



Aurora University  
George Williams School of Social Work

## **MSW Program Policy and Procedure Handbook**

**Aurora Campus**  
**University Center at McHenry County College**  
**AU Online**

**2025-2026**

This Academic Catalog/Program Policy serves to familiarize all undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students with Aurora University's academic policies and procedures as of the date of this Catalog/Policy. A department or program may adopt more specific policies or procedures applicable to the particular program of study. Together, the policies and procedures set forth in this Catalog and in program-specific policies constitute your resource guides regarding the academic requirements of Aurora University.

The policies and procedures in this Catalog/Policy/Handbook are subject to modification, revision, and updates at the discretion of the University or the program in question, to comply with evolving accreditation standards and best practices in the best interests of the University community. These policies and procedures do not constitute a contract, do not reflect binding commitments by the University, and may not be relied upon as such. The University/program will notify students when policies or procedures are revised, but students also have a responsibility to stay current on the applicable policies and procedures for their specific degree or certification programs.

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## I. Aurora University

### Aurora University Mission Statement

Aurora University is an inclusive community dedicated to the transformative power of learning. As a teaching-centered institution, we encourage undergraduate and graduate students to discover what it takes to build meaningful and examined lives. Our singular goal is to empower our students to achieve lasting personal and professional success.

### Aurora University Core Values

Integrity- Aurora University adheres to the highest standards of integrity in every aspect of institutional practice and operation. Through this proven dedication to honesty, fairness, and ethical conduct, we lead by example and inspire our students to do the same.

Citizenship- Aurora University exercises the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in an inclusive educational community, founded upon the principles of mutual respect and open discourse. We live within our means and manage our resources wisely and responsibly, while sustaining an environment that fosters teamwork and promotes services to others. We serve the needs of the Fox River Valley, McHenry County (Illinois), Walworth County (Wisconsin), and online learners by offering myriad educational and cultural opportunities to our students and the community-at-large.

Continuous Learning- Aurora University works and lives as a non-profit organization dedicated to continuous learning. We help students achieve their full potential.

Excellence- Aurora University pursues excellence by embracing quality as a way of community life.

### Aurora University Learning Outcomes

Effective Communication- Students will communicate clearly and offer well-supported arguments in their writing and speaking.

Critical Thinking- Students will demonstrate skills of analysis, problem solving, and application.

### Aurora University General Education Learning Outcomes

Creative Thinking - Students will demonstrate original or imaginative ways of thinking about, reacting to, or working in the fine, performing, or literary arts.

Discovery and Reflection - Students will demonstrate how discovery and reflection in regard to the world have affected how they view their sense of purpose.

Quantitative Reasoning - Students will evaluate and utilize quantitative evidence, methods, and models effectively

Intercultural Knowledge - Students will demonstrate an understanding of cultural differences and human diversity.

Social Scientific Inquiry and Analysis - Students will utilize scientific principles, models, or theories to promote and demonstrate understanding of social phenomena.

Scientific Reasoning - Students will utilize scientific principles, models, or theories to promote and demonstrate understanding of natural or physical phenomena.

## II. Aurora University George Williams School of Social Work

### School of Social Work Mission

The George Williams School of Social Work empowers students through holistic and transformative education. Our inclusive learning community works to prepare social workers to competently build justice and systematic change for individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities while guiding students toward professional engagement.

The AU MSW program mission statement was derived directly from the George Williams School of Social Work mission statement which follows: *The Master of Social Work Program in the School of Social Work empowers students through holistic and transformative education. Our inclusive learning community works to prepare social workers to competently build justice and systematic change to implement and evaluate evidence-based clinical practice for individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities while guiding students toward professional engagement.*

The missions of Aurora University, the George Williams School of Social Work and the MSW program, focus on the transformative power of learning. Evident in each statement is the dedication to providing an environment that promotes understanding enriched through experiences. Professional engagement and success in the field of social work are key components to the mission of both the program and the institution.

The University and all programs within the George Williams School of Social Work, adhere to the highest standards of **integrity** in every aspect of institutional practice and operation. Through this proven dedication to honesty, fairness, and ethical conduct, faculty and staff lead by example and inspire students to do the same. All involved exercise the rights and responsibilities of **citizenship** in an educational community, founded upon the principles of mutual respect and open discourse. Programs live within reasonable means and manage resources wisely while creating an environment that fosters teamwork and promotes service to others. The University will work and live as an organization dedicated to **continuous learning**. Students, faculty and staff recognize that the University exists in a rapidly changing world. The educational community will succeed in helping students achieve their full potential only if the University realizes its own potential. All members of the University pursue **excellence** by embracing quality as a way of community life. Accordingly, high expectations are set for students, faculty, and staff; and all members of the University work together to attain them. The University's core values endure, even as the School of Social work mission evolves and the vision for the future emerges. As members of the Aurora University community, everyone enters into a voluntary pact with one another to live and work in ways consistent with these ideals.

The missions are consistent across student learning modalities of face-to-face learning, as well as online learning. The mission of the School of Social Work includes the Graduate Social Work Program, the Bachelor of Social Work Program, and the Doctorate of Social Work Program. All program options follow the mission statement of the School of Social Work.

### Goals of the MSW Program

The goals of the program are derived from the mission statement and the CSWE competencies.

1. Provide curricula and teaching practices at the forefront of the new and changing knowledge base of social work and related disciplines.
2. Provide curricula that build on a liberal arts perspective to promote a breadth of knowledge, critical thinking, and communication skills.
3. Promote the continual professional and ethical development of students, faculty, and practitioners
4. Prepare social workers to engage in prevention activities that promote well-being.
5. Prepare social workers to practice ethically with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
6. Prepare social workers to evaluate the processes and effectiveness of practice.
7. Prepare social workers to practice without discrimination, with respect, and with knowledge and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
8. Prepare social workers to alleviate poverty, oppression, and other forms of social injustice with anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice skills.
9. Prepare social workers to recognize the global context of social work practice.
10. Prepare social workers to formulate and influence social policies and social work services in diverse political contexts.

### Accreditation and Certification

The Master of Social Work (MSW) program of Aurora University is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The MSW program at the Aurora, Illinois, campus and the McHenry County College University Center in McHenry, IL, and the online modality, is fully accredited by CSWE. Aurora University is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

### Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)

“The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to baccalaureate and master’s level social work programs. EPAS supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence. It permits programs to use traditional and emerging models and methods of curriculum design by balancing requirements that promote comparable outcomes across programs with a level of flexibility that encourages programs to differentiate” (CSWE, Inc. Updated June, 2022). CSWE competencies conceptually link to generalist and specialized coursework.

The current EPAS can be found at [CSWE 2022 EPAS](#)



### **Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)**

All school social workers must be licensed by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to practice school social work in a public-school setting within the state of Illinois. Students pursuing the PEL: SSW endorsement must meet both the university requirements and the requirements set forth by ISBE. The requirements include coursework in school social work, reading contents and methods, special education, and instructional strategies for English language learners; a 600-hour minimum internship in a PK-12<sup>th</sup> grade school; and successfully passing the school social work content exam.

### **Illinois Certification Board (ICB)**

(Formerly Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Professional Certification Association)  
(IAODAPCA)

The School of Social Work is accredited by ICB (formally IAODAPCA) as an “Advanced Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Counselor Training Program.” This accreditation assures that persons entering the field of substance abuse through an accredited program have met the minimum requirements of training. Accreditation defines the competencies to be addressed in the training program. MSW students in the School of Social Work at AU must complete the course and internship requirements of the Addictions curriculum in order to be eligible for Certified Alcohol and other Drug Counselor (CADC).

In the Spring of 2011, the School of Social Work became the first accredited school in Illinois to become approved by ICB to provide a special training course that can lead to Board Certification as a co-occurring substance use mental health disorder professional (CODP) treatment provider. The course work and field work certify students to provide services for those afflicted with co-occurring disorders (addictions and psychiatric disorders). The four credit-hour course covers all of the core competencies specifically outlined by ICB. Upon successful completion of this course (minimum grade of a B), the chair of the track will send a letter to the ICB office in Springfield indicating completion of the University’s requirements and educational component of the certification. Additional requirements must be met before obtaining the CODP I credential from ICB. For specific details regarding this track, students should contact the Addictions Track coordinator. The elective course is also useful for those not pursuing the addiction track.

## **III. Master of Social Work Program (MSW)**

### **MSW Program Locations**

The MSW program is offered at the following AU campus locations:

Aurora University Aurora, Aurora, Illinois

Aurora University Online

University Center at McHenry County College, Woodstock, Illinois

The primary objective of the MSW program in the School of Social Work is to prepare students for clinical social work practice. The MSW program prepares students to assist individuals, families and communities, and to advance social change to improve the well-being of vulnerable populations.

### MSW Program Options

The School of Social Work offers several graduate program options leading to the Master of Social Work degree, including two-year full-time and three-year part-time.

The **full-time program** requires 15 semester hours of coursework for four semesters.

The **part-time program** requires nine semester hours for the first four semesters (first two years) and then 12 semester hours per semester in the third year. Advanced standing students may complete the program either as full- or part-time students. Fulltime advanced standing for those who receive full credit for the BSW degree complete 15 semester hours of coursework for two semesters in addition to summer, which requires three semester hours. Part-time advanced standing requires six semester hours of coursework in each semester in year one, and nine semester hours of coursework in each of the semesters in year two. Students will make a choice of which plan they will pursue at the time of admission.

## IV. MSW Curriculum

The Graduate Studies in the School of Social Work curriculum prepares graduates for clinical social work practice using a conceptual framework to identify specialized knowledge and skills. The courses build a specialized curriculum from the generalist content. In the specialized clinical curriculum, the generalist content areas are addressed in greater depth, breadth, and specificity and support the program's conception of specialized practice. The following table delineates courses taught at the generalist level, the semester hours per course, content area, and competency.

### Generalist Curriculum

The generalist curriculum provides social work knowledge, values and skills in a generalist practice model. The generalist curriculum prepares students to assess, engage, provide interventions for and evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Field instruction during the generalist year consists of approximately 15 clock hours per week (225 clock hours per semester) during each semester for a total of 450 clock hours for the academic year. The following table delineates courses taught at the generalist level, the semester hours per course, content area, and competency.

#### MSW Program of Study GENERALIST CURRICULUM 30 semester hours

Course	Semester Hours		2022 CSWE Competency
SWK 6140 Social Welfare Policy & Institutions	3	Social Welfare Policy	III, V
SWK 6180 Building Professional Social Work Competency	3	Human Behavior in the Social Environment	I, III
SWK 6185 HBSE II: Lifecourse Development	3	Human Behavior in the Social Environment	III

SWK 6370 Social Work Practice I: Individuals & Families	3	Social Work Practice Theory & Methods	VI, VII, VIII, IX
SWK 6381 Social Work Practice II: Group Work	3	Social Work Practice Theory & Methods	VI, VII, VIII, IX
SWK 6382 Social Work Practice II: Community Practice	3	Social Work Practice Theory & Methods	VI, VII, VIII, IX
SWK 6250 Research I: Social Work Research Methods	3	Research	IV
SWK 6730 Field Instruction I: Generalist Internship	3	Field	I through IX
SWK 6740 Field Instruction II: Generalist Internship Elective Course (1)	3	Field	I through IX

### Clinical Specialization Curriculum

In the clinical specialization curriculum, students enter specialization-level courses in social work theory, policy and practice; psychopathology, advanced social work electives; and advanced social work research. Field instruction during the specialization year consists of approximately 20 clock hours per week (300 clock hours per semester) during each semester for a total of 600 clock hours for the academic year. Students may pursue a track during the specialization curriculum and complete their field work in the corresponding track.

The following table delineates courses taught at the specialized level, the semester hours per course, content area, and competency.

#### **MSW Program of Study SPECIALIZATION CURRICULUM 30 semester hours**

Course	Semester Hours		2022 CSWE Competency
SWK 6533 Advanced Social Policy	3	Social Welfare Policy	V
SWK 6500 Social Work Perspectives & Practice on Psychopathology	3	Human Behavior in the Social Environment	I, VI, VII, VIII, IX
SWK 6511 Evidence Based Clinical Social Work Practice	3	Social Work Practice Theory & Methods	IV, VI, VII, VIII, IX
SWK 6521 Psychotherapy in Clinical Social Work Practice	3	Social Work Practice Theory & Methods	I, II, VI, VII, VIII, IX
SWK 6575 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Social Work Practice	3	Diversity & Human Rights/Social Justice	II, III, VI
SWK 6750 Field Instruction I: Specialization Internship	3	Field	I through IX
SWK 6760 Field Instruction II: Specialization Internship	3	Field	I through IX

## Elective Courses (3)

### Graduation Requirements

The MSW degree is awarded at the completion of the 60-credit program of generalist credits, specialist credits, and elective credits. A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is required at the time of graduation to complete the MSW degree and receive a diploma.

### Field Instruction

Field instruction is the signature pedagogy in social work education. Field experiences provide students with opportunities to practice and integrate social work theory in the field under the guidance and instruction of an experienced social work field instructor and field liaison. Students may select a field placement from affiliated agencies in consultation with the Field Department at the School of Social Work. First-year students typically complete a minimum of 15 clock hours of field instruction per week over two semesters for a required total of a minimum of 450 cumulative hours. Second-year students typically complete a minimum of 20 clock hours of field instruction per week over two semesters for a required total of a minimum of 600 cumulative hours. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in the School of Social Work Field Manual. The School of Social Work Field Manual can be found [here](#) as well as on the respective Brightspace Field pages.

Field Manual Hyperlink:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1x4bHFQCUyIyOdy6fRo6VtSYJENjxD7Xr/edit#heading=h.gjdgxs>

### Track Curriculum

The Aurora University School of Social Work has been and continues to be a clinical program. We have developed specialized curricula for practice to create a path that will promote the successful employment of our graduates. We have intentionally offered curriculum specific to the specialization of clinical social work which includes research, policy practice and a systems approach that examines engagement, assessment, intervention and evaluation with individuals, groups, families, organizations and communities. As we emphasize our clinical curriculum, we have determined that our specialization is a clinical program.

**NOTE:** Generalist and specialized courses are typically offered in fall, spring, and summer terms. Many electives are offered during one designated semester. **For this reason, please be aware that divergence from the structured degree completion plan may result in scheduling complications that could delay timely graduation.**

### Tracks leading to External Certifications or Licenses

- **Addictions-** This track curriculum prepares students to work with substance using individuals and those impacted by substance use and addiction. The coursework focuses on educating

students about various aspects of substance use disorders from prevention to recovery, gaining insight into evidence-based treatment approaches, exploring ethical concepts including engaging in self-reflection to address any internal bias, and learning specific clinical skills to help the various subpopulations of individuals impacted by substance use disorders.

Within the track, students complete a field internship at an approved substance use treatment provider. Because the School of Social Work is accredited by the Illinois Certification Board (ICB) as an *Advanced Training Program* for Certified Alcohol and Other Drug Counselors (CADC), upon successful completion of this track, students are eligible to take the CADC examination for the state of Illinois.

Potential Benefits of this Track:

- Obtaining certification as a Certified Alcohol and other Drug Counselor (CADC) in Illinois
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that jobs in addiction counseling will increase by 23% by 2026 making it one of the fastest growing fields (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/substance-abuse-behavioral-disorder-and-mental-health-counselors.htm>)
- Students will build skills in counseling, the physiology of addiction, and evidence-based treatment approaches
- The certification is valuable across the field of social work and does not limit students to professional work with only this population. Students will find benefit in adding the specialized training in substance use as they explore many areas of social work including mental health, adolescents, veterans, forensic settings, schools, and health care settings, to name a few.

➤ Required Addictions Coursework (offered as electives) (12.0 semester hours)

SWK 6340	Survey of Substance Abuse Evaluation & Treatment (first in sequence)
SWK 5420	Addictions Counseling I
SWK 6400	Addictions Counseling II
Field Instruction	Internship must be completed in an approved addictions setting with a minimum of 500 hours (generalist internship) or 600 hours (specialized internship).

**Students must earn a “B” or higher** in all track courses in order for them to count towards the requirements. When possible, it is advised that students take Addictions Counseling I and II concurrently with their internship.

A field placement in an approved substance use treatment site is required and students will accrue 500-600 hours depending on placement level (site must be a primary substance use provider). The internship site **MUST** be approved for addictions or the internship hours will not count toward the certification requirements. All addictions sites must be SUPR (Substance Use Prevention & Recovery) licensed, or JCAHO (Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations) accredited. If assistance is needed in determining a site’s eligibility, please contact the field office and/or the track coordinator. **ALL** students pursuing the addictions track will need supervision from a CADC and a MSW (or other approved)

supervisor. The supervisor can be the same person with both credentials or two different individuals.

**Additional addictions credential:** SWK 5600: Co-Occurring Substance Use and Mental Health Disorders is a 4-semester hour course that offers students the opportunity to complete the educational component of the CODP (Co-Occurring Substance Use and Mental Health Disorder Professional) I board registration. Once the student completes the course (SWK 5600), verification will be sent to ICB (Illinois Certification Board) indicating that the student completed the educational component of the board registration requirement. This class only covers the educational requirements for CODP I. Students will then need to accrue paid work experience in the field to complete the requirements for the CODP I Board Registration. ***Students MUST obtain and document the required clinical hours and supervision*** prior to being confirmed as a Board Registered Co-Occurring Substance Use and Mental Health Disorder Professional (CODP I). Please consult with the track coordinator to discuss this opportunity further (see faculty directory).

- **Child Welfare** focuses on addressing the issues surrounding families facing turmoil, protecting children from abuse and neglect, working with biological parents to reunite families, and finding permanent placements for those who cannot safely return to their homes. Internship experiences include positions in case management, shelter care services, intact family services, foster care, adoption, and therapeutic foster care services. Students will complete three electives and a child welfare specific internship. After successful completion of this track, you will be eligible to take the tests required, such as the Illinois Child Welfare Licensing Exam, to work in the child welfare field in Illinois.

➤ Required Coursework (offered as electives) (9.0 semester hours)

SWK 6700	Effects of Trauma on Children
SWK 6720	Social Work with Vulnerable Children and Families
SWK 6725	Child Welfare Services
Field Instruction	Specialized internship must be completed in an approved child welfare setting with a minimum of 600 hours.

- **School Social Work** prepares you to address the social, emotional and behavioral concerns of students, provide resources to families, assist with student academic performance, and collaborate with school staff to improve the well-being of students and their families within the school setting. As a school social worker, you will have the knowledge and skills to provide preventive and interventional services for students from pre-K through the age of 22. The program is approved by the Illinois State Board of Education, and upon successful completion of the track, you will be eligible to apply for the Illinois Professional Educator License (PEL) with a School Social Worker Endorsement.

**ILLINOIS PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR LICENSE WITH A SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK  
ENDORSEMENT (PEL: SSW)<sup>[OBJ]</sup>**

**\*\* As of 7/1/19, ISBE no longer requires aspiring School SWers to take the Basic Skills test, but they do have to take the School SW Content Exam prior to their Professional Educator License being issued. \*\***

➤ Required Coursework for students pursuing an **MSW**. (12.0 semester hours)

SWK 5620	Social Work Practice: Exceptional Child
SWK 6410	School Social Work: Policy & Practice I
SWK 6420	School Social Work: Policy & Practice II
Field Instruction	Specialized internship must be completed in an approved public-school setting with a minimum of 600 hours.
Testing	A state content exam is required for the PEL:SSW endorsement. Refer to the School Social Work Licensing Brightspace Shell for details. Some districts may require students to pass the Content Exam prior to starting the internship.

➤ Required Coursework for students pursuing the **Post MSW-PEL program** (15 sh)

SWK 5610 (3sh)	Social Work Practice: Exceptional Child
SWK 6430 (3sh)	School Social Work Licensure
SWK 6600 (3sh)	Reading Content and Reading Methods for School Social Workers
Field Instruction (6sh)	Specialized internship must be completed in an approved public-school setting with a minimum of 600 hours.
Testing	A state content exam is required for the PEL:SSW endorsement. Refer to the School Social Work Licensing Brightspace Shell for details. Some districts may require students to pass the Content Exam prior to starting the internship.

## Other Tracks

- **Forensics** prepares students to use legal expertise to work in the social work field. The coursework focuses on educating students in forensic social work practice and theory. Students can utilize their specialized knowledge of this field to work in a variety of settings. Some examples include correctional settings (jails, prisons, reentry programs, community supervision such as probation and parole), police departments and other law enforcement agencies, FBI, court systems (legal advocates, clinicians, treatment providers, policy development), child advocacy centers, domestic violence programs, survivor assistance programs (human trafficking, crime victims), mediation, etc. Opportunities are broad and available at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

➤ Required Coursework (offered as electives) (9.0 semester hours)

SWK 5300	Forensic Social Work
SWK 6720	Social Work with Vulnerable Children and Families
SWK 6721	Mediation
Field Instruction	Specialized internships must be completed in an approved site involving forensic populations with a minimum of 600 hours.

- **Gerontology** focuses on the rapidly growing and ever-changing field of gerontology, and the myriads of roles for social workers in this field. In this track, you will learn to assess and treat older adults in a variety of service agencies including assisted-living facilities, nursing homes, hospice care settings, hospitals, and senior living homes.

➤ Required Coursework (offered as electives) (9.0 semester hours)

SWK 6010	Medical Social Work
SWK 5100	Gerontology: Assessment and Intervention
SWK 5110	Gerontology: Biology and Health of Aging
Field Instruction	Specialized internship must be completed in an approved gerontology specific site with a minimum of 600 hours.

- **Health Care** exposes students to the field of health care in the United States and the various roles available for social workers. The track provides a basic understanding of the medical field and its terminology, the complexities of brief and chronic illness and respective treatments, ethical considerations, insurance issues, and public policy. Upon completion, you will be able to recognize health disparities and work toward the equitable and fair provision of services to all populations.

➤ Required Coursework (offered as electives) (9 semester hours)



Required Coursework (offered as electives)(3.0 sh)	SWK 6010 Medical Social Work
Related Electives (choose two) (6.0 sh) * NOT all electives are offered each term	SWK 5110 Gerontology: Biology & Health of Aging SWK 5100 Gerontology: Assessment and Intervention SWK 5250 Perspectives on Fertility and Assisted Reproduction SWK 5600 Co-occurring Substance Use and Mental Health Disorder (4 sh) SWK 5620 Social Work Practice with the Exceptional Child SWK 6030 Bereavement Counseling SWK 6035 Hospice Social Work SWK 6045 Psychiatric Hospital Social Work SWK 6050 Self-Injury and Eating Disorders SWK 6055 Oncology SWK SWK 6340 Psychopharmacology of Substance Use Disorders SWK 6581 Mindfulness in Clinical Social Work
Field Instruction	Specialized internship must be completed in an approved healthcare setting with a minimum of 600 hours.

- **Leadership Administration** exposes students to the macro level social work perspectives as well as an administrative perspective through MSW and MBA courses. The Leadership Administration track will prepare you for administrative roles in social work and human services.

**LEADERSHIP ADMINISTRATION (9.0 sh total)**

Required Coursework (offered as electives) (9.0 sh)	MBA 6030 Leadership and Organization Behavior MBA 6200 Human Resource Management MPA 6350 Nonprofit Management and Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students must earn “B” grade or higher in each course to count toward Leadership Administration Track.</li> </ul>
Field Instruction	Complete a leadership field placement in 1st year or 2nd year. Leadership learning activities may consist of, but not limited to, advocacy, strategic planning, policy and research, etc.

- **Military/Veteran Social Work** exposes students to the knowledge and skills needed to provide social work practice interventions for those in active military service, military veterans, or family members of active duty or military veterans.

Required Coursework (offered as electives (6.0 sh)	SWK 5350 Military/Veterans Social Work Culture, Customs, & Traditions SWK 6170 Clinical Social Work with Military/Veteran Populations Students must earn “B” grade or higher in each course to count toward Military/Veteran Track.
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Field Instruction	Complete a leadership field placement in 1st year or 2nd year. Leadership learning activities may consist of, but not limited to, direct micro or mezzo practice with military veterans, active service members, or family members of military or veterans exclusively.
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## DUAL DEGREE OPTIONS

### **MSW/MBA Dual Degree**

MSW/MBA Dual Degree Students must apply and be admitted to both graduate programs. Students enroll in courses from each program in each term, this sets the condition where the student completes the degrees simultaneously.

\* Required Coursework (offered as electives) (54 semester hours for advanced standing and 84 semester hours for traditional students) Note: You must work closely with your advisor to manage the dual degree program of study.

#### **MSW Generalist Requirements (30 credits)**

SWK 6140 Social Welfare Policy & Institutions (3)  
 SWK 6180 HBSE I: Human Behavior in the Social Environment: Developing Professional Social Work Competence (3)  
 SWK 6185 HBSE II: Human Behavior in the Social Environment: Lifecourse Development (3)  
 SWK 6370 Social Work Practice I: Individuals & Families (3)  
 SWK 6381 Social Work Practice II: Group Work (3)  
 SWK 6382 Social Work Practice II: Community Practice (3)  
 SWK 6250 Research I: Social Work Research Methods (3)  
 SWK 6730 Field Instruction I: Generalist Internship (3)  
 SWK 6740 Field Instruction II: Generalist Internship (3)  
 SWK Elective (3)

#### **MSW Specialist Requirements (30 credits)**

SWK 6533 Advanced Social Policy (3)  
 SWK 6500 Social Work Perspectives & Practice on Psychopathology (3)  
 SWK 6511 Social Work Practice III: Clinical Theory & Methods (3)  
 SWK 6521 Social Work Practice IV: Advanced Clinical Knowledge & Application (3)  
 SWK 6575 Diversity, Equity, & Inclusivity in SWK Practice (3)  
 SWK 6750 Field Instruction I: Specialization Internship (3)  
 SWK 6760 Field Instruction II: Specialization Internship (3)  
 -

Dual Degree Students must complete the courses using 3 social work elective options: MBA 6030 Leadership and Organizational Behavior, MPA6360 Grant Writing, Philanthropy, and Advancement & MBA6200 Human Resource Management.

The following MBA courses would also need to be completed:

MBA6045 Budgeting & Financial Management (3)	MBA6085 Ethics & Decision Making (3)
MBA6075 Operations Management (3)	MBA6100 Strategic Management (3)

**MBA Required Elective Courses: 15 Semester hours required (choose 5)**

MBA6050 Corporate Finance (3)	MBA6500 Global Business Immersion (3)
MBA6090 Applied Business Research (3)	MBA6520 Project Management Planning (3)
MBA6130 Economics (3)	MBA6530 Project Management Execution (3)
MBA/MPA6170 Applied Research, Insights, and Evaluation (3)	MBA6540 Entrepreneurial Management (3)
MBA6200 Human Resource Management (3)	MBA6550 Healthcare Management (3)
MBA6250 Data Analytics (3)	MBA6560 Leadership of Not-for-Profit Organizations (3)
MBA6310 Design Thinking (3)	MBA6610 Leading Organizational Development (3)
MBA6350 Nonprofit Management and Leadership (3)	MBA6620 Leading Strategically (3)
MBA6380 Communication Management (3)	MBA6630 Leading Teams (3)

**MSW/MPA Dual Degree**

MSW/MPA Dual Degree Students must apply and be admitted to both graduate programs. Students enroll in courses from each program in each term, this sets the condition where the student completes the degrees simultaneously.

Required Coursework (offered as electives) (54 semester hours for advanced standing and 84 semester hours for traditional students)

Note: You must work closely with your advisor to manage the dual degree program of study.

Students must complete these MSW courses:

**MSW Generalist**

**Requirements (30 credits)**

SWK 6140 Social Welfare  
Policy & Institutions (3)  
SWK 6180 HBSE I: Human  
Behavior in the Social  
Environment: Developing

Professional Social Work  
Competence (3)  
SWK 6185 HBSE II: Human  
Behavior in the Social  
Environment: Lifecourse  
Development (3)

SWK 6370 Social Work  
Practice I: Individuals &  
Families (3)  
SWK 6381 Social Work  
Practice II: Group Work (3)  
SWK 6382 Social Work  
Practice II: Community Practice  
(3)  
SWK 6250 Research I: Social  
Work Research Methods (3)  
SWK 6730 Field Instruction I:  
Generalist Internship (3)  
SWK 6740 Field Instruction II:  
Generalist Internship (3)  
SWK Elective (3)  
**MSW Specialist Requirements  
(30 credits)**  
SWK 6533 Advanced Social  
Policy (3)  
SWK 6500 Social Work  
Perspectives & Practice on  
Psychopathology (3)

SWK 6511 Social Work  
Practice III: Clinical Theory &  
Methods (3)  
SWK 6521 Social Work  
Practice IV: Advanced Clinical  
Knowledge & Application (3)  
SWK 6575 Diversity, Equity, &  
Inclusivity in SWK Practice (3)  
SWK 6750 Field Instruction I:  
Specialization Internship (3)  
SWK 6760 Field Instruction II:  
Specialization Internship (3)  
**MBA/MPA Electives 9 sh-**  
MPA 6360 Grant Writing,  
Philanthropy, & Advancement  
(3)  
MPA 6350 Nonprofit  
Management and Leadership (3)  
MBA 6200 Human Resource  
Management (3)

Students must complete these courses in the MPA/MBA program:

MBA 6130 Economics (3)

MPA 6110 Administration of Public Institutions (3)

MPA 6120 Public Policy and Analysis (3)

MPA 6130 Government & Community Relations (3)

MPA6140 Public Finance and Budgeting (3)

MPA 6170 Applied Research, Insights, and  
Evaluation (3)

MPA 6200 Advanced Seminar in Applied Public  
Administration (3)

MBA 6200 Human Resource Management (3)

## V. MSW Program Admission Policies

### Admission Requirements for the MSW Program

- The applicant must have a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution with an average GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Applicants with a GPA of less than 3.0 will be for admission on a case-by-case basis, potentially subject to conditional admission.
- Applicants must understand and demonstrate a commitment to high standards of personal and professional conduct, as reflected in the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Applicants must submit the following:  
A completed Graduate Application for Admission.  
Two letters of recommendation from individuals familiar with the professional or academic abilities

of the student.

A professional Statement of Purpose.

A curriculum vitae or detailed resume that includes work experience, educational background, professional experience, professional activities, honors, professional publications and/or presentations and other relevant information relating to the applicant's experiences.

All transcripts from previous institutions and previous degrees.

Upon admission to the program, a background check must be completed by the student prior to beginning course work.

Applicants should demonstrate personal characteristics indicative of the capacity for professional practice as evidenced by:

- personal maturity
- a high level of personal integrity, readiness to identify with the values and ethical principles of the social work profession
- commitment to social justice and to improvement of the condition of vulnerable and oppressed groups

### Admission Review Process

The School of Social Work strives to recruit a diverse group of students who have had relevant and significant work and life experiences, and who can relate to diverse and vulnerable populations. The MSW Admission Committee will consider factors relating to the applicant's academic ability, work, service and extracurricular experience, especially as they relate to promotion and development of resilient communities, organizations, social groups, families and individuals. In reviewing applications, MSW Admission Committee members evaluate all transcripts, the "Statement of Purpose" and letters of recommendation.

### Application Considerations

Potential applicants for the MSW program should note that a background indicating convictions may render them ineligible for a field internship which is a requirement to complete the MSW program. The applicant may also be ineligible for licensure after graduation. Aurora University and the School of Social Work reserve the right to deny admission to the MSW program based on application materials, previous academic record and records of past conduct, including but not limited to, the results of a criminal background check or registration of a sex offense.

### Provisional Admission

A student seeking regular admission whose official transcripts or other required documents have not arrived by the established deadline due to circumstances beyond the applicant's control and who otherwise meets all requirements for admission to the program may be admitted provisionally for one semester. A provisional student whose admission status is not complete by the first day of the next semester will be administratively dropped from classes.

### Conditional Acceptance

On occasion, an applicant may be accepted into the program conditionally. Conditional acceptance requires that an applicant meet certain conditions either prior to beginning the MSW program or concurrent with enrollment in the MSW program. Applicants being accepted conditionally are notified in writing of the necessary conditions that must be addressed prior to full acceptance being granted. Full acceptance is required if students are to be permitted to continue in the MSW program.

### **Advanced Standing Students**

Students who have earned a BSW degree within the last five years from a CSWE accredited institution and who have demonstrated outstanding scholarship in social work courses and excellence in the field may apply for advanced standing for up to one-half of the semester hours (30 semester hours) required for the MSW program at Aurora University.

Special admission procedures and standards apply to advanced standing applicants.

### **Student Evaluation**

Professional social work education requires high standards of academic, personal and professional conduct. The educational program at the graduate level (MSW) requires the development of social work ethics and values as well as knowledge and skills. In accordance with Aurora University regulations, the School of Social Work reserves the right to maintain academic standards for admission and retention in the social work program at the MSW level, above and beyond compliance with the general academic standards of the university.

Also recognizing that there are professional competencies and conduct not measurable by academic achievement alone, the School of Social Work reserves the right to make decisions regarding admission and retention based on high standards of personal and professional conduct. Because social work education involves a significant amount of internship experience and preparation for helping vulnerable populations, student evaluation will honor not only the rights of students, but also the rights and well-being of clients and others to whom students relate in a professional role.

### **Four-Year Limit**

Students must complete the program on or before a date four years from the date of matriculation. A statute of limitations of five years applies for re-application to the MSW program or transfer of credit.

### **Credit for Life Experience**

In accordance with the standards of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), degree credit may not be given for life experiences.

### **Admission Notification**

Applicants receive notice via email from the Dean of Graduate Studies, notifying them of the admission decision. If admitted, the applicant receives additional communication regarding steps to take for background check completion, orientation to the program, and registering for classes. The student is linked to their academic advisor at the time of admission.

## **Statement of Criminal Background Notification**

Aurora University reserves the right to deny admission to its undergraduate, graduate and non-degree programs based on application materials, previous academic record and records of past conduct, including but not limited to the results of a criminal background check or registration of a sex offense.

MSW applicants are required to complete a national background check before beginning the program. The MSW program may deny admission based on the results of a criminal background check. The school may refuse or revoke admission for the following: misrepresentation of self, criminal behavior, results of the national background check, and/or behavior that interferes with performing professional duties.

If admitted to the MSW program, any applicant or student with a criminal background may not be eligible for some field instruction placements. In addition, the applicant or student may not be eligible

for licensure after completing the requirements for the MSW degree. Many agencies require criminal background checks as a condition for accepting a placement in their program. It is the student's responsibility to inquire with the Department of Professional Regulation to determine their licensure eligibility.

Once admitted to the MSW program, students must adhere to the Professional Standards of the University and the School of Social Work. Students must meet the criteria for professional and ethical behavior as set forth by the School of Social Work.

Some states prohibit licensure in social work if a felony conviction is on record. It remains the student's responsibility to obtain information regarding the information specific to licensure through the appropriate governing body.

## **VI. MSW Program Curriculum Policies**

### **Prerequisites**

All graduate students are required to have earned an undergraduate degree from an accredited university or college.

### **Residency Requirement**

To complete a graduate social work degree at Aurora University, students are required to complete 25% of their graduate credits at Aurora University.

### **Academic Advising**

**Role of the Graduate Academic Advisor & Registration Coordinator:**

Aurora University Advising at the graduate level is unique in that it is inclusive. The Graduate Academic Advisors rely on team members from the MSW program to assist our students in a wrap-around system. There is a strong faculty presence providing mentorship to our students. There are track coordinators, field Internship coordinators, and the Graduate Program Director. This network of support is crucial to advising because it allows the entire team to focus on quality. Together, we are working towards one goal, to empower students to achieve lasting personal and professional adults. Together and in alignment with our mission statement, we encourage, empower, support and guide students to achieve goals at AU and well beyond that.

All applicants to the MSW online program have a dedicated online enrollment counselor assigned to them to guide them through the admissions process. Upon acceptance to the MSW program, the enrollment counselors guide them through registration and orientation. Once the applicant matriculates, the students are assigned a dedicated academic advisor to assist them throughout the program of study and to ensure that each student is progressing toward graduation.

Students receive information about advising on field instruction policies and procedures upon admission. Information about the field instruction program is available through Brightspace, and the Field Handbook. Students work with the Field Director if they are Aurora campus students, with the University Center at MCC Field Coordinator if they are University Center at MCC Students, and with the Online Field Coordinator if they are fully online students.

MSW Registration Session

**All graduate students starting the MSW program are required to attend a registration session before the semester begins.** The Registration Session is facilitated by the Graduate Academic Advisor & Registration Coordinator for Aurora campus and University Center at MCC MSW students, or by the enrollment counselor from AU Online for online MSW students. New MSW students attending this session are provided with essential orientation information, resources, and assistance in registering for their first classes. Students are instructed on how to use essential AU technology features to utilize Student Planner, AU email, Brightspace, and Okta.

### Professional Advising

Aurora University Advising at the graduate level is unique in that it is inclusive. Students receive professional advising from a variety of faculty, staff, and administrators in the MSW program. There is a strong faculty presence providing mentorship to our students. There are track coordinators, field internship coordinators, and the Graduate Program Director providing professional goal guidance to MSW students. This network of support is crucial to advising because it allows the entire team to engage with students to reach their professional goals. Together, we are working towards one goal, to empower students to achieve lasting personal and professional adults. Together and in alignment with our mission statement, we encourage, empower, support and guide students to achieve goals at AU and well beyond that.

### Modality Changes

If a student wishes to change modalities (i.e. change from the online format to face-to-face format or vice versa) students should work with their academic advisor to complete a “Modality Change Request” form. The form is submitted to the Graduate Academic Advisor & Registration Coordinator and will be approved by both the Graduate Registration Coordinator and the Manager of Online Enrollment Processes.

Submission of a request form does not guarantee approval. Program staff will consider the student’s grades/academic standing, the number of courses completed via the initial modality, the status of their field placement and the reason(s) provided for the change request. Students may not change modalities during a semester or field placement. A change in modality may impact the student’s field instruction process such as their staff contact and where documentation is submitted.

If approved, no additional modalities change will be permitted. Thus, students must carefully consider whether to request a modality change as they will not be able to switch back.

### Credit, Waiver, or Substitution of Course Work as Applied to Meeting MSW Degree Requirements

The purpose of the process of granting transfer credits, waiver, or substitutions of course requirements is to ensure the integrity of the MSW student’s academic and field preparation for graduate practice as well as ensure that students do not repeat the generalist-level curriculum. Transfer credit is only considered from graduate courses from CSWE accredited social work programs. In all cases, the student must convincingly demonstrate mastery of knowledge of content and those competencies required for the course or courses under consideration. The statute of limitations of five (5) years applies to transfer of credit. Courses approved for transfer credit must have been taken less than five (5) years before entering the program. Requests for



credit, waiver, or substitution must be made to the Director of Graduate Studies of the School of Social Work for consideration during the application process.

Definitions:

Credit: The granting of course semester credit hours for academic credits completed elsewhere. Credit for social work courses can only be granted if courses are taken within a program that is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

Waiver: Granting completion of a requirement, to avoid duplication of content in which the student has demonstrated proficiency in previous course work. The student does not take the waived course and is not granted academic credit.

Substitution: Permission to use one course to fulfill another course requirement.

### Frequently Asked Questions Related to Credit, Waiver, & Substitutions

Q: Is it possible to use previous course work as credit towards degree requirements?

A. MSW requirements may be met only by course work:

- 1) Taken at a CSWE accredited school of social work;
- 2) In which the grade received was “B” or better;
- 3) Completed within the last five years;
- 4) If the catalog description or syllabus substantially resembles the course offered at Aurora University.

Q: What course work may be applied toward fulfilling MSW requirements at Aurora University through waiver or substitution?

A. Courses which were taken:

- 1) At an accredited university or college;
- 2) For credit;
- 3) With a grade of “B” or better;
- 4) Within the last five years;
- 5) And which were not used to fulfill requirements for another completed degree.

Q. What documentation is needed to apply for such a waiver?

A. The following:

- 1) A course transcript must be on file with the Registrar;
- 2) One copy of “Request of Waiver or Substitution Form” must be completed;
- 3) Catalog description or syllabus for the course must be provided.

Q. Are exceptions to these policies made?

A. Yes. During the admissions process or by review of the MSW Program Director of Graduate Studies, substitutions of required course work may be made, or waiver considered, for compelling academic reasons. If in doubt, the student should ask about courses that seem repetitive prior to registration. Students should not repeat course

content.

- Q. Can academic credit be given for work or life experience?
- A. No. According to the Council of Social Work Accreditation, social work course credit may not be given for life or work experiences.
- Q. When should requests for waiver, etc., be made?
- A. Course waiver and substitution forms must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies of the School of Social Work at least one month prior to the beginning of the next semester. If the issue relates to graduation, the request must be submitted by March 1st. This absolute minimum makes orderly consideration possible. Should a student submit a request after this period, he/she should anticipate that the request will be handled in a routine manner, and he/she will be responsible for all MSW program requirements until notified otherwise by the MSW Program Director of Graduate Studies.
- Q. What is the process by which a student applies for credit, waiver, or substitution of MSW course work?
- A. The student gathers documentation, and transcripts, and completes Part I of the copy of “Request for Waiver” form. The MSW Program Director of Graduate Studies then considers the request, often including other faculty members who could usefully consult on the request, and if indicated, with the student as well. The Director makes a decision and the student is notified by letter. A copy of the form and letter is placed in the student’s file.
- Q. Where do students get a “Request for Waiver” form?
- A. Copies are available at the School of Social Work from the Director of Graduate Studies of the School of Social Work or department secretary.

### MSW Program Completion Time Limits

A statute of limitations of five (5) years applies for:

Re-application to the program

Transfer of credit

Program completion\*

Students must complete the MSW program on or before a date of five (5) years from the date of matriculation or petition for an extension to the Director of Graduate Studies. The Director then considers the petition, often including other faculty members who could usefully consult on the request, and if indicated, with the student as well. The Director of Graduate Studies makes the final decision on granting an extension.

**NOTE:** Students entering the program with **advanced standing status** must complete the program in a four (4) year time limit.

## Leave of Absence

If a student wishes to take a leave of absence of one semester or more, excluding summer, a request for leave of absence must be made. A “Leave of Absence” form must be completed with the Director of Graduate Studies of the School of Social Work and it is then forwarded to the Registrar’s Office. Maximum terms for leave of absence are two (2) semesters or one academic (1) years.

Without fulfilling these conditions, a student who is not enrolled each semester of the academic year is considered to have terminated the program and must re-apply for admission to continue in the program. For more specific regulations please consult with the Registrar’s Office, 630-844-5462.

## Independent Study or Courses by Special Arrangement

Students may request to complete an independent study course on a selected topic not addressed in a regularly offered elective course. Requests must be made to the Director of Graduate Studies. In unique circumstances, students may request to complete a “Course By Special Arrangement” (CBSA). This is typically done if a student needs to complete a course during a semester in which the course is not offered. There must be extenuating circumstances for why the CBSA is requested. Requests must be made to the Director of Graduate Studies. Approval for Independent Study courses or CBSA courses is made by the Director. Students may take no more than one Independent Study course and no more than one CBSA. Priority circumstances for CBSAs include the student in their final semester of their program needing a course to graduate, or a discontinuation of a course from the catalog the student enrolled under.

## Academic Advising & Course Registration

After a student is accepted into the MSW program, the AU Graduate Academic Advisor/Registration Coordinator or the AU Online Advisor (from AU Online) functions as a first line advisor to the student monitors the student’s progress in their respective course of study and works with the Director of Graduate Studies and Director of Field Work to guarantee that the student is successful in the MSW program. The Graduate Registration Coordinator, the Director of Graduate Studies and faculty also provide students with academic information, and information specific to the University procedures.

Students should consult the program structure charts/grids for guidance when scheduling courses. Students are reminded that deviating from the structured program plan may result in a delay in completing the program since courses are usually offered only in the academic terms outlined on the program structure charts. The charts are available at the School of Social Work as well as on the website.

Be sure to speak directly to full-time faculty and your assigned academic advisor about your program plan. If you seek advice from those who are not affiliated fully with AU, you may hamper

your education. Students should seek support from those currently employed full-time in the School of Social Work. Checking the MSW Registration page in Brightspace will promote student planning and success.

## VII. School of Social Work Academic Standards

### Academic Performance

The MSW program maintains high academic standards as do all professional programs where the well-being of future clients is of concern. Any academic standards required of all graduate students in the University are binding on MSW students in the School of Social Work. Students may refer to the University catalog. Additionally, in accordance with Aurora University regulations, the School of Social Work reserves the right to maintain academic standards for admission and retention in the social work program at both the BSW and MSW levels above and beyond compliance with the general academic standards of the University.

### Academic Performance Requirements in Tracks

Tracks require specific academic and field performance expectations. For example, in the Addictions track, students are expected to maintain a “B” average in the four courses specific to the track. If a “B” average is not maintained, the student must meet with the appropriate administrators to establish a resolution plan. This plan may require repeating course work or field hours. It should be noted that a meeting with the coordinator from the track will allow the student to examine potential outcomes for decisions pertaining to the track.

### Maximum Credit Hours Per Semester

Full-time in the MSW program is defined as six semester hours or more in one semester. Summer maximum credit hours for course enrollment is 12 semester hours total. Fall and spring term maximum credit hours for course enrollment is 15 semester hours total.

### AU Course Catalog Graduate Degree Requirements

1. ~~Completion of all graduate programs is determined by the graduate program by the~~  
 5: ~~Completion of all graduate programs is determined by the graduate program by the~~

### Graduate Academic Warning and Dismissal (as stated in Graduate Catalog)

1. When a student's academic performance does not meet minimum standards, the instructor should send an academic alert to the student.
2. A student is placed on academic warning at the end of any semester when their cumulative or semester program/major GPA is less than 3.0.
3. A student, placed on academic warning for a second time (not necessarily consecutive semesters) will be academically dismissed, for poor scholarship.
4. A student, will be academically dismissed if their Term GPA is 0.00 in any given semester.
5. A graduate student, who is dismissed from Aurora University for poor scholarship may apply for readmission after one full semester away (Spring, Summer, or Fall).

6. To be considered for readmission, a new application for admission and a petition for readmission are both required to be filed no less than 30 days prior to the requested semester of return, with the Office of Admissions.
7. The petition will be reviewed by an academic program committee, comprised of the academic program director/chair and two faculty designated by the Jurisdictional Academic Dean, to make a determination based on the academic standards of the program. The academic program committee may require an in person meeting with the student as deemed necessary.
8. Should readmission be granted, the student will be readmitted on Academic Warning. Should the cumulative program GPA fall below 3.0 in a subsequent semester, the student will be dismissed from the university.
9. A student who has already had their petition for readmission denied by the academic program may appeal the decision to the Jurisdictional Academic Dean over the program. This step must be completed in the form of a written request to the Academic Dean within one calendar week after the student has been informed of the program committee decision. The Academic Dean will appoint two faculty members to serve on an ad hoc committee working to review the student's appeal. The ad hoc appeal committee will review all relevant materials and meet with the student and others, as deemed necessary. The decision of this ad hoc appeal committee is final. The ad hoc appeal committee will then report back to the program and the University Registrar regarding the final decision and its reasoning.

### Writing Standards

Professional social workers are often judged by others based upon the quality of their written work. A

poorly written professional report may suggest mistakes in other areas of work performance.

When the

the work product of a social worker is devalued, the result may be detrimental. Therefore, all written assignments are expected to meet professional standards. Work must be typed and edited. Each assignment must follow the guidelines stipulated by the instructor. The most current edition of APA guidelines will serve as a quality resource for writing and proper formatting.

### Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is expected of all students. Aurora University has no permissible cut policy. Because of the wide diversity that exists among the various courses within the university and the manner in which they are conducted, it is the responsibility of each instructor to establish and maintain his/her own policy in each of his/her classes. Each instructor is highly encouraged to maintain a record of attendance history. Students must comply with attendance requirements established by financial aid sources regardless of the attendance policy established by the instructor.

### Authorized Absences from Class Policy

A student representing the university at university-sponsored events may be granted authorized absences from class provided that the student has complied with approved procedures. Note that it is the responsibility of the student to attempt to schedule courses so as to minimize potential class absences. It is generally unacceptable for authorized absences to exceed 20% of the class meetings.

## Attendance Policy Considerations for Special Circumstances (COVID-19)

In the event that CDC endorsed community health concerns or other extraordinary circumstances cause the university to transition to remote learning in part or total, the following attendance policy will apply. Synchronous class sessions attended remotely (via Zoom or other means) are treated as in-person class sessions for the purpose of attendance. Appropriate attendance for these class sessions will require that the student's device camera is on with the student clearly visible. The attendance policy listed in the course syllabus will remain in force. Visibility of the student shall serve as evidence of attendance during the remote instruction period.

1. Isolation/Quarantine – In the event that a student is experiencing symptoms, is awaiting test results, has been confirmed to have been exposed to someone who tested positive, or has tested positive for COVID-19, she or he must isolate/quarantine at home or in university-designated space for the duration of time prescribed by the CDC or relevant regulatory authorities. During this time, the student may attend class via Zoom and engage remotely in learning activities as she or he are able, and if the class structure allows. Should the student be too ill to attend via Zoom, or the class structure prohibit such remote attendance or engagement, the class sessions missed shall be excused. A student may return to class from isolation/quarantine when cleared by the university to do so.
2. Documentation – Should a physician's recommended isolation/quarantine time exceed that prescribed by the CDC or other relevant regulatory authorities, documentation must be provided to the university. Once provided, the Special Circumstance Attendance Policy will honor the physician's recommendation in the determination of excused absences.
3. Make-up Work – At minimum, a student whose absences are excused shall be able to make up all work and assignments missed during their illness. Faculty members may authorize additional time at their discretion.
4. Extended Absence for Illness – A student and faculty members may request an I (Incomplete) grade if the student was passing the course prior to the first COVID-19 related absence. Such requests are subject to customary administrative approvals. The university completion deadline for the I (Incomplete) grade stipulations shall apply.

## Final Exam Attendance

All traditional and remote classes are required to meet during the assigned final examination period at the end of the semester as this is considered to be part of the required meeting time for the course, with the exception of online students who engage in scheduled learning activities throughout the last week of class and will not meet at a specific time for a final exam or activity. Alternative testing during finals week is provided through the Academic Support Center for students who receive such accommodations through the Disability Resource Office and for students who receive permission to take the exam after the assigned final examination period due to illness or other emergency.

## Professional Conduct in the MSW Program

### Behavior in Classroom

Students in a professional program should conduct themselves as professionals in relation to the

class

session and assignments. Students are assessed not only for meeting basic performance criteria on assignments described in course syllabi, but also on their ability to relate to others and their personal and professional behavior. Minimizing distractions while attending a class session is expected.

#### Professional Conduct

Students in a professional program should conduct themselves as professionals in relation to the class

session and assignments. It is not acceptable to be late for classes except in unusual circumstances. Respect for the opinions of others is expected. Opinions expressed should be supported by data or carefully reasoned argument. Asking questions per se, or offering opinions that do not reflect the readings assigned for the class do not constitute “prepared participation.” Any use of consciousness altering substances before, during, or between class sessions obviously impairs learning and is unacceptable. Frequent lateness or professional unbecoming class conduct is likely to result in a lowered grade.

#### Dress Code

Students are expected to respect and adhere to the dress code of the classroom, University, and field placement. The appropriate dress may range from casual, business attire to business casual. The George Williams School of Social Work expects students to wear modest and professional attire while working at the field agency (internship setting) and when representing the field of social work.

#### Grade Appeal Policy

A student has the right to appeal a course grade if they feel that the grade had been assigned capriciously. Capricious grading is the only rationale for a grade appeal. A student may not appeal a grade based on a disagreement about grading criteria or concerns about the judgment of the faculty member. the students had been led to reasonably expect would be used to judge their work.

#### **Procedures for Student Use in Appealing Allegedly Capricious Term Grades for Students**

- a) The following procedures are available only for review of alleged capricious grading, and not
- b) for review of the judgment of an instructor in assessing the quality of a student’s work.
- c) **Capricious grading, as that term is used herein, is limited to one or more of the following:**
  1. The assignment of a grade on some basis other than performance in the course
  2. The assignment of a grade to a particular student by different standards than were applied to other students in that course
  3. The assignment of a grade using standards other than those that the students had been led to reasonably expect would be used to judge their work
- d) The assessment of the quality of a student’s academic performance is one of the major
- e) professional responsibilities of University faculty members and is solely and properly



their responsibility. It is essential for the standards of the academic programs at Aurora University and the integrity of the degrees conferred by this University that the professional judgments of faculty members are not subject to pressures or other interference from any source.

- f) It is necessary, however, that any term grade be based on evidence of the student's performance in a course, that the student have access to the evidence, that the instructor be willing to explain and interpret the evidence to the student, and that a grade be determined in accordance with announced guidelines. These guidelines should be announced in and put in writing for each class at the beginning of each term.

### **Appeal Procedures**

- a) A student who believes his/her term grade is capricious may seek clarification and, where appropriate, redress, as follows:
- b) The student shall confer with the instructor, informing the instructor of questions concerning the grade, and seeking to understand fully the grounds and procedures the
- c) instructor has used in determining the grade. The aim of such a conference is to reach mutual understanding about the grade, the process by which it was assigned, and to correct errors, if any, in the grade. The student should do this within two weeks of receiving his/her final grade.
- d) If, after consultation with the instructor, the student believes that a grade is capricious, the student shall submit a petition in writing via Petition to Appeal Course Grade (from the Forms and Resources page of the Aurora.edu webpage) to the Director of
- e) Graduate Studies who shall consult and advise with both the instructor and student separately or together, in an effort to reach an understanding and resolution of the matter.
- f) If Steps One or Two do not resolve the problem, the student may submit a petition in writing to the Dean of the College of Education and Social Work. This petition must be submitted to the Dean no later than the end of the fourth week of the term following that for which the grade is being appealed, excluding the summer term.
- g) The student shall request a meeting with the Dean and shall present evidence that the grade is capricious as defined above, and shall present the student's arguments which substantiate his/her conclusions. The Dean shall refer the petition to the instructor and secure from the instructor a response in writing, setting forth the instructor's position on the matter.
- h) On the basis of a consideration of the student's petition and the instructor's response, the Dean shall conduct an inquiry which shall include a meeting with the student and the instructor
- i) separately or together and ascertain and consider relevant facts. (The instructor and/or student may bring an advocate if he/she so chooses. If an advocate is to be present at a meeting, the Dean must be informed prior to the meeting.)

### **Grade Appeal Decision**

In response to a grade appeal, the Dean of the College of Education and Social Work shall make one of these decisions:

1. That the grade was not assigned capriciously and shall stand as assigned.
2. That the grade was assigned capriciously and should be changed. The Dean shall then, as a



result of his/her consideration, assign a grade different from the grade decided to be capricious. The Dean shall authorize the Registrar to make the grade change and such a decision shall be final.

## **VIII. School of Social Work Professional Standards**

### **Professional/Ethical Behavior**

Professional social work education requires high standards of academic, personal, and professional conduct. The educational program at both the undergraduate (BSW) and graduate levels (MSW) requires the development of ethics and values as well as knowledge and skills. Students are expected to exhibit values and behaviors that are compatible with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics which regulates not only professional conduct in relation to clients, but also in relation to colleagues.

The School of Social Work (SSW) recognizes that professional competencies and conduct are not always measurable by academic achievement. The SSW reserves the right to make decisions regarding admission and retention of student status based on high standards of personal and professional conduct demonstrated both in and out of the classroom. Students are evaluated on standards of personal and professional behavior, adherence to ethical standards, and on the basis of civil and criminal records. Students may be suspended or dismissed from the program if an evaluation outcome does not meet professional standards.

Because social work education involves a significant internship experience, and preparation for helping vulnerable populations, student evaluations will honor the rights of students, as well as the rights of clients, and others to whom students relate in a professional role.

### **Criteria for Professional/Ethical Behavior**

#### **Ethical Behavior**

The student is required to know the contents of, and is bound by, the University policies and regulations dealing with conduct presented in the Student Handbook. All MSW students, at all campus locations and program modalities are held to the Code of Conduct defined and described within the Aurora University Student Handbook (The A-Book). Students in violation of the University Code of Conduct are subject to enrollment determination made by the AU Dean of Students in consultation with Aurora Campus Safety and other necessary administrators and staff.

Students are required to know the contents of, and are bound by, The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). Social work students are also bound by the School of Social Work's specific provisions below:

#### **Misrepresentation of Self**

Fraud or misrepresentation includes, but is not limited to, false or misleading statements on the application, during the admissions interview, and/or on the financial aid application. Falsifying degrees or professional credentials is also considered fraud or misrepresentation of self. Such behavior shall constitute grounds for dismissal.

### Alleged Law Violations

Any student charged with fraud, malpractice, a felony, or misdemeanor, may be refused or revoked registration in field instruction activities and classes without prejudice until an official determination has been made by the University.

### Conviction for a Felony or Misdemeanor

Any student who has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor for conduct that may be a threat to the well-being of others shall not be admitted to field instruction, classes or activities until there is clear evidence of rehabilitation. Serving a sentence alone does not necessarily constitute evidence of rehabilitation. The faculty of the School of Social Work will be the sole judge of rehabilitation. Following a conviction, the student shall be informed in writing of the criteria that the University will use in determining evidence of rehabilitation.

### Inappropriate Behavior that Would Interfere with Performing Professional Duties

Any student who engages in inappropriate behavior that would interfere with performing professional duties and could potentially threaten the well-being of clients, including violent behavior, behavioral indications of substance abuse, or having indicators of physical or psychiatric disorders shall not be admitted to field instruction. Any behavior which may have been influenced by a student's mental state (regardless of the ultimate evaluation) or use of drugs or alcoholic beverages will not in any way limit the responsibility of the student for the consequences of his/her actions. Dean of the College of Education and Social Work, Dean of AU Online, Dean of Students, Director of Graduate Studies and/or the Field Director may document any behaviors using reporting methods aligned with university protocols.

## School of Social Work Pledge

When students enter the MSW program, they receive the *DSW MSW BSW Pledge*. This Pledge document broadly articulates the behavioral expectations students are required to adhere to throughout their programs of study – in the classroom, on field trips, during the internship, and in any other academic or professional setting. The Pledge follows.



School of Social Work  
DSW, MSW & BSW  
Pledge

All programs in the School of Social Work (SSW) are grounded in Aurora University's commitment to integrity, citizenship, continuous learning, and excellence. The social work degrees are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and are dedicated to advancing quality clinical specialization education. The curriculum is designed to include an emphasis on the mission of AU and the SSW, CSWE Competencies and Dimensions, the National Association of Social Work (NASW), Grand Challenges of Social Work, and the American Social Work Board (ASWB) Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.

This Pledge document broadly articulates the behavioral expectations students are required to adhere to throughout their programs of study – in the classroom, on field trips, during the internship, and in any other academic or professional setting. By understanding these guidelines and following them inside and outside of the classroom, students will develop human capital relating to the knowledge and practice of professional behavior. Accumulating this human capital will contribute positively to students’ professional reputations – one vitally important component of career success.

Students pledge to **behave ethically**. Specifically, students pledge to:

- Adhere to Aurora University’s [Code of Academic Integrity](#) and the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Understand the components of the disposition form.
- Follow the policies and procedures of the internship site as they relate to the ethical conduct of interns.
- Follow all ethical practices as outlined by appropriate professional and disciplinary associations.
- Bring ethical concerns to the attention of appropriate personnel in a timely manner.

Students pledge to **be prepared, respectful, and attentive**. Specifically, students pledge to:

- Attend and be on time for all professional events.
  - Professional events include class sessions, professional development activities, meetings, interviews, and internship workdays.
  - Avoidable absences or tardiness are not to occur. Please do not schedule vacations or other non-emergency appointments during the semester.
  - Absences or tardiness due to sickness or other emergency circumstances are to be communicated to the appropriate supervisor (e.g., professor or internship site supervisor) as soon as possible, ideally in advance.
  - Students are not to leave class, professional development events, or their internship workdays early except due to emergency circumstances, having discussed the situation with their instructors or supervisors in advance if possible.

Be prepared and engaged in professional activities.

- Preparation requires the thoughtful completion of all tasks assigned by the instructor or supervisor prior to the deadline.
- Engagement means that students actively participate by taking notes when appropriate, contribute to class discussions and meetings and shoulder an equal share of the workload when in a team environment.
- Follow communication etiquette
  - Students are to communicate with instructors and supervisors using the methods, format, and style identified by those individuals.
  - During classes, professional development events, and internships, students are to refrain from using electronic devices except in emergencies or when used for professional purposes.
  - Students are to use critical thinking skills to determine the best course of

communication and will allow for appropriate response times to any inquiries of faculty, staff, or fellow students

- Be respectful in all settings
  - Students are to recognize the validity of diverging viewpoints and treat everyone with tact and courtesy.
  - Students are not to use language or behave in a manner that may be perceived as discriminatory in any respect.
- Dress professionally
  - The norms of professional dress vary by setting. Students are to identify and adhere to these norms as they are defined in each setting.

**Students pledge to act with integrity at all times, but especially with respect to internships.**

Specifically, students pledge to:

- Actively participate in the internship placement process.
  - Although Aurora University will assist students in navigating the internship placement process, the student is solely responsible for securing an internship that meets the approval of the university.
- Attend scheduled interviews or cancel more than twenty-four hours prior to the appointment.
- Commit themselves to an internship once an offer has been accepted. Students are to terminate the internship search once an internship has been accepted.
- Satisfy the duties and responsibilities of the internship as agreed to by the student, internship site, and university
  - Except due to egregious circumstances, students are to remain in their internships for the duration of the period agreed to by the student, site, and university.
  - Students should not terminate their internships before the end of the semester without prior approval from the Dean, Director of Graduate Studies, Director Field Education, Internship Coordinator, and Site Supervisor.

This Pledge does not replace or supersede state or federal law or other Aurora University policies. Nevertheless, students **recognize and agree** that their failure to abide by the preceding might result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the program at the discretion of the Dean and Program Director/Chair. Your signature is an expected behavior to remain in good standing in the program.

### Student Confidentiality

The School of Social Work maintains an academic file on each MSW student. This file contains admissions materials; academic records (transcripts, grades); formal communication between the Dean, Director of Graduate Studies, faculty mentor, and the student; as well as field evaluations.

The program honors and complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act 20 USC Sec. 1232g which requires academic institutions to provide access to academic records to the student, and prohibits the release of any information to another party unless a signed

authorization has been obtained.

### **Confidentiality of Admissions Materials**

Once the School of Social Work has the completed admissions file for a student, no materials within

the file will be provided to the student or other parties. Included with this material is the student's Statement of Purpose, official transcripts, and letters of recommendation. Letters of recommendation will not be released to students even with signed permission from the person who completed the recommendation.

### **Non-Discrimination and Affirmative Action**

Every aspect of the program's organization and implementation is conducted without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, ability/disability, or political or sexual orientation. The faculty assure the enrichment of the educational experience by reflecting racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity and equity throughout the curriculum in all aspects of the program.

A complaint of program non-compliance with the Non-Discrimination and/or Affirmative Action policy should be directed to the Director of Graduate Studies of the School of Social Work.

## **Aurora University School of Social Work Disposition Policy**

### **Disposition Information**

The ultimate goal of the disposition process is awareness surrounding the progress toward becoming an exemplary social worker. The disposition framework is aligned to the CSWE and NASW standards, as well as Aurora University's Core Values. In order to support the development of dispositions, faculty and staff members may evaluate their students using this universal assessment. If a faculty/staff member issues a disposition form of "alert", the student will be notified and required to attend a disposition conference with the referring faculty/staff member. A student who receives a disposition of "concern" may be required to attend a disposition conference.

The School of Social Work faculty and staff will utilize the disposition form when concerns pertaining to behaviors arise. The instructor or staff member of record will submit a completed disposition form to the administrative assistant in the School of Social Work to be saved electronically.

### **Dispositions Criteria**

#### **Acceptable Dispositions:**

Form indicates acceptable dispositions on all indicators on the disposition form.

#### **Disposition Concern:**

Form indicates a rating of "concern" for one or more indicators on the disposition form.

**Disposition Alert:** Form(s) indicate a rating of "alert" for one or more indicators on the disposition form. A disposition conference will be conducted.

### **Disposition Conference**

The purpose of the conference will be to review the disposition report issued by the reporting faculty/staff

member. The conference will be attended by both the student and the reporting faculty/staff member. The reporting faculty person will arrange the conference with the student and document the outcomes of the conference.

A remediation plan may be developed as a result of disposition conference. A remediation plan will outline the expected behaviors in all settings, including, but not limited to AU classrooms, field experience settings, email/phone/face-to-face communication with faculty/staff, administration, and other students. A timeline will be established to check the progress of the candidate toward the achievement of the goals. The remediation plan will be monitored by the reporting faculty person.

### **Student Appeal Process for Disposition Conference Outcome**

Students have the opportunity to appeal the disposition form within fourteen days of meeting with the faculty member presenting the disposition form, by contacting the following university personnel in the listed order:

1. Reporting Faculty/Staff
2. Department Chairperson
3. Dean of the College of Education and Social Work

### **Multiple Disposition Conference policy**

When a student has attended 2 disposition conferences in the course of their program of study, and/or is

not successful in the achievement of adequate progress, a Student Review (SR) will be scheduled. Any outcomes from this review will become a part of the candidate's permanent record in the School of Social Work.

### **Guidelines for Online Course Engagement**

*Aurora University is a student-centered university that strives to provide exceptional learning experiences for all students. To that end, faculty and students are strongly encouraged to be fully present and engaged in all courses by doing the following:*

1. *Log into courses at least four days a week;*
2. *Submit all assignments in a timely manner to meet deadlines;*
3. *Respond to faculty emails in a professional manner;*
4. *Participate in online discussions as an active and professional student;*
5. *Attend to feedback from classmates and faculty;*
6. *Provide informative posts, messages, each week that facilitate learning and promote critical thinking and engagement;*

7. *Attend optional synchronous events, when and where appropriate (Note: Student attendance at synchronous events is always optional);*
8. *Recognize that online learning is a demanding learning format that must be taken seriously; and*
9. *Understand that students enrolled in online courses are responsible to have consistent access to technology that ensures their completion of assignments and participation in the course.*

### Problem-Solving Policies and Field Placement Termination Processes

The field experience can be one that highlights growth opportunities for social workers in training. As the space where theory meets practice, it is not uncommon for students or field instructors to identify issues or concerns regarding the field placement. These issues may be related to student performance, expectations of the field instructor or learning experiences provided by the site. It is the goal of the SSW Field Department to address these concerns early and often, to allow for maximized learning opportunities for all involved. The intent is that initiating a problem-solving plan is not to be seen as a punitive action, but should be used as a tool to enhance the efficacy of the field experience. As concerns come up, it is vitally important that they be communicated as quickly as possible to the field liaison, so supports can be implemented to best avoid field placement interruptions. All concerns, particularly relating to student safety and/or unprofessional or unethical practice behavior, should be communicated in a timely fashion; failure to do so will result in a thorough assessment of the situation by the SSW Field Department, and may jeopardize field instruction opportunities for the parties involved.

It is recommended that students and/or field instructors follow the following steps when issues arise:

1. Contact the field liaison of the issue/concern as soon as possible.
2. Field Liaison and/or SSW Field Team will initiate an assessment of the situation:
  - a. For concerns related to safety, ethical violations, or legal involvement, the SSW Field Director will facilitate remediation processes and any applicable University responses (see below for student review policy)
  - b. For any other concerns, the field liaison will assess to determine the applicable problem-solving steps to employ
- c. Based on field team member assessment, remediation strategies will be initiated, including but not limited to:
  1. Communication with site/student to discuss concerns
  2. Completion of a SSW Remediation Form
  3. Scheduling of a Student Review
  4. Termination of Field Placement
  5. Dismissal from the Aurora University Social Work Program

3. Remediation processes that result in the completion of a SSW Remediation Form should specify measurable plans of action to improve the field placement experience.
  - a. The School of Social Work faculty and staff will utilize the disposition form when concerns pertaining to behaviors arise. The instructor or staff member of record will submit the disposition forms to the Field Director in the School of Social Work to be saved electronically. The problem-solving plan should include a SSW Remediation Form that clearly states the specific social work competency or ethical principle being addressed, time frames for which improvement is expected, the party or parties who should show improvement, and the consequences should improvement not occur.
  - b. A conference will be held to review the disposition report issued by the reporting faculty/staff member. The conference will be attended by the student, supervisor (if applicable) and the reporting faculty/staff member. The reporting faculty/staff member will arrange the conference with the student and document the outcomes of the conference. The remediation plan will outline the expected behaviors in all settings, including, but not limited to AU classrooms, field experience settings, email/phone/face-to-face communication with faculty/staff, administration and other students. A timeline will be established to check the progress of the candidate toward the achievement of the goals. The remediation plan will be monitored by the reporting faculty/staff member person.
  - c. Students have the opportunity to appeal the disposition form within fourteen (14) days by contacting the following university personnel in the listed order:
    1. Reporting Faculty/Staff
    2. Department Chairperson /Director
    3. Dean of the School of Social Work
5. Remediation processes that result in a student review should follow the student review policy of the School of Social Work:
 

On occasion, when a serious concern about academic, personal, or professional performance related to any of the program's standards and/or policies has been identified by a faculty member or field supervisor, at any point in the program, and it is deemed a concern warranting immediate attention, the faculty member reports to the Field Director. The Field Director informs the student that a concern has been identified, seeks information from relevant parties (faculty, Field Coordinators, Program Directors, Academic Support Center, etc.), thoughtfully appraises the student's situation and assesses whether the situation warrants a Student Review. The purpose of a Student Review is to either design a helping plan for continuance in the social work program or to make a determination regarding continuance in the program, such as suspension or dismissal from the School of Social Work. A Student Review is scheduled as needed, and is chaired by the Graduate Program Director, Field Director, or a designee. A Student Review Committee is formed which consists of the faculty who are current instructors for the student, other faculty members, administrators (Field Director, Specialization Coordinator, etc.) and University personnel (e.g., Academic Support Center) deemed relevant to the Student Review process.

The student will be notified in writing of the commencement of the student review, the nature of the student review, giving the date, time, and place, the facts and occurrences that have given rise to concern, the nature of the student review, the student's right to attend (and bring an advocate or person for support), the student's right to bring to the committee's attention relevant information concerning these facts, and occurrences that



the student wishes the committee to consider. In cases where the committee deems it appropriate, the committee may request the student to have his/her physician, psychiatrist, psychologist or other provider of professional services meet with the committee to discuss the student's capabilities, and/or may request the student to permit an examination by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist or other provider of professional services selected by the School, whose report and/or opinion concerning the student's capabilities will be shared with the student. The student may submit additional information in response. If necessary, the Committee shall continue the conference at a later date for the purpose of obtaining additional relevant information.

Once the committee has completed its review, it will notify the student in writing by email of its determination along with a summary of the student review meeting. The determination can take any of the following forms: (1) a written plan establishing the conditions and requirements that the student must meet to continue in the program; (2) a temporary suspension of the student from the program, and; (3) a determination to discontinue the student from the program.

If the student wishes to challenge the determination of the Student Review Committee, the student has a right to appeal to the Dean. A written request for the appeal must be submitted to the Dean of the School of Social Work within four weeks of the student review. The written request should identify the student's grievance(s).

6. Follow up with the Problem-Solving Plan is the responsibility of all parties involved in the creation of said plan. If improvement is not recognized within the outlined time frame, an escalation of the issue, including potential termination of the field placement, may be made.

### Student Review Policy

On occasion, when a serious concern about academic, personal, or professional performance related to

any of the program's standards and/or policies have been identified by a faculty member or field supervisor, at any point in the program, and it is deemed a concern warranting immediate attention, the faculty member reports to the Director of Graduate Studies. The Director of Graduate Studies informs the student that a concern has been identified, seeks information from relevant parties (faculty, Field Director, Academic Support Center, etc.), thoughtfully appraises the student's situation and assesses whether the situation warrants a Student Review.

The purpose of a Student Review is to either design a helping plan for continuance in the social work program or to make a determination regarding continuance in the program, such as suspension or dismissal from the School of Social Work.

A Student Review is scheduled as needed and is chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies, Field Director, or a designee. A Student Review Committee is formed which consists of the faculty who are current instructors for the student, other faculty members, administrators (Field Director, Track Coordinator, etc.) and University personnel (e.g., Academic Support Center) deemed relevant to the Student Review process.

The student will be notified in writing of the commencement of the student review, the nature of the student review, giving the date, time, and place, the facts, and occurrences that have given

rise to concern, the nature of the student review, the student's right to attend (and bring an advocate or person for support), the student's right to bring to the committee's attention relevant information concerning these facts, and occurrences that the student wishes the committee to consider.

In cases where the committee deems it appropriate, the committee may request the student to have his/her physician, psychiatrist, psychologist or another provider of professional services meet with the committee to discuss the student's capabilities, and/or may request the student to permit an examination by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist or other provider of professional services selected by the School, whose report and/or opinion concerning the student's capabilities will be shared with the student. The student may submit additional information in response. If necessary, the Committee shall continue the conference at a later date for the purpose of obtaining additional relevant information.

Once the committee has completed its review, it will notify the student in writing by Aurora University e-mail of its determination along with a summary of the student review meeting. The determination can take any of the following forms: (1) a written plan establishing the conditions and requirements that the student must meet to continue in the program; (2) a temporary suspension of the student from the program, and; (3) a determination to discontinue the student from the program.

If the student wishes to challenge the determination of the Student Review Committee, the student has a right to appeal to the Dean. A written request for the appeal must be submitted to the Dean within four weeks of the student review. The written request should identify the student's grievance(s).

### Program Termination

Students who are not permitted to continue within the MSW program are informed of such by Aurora University e-mail. At the time of suspension or dismissal, the student will be administratively dropped from current and future courses in the MSW program.

#### **Termination Appeals**

Students who have been terminated from the MSW program can appeal such a decision only on the basis

of alleged "capriciousness." The term "capricious" is limited to one or more of the following:

1. Termination on the basis other than academic or professional performance;
2. Termination on more exacting or demanding standards than were applied to other students in the program;
3. A substantial departure from the standards and procedures contained in the *MSW Policy Handbook*.

Appeals based upon capriciousness are made to the Director. The request for appeal must be in writing, identifying the student's grievance(s). Failing a mutually satisfactory resolution at the level of the Director, the student may appeal the determination in writing to the Dean.

#### **Readmission to the MSW Program**

A graduate student who leaves or withdraws from the MSW program; is dropped from the program for poor scholarship or unprofessional behavior; or is terminated for lack of registration or application for a leave of absence, and later decides to complete the program, must apply for readmission to the program. Prior records will be re-evaluated and the student, if readmitted, will be held responsible for completing all current degree requirements.

Courses taken more than five-years prior to the reapplication time will need to be retaken. Internships more than five years old will need to be retaken as well.

### **Handbook Terms of Issue**

Every attempt is made to permit students to graduate under the degree requirements in effect when they

entered Aurora University and the School of Social Work provided that enrollment is continuous from the time of matriculation until graduation. However, the School of Social Work reserves the right to modify academic requirements, curricula, and/or course offerings at any time without prior notice and without incurring obligation. At the same time, the program attempts to enable students to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic affairs.

## **IX. Students' Responsibilities to Participate in Academic and Student Affairs Policymaking**

All MSW students have a responsibility to engage in the AU community through regular appraisal and attention to policies, practices, and procedures that support the functioning of the community. Students remain informed of such standards and updates through review of handbooks, catalogs, and their student emails. Students are expected to model professional ethical behavior, as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics, sections 5.01 and 3.07, by responding to administrative contexts that misalign with social work values by communicating with program personnel about their concerns. Students also are encouraged to participate actively in providing feedback that informs academic and student affairs policies through the following feedback qualitative and quantitative methods: 1) Course Evaluations; 2) Program and University Surveys; 3) Participation in focus groups and/or town hall meetings; 4) Communication with a student representation within the SSW Student Advisory Committee. This policy appears in the MSW Student Handbook.

### **Petitioning for Program Policy Changes**

This policy states that students are to begin their advocacy for a policy change by communicating directly with the MSW program Director. Students can request modifications related to academic policies and/or student affairs in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies. Once a policy change is requested, the faculty and administration of the School considers the request. A recommendation regarding the proposed policy change or institution is made by the full faculty to the Dean of the College of Education and Social Work. Should an appeal be made, the administrative team will meet with the students. The Dean of the College of Education and Social Work, who then shares the information and final decision about any policy change for the School of Social Work with the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Enrollment Team.

## **X. Aurora University Academic & Professional Standards**

Please refer to the University Student Handbook (A Book) for all University policies related to academic and professional standards, including (but not limited to):

- Academic and Social Expectations
- Statement of Academic Integrity
- Zero Tolerance Policy
- Statement of Discrimination and Sexual Harassment
- Learning Disabilities Policy
- Privacy Act of 1974 as Amended
- Policy for Grade Appeals
- Graduate Grading System

## ACADEMIC SUPPORT

### **Academic Support Center – Aurora Campus**

The ASC offers free professional writing support for all courses at all levels. Math and science tutoring for specific undergraduate courses is also available. These services are available to all registered AU students at all locations. The instruction and support provided is intended to enhance student learning. To schedule a writing appointment, you may do so at

<https://aurora.mywconline.com/>, or you may contact the ASC via the web at <http://aurora.edu/asc> or call (630-844-5520). To access math and science tutoring for select undergraduate courses, students can access [www.Tutor.com](http://www.Tutor.com) via their Brightspace course shell.

Online students may access [www.Tutor.com](http://www.Tutor.com) for their academic support needs.

### **Academic Support Center – University Center at MCC Campus**

University Center at MCC campus students can access free professional writing support for all courses at all levels via the Aurora campus ASC. The instruction and support provided is intended to enhance student learning. To schedule an appointment to receive tutoring and writing assistance remotely through the Academic Support Center at AU, please go to

<https://aurora.mywconline.com/>.

For questions, contact the Academic Support Center at <http://aurora.edu/asc>

To access math and science tutoring for select undergraduate courses, students can access [www.Tutor.com](http://www.Tutor.com) via their Brightspace course shell.

## Phillips Library

The library is the premier destination for scholarly, credible sources. High quality sources increase the likelihood of producing a high-quality paper. Scholarly and popular journals as well as eBooks can be located through the AU library website (<http://aurora.edu/library>). Librarians are a valuable resource; please do not hesitate to ask for assistance with any research questions. They are available for all students by chat at (<http://aurora.libanswers.com/>), text (630-796-7615), phone (630-844-5437), or by an online appointment with a librarian

<http://libguides.aurora.edu/appointments>. Services for University Center at MCC campus students are available through the Aurora campus

## ACADEMIC REGULATIONS\*

### **Code of Academic Integrity**

Aurora University's core values include integrity and ethical behavior. A community of learners, Aurora University students and faculty share responsibility for academic honesty and integrity. The University expects students to do their own academic work. In addition, it expects active participation and equitable contributions of students involved in group assignments. Aurora University's Code of Academic Integrity (henceforth, the Code) prohibits the following dishonest and unethical behaviors, regardless of intent.

- **Cheating.** Cheating is obtaining, using or attempting to use unauthorized materials or information (for example; notes, texts, or study aids) or help from another person (for example looking at another student's test paper, or talking with him/her during an exam), in any work submitted for evaluation for academic credit. This includes exams, quizzes, laboratory assignments, papers and/or other assignments. Other examples include altering a graded work after it has been returned, then submitting the work for re-grading; or submitting identical or highly similar papers for credit in more than one course without prior permission from the course instructors.
- **Fabrication.** Fabrication is unauthorized falsification, invention or copying of data, falsification of information, citations, or bibliographic references in any academic course work (for example, falsifying references in a paper); altering, forging, or falsifying any academic record or other University document.
- **Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is representing someone else's work (including their words and ideas) as one's own or providing materials for such a representation, (for example, submitting a paper or other work that is in whole or part the work of another, failing to cite references, presenting material verbatim or paraphrased that is not acknowledged and cited).
- **Obtaining an Unfair Advantage.** This is (a) stealing, reproducing, circulating or otherwise gaining access to examination materials before the time authorized by the instructor; (b) stealing, destroying, defacing, or concealing library materials with the purpose of depriving others of their use; (c) intentionally obstructing or interfering with another student's academic work; or (d) otherwise undertaking activity with the purpose of creating or obtaining an unfair academic advantage over other students' academic work.
- **Unauthorized Access to computerized records or systems.** This is unauthorized review of computerized academic or administrative records or systems; viewing or altering computer records; modifying computer programs or systems; releasing or dispensing information gained via unauthorized access; or interfering with the use or availability of computer systems of information.
- **Facilitating academic dishonesty.** This is helping or attempting to assist another commit an act of academic dishonesty in violation of this Code (for example, allowing another to copy from one's test or allowing others to use or represent one's work as their own).

### **Classroom Conduct Policy**

Students enrolled in AU courses have the right to learn in an environment where all individuals are treated equitably and with respect. Behaviors at a physical campus, in a remote setting, or in an online learning classroom, or at an internship/clinical placement, that interfere with the learning experience are not permitted. Disruptive or disrespectful behaviors will be referred to the Graduate Program Director and the Dean of the College of Education and Social Work. for consideration of further action, up to and including dismissal from the institution in serious instances.

### **Attendance Policy**

Regular class attendance is expected of all students. Aurora University has no permissible cut policy. Because of the wide diversity that exists among the various courses within the university and the manner in which they are conducted, it is the responsibility of each instructor to establish and maintain his/her own policy in each of his/her classes. Each instructor is highly encouraged to maintain a record of attendance history. Students must comply with attendance requirements established by financial aid sources regardless of the attendance policy established by the instructor.

### **Authorized Absences from Class Policy**

A student representing the university at university-sponsored events may be granted authorized absences from class provided that the student has complied with approved procedures. Note that it is the responsibility of the student to attempt to schedule courses so as to minimize potential class absences. It is generally unacceptable for authorized absences to exceed 20% of the class meetings.

### **Attendance Policy Considerations for Special Circumstances (COVID-19)**

In the event that CDC endorsed community health concerns or other extraordinary circumstances cause the university to transition to remote learning in part or total, the following attendance policy will apply. Synchronous class sessions attended remotely (via Zoom or other means) are treated as in-person class sessions for the purpose of attendance. Appropriate attendance for these class sessions will require that the student's device camera is on with the student clearly visible. The attendance policy listed in the course syllabus will remain in force. Visibility of the student shall serve as evidence of attendance during the remote instruction period.

5. Isolation/Quarantine – In the event that a student is experiencing symptoms, is awaiting test results, has been confirmed to have been exposed to someone who tested positive, or has tested positive for COVID-19, she or he must isolate/quarantine at home or in university-designated space for the duration of time prescribed by the CDC or relevant regulatory authorities. During this time, the student may attend class via Zoom and engage remotely in learning activities as she or he are able, and if the class structure allows. Should the student be too ill to attend via Zoom, or the class structure prohibit such remote attendance or engagement, the class sessions missed shall be excused. A student may return to class from isolation/quarantine when cleared by the university to do so.
6. Documentation – Should a physician's recommended isolation/quarantine time exceed that prescribed by the CDC or other relevant regulatory authorities, documentation must be provided

to the university. Once provided, the Special Circumstance Attendance Policy will honor the physician's recommendation in the determination of excused absences.

7. Make-up Work – At minimum, a student whose absences are excused shall be able to make up all work and assignments missed during their illness. Faculty members may authorize additional time at their discretion.
8. Extended Absence for Illness – A student and faculty members may request an I (Incomplete) grade if the student was passing the course prior to the first COVID-19 related absence. Such requests are subject to customary administrative approvals. The university completion deadline for the I (Incomplete) grade stipulations shall apply.

### Disability Statement

Aurora University is committed to providing equal access for students with documented disabilities. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) students must contact the AU Disability Resource Office. Visit their website at <http://www.aurora.edu/dro> in order to initiate a request for accommodations. More information can be obtained by emailing [disabilityresources@aurora.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@aurora.edu).

### **Electronic Devices**

Students are asked to limit use as to avoid disturbing the learning environment. The instructor reserves the right to further limit use if, in their opinion it is interfering with the orderly functioning of the class. Please refer to the specific policy mandated by your instructor.

### Final Exam Sessions

All traditional and remote classes are required to meet during the assigned final examination period at the end of the semester as this is considered to be part of the required meeting time for the course, with the exception of online students who engage in scheduled learning activities throughout the last week of class and will not meet at a specific time for a final exam or activity. Alternative testing during finals week is provided through the Academic Support Center for students who receive such accommodations through the Disability Resource Office and for students who receive permission to take the exam after the assigned final examination period due to illness or other emergency.

*\* Please refer to the Aurora University Catalog for additional information regarding academic regulations and requirements.*

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Students are encouraged to be aware of measures that Aurora University has taken to create a safe learning environment, as well as their own role in emergency preparedness efforts. All classrooms and labs have deadbolt locks installed in entry doors, and university buildings can be placed into a lockdown status. AU has also installed evacuation maps along with emergency response guides in each classroom and building on campus. Maps include the floor plan of that particular building floor; building name and address; fire evacuation routes; and severe weather safety zones. To help

prepare for emergency situations, please make sure to review these maps and guides regularly. As the university puts in place other safety procedures, the campus community will be notified.

Aurora University follows the **Run, Hide, Fight protocol** in the event of an active shooter. Run, Hide, Fight is the leading protocol followed across college campuses and is endorsed by both local and federal law enforcement agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security. Run, Hide, Fight provides the campus community with clear, actionable steps:

**RUN** - If there is a clear, accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate.

- Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Help others escape, if possible.
- Follow the instructions of any police officers.

**HIDE** - If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide

- Your hiding place should...
  - Be out view.
  - Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (Example – an office with a closed and locked door, behind a file cabinet, or a copier).
  - Not trap you, or restrict your options for movement (for a fast escape).
- You should...
  - Silence your cell phone (including vibrate mode) and remain quiet.
  - Lock and barricade the door.
  - Turn off the lights in the room and remain calm and quiet.

**FIGHT** - As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the shooter.

- You should...
  - Act as aggressively as possible against armed intruder. Yell and scream.
  - Improvise weapons or throw items at the armed intruder
  - Commit to your actions . . . your life depends on it.

At Aurora University, everyone is responsible for creating a safe environment, so it is important for students to report suspicious or threatening objects, people, or conditions to Campus Public Safety. At Aurora campus, call 630-844-5450 or 911 for an emergency; in non-emergency situations, call 630-844-6140 or x6140 (if calling from on campus). At the University Center at MCC campus, call 815-338-2131 or 911 for an emergency.

In the event of campus classes or offices being closed due to inclement weather, or an emergency situation affecting the campus, AU has an emergency alert notification system that will send important messages through text, email, and the university's social media channels. All current students are automatically enrolled to receive both text and email messages. Please make sure to



keep your phone number and contact information updated in Self Service, as well as allow your phone to receive short code messages.

If you do not have text messaging enabled on your cellular phone, you can check the AU website homepage and social media channels to see if there is an emergency announcement.

## Sexual Misconduct Policy

Aurora University does not tolerate sexual misconduct against students, staff, faculty, or visitors, in any form, including but not limited to: sex discrimination, sexual harassment, dating/domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault. The University also provides assistance for community members reporting sexual misconduct. For additional information, including detailed definitions, reporting options, and support resources, please see AU's Sexual Misconduct website at <https://aurora.edu/sexual-misconduct/>.

The University has designated the following individual to enforce the sexual misconduct policy and to educate the community regarding reporting and prevention:

Aurora University Title IX Coordinator: Allison Brady, Dean of Students and Title IX Coordinator  
630-844-4578 [abrady@aurora.edu](mailto:abrady@aurora.edu)

Confidential on-campus support and resources are provided by the following offices:

### **Aurora Campus:**

Counseling services are provided to students free of charge.

To access support via Counseling and Psychological Services, please call 630-844-4932 or visit [aurora.edu/counselingappointment](http://aurora.edu/counselingappointment)

University Chaplain, Mark Woolfington, [mwoolfington@aurora.edu](mailto:mwoolfington@aurora.edu), 630-844-6175, 430 S. Evanslawn

## **APPENDIX: GEORGE WILLIAMS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK DIRECTORY**

### **Administration**

Dean of the College of Education and School of Social Work:

Dr. Brenda J. Barnwell ([bbarnwel@aurora.edu](mailto:bbarnwel@aurora.edu), 630-947-8933)

Director of Graduate Studies:

Prof. Alison Arendt ([aarendt@aurora.edu](mailto:aarendt@aurora.edu), 630-844-5793)

BSW Program Chair:

Prof. Allison Schuck ([aschuck@aurora.edu](mailto:aschuck@aurora.edu), 630-947-

8936)

Field Director: Joanna Van Lear ([jvanlear@aurora.edu](mailto:jvanlear@aurora.edu), 630-844-5262)

Field Coordinators:

Samantha Heiden, LCSW: MSW Field Coordinator (Coordinates MSW's A-L) ([sheiden@aurora.edu](mailto:sheiden@aurora.edu))

Sandra Perez Avila, LSW: Field and Administrative Coordinator (Coordinates Main Campus BSW)  
([sperezavila@aurora.edu](mailto:sperezavila@aurora.edu))

Amy Ceshker, LCSW: MCC and Online BSW Field Coordinator ([aceshker@aurora.edu](mailto:aceshker@aurora.edu))

Cindy Korso, LCSW: Field Affiliation Coordinator ([ckorso@aurora.edu](mailto:ckorso@aurora.edu))

TBD: Assistant Field Director (Coordinates MSW's M-Z)

### **Coordinators of Tracks**

Addictions: Professor Laura Donavon ([ldonavon@aurora.edu](mailto:ldonavon@aurora.edu), 630-947-8943)

Child Welfare: Professor Laura Vargas ([lvargas@aurora.edu](mailto:lvargas@aurora.edu), 630-947-8900)

Forensic Social Work: Professor Laura Donavon ([ldonavon@aurora.edu](mailto:ldonavon@aurora.edu), 630-947-8943)

Gerontology: Professor Marissa Happ ([mhapp@aurora.edu](mailto:mhapp@aurora.edu), 630-947-8932)

Health Care: Professor Marissa Happ ([mhapp@aurora.edu](mailto:mhapp@aurora.edu), 630-947-8932)

Leadership Administration: Allison Schuck ([aschuck@aurora.edu](mailto:aschuck@aurora.edu), 630-947-8936)

Military and Veteran SWK Joe Oleck ([joleck@aurora.edu](mailto:joleck@aurora.edu), 630-844-5613)

School Social Work:

Emily Kath ([ekath@aurora.edu](mailto:ekath@aurora.edu) 630-947-8935)

**MSW Faculty**

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([mbenedek@aurora.edu](mailto:mbenedek@aurora.edu))

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Dr. Chris Bruhn ([cbruhn@aurora.edu](mailto:cbruhn@aurora.edu))

Dr. Meghan Jarpe ([mjarpe@aurora.edu](mailto:mjarpe@aurora.edu))

Dr. Willie Jackson ([wjackson@aurora.edu](mailto:wjackson@aurora.edu))

Dr. Christopher Novak ([cnovak@aurora.edu](mailto:cnovak@aurora.edu))

Dr. Joe Oleck ([joleck@aurora.edu](mailto:joleck@aurora.edu))

Dr. Anquenette Perkins ([aperkins@aurora.edu](mailto:aperkins@aurora.edu))

Carlos Robles ([crobles@aurora.edu](mailto:crobles@aurora.edu))

Rebecca Vacco-Giudice ([rvacco-guidice@aurora.edu](mailto:rvacco-guidice@aurora.edu))

**School of Social Work Staff:**

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Jacqueline Carranza, Administrative Assistant for the College of Education and Social Work  
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