

Saint Louis University
School of Social Work

Master of Social Work Program
Student Handbook
2025-2026



SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/social-work/social-work-msw/>

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I. Introduction

A. Dean of the School of Social Work

Welcome to Saint Louis University's School of Social Work! The School shares the University's mission to educate the whole person and provide leadership in the discovery, dissemination and integration of values, knowledge, and skills needed to instill a passion for lifelong learning and transform our society in the Jesuit tradition. Our School pursues this goal by providing learning-teaching-service environments, both in the classroom and in the community, that nurture, strengthen, and sustain creative intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, and technical abilities and interests. We encourage and support innovative scholarship and research. We actively engage in community service, linking the School and its resources to local, regional, national, and international communities to eliminate ignorance, poverty, injustice, and hunger, to improve community life, and to solve difficult problems. We are thrilled for you to join us, to walk with us, and to work together with us as we seek to advance both the School's and the University's shared mission, and to serve with and for our community and the people to which the School's disciplines – social work, applied behavior analysis, criminology and criminal justice – and the professions associated with these disciplines are dedicated.

Noelle E. Fearn, PhD

Professor and Dean of the School of Social Work

B. Director of the Master of Social Work Program

Welcome to the Master of Social Work Program at Saint Louis University. Thank you for choosing our School of Social Work as your partner in graduate education. One of the hallmarks of a Jesuit education is the emphasis on *Cura Personalis* —care for the whole person. It is my hope that in the MSW Program, you will have a well-rounded, personalized experience and be prepared to engage in social work practice with a humane and holistic approach. Here in the SLU MSW Program, you will learn about being a “person for others” while being empowered and supported to achieve your own professional goals.

The preparation process while in the SLU MSW Program will be rigorous and intellectually challenging. Our program offers a unique opportunity for social workers to learn effective, evidence-based interventions that improve physical and mental well-being, and healthy psychosocial functioning for social work clients. This distinctive learning environment is rooted in intensive teaching, mentoring, and experiential learning as well as rich peer-learning opportunities with your fellow classmates, your practicum colleagues, and the clients we all serve.

This MSW Handbook contains important detailed information about our program and policies, so please take some time to read and review it. Updates may happen to reflect changes made in various University and program policies and processes. You will be notified if significant changes occur during the academic year. As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Kristi Richter, MSW, LCSW

II. Missions and goals

A. The Mission of Saint Louis University

The pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity. The University seeks excellence in the fulfillment of its corporate purposes of teaching, research, and community service. It is dedicated to leadership in the continuing quest for understanding of God's creation, and for the discovery, dissemination, and integration of the values, knowledge, and skills required to transform society in the spirit of the Gospels. As a Catholic, Jesuit University, the pursuit is motivated by the inspiration and values of the Judeo-Christian tradition and is guided by the spiritual and intellectual ideals of the Society of Jesus.

The Five Dimensions of the Saint Louis University Experience

Reflective of its mission, Saint Louis University strives to engage its students in five interrelated dimensions contributing to the development of the whole person:

- Scholarship and knowledge
- Intellectual inquiry and communication
- Community building
- Leadership and service
- Spirituality and values

B. The Mission of the MSW Program

Saint Louis University School of Social Work prepares social work students for professional social work practice with a commitment to social justice and the empowerment of vulnerable and oppressed populations. The school strives for a dynamic community of learning with excellence in teaching, research, and service.

(Approved by Faculty Assembly, May 2008)

Goals of the School of Social Work

- 1) To use knowledge, values, and skills in generalist social work practice.
- 2) To use knowledge, values, and skills in advanced social work practice.
- 3) To contribute to the advancement of knowledge of the profession.

- 4) To use skills, talents, and time in pursuit of social justice in the community. (Approved by Faculty Assembly, May 2008)

III. Accreditation

The MSW Program has been continuously accredited since 1933 starting with accreditation by the American Association of Schools of Social Work (now the Council on Social Work Education established in 1952). The MSW Program was most recently re-affirmed by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in 2018. The Council's accreditation standards can be found at <http://www.cswe.org/>. Graduating from an accredited program is important and required in pursuing state social work licensure.

IV. Program and administrative team

A. Team

Noelle E. Fearn, PhD.....	Dean, School of Social Work
Brandy R. Maynard PhD.....	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Kristi Richter, LCSW.....	Director, Master of Social Work Program
Wendy DuCasse, DSW.....	Director, Field Education
Shelby Tarkington.....	Program Coordinator
Jess Kilmade.....	Dean's Executive Assistant and Business Manager

V. Disclaimer

This MSW Handbook is in effect for the academic year 2025-2026. As policies are changed in this academic year, electronic announcements will be delivered to SLU emails to notify students. This document should not be construed as creating a contract between the University and any person. The University specifically reserves the right to make any changes deemed necessary at any time without advance notice in the University's policies, practices, academic programs, courses, schedules, or calendars. This includes, but is not limited to, the modification, cancellation, rescheduling, or elimination of programs, departments, courses, and institutes. Matriculation at Saint Louis University is a privilege and not a right. The University reserves the right in its discretion to separate any student who does not meet academic requirements or maintain acceptable standards of conduct or character consistent with the University's Jesuit Catholic values, including specific standards established by schools or departments of the University.

In addition to the MSW Student Handbook, which outlines policies specific to the School of Social Work, students are also expected to adhere to all university-wide policies established by Saint Louis University. Students are responsible for reviewing and understanding the policies and expectations for behavior as a Saint Louis University Student. These policies can be found in the [SLU Academic Catalog](#) and on the [Community Standards](#) page online. Other helpful information may be located from the University's [Office for Graduate Education](#).

VI. Nondiscrimination policy and human diversity

Saint Louis University and the School of Social Work have a strong and active commitment to promoting human diversity and ensuring that all aspects of educational programs are carried forth without discrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation. A specific University goal is to foster "respect for diversity, other cultures, and belief systems." The University's Harassment Policy and Procedures and other related information can be found on the website of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX.

VII. Social work competencies

Social work competencies are measurable behaviors (knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes) that are expected of practicing social workers. All social workers are expected to achieve the

nine core competencies in the generalist curriculum while specializing in an area of advanced practice (through choosing an MSW concentration) allowing social workers to gain additional, advanced competencies.

A. Generalist Core Competencies and Behaviors

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
 - 1.1. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
 - 1.2. Demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
 - 1.3. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes;
 - 1.4. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior
2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
 - 2.1. Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and
 - 2.2. Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.
3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
 - 3.1. Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and
 - 3.2. Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
 - 4.1. Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and

- 4.2. Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.
5. Engage in Policy Practice
 - 5.1. Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and
 - 5.2. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - 6.1. Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies; and
 - 6.2. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - 7.1. Apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and
 - 7.2. Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - 8.1. Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and
 - 8.2. Incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - 9.1. Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and

- 9.2. Critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

(Adopted from CSWE EPAS 2022 and approved by the MSW Program Committee Spring 2024)

B. Advanced Practice Competencies and Behaviors that Build on the Core

(Delivered through the MSW concentrations)

ABA Concentration

1. Demonstrate Professional Behavior consistent with social work values and ethics in clinical practice
 - 1.1. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context in behavior analytic practice.
 - 1.2. Demonstrate Professional Behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication in compliance with organizational standards
 - 1.3. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate behavior-analytic practice outcomes
 - 1.4. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior when engaging in behavior analytic practice.
2. Integrate human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice into behavior-analytic practice.
 - 2.1. Apply behavioral skills to advocate for human rights, social, environmental, and economic justice.
 - 2.2. Engage in practices that address disparities and advance human rights to promote
3. Demonstrate Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in behavior analytic practice.
 - 3.1. Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive clinical skills in behavior analytic practice to enhance client well-being.
 - 3.2. Apply critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to address the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies.

- 3.3. Demonstrate cultural humility by acknowledging clients as experts of their own lived experiences within behavior analytic practice.
- 4. Use an evidence-informed practice process in behavior analytic work with individuals, families, groups, and larger systems
 - 4.1. Use practice experiences and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research.
 - 4.2. Critically evaluate and translate research evidence to inform and improve anti-oppressive behavior analytic practice, policy, and service delivery.
- 5. Apply policy practice skills to advance human rights and social economic justice
 - 5.1. Acquire knowledge about agency and governmental policies (e.g. Medicaid, Social Security Disability, Individuals with Disability Education Act, Mandated Reporting) to analyze the impact on clients using social justice, antiracist, and anti-oppression lenses.
 - 5.2. Use policy practice approaches to advocate for social policies that enhance clients and behavior-analytic service delivery.
- 6. Demonstrate advanced client engagement skills in behavior analytic practice.
 - 6.1. Integrate knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in- environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.
 - 6.2. Identify and apply interpersonal and other skills (e.g., accepting feedback, listening actively, seeking input, and collaborating) to establish and maintain professional relationships with diverse clients. (language from BACB Task List 6)
- 7. Demonstrate advanced client assessment skills in behavior analytic practice.
 - 7.1. Design and evaluate assessments addressing relevant skills strengths and areas of need using evidence-based assessment procedures (including preference assessments, descriptive assessments, functional analysis, skills assessments, social validity assessments, etc.) (language from BACB Task List 6)
 - 7.2. Interpret assessment data to identify and prioritize socially significant, client-informed, and culturally responsive behavior-change procedures and goals.
- 8. Demonstrate advanced client intervention skills in clinical practice.

- 8.1. Utilize culturally responsive, evidence-based practice processes to achieve effective behavior analytic interventions and goal setting.
- 8.2. Develop intervention goals in observable and measurable terms and identify and recommend interventions based on assessment results, scientific evidence, client preference, and contextual fit (e.g., expertise required for implementation, cultural variables, environmental resources). (Language from BACB Task List 6)
9. Use research and behavior analytic expertise to evaluate client, practice, and program outcomes.
 - 9.1. Use culturally responsive methods for the evaluation of clinical outcomes. (i.e., client, programmatic, practitioner, agency, etc.)
 - 9.2. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes to improve practice effectiveness.

(Adopted from CSWE EPAS 2022 and approved by the MSW Program Committee Spring 2024)

C. Community and Organization Concentration

1. Use codes of ethics and human rights principles to guide practice with communities and organizations.
 - 1.1. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context in community and organizational practice
 - 1.2. Demonstrate professional ethical behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication in compliance with organizational standards and practice outcomes.
 - 1.3. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior in developing one's community and organizational practice.
2. Approach community and organizational planned change using frameworks and evidence-based practice models to organize and/or sustain advocacy and /or support networks.
 - 2.1. Participate in social planning activities such as strategic planning, advocacy campaigns, and/or community efforts.
 - 2.2. Participate in task groups, coalitions, task forces, committees, or neighborhood groups in order to enhance communities or organizations.

3. Demonstrate antiracist, anti-oppressive, and culturally competent practice with communities and organizations.
 - 3.1. Apply critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to address the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies.
 - 3.2. Demonstrate cultural humility by acknowledging constituents as experts in their own experiences while using a strengths-based perspective in working with policy, organizations, and communities.
4. Use research and professional expertise to improve practice with communities and organizations.
 - 4.1. Critically evaluate and translate research evidence (e.g. articles, books and white papers) to inform and improve anti-oppressive macro/mezzo practice, policy, and service delivery.
5. Provide leadership in a variety of roles in community and organizational practice.
 - 5.1. Demonstrate professional expertise through public speaking to a community group, board, or policy decision-making body.
 - 5.2. Using social justice, antiracist, and anti-oppression lenses provide leadership in community, organizational, or policy practice for a project.
6. Approach community and organizational planned change using theoretical frameworks and evidence-based practice models.
 - 6.1. Identify and apply theoretical frameworks that guide community and organizational practice.
 - 6.2. Understand and engage in community or organizational practice models that are evidence-based.
7. Approach community and organizational planned change using theoretical frameworks and evidence-based practice models to plan and/or conduct an assessment of community or organizational needs and strengths with stakeholders.
 - 7.1. Participate in community or organizational needs and/or strengths assessment in order to enhance community or organization service delivery.
 - 7.2. Honor self-determination by integrating a collaborative decision-making process with constituencies to inform intervention planning.

8. Approach community and organizational planned change using theoretical frameworks and evidence-based practice models to engage in community and organizational practice.
 - 8.1. Participate in community organizing or development.
 - 8.2. Participate in policy analysis, development, and practice within legislative or organizational bodies.
 - 8.3. Participate in resource development activities (e.g. fundraising or grant writing) and understand budgeting and financial management processes.
9. Use research and professional expertise to evaluate practice with communities and organizations.
 - 9.1. Generate and/or use empirical research, secondary data, databases, geographic information systems (GIS), professional expertise, and/or other forms of evidence in evaluation, and program development in communities or organizations.
 - 9.2. Use culturally responsive methods to critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes to improve mezzo/macro practice.

(Adopted from CSWE EPAS 2022 and approved by the MSW Program Committee Spring 2024)

D. Clinical Concentration

1. Demonstrate professional behavior consistent with social work values and ethics in clinical practice.
 - 1.1. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context in Clinical Practice
 - 1.2. Demonstrate Professional Behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication in compliance with organizational standards
 - 1.3. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate clinical practice outcomes
 - 1.4. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior in developing one's clinical practice
2. Integrate human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice into clinical practice.
 - 2.1. Apply behavioral skills to advocate for human rights, social, environmental, and economic justice.

- 2.2. Engage in practices that address disparities and advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice
3. Demonstrate Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ADEI) in clinical practice.
 - 3.1. Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive clinical skills in social work practice to enhance client well-being.
 - 3.2. Apply critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to address the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies.
 - 3.3. Demonstrate cultural humility by acknowledging clients as experts of their own lived experiences when using a strength-based and bio-psycho-social-spiritual perspective in clinical practice.
4. Use an evidence-informed practice process in clinical work with individuals, families, groups, and larger systems
 - 4.1. Use practice experiences and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research.
 - 4.2. Critically evaluate and translate research evidence to inform and improve anti-oppressive clinical practice, policy, and service delivery.
5. Apply policy practice skills to advance human rights and social economic justice
 - 5.1. Acquire knowledge about agency and governmental policies (e.g. Medicaid, Social Security Disability, Individuals with Disability Education Act, Mandated Reporting) to analyze the impact on clients using social justice, antiracist, and anti-oppression lenses.
 - 5.2. Use policy practice approaches to advocate for social policies that enhance clients and clinical service delivery.
6. Demonstrate advanced client engagement skills in clinical practice.
 - 6.1. Integrate knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in- environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.
 - 6.2. Use advanced clinical skills to engage diverse clients and constituencies into a working therapeutic alliance.
7. Demonstrate advanced client assessment skills in clinical practice.

- 7.1. Synthesize knowledge obtained from clients and constituencies with practice wisdom and data-driven decision-making to inform a person-centered bio-psycho-social-spiritual assessment.
- 7.2. Honor self-determination by integrating a collaborative decision-making process with clients and constituencies to inform treatment planning.
- 8. Demonstrate advanced client intervention skills in clinical practice.
 - 8.1. Utilize culturally responsive, evidence-based practice processes to achieve effective clinical interventions and goal setting.
 - 8.2. Incorporate culturally responsive advanced clinical skills to coordinate, negotiate, and implement client services, resource access, and treatment.
- 9. Use research and clinical expertise to evaluate client, practice, and program outcomes.
 - 9.1. Use culturally responsive methods for the evaluation of clinical outcomes. (i.e., client, programmatic, practitioner, agency, etc.)
 - 9.2. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes to improve practice effectiveness.

(Adopted from CSWE EPAS 2022 and approved by the MSW Program Committee Spring of 2024)

VIII. The MSW Curriculum

The essential purpose of the Master of Social Work (MSW) Program is to prepare graduate students for advanced and specialist practice in social work. The curriculum is designed to prepare students to develop competence and leadership as professionals in work with varied vulnerable populations and practice settings. The curriculum is designed with core course sequences including practice with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations; human behavior; and social policy. Significant content on diversity, populations-at-risk, social and economic justice, social work research methods, and values and ethics is integrated throughout the curriculum. The signature pedagogy and central part of professional social work education is the “practicum” which is Latin for “practical training” which occurs in field education.

The MSW Program consists of 48 credit hours of classroom and practicum courses as listed below. All courses are 3 credit hours unless otherwise indicated. It is highly recommended to take no more than 15 credit hours in one semester.

A. Generalist/Foundation Courses: 15 credit hours

Note: Students must receive a B or better in all generalist courses to pass the course and matriculate.

SWRK 5702 Social Policy

SWRK 5725 Human Behavior and the Social Environment

SWRK 5750 Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups

SWRK 5751 Social Work Practice with Communities and Organization

SWRK 5819 Generalist Integrative Practice Seminar (1 credit hour)

SWRK 5841 Generalist Practicum (2 credit hours) (SWRK 5821 for ABA students)

B. Concentrations

Students will select one of the three concentrations (Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), Clinical, or Community and Organization) to continue the required coursework in an area of advanced practice.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Concentration

Note: Students must receive a B or better in all ABA courses to pass the course and matriculate.

Description

The purpose of the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) concentration is to prepare graduate students for professional practice in applied behavior analysis. The curriculum is designed to prepare students to develop competence and leadership as professionals in work with varied vulnerable populations, primarily including persons with disabilities and in a variety of settings. The curriculum is designed according to the required Behavior Analyst Certification Board's specifications as to content in the six core courses, research courses, and practicum.

Required Courses

The courses will be offered in a cohort model, such that students must start in the fall semester, take the courses in the order offered, and take two courses per semester.

Core Courses (18 credit hours)

SWRK 5001 Supervision and Organizational Behavior Management

SWRK 5002 Philosophy of Behavioral Science

SWRK 5746 Principles and Concepts in Behavior Analysis

SWRK 5747 Behavioral Assessment

SWRK 5748 Behavior Change and Processes

SWRK 5749 Behavior Change and Ethics (sub. for SWRK 5700 Values and Ethics)

Clinical and Hallmark Courses 6 (credit hours)

SWRK 5707 Policy Practice for Social Justice

SWRK 5762 Diagnosis and Assessment in Clinical Practice

Research Courses (3 credit hours)

SWRK 5774 Measurement and Experimental Design

(sub. for SWRK 5708 Research and Program Evaluation)

ABA 5115 ABA Advanced Clinical Research and Capstone

Concentration Practica Courses (11 credit hours)

SWRK 5820 ABA Concentration Integrative Practice Seminar I (1 credit hour)

SWRK 5822 ABA Concentration Practicum I (2 credit hours)

SWRK 5823 ABA Concentration Practicum II (2 credit hours)

SWRK 5824 ABA Concentration Practicum III (2 credit hours)

ABA 5116 ABA Concentration Practicum IV (1 credit hour)

Concentration Electives

ABA students have no elective options.

Persons seeking BACB certification must complete 200 additional field experience hours following graduation under the supervision of a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). Students may also choose to complete an additional semester after earning their degree for a 1-credit hour practicum and 1-credit hour seminar for the final 200 hours. For more information on the ABA concentration, contact the ABA Program Director.

Community and Organization Concentration

Description

The purpose of the Community and Organization Concentration is to prepare students for advanced practice in a range of settings that focus on social problems and social change at the community, organizational, and societal levels.

The conceptual framework of the concentration is built upon the community as a field of practice in which individuals are engaged as citizens, residents, members, constituents, indigenous leaders, representatives,

and heads/officers of community groups, organizations, and other action or change agent systems. This framework conceptualizes community practice at macro, mezzo, and micro levels and concentrates on groups, communities, and organizations (the practice units of attention) as actors and targets of change.

The Community and Organization Concentration is anchored in the social justice orientation of the School, the University, and the social work profession. Within the concentration, this orientation shapes a particular commitment to communities and populations that are powerless, oppressed, at-risk, and/or targets of discrimination. The concentration is committed to the improvement of the quality of life of community members, to the humane and effective functioning of human service organizations, and to the development and modification of social policies for a more peaceful and just society. It is also committed to a vision of community in which people relate to each other as equal moral agents, the development of democratic institutions, and the use of participatory practice strategies.

Required Courses

*Core Courses (6 credit hours)**

SWRK 5721 Community Theory and Practice
SWRK 5785 Organizational and Program Planning

Hallmark Courses (6 credit hours)

SWRK 5700 Values and Ethics in Social Work Practice
SWRK 5707 Policy Practice for Social Justice

Research Courses (3 credit hours)

SWRK 5708 Research and Program Evaluation in Social Work Practice

Practica Courses (6 credit hours)

SWRK 5820 Community Concentration Integrative Practice Seminar (1)
SWRK 5832 Community and Organization Concentration Practicum I (2)
SWRK 5833 Community and Organization Concentration Practicum II

Concentration Electives (12 credit hours) Students may choose 4 elective courses.

*These required Community and Organization Concentration Core Courses are only offered asynchronously online and generally offered only once a year. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that a student take these courses the first time they appear on the class schedule after completion of the Generalist courses.

Clinical Concentration

Description

The Clinical concentration focuses on assessment, intervention, and outcomes in clinical work with individuals, families, groups, or larger systems. The concentration curriculum focuses on a strengths-based, culturally competent, and holistic, bio-psycho-social-spiritual approach in working with clients. Courses will focus on working with diverse families and family systems across a developmental life span. The core clinical approaches to engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of outcomes will be addressed with the student's ability to use in a variety of clinical practice settings such as hospitals, community mental health centers, children and family agencies, schools, therapy practice, justice system and many more. Students will be able to explore clinical approaches in work with a variety of target populations or social challenges such as Veterans, children in foster care, persons experiencing homelessness and schizophrenia, and couples or families with relationship challenges. These are a few examples, but the application of clinical skills provides a strong base for direct social work practice.

Required Courses

Core Courses (9 credit hours)

SWRK 5733 Advanced Clinical Practice with Individuals
SWRK 5736 Advanced Clinical Practice with Families and Groups
SWRK 5762 Diagnosis and Assessment in Clinical Practice

Hallmark Courses (6 credit hours)

SWRK 5700 Values and Ethics in Social Work Practice
SWRK 5707 Policy Practice for Social Justice

Research Courses (3 credit hours)

SWRK 5708 Research and Program Evaluation in Social Work Practice

Practica Courses (6 credit hours)

SWRK 5820 Clinical Concentration Integrative Practice Seminar
SWRK 5842 Clinical Practicum I
SWRK 5843 Clinical Practicum II

Concentration Electives (9 credit hours) Students can choose 3 electives.

Please click on the link to access part-time and full-time course roadmaps for each concentration:
<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/social-work/social-work-msw/#roadmaptext>

C. Gerontology Certificate

The graduate certificate is aimed at students from all disciplines and is a 15-credit-hour program for any post-baccalaureate student, graduate student, or community member currently working in healthcare-related fields such as nutrition and dietetics, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language pathology, nursing, or other disciplines. The certificate is available to both on ground and online students.

The program will include courses related to working as part of an interprofessional or care coordination team. Those undertaking the certificate will attend SLU's Family Center for Health Aging Summer Conference, which will include workshops on the current practice of geriatric care in community settings and plenary sessions on current research in assessment and intervention strategies. The certificate also includes a 1-2-discipline-specific practica in working with older adults. You may apply for a waiver to the practicum depending on your work experience.

Those undertaking the certificate do not have to be degree-seeking. Courses taken in a degree-seeking program may count toward SLU electives as well as toward the certificate itself.

Completion of the certificate will be noted on transcripts.

For questions or more information, contact Dr. Allison Gibson, the gerontology certificate liaison at allison.gibson@slu.edu.

IX. Program Delivery Options

Program Option: Saint Louis – In-Person / Face-to-Face / Traditional at the Main Campus

The MSW Program is offered in a traditional, face-to-face format on Saint Louis University's main campus in St. Louis, Missouri. The program serves a diverse student body, including both traditional and non-traditional students, full-time and part-time learners, and individuals returning to graduate education from a variety of professional backgrounds. Courses are taught by full-time and adjunct faculty who bring extensive practice experience and scholarly expertise into the classroom. Students benefit from the program's location in a metropolitan area with a deep network of community-based organizations, hospitals, schools, and advocacy groups, which provide rich opportunities for field education and applied learning. The curriculum

is grounded in a commitment to equity and social justice and is responsive to the historical and socio-political context of St. Louis, including its legacy of racial segregation, health disparities, and economic inequality. Students have full access to SLU's advising, writing, technology, and wellness services, and the program integrates Jesuit values of reflection, service, and social responsibility across coursework and field experiences.

Program Option 2: Online / Distance Education

The MSW Program is also offered in an online format, designed to increase access to graduate social work education for students across the United States. The program serves a diverse and geographically dispersed student body, including working professionals, career changers, caregivers, military-affiliated students, and others seeking the flexibility of online learning. Students may enroll full-time or part-time, and they engage with faculty and peers through a robust learning management system that supports both asynchronous and synchronous interaction. Courses are developed and taught by the same full-time faculty who teach on campus, ensuring consistency in academic quality, pedagogical approach, and mission alignment. Field education is arranged in the students' local communities, with support from SLU's Office of Field Education, allowing students to gain practice experience in settings relevant to their career goals. Although delivered remotely, the online MSW program remains deeply grounded in the School's Jesuit values and commitment to social justice. Students have access to the full range of SLU's academic and student support services, and the program fosters connection, reflection, and professional identity through virtual advising and ongoing engagement with faculty and staff.

Students are required to enroll in and complete courses in the delivery format (in-person or online) to which they were originally admitted. Exceptions to this policy may occur when course sections are combined due to low enrollment, in which case an in-person student may be enrolled in an online course as determined by the program.

A. Course Sequencing in the MSW Curriculum

Students are expected to complete Generalist course requirements before beginning the Concentration Core courses required by their MSW Concentration. Elective courses may be taken concurrently with Concentration Core courses as long as any prerequisites for the elective courses are met. MSW students with Advanced Standing have Generalist course requirements waived and begin their MSW studies with Concentration Core and SLU Hallmark courses.

SLU Hallmark courses are distinctive to Saint Louis University and may have prerequisites in Generalist courses or only be offered in certain semesters. Students are to take the SWRK 5706 Antiracism and Social Work Practice course following completion of SWRK 5841 Generalist Practicum I. SWRK 5707 Policy Practice for Social Justice must follow completion of SWRK 5702 Social Policy.

Students must be in good academic standing to register for or take a practicum. Good academic standing means no academic probation (i.e., 3.0 cumulative GPA or higher) or professional probation status.

Students with an Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) concentration must work closely with their ABA Faculty Advisor/Mentor regarding course sequencing. ABA Concentration students complete four rather than three practica and use their own practica numbering (SWRK 5821, 5822, 5823, 5824 and ABA 5116). ABA Concentration students also may take Generalist and Concentration Core courses in the same semester at the direction of their ABA Faculty Advisor/Mentor. Note: Students must receive a B or better in all ABA courses to pass the course and matriculate.

MSW students in the other concentrations are encouraged to complete SWRK 5841 Practicum following completion of the other four Generalist courses. All students are required to complete SWRK 5841 Generalist Practicum and SWRK 5819 Generalist Integrative Practice Seminar within their first 15 credit hours of enrollment in the Program. Note: Students must receive a B or better in all generalist courses to pass the course and matriculate.

Students can plan and register for SWRK 5832 Community and Organization Concentration Practicum or SWRK 5842 Clinical Concentration Practicum I once they have successfully completed SWRK 5841 Generalist Practicum. Students registering for their first concentration practicum, SWRK 5832 (Community and Organization) or SWRK 5842 (Clinical) must concurrently register for SWRK 5820 Concentration Integrative Practice Seminar.

Students who take at least 6 credit hours in a semester are considered full-time for financial aid purposes. However, taking only 6 credit hours in Fall and Spring semesters is typically considered “part-time” in that students are required to take at least 6 credits in Fall and Spring semesters to remain on time to graduate within the maximum time allowed. It is highly recommended for Students to take no more than 15 credit hours in one semester. In all cases, the student must have the specified prerequisite or co-requisite course(s) in order to take a course. Questions about MSW course sequencing should be directed to Faculty Advisor/Mentors or the MSW Program Director.

A student may take up to 6 credit hours (two courses) of graduate-level electives outside of the School of Social Work. These courses may be taken in other Saint Louis University departments or from another University. Prior approval must be confirmed by the Faculty Advisor and MSW Program Director. To seek prior approval, students must submit to the MSW Program Director a course syllabus and rationale for how the course relates to their practice interest.

B. Advanced Standing

Students with a bachelor's degree in social work may be granted up to 15 credit hours of waived courses in the MSW Program provided that:

1. The bachelor's degree is from a CSWE-accredited program
2. The cumulative undergraduate GPA is a 3.0 or higher

C. Transfer Credits

Upon review and approval by the Director of the MSW Program, students may transfer in a maximum of 6 credit hours. If the credits are applying as a required course(s) then they must have been earned in a CSWE accredited program. The cumulative total of waived advanced standing credits and transfer credits cannot exceed 21 credit hours. Students must also have received a grade of "B" or better in each course to be transferred. This coursework must also demonstrate comparable content to the SLU MSW Program required for generalist, concentration, or elective courses.

Students who are currently enrolled in the MSW Program must obtain prior approval from their Faculty Advisor/Mentor and the Director of the MSW Program for proposed courses to be taken outside of the School of Social Work.

After Approval from the MSW Program Director, [the form](#) must be filled out and returned to the Office of the University Registrar (registrar@slu.edu).

Upon completion of courses outside of the School, students are required to request a transcript with the course grade to be sent directly to the Director of the MSW Program.

D. Recognition of Comparable Coursework

Students who believe they have completed comparable undergraduate coursework (in a social work minor or an unaccredited baccalaureate social work program) in the areas of Human Behavior and the Social Environment or Social Policy but do not have a Bachelor of Social Work Degree from a CSWE-accredited program may request that the MSW Program Director review the comparability of the course or courses. To be eligible, the student must have received a grade of "B" or better in the course(s) and have completed the course(s) within five years, or seven years for those students who have been employed full-time for two years or more in a social services position. For the course(s) that the MSW Program Director certifies as comparable, the student will not have to take the corresponding MSW Program Generalist/Foundation course (SWRK 5725 Human Behavior and the Social Environment and/or SWRK 5702 Social Policy).

However, no transfer course credit is awarded, so the student will instead take an additional elective or electives to complete the required 48 credit hours for graduation.

In all situations where students desire to receive consideration of courses completed at another institution and applied as an elective toward the MSW degree, they have the responsibility of providing the necessary documentation to demonstrate the relevance or comparability between such courses and those of the MSW Program. This could include information such as transcripts, course syllabi, table of contents of the textbook(s), and papers or other assignments completed in these courses. The Director of the MSW Program will review to determine a comparable course exemption. Once the decision is made by the Director of the MSW Program, it is final.

E. Previous Work, Volunteer, or Life Experience

While the School of Social Work recognizes the value of prior experience in the field of human and social services, the School does not grant academic course credit based on prior work, volunteering, or life experience. This degree requires new learning from the discipline of social work and the integration of coursework with the practicum courses.

F. Course Enrollment Prerequisites

Prerequisite course(s) must be completed prior to the beginning of the desired course. Students who do not have the stated prerequisites for a course, but who believe they have the prerequisite knowledge or want to pursue an exception, may seek the permission of the instructor to enroll in the course.

G. Changing Programs: MSABA Program to/from MSWABA Concentration

Students desiring to change their degree path from MSABA to MSWABA or vice versa may do so under the following guidelines:

Any student changing from either program to the other must submit two items together to the Program Director of the program in which the student wishes to enroll:

1. Petition to Amend the Graduate Program form
2. A written professional justification that outlines the rationale for the request for a program change.

The Program Director of the program to which the student is seeking to enroll will review the submitted materials and determine whether the request is approved. Approval is not guaranteed and is subject to the Director's professional discretion and consideration of academic standards, including alignment with CSWE, BACBA, and ABAI expectations. The Director will also determine whether any previously earned academic credits are eligible for application toward the requirements of the new program.

For MS ABA students changing to MSW ABA:

1. The change must take place before the 1st half of the ABA 5748 course (Behavior Change and Processes) and/or before completion of the second ABA practicum or before the completion of no more than six credit hours of ABA coursework.
2. If a student wishes to change programs after the completion of six credit hours of the ABA program, he/she will have to complete a full application and all the necessary application steps for the enrolling program as appropriate, including (but not limited to) interviews, submission of letters of recommendations, and submission of transcripts from other institutions.

H. MSW Course Descriptions

To see a listing of current courses offered in the School of Social Work with course descriptions, please go to the [SLU Academic Catalog](#). At times a course may not be offered due to lack of faculty resources, low enrollment, scheduling conflicts, or other factors.

I. Dual Degree Programs

NOTE: Students must begin a dual degree program before they are halfway (24 credits) through either degree plan. Students who have completed over half of the credit hours or who have graduated are not eligible for the dual degree plan.

MSW/Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis (MSABA)

The MSW and ABA programs offer a dual Master of Social Work (MSW) and Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis. Through a dual track of coursework and fieldwork, this program is designed to:

- 1) Enhance students' foundational learning to fully and completely introduce the learner to both fields of study prior to practice.
- 2) Increase student eligibility to pursue doctoral programs in either social work or ABA disciplines.
- 3) Equip students with more clinical expertise than what is offered through the ABA concentration.

This dual degree program is 64-67 credit hours depending on the MSABA track you choose. Students should refer to the MSW/MSABA Dual Degree roadmap when determining order and semester to take courses to

ensure prerequisite courses are selected first (or concurrently, where permissible), assuring timely degree completion. Note: Students must receive a B or better in all ABA courses to pass.

MSW/Master of Public Health (MPH)

The Master of Social Work (MSW) and Master of Public Health (MPH) dual degree program is offered in cooperation with the Saint Louis University College for Public Health and Social Justice. This program was initiated in 1984. The MSW/MPH Program allows the student to specialize in the social service aspects of public health and prepares the student for a variety of positions in healthcare settings.

A student entering the combined program must meet the admissions requirements of both programs and must select the Clinical concentration in the MSW Program. Integration of learning in the two professions is facilitated by a second-year practicum that meets the practicum requirements of both programs. In addition, a number of courses meet the academic requirements of both programs.

MSW/Juris Doctor (JD)

The Master of Social Work and the Juris Doctorate in the Saint Louis University School of Law remain separate degrees. For students who want to seek both degrees, 9 credit hours of each degree plan are accepted by each program as electives. In pursuit of these degrees, students are required to be admitted by both programs, and they begin their first year as full-time law students.

MSW/Master of Arts in Criminology and Criminal Justice (MACCJ)

The Master of Social Work, and Master of Arts in Criminology and Criminal Justice are offered within the School of Social Work. Students interested in interdisciplinary skills and preparation to handle complex challenges with marginalized populations who interact with the criminal justice system. The dual is designed to provide students with a comprehensive education in both disciplines. Students complete the main required elements of each degree program.

X. Policies and procedures

University Policies

All students in the School of Social Work are subject to the official policies and procedures of Saint Louis University. These policies govern academic integrity, student conduct, discrimination and harassment, non-academic grievances, and other essential areas of university life.

To avoid redundancy and ensure consistency with current university policies, this handbook provides reference to the university policies rather than repeating them in full. Students are responsible for reviewing

and adhering to these policies throughout their academic program. Please consult the SLU Student Handbook for current SLU policies.

In addition to the SLU Student Handbook, key university policies that students should be familiar can be found in the SLU Student Handbook as well as on the Office of the Provost's website or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX:

- Academic Integrity Policy
- Non-Academic Grievances
- Student Conduct
- Bias-Related Incident Protocol
- Harassment Policy
- Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy

If you have questions about how university policies apply within your academic program, please contact your academic advisor or program director.

MSW Program Policies

A. Conditional Admission

Applicants who do not meet the standard admissions criteria may be considered for conditional admission by the Admissions Committee. Conditional admission is granted on a probationary basis for one semester or two semesters, allowing students an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to succeed in graduate studies.

Notification and Agreement

Students admitted conditionally will receive an official admission letter from the Director of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions. This letter will include a conditional admission contract outlining the specific requirements that must be met during the first semester.

Academic Requirements

Students admitted on a conditional basis due to academic performance are subject to the following restrictions and expectations:

- Enrollment is limited to six (6) credit hours during the first semester.

- Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.
 - All conditions outlined in the contract must be satisfied.
- Failure to meet these conditions may result in dismissal from the program.

Conduct Requirements

Students admitted on a conditional basis due to prior conduct concerns are subject to the following restrictions and expectations:

- All conditions outlined in the contract must be satisfied.

Practicum Eligibility

If applicable to the degree program, students on conditional admission status are not eligible to plan or participate in practicum until they have successfully met all requirements and had their conditional status removed.

Review and Determination

At the end of the semester, the student's academic performance will be reviewed by the Program Director, in consultation with the student's advisor and/or instructors. Based on this review, the Program Director will issue a formal decision, which may include:

- Removal of conditional status and full admission to the program, or
- Continuation of conditional status, or
- Dismissal from the program.

Appeal Process

Students who receive an adverse decision may submit a written appeal to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for the School of Social Work within 10 calendar days of the decision notice.

B. Registration

All students will have an advising meeting with their Faculty Advisor prior to registering. Students are required to register online in SLU Banner Self-Service or Courses@SLU after checking their DegreeWorks for their remaining course requirements. All three systems can be found in students' MySLU applications.

Registration for the spring semester generally takes place in November. Registration for both the Summer and Fall semesters usually takes place in April. For each registration period, students receive registration

information on Banner Self-Service. Students are urged to register early in order to secure the classes they need; decisions about canceling courses will be made two weeks prior to courses starting.

Per University policy, continuous enrollment in the Fall and Spring semesters is required. Students who will not be enrolled in a Fall or Spring semester should contact the MSW Program Director about taking a Leave of Absence.

C. Advising

Following acceptance to the MSW Program, every new student receives registration and advising information via email, where the MSW Program Coordinator and the MSW Program Director provide general information to students about the University so they can register for their first semester. Shortly after the beginning of the student's first semester, they will be assigned to a faculty advisor who will provide both academic and professional advising.

Advisors seek to understand the educational and career goals of students and provide assistance and mentoring in course planning, registration, and other academic and career concerns. The School embraces an adult learner model of advising, with advising meetings often scheduled as requested by the student. However, the student must meet with her/his advisor prior to the time of each registration (typically every October and every March). The MSW Program Coordinator notifies students and faculty advisors of the dates during which registration is to occur. Students then contact their advisors to arrange mutually convenient times to meet. Any later changes in registration (e.g., adding, dropping, or changing courses) must also begin by consulting with one's advisor. At any time during the progression through the program, students may request a change of advisor. Requests are submitted in writing to the Director of the MSW Program.

D. Grading Policy

1. **Grading System:** The SSW has instituted a grading scale that is consistent across all graduate-level SWRK courses taken in the MSW program at SLU.
 - a. The grading system in the MSW Program for academic courses and integrative seminars consists of the following letter grade system: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D and F.

Grade	Percent	GPA points		Grade	Percent	GPA points
A	92-100	4.0		C+	77-79	2.3
A-	90-91	3.7		C	72-76	2.0
B+	87-89	3.3		C-	70-71	1.7

B	82-86	3.0		D	60-69	1.0
B-	80-81	2.7		F	Below 60	0.0

- b. The practicum grading system consists of grades S (satisfactory) and U (unsatisfactory). The grades of S and U carry no grade point equivalents and are not calculated in a student's overall grade point average (GPA).
 - c. If a student has not completed their practicum within the required time limit for a semester and is actively working on it with faculty liaison approval, an IP (in progress) may be entered until the practicum is complete.
 - d. A student with a grade of "IP" for longer than a year will receive an "F" for the course.
2. **Incomplete Grades:** An incomplete (I) is given only in unusual circumstances and at the discretion of the instructor. See SLU's policy regarding Incomplete grades and Petition for Course Extension form for eligibility and process. A student with a grade of "I" for longer than a year will receive an "F" for the course.

E. Withdrawals:

- a. Withdrawal from a Course: See SLU's policy for Course Withdrawals.
- b. Withdrawal from a practicum course: The Director of Field Education must approve a withdrawal request any time after the first day of practicum. The Director consults with the student's Field Instructor and Faculty Liaison before deciding whether to approve a request to withdraw. Such approval is granted only in cases of serious extenuating circumstances.
- c. A grade of W carries no grade point equivalents and is not calculated in a student's overall GPA.

F. Academic Standing Policy

Students are in good academic standing when they are making progress toward a degree within the time period established for the MSW degree, are maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above, are not on conditional admissions, academic probation, or non-academic probation, and are meeting all other requirements as described below.

- 1. **Passing with Grade B/S or Better- Generalist and ABA courses:** Students must earn a grade of B or higher in **generalist** courses and **ABA courses** and an S in generalist practicum or be retaken. These courses include SWRK 5702 Social Policy, SWRK 5725 Human Behavior and the Social Environment, SWRK 5750 Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups, SWRK 5751

Social Work Practice with Communities and Organizations, 5819 Generalist Integrative Seminar, 5820 Concentration Integrative Seminar, and all ABA courses.

- a. A student who receives a grade of a B- or below in one of the above courses or a U in practicum must meet with the MSW advisor (and ABA program director when relevant) and retake the course the next semester it is offered.
 - b. A student receiving two grades of B- or below for the same generalist or ABA course will be unable to proceed with other courses in the MSW program until they pass the course with a B or better.
2. **Passing with Grade C/S or Better- Non-Generalist Courses:** Students must earn a C or better in **non-generalist** courses and an S in concentration practicum. A student receiving a grade of U in concentration practicum or C- or lower in any non-generalist courses must retake the course or practicum the next semester it is offered.
- a. A student receiving a grade of C- or below in an elective course will consult with his/her advisor to select a replacement course. This may be either the same course or an appropriate substitute.

G. Academic Probation

- a. Students will be placed on academic probation under the following conditions: the student's cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0 or the student receives a grade of C-, D, or F in an academic course or a grade of U in a practicum course
- b. The MSW Program Director will send a letter of academic probation status to the student.
- c. Within the next 9 credit hours of coursework, the student needs to show an improvement in grades and/or raise the GPA to 3.0 depending on the reason they were placed on academic probation.
- d. Students on Academic Probation are not eligible to enroll in practicum until they are removed from Academic Probation.

H. Academic Dismissal

Students will be automatically dismissed from the MSW program for any of the following reasons:

- 1) If the student receives any combination of two grades of F, FQ, or U during their time in the program. If a student retakes a course in which they initially earned an F, FQ, or U and successfully replaces the grade, the original failing grade will not count against them for the purposes of determining dismissal.
- 2) If the student fails to move off of academic probation within 9 credit hours.

- 3) If, by the end of the 4-year limit for completion of degree requirements, the student has not completed all required courses.

Dismissal decisions and notifications are handled by the MSW Program Director. The MSW Program Director will notify the student via email of the dismissal. A student may appeal the decision by submitting a written letter to the SSW's Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (ADAA). The appeal should specify the extenuating circumstances that would account for the student's previous performance and provide evidence that the student currently has the ability to complete the program successfully. The appeal must be filed within 10 calendar days of the issuance of the letter of dismissal. The ADAA will then review relevant material and meet with any relevant parties to make a determination. The ADAA will notify the student via email of the decision within 5 calendar days. If a student wishes to appeal the decision of the ADAA, they may submit an appeal, within 10 calendar days of receipt of the ADAA's decision, to the SSW Dean, whose review will be limited to ensuring that proper process was followed. If further appeal is desired, the student may submit an appeal within 5 calendar days of receipt of the SSW Dean's decision, to the Associate Provost for Graduate Education, whose review will also be limited to ensuring that proper process was followed.

I. Leave of Absence

A leave of absence means the student is remaining in the degree program and intends to finish the MSW at SLU but seeks a semester away from coursework to take care of other issues in his or her life. Students are urged to be extremely cautious in requesting a leave of absence. During the leave period, students do not have enrollment status for purposes of health insurance, loan deferment, or access to campus libraries and computer services. The time taken during an approved leave of absence will, for graduate and professional students like MSW students, not be included as part of the time students have to complete their degree (4 years total for MSW students). However, if students have received loans that are being deferred, they will lose their deferment status while on leave. There is no guarantee that a Leave of Absence request will be granted. If students want to be considered for tuition scholarships upon their return from Leave of Absence, it is their responsibility to apply for financial aid by the appropriate deadline. Complete the Leave of Absence Form and submit the signed form to the Director of the MSW Program.

J. Withdrawal from Degree Program

A withdrawal from the degree program means the student is not remaining in their degree program and does not intend to finish the MSW at SLU. Complete the Intent to Withdraw Form and submit the signed form to the Director of the MSW Program.

K. Five-Year Completion of Program Requirement

All students have five years from their date of entry into the program to complete the 48 - credit hours requirement of the MSW Program. This means that students must take at least 6 credits every fall, spring, and summer. Any student who cannot comply with this requirement and has a legitimate reason for being unable to do so may request an extension. The written request for extension should be approved by the Director of the MSW Program and then sent to the SSW Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (ADAA) for consideration. The request should explain reasons for an exception to this policy as well as include a detailed timetable for completion of course requirements. The student will be notified in writing by the SSW ADAA of the acceptance or rejection of this request.

L. Graduation

Students planning to graduate must apply online through Banner Self-Service to graduate. This is to be done the semester before or early in the semester in which they plan to graduate. Students will have the option to request a letter of good standing from the MSW Program no more than 60 days before the degree conferral date. Notices regarding the availability of applications and their due dates will be announced in emails to students. This application is required and provides your address for where the diploma should be sent.

Pre-Commencement and Commencement Ceremonies

All graduating MSW students are invited to participate in the University commencement ceremony held in December and May, and the SSW pre- commencement ceremony held in May.

Students are required to buy a cap, gown, and hood to participate in all commencement ceremonies. At the SSW pre-commencement ceremonies, students' names will be individually read, and they will be "hooded" as is the custom for master's graduates.

The Program Coordinator will email Students instructions on how to order regalia (cap, tassel, gown, and hood) from the SLU Billiken bookstore.

M. Financial Aid

The School of Social Work assists students in obtaining financial assistance to help pay for the cost of graduate education. The two most immediate resources to learn about financial aid are the SSW Director of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions (314-977-2752) and the University's Office of Student Financial Services.

The School's funds for financial aid are primarily in the form of scholarships. The School attempts to provide support to as many students as possible. Additional scholarships may be awarded, as funds allow, to

students who can demonstrate academic merit. In addition, the School has Graduate Assistantships and Graduate Internships, which provide opportunities to work closely with faculty and receive tuition remission. The Graduate Assistantships (GA) also provide a stipend and student health insurance. The Graduate Internships (GI) do not provide a stipend or cover health insurance. The funding application for graduate assistantships and graduate internships opens in early January each year. March 1 is the deadline to apply. Faculty often receive other funding for research projects where students are notified of additional financial support opportunities. Students interested in further information regarding financial aid administered by the School of Social Work are encouraged to consult with the Director of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions, Room 212, Tegeler Hall, Phone: 314-977-2752.

N. Grievances

A “grievance” is defined as a formal inquiry or complaint requesting a review related to a school policy or procedure or a situation where the student feels that they were treated unfairly or unprofessionally by a faculty or staff member. Students are first encouraged to meet with and try to resolve any course related issues or conflicts with the specific faculty or staff member and any overall program policies with the appropriate Program Director. Any appeals related to academic integrity must follow the procedures under the University Academic Integrity Policy.

Any student enrolled in a School of Social Work (SSW) degree program (SW/ABA/CCJ/PhD) may submit a formal written grievance to the appropriate Program Director (PD). The PD will review the grievance and convene a meeting with the student within 10 business days. The student may bring a person for support, but the support person may not speak for the student or ask questions during the meeting. Recording of the meeting will not be allowed. Within an additional five business days, the PD will provide a written response to the student.

If the student wants to appeal the Program Director’s decision, the student may submit a written appeal to the SSW Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (ADAA) within 5 business days from receipt of the PD’s decision. The ADAA will review the written appeal and may convene a meeting with the student and other parties as needed within 10 business days. The ADAA will provide a written response to the student within 5 business days. If a satisfactory solution is not reached, the student may submit a written appeal to the Dean of the School of Social Work within 5 business days from receipt of the ADAA’s decision. The matter will be reviewed by the Dean for adherence to process(es), and the student will be informed of the findings within 10 business days. The decision of the Dean of the SSW is final.

O. Professional Competence and Expectations

“Professional competence” refers to expected behaviors that are required of Saint Louis University School of Social Work students who are also developing as professionals. Students are expected to maintain positive and constructive interpersonal communications and relationships with faculty, students, staff, and persons in practicum agencies. Students are expected to positively contribute to the academic learning environment within the classroom, school, and in practicum placements. This includes respecting diversity and not participating in any form of discriminatory action. As a student in a professional school, emotional stability is necessary for practice.

Additionally, students enrolled in the School of Social Work are asked to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics in their field practica as well as in classes or small group work.

In section 4.05 (a) of the Code, it states, “Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional relationship. (b) Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others” (NASW, 1999, p. 23).

Conducting oneself with integrity and resolving conflict in a respectful manner are also demonstrations of professional competence.

In addition, a policy on Professional Expectations is included on every School of Social Work course syllabus. The policy is as follows:

Students will treat their classroom obligations as they should treat any serious professional engagement. This includes but is not limited to:

- 1) Preparing thoroughly for each session in accordance with the instructor’s request.
- 2) Arriving promptly and remaining until the end of each class meeting.
- 3) Participating fully and constructively in all classroom activities and discussions.
- 4) Displaying appropriate courtesy to all involved in the class sessions. Courteous behavior specifically entails communicating in a manner that respects, and is sensitive to, cultural, religious, sexual, and other individual differences in the SLU community.
- 5) Adhering to deadlines and timetables established by the instructor.
- 6) Submitting original papers written specifically for each course. The same paper is not to be submitted in more than one course. When writing a paper, students are allowed to use previously cited literature.

- 7) Providing constructive and courteous feedback to faculty members regarding their performance. Students should be as objective in their comments about instructors as they expect instructors to be in their evaluations of students.

If a student does not demonstrate appropriate professionalism, then a faculty member, student, or staff person can request a professional review with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The Associate Dean will then convene a small group of appropriate faculty to meet with the student. The outcome of the meeting may include any of the following: a discussion with documentation for the student's file only, professional probation with a contract, or a professional competence dismissal from the program. This review is intended to be strengths-oriented and educational in nature, with the goal of supporting the student's ongoing development and success within the program. The student may bring a person for support, but the support person may not speak for the student or ask questions during the meeting. Recording of the meeting will not be allowed. The Associate Dean will submit a report with recommendations to the Director of the MSW Program. The Program Director will then meet with the student to discuss the final decision and provide a written letter or contract. If the student desires to appeal the decision, then a written appeal must be presented to the Dean of SSW within 10 days of the notice of the outcome of the review meeting. The decision of the Dean of SSW is final.

P. Academic Expectations and Academic Integrity

Academic expectations include timely and successful completion of all assignments and tests in the courses as well as maintaining the necessary grades for courses and GPA for the MSW degree. Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of honesty and ethical behavior in all academic work, in accordance with the University Academic Integrity Policy. In the event of academic dishonesty, individual professors can decide either to handle the disciplinary situation themselves or refer the matter for formal review in accordance with the University's Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found in its entirety on the Office of the Provost's website and in the Saint Louis University Student Handbook.

Additionally, academic dishonesty is an ethical violation of the NASW Code of Ethics. As a part of ethical responsibilities as professionals, the Code outlines, "4.08 (a) Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed. (b) Social workers should honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others." (NASW, 2009)

XI. MSW STUDENT RESOURCES

A. Student Associations

MSW Student Association (MSWSA)

As a student in the MSW program, you are automatically a part of the MSW Student Association (MSWSA). The MSWSA elects a leadership group annually. The leadership group then engages fellow students in various activities that often include social events, service activities, community advocacy events, and other collaborations.

Additionally, the MSWSA offers leadership opportunities within the association and on School of Social Work governance committees. For more information, contact the assigned Faculty who serves as the advisor.

XII. University Resources

Career Services

314-977-2828

Career_services@slu.edu

Department of Public Safety

Emergencies: 314-977-3000

General Info: 314-977-2376

DPS@slu.edu

Housing and Residence Life

314-977-2811

reslife@slu.edu

IT Support Services

314-977-4000

ask@slu.edu

Pius XII Memorial Library

314-977-3093

SSW Librarian Liaison

Sarah Pugachev

sarah.pugachev@slu.edu

Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX

314-977-3838 or after hours 314-580-9730

conduct@slu.edu

Office of Student Responsibility and Community Standards

(314) 977-7326

conduct@slu.edu

Scholarship Questions

SSW Admissions

socialwork@slu.edu

Student Financial Services

314-977-2350

sfs@slu.edu

University Writing Services

314-977-5595

writing@slu.edu

University Counseling Center

314-977-8255

XIII. Professional Resources

[Council on Social Work Education \(CSWE\)](#)

NASW - National Association of Social Workers (professional organization)

socialworkers.org

NASW-Illinois

naswil.org/

NASW-Missouri

naswmo.socialworkers.org/

NABSW - National Association of Black Social Workers
nabsw.org/

SWAA - Social Welfare Action Alliance
socialwelfareactionalliance.org

Illinois Licensure
dfpr.com/profs/SocialWorker.asp

Missouri Licensure
pr.mo.gov/socialworkers.asp