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Time Schedule of Classes

A few weeks before the beginning of registration each term, the schedule of social work classes is made available in the hall outside of Room 2110 CL as well as being posted online at the School’s Web site (www.socialwork.pitt.edu). The University publishes an online Schedule of Classes three times a year, shortly before each registration period for Fall, Spring, and Summer Terms. This publication can be accessed through the student portal at www.my.pitt.edu.

Registration Dates

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<td>begins February 15, 2016 end May 9, 2016</td>
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<td>begin March 28, 2016 end August 29, 2016</td>
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All students should check the School of Social Work website for notices of special dates for registrations.

Registration Procedures

1. Check when the university has your enrollment appointment listed (your “enrollment appointment” is the date and time when you can begin to enroll online). To do this, go to www.my.pitt.edu and click the Link to “Student Center Login”. Then, click Self Service; then, click Student Center. Once in your Student Center, your enrollment appointment will be listed in the box entitled Enrollment Dates on the right-hand side of the page.

2. Schedule an appointment with your advisor prior to your online enrollment date and time. During the appointment, your advisor will review with you your program, interests, and career goals. You and your advisor will develop a course schedule both to meet your needs and to satisfy the curriculum requirements. Once you have met with your advisor and planned your schedule, the “Academic Advisement Service Indicator” will be removed by your advisor. This will allow you to complete self-registration on your enrollment appointment date. Please note: You will not be able to enroll for classes until you have met with your advisor and the academic advisement service indicator is removed.

3. Complete 2 copies of the Enrollment Form in BALLPOINT PEN. Make sure that your registration information is legible. PLEASE NOTE: Do not put the title of the course in the SUBJECT area of the Enrollment Form. This space is for the Department Abbreviation listed on the Social Work Schedule of Classes under the SUBJECT Heading. PLEASE NOTE:
When registering for Field credits, be sure to choose the exact number of credits for Field once you have entered the class number (5 digit number). If you do not choose the exact number of credits, the system will default to 1 credit.

4. You will use 1 copy of the Enrollment Form to complete self-registration on your scheduled enrollment appointment date and the other copy will be retained by your advisor. To complete the online self-registration, take the following steps:
   - Log in to my.pitt.edu with your University Computer Account username and password.
   - Next, click the Student Center Login link on the right side of the page.
   - Click Self Service
   - Click the Student Center folder. Once you have seen your advisor/know the courses in which you wish to enroll and your enrollment appointment date/time has arrived, you will enroll in those classes right from your Student Center page by clicking on the enroll link under "Academics" on your Student Center page. Add all classes to your enrollment shopping cart by entering the 5-digit class number in the “Enter Class Nbr” box and clicking on the “enter” box after each entry. Click the “Next” button to enter additional class numbers. When registering for field credits, be sure to choose the exact number of units (credits) for field from the pull-down box on the screen immediately following where you enter the class number. The system will default to 1 unit (credit) if you skip this step. When registering for foundation fieldwork, you must choose the foundation fieldwork class number with your field advisor’s name. When registering for concentration fieldwork, you must choose the concentration fieldwork class number with your academic advisor’s name. After entering all class numbers, click the “Proceed to Step 2 of 3” button to confirm all the classes in your cart. The Promissory Note displays above the shopping cart. After you have finished reading the agreement to pay, scroll down to click on the “Accept Terms & Register” button. A green checkmark in the status column means that you have successfully enrolled. A red X shows there was an error during the enrollment process.

5. Students planning to graduate in this academic year should complete a “GRADUATION APPLICATION” when registering for their final term. If you are fulfilling requirements for the Integrated Health Care or Gerontology certificate program, you must include the certificate information on the Graduation Application (pg. 2) for the Certificate. Failure to submit an application by the deadline will result in the assessment of a late fee or will prevent you from graduating at the anticipated time. You will also need to have any incomplete grades changed to reflect the completion of course or field work.

Add/Drop Procedures:

1. To ADD classes, Log in to your Student Center through the Pitt Portal (www.my.pitt.edu). Once you have logged in, click the “Enrollment” folder. Select “Enrollment: Add Classes” and follow the same steps you took to register initially for the term to add classes to your schedule.

2. To DROP classes, Log in to your Student Center through the Pitt Portal (www.my.pitt.edu). Once you have logged in, click the “Enrollment” folder. Select “Enrollment: Drop Classes” and click the box next to the class or classes you would like to drop; then click the “Drop Selected Classes” button. Review the information on the “Confirm your Selection” screen. Click the “Finish Dropping” button to drop the classes.
you have selected. On the “View Results” screen, a green checkmark will display next to the classes you successfully dropped.

Financial Penalties

A number of "penalty" fees are assessed upon students for late payment, late registration, late application for graduation, re-instatement, etc. Information on fees and the conditions under which they are to be paid is available in the Office of Student Accounts, G8 Thackeray. Students are urged to become acquainted with this information.

Cross Registration

Students in the School of Social Work are permitted to take courses in other departments of the University of Pittsburgh, such as Sociology, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, Psychology, Law, and in other universities. Procedures followed should be: (1) discussion with advisor about relevance of course to desired goal and (2) obtaining permission from the course instructor. There is a cooperative program in operation between the University of Pittsburgh and other universities and colleges in Pittsburgh (Carnegie-Mellon, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Duquesne). Students who wish to take courses in other universities should, after discussion with their advisors, obtain a cross-registration form from the Office of Student Records (2110 CL).

Transcript Review

Students are held responsible for reviewing all University of Pittsburgh transcripts and/or grade reports each term to assure themselves of accurate recordings of grades, credit hours earned, advanced standing, etc. All errors in the transcript should be reported immediately to one's advisor and to the Office of Student Records, Room 2110 CL.

Official University Record: GPA Calculation

A student's undergraduate or graduate Grade Point Average (GPA) is obtained by dividing the total number of letter grade credits taken as an undergraduate or graduate student by the number of credit hours for which grades were received. Only letter grades earned at the University of Pittsburgh (A, B, C, D, and F) will be used in computing the Grade Point Average.

Course Repeat Option

An undergraduate student receiving less than a C- grade or a graduate student receiving less than a B- grade in a required social work course must repeat the course. The grade earned by repeating a course is used in lieu of the grade originally earned. The original course and grade remain on the transcript and/or the academic record, however, the grade and credits originally earned are not counted in the calculation of the GPA.

To initiate this, the student, in consultation with the academic advisor and with the approval of the MSW Program Director and/or Associate Dean of Academic Affairs of the School, must file a Course Repeat card with the Office of Student Records, Room 2110 CL, after the repeated course has been successfully completed.
**Student Evaluation of Courses**

Students should be aware that, at the end of each term, they will be asked to evaluate the courses in which they are enrolled.

**Application for Graduation**

Students MUST APPLY for graduation during the term preceding the term in which they expect to be graduated, preferably at the time of registration for their final term, but no later than the deadline posted in the academic calendar. Graduate students must be registered for at least one credit in each 12-month period and for at least one credit in the term in which they plan to be graduated. The student should make contact with the advisor to determine the minimum number of required credits in the last term. Graduating students should not receive incomplete grades for courses taken in their final term.

*Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the student to see to it that he or she has the sufficient number of credits and has satisfied all requirements for graduation.*

Application forms for graduation are available from the Office of Student Records (Room 2110 CL) and must be returned to that Office.

Failure to apply for graduation before the deadline date will either result in the assessment of a late fee or will prevent you from graduating at the anticipated time.

All graduates should receive a final transcript which shows conferral of the degree approximately 6-8 weeks after the graduation date. If you do not receive this transcript within two months after graduation, please contact the Records Section of the University Registrar’s Office in Room G3, Thackeray Hall.

**Resignation**

Students who wish to drop all of their courses before the official end of the add/drop period should do so on-line. The student is not liable for term charges, and the registration will become void.

If, after the end of the add/drop period, a student wishing to resign from all of the courses registered, must notify Student Accounts by mail, phone or in person to have registration and term charges adjusted in accordance with the official University Termination of Registration Policy. This must be done even if the student is registered for one course. The student should notify their faculty advisor, program director, and each instructor via email of their resignation. There is a special resignation service phone line (412) 624-7585, which operates 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays. On this line, an answering machine will prompt the caller for some basic information.

Students who resign after the last day of the add/drop period are liable for a percentage of their charges and will be issued "R" grades, denoting resignation, on their transcripts. If a student resigns by mail, the percentage reduction of term charges will be determined by the postmark date on the envelope, considered to be the notification date of resignation. For further information go online to [www.bc.pitt.edu/students/resignation.html](http://www.bc.pitt.edu/students/resignation.html).
Refund Processing

Students are encouraged to use the direct deposit activity in PittPay in order to process all financial transactions.

All questions regarding other available options should be directed to the Student Payment Center at www.bc.pitt.edu/students/refunds.html.

Financial Holds

If a student does not pay the full account or make payment arrangements through Student Loans and Special Accounts by the due date on his or her Invoice, Student Accounts will place a financial hold on the student’s account. If the Invoice has been validated using an Aid Information Data Sheet or sponsor billing procedures, but the deferred aid credits or sponsor payments have not been received by the University within 30 days after validation, Student Accounts may place a financial hold on the account. A financial hold will deny student access to certain University services, such as registration, add/drop and receipt of grades, transcripts and diplomas.

A late fee of $50.00 will be charged to a student’s account if payment is not made by the first due date. If payment is not received by the second due date, in addition to the placement of the financial hold, $50 will be charged to the account. Once the account is forwarded to Collections, an additional $100 will be charged.

When the account has been paid in full, the financial hold will be automatically released. When the financial hold has been released, the student may request a release of grade report(s) if it was withheld because of the financial hold on account. If payment is made by mail, the student must wait until the payment has been recorded to request a grade report.

No-Smoking Policy

Smoking of any kind is not permitted on the premises of the School of Social Work.

Academic Policies

The online handbooks aim to provide the most current information possible; sites are updated regularly. However, information contained in the MSW Handbook is subject to change at any time. The handbooks are intended to serve as a general source of information and are in no way intended to state contractual terms.

Bachelor’s Degree Requirement for MSW Program Entry (#15:7)

An individual must possess a bachelor’s degree from a college or university accredited by a recognized regional accrediting association to matriculate in the MSW Program. Applicants admitted to the MSW program prior to completion of their undergraduate degree must, before the first day of Fall Semester classes, submit to the School’s Office of Admissions an official transcript from the undergraduate institution that shows the degree awarded. An individual will not be permitted to begin classes unless the official final transcript is received.
Credit for Life, Volunteer, or Employment Experience (#25:4)

Academic or field education credit shall not be granted in the MSW Program for life, volunteer, or employment experience.

Policy on Provisional Admission (#15:11)

This policy codifies the intent and language of acceptance letters (i.e., current practice).

Definition

An applicant whose cumulative undergraduate Grade Point Average (GPA) falls below the 3.00 level required for admission to the MSW Program may be admitted on provisional status. Admission on provisional status is at the discretion of the Director of Admissions and the Admissions Committee, based on a review of application materials. Applicants with a GPA below 3.00 may be asked to submit additional materials to further evaluate readiness for graduate study.

Requirements

A student admitted on provisional status must demonstrate satisfactory academic performance in the MSW Program in order to be removed from that status. Satisfactory academic performance is defined as:

A. Students who enter the MSW Program without advanced standing (i.e., do not have a bachelor’s degree in social work awarded by a Council on Social Work Education accredited undergraduate social work program within seven academic calendar years prior to MSW Program admissions), must achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 within the four foundation courses and field credits, a total of 12-15 credits. These courses are normally completed in the first semester of full-time study or during the first two semesters of part-time study.

B. Students who enter the MSW Program with advanced standing (i.e., have a bachelor’s degree in social work awarded by a Council on Social Work Education accredited undergraduate social work program within seven academic calendar years prior to MSW Program admission) must achieve a minimum GPA of 3.00 in their first 12 credits. If awarded full advanced standing credit, these courses typically include the first required concentration skill course, second-level HBSE, a general elective and concentration field. These courses are normally completed by the end of the first semester of full-time study or by the end of second semester of part-time study.

Procedures

The course work to be completed and other conditions for enrollment will be determined by the MSW Program Director. Provisional students will enter into field at the discretion of the MSW Program Director and the Director of Field Education until satisfactory academic performance has been demonstrated and the provisional status cleared, even if this results in a student having to extend his or her enrollment in the MSW Program beyond the two years needed by full-time students to graduate. However, in no case will the period of enrollment be permitted to extend beyond the four-year limit on earning the MSW degree.
Failure to demonstrate satisfactory academic performance within one (1) semester of full-time study (12 or 15 credits) or two (2) semesters of part-time study (12 credits) by a provisionally-admitted student will result in dismissal without possibility of re-admission to the MSW Program.

**Prerequisites in the MSW Program (#15:8)**

**Definition**

The MSW Program has one (1) admission prerequisite: satisfactory completion of an undergraduate or graduate 3-credit course in either descriptive statistics or quantitative analysis.

**Procedure**

It is **required** that all admitted students complete a 3-credit course in either descriptive statistics or quantitative analysis prior to the start of the MSW Program. Students who are admitted to the School without having completed a statistics or quantitative analysis course must successfully complete this coursework during either the spring or summer semester prior to the start of the Fall semester.

All students have the responsibility to submit an official transcript to the School’s Admissions Office verifying successful completion of this prerequisite requirement. **No student will be allowed to matriculate into the program without successfully meeting this requirement.**

Students will be allowed to register for courses prior to the start of the semester. However, documentation of successful completion of the prerequisite must be submitted prior to the first day of Fall semester in order for the student to attend their courses. The School will administratively drop the student from all their courses and their admission will be deferred for the following academic year if documentation of successful completion of the prerequisite has not been received by the Admissions Office.

**Advanced Standing, Transfer Credit, or Exemption in the MSW Program (#25:2)**

**Definitions:**

*Advanced Standing* is defined as the awarding of academic credit toward a degree by the School of Social Work for prior baccalaureate course or field work completed at an undergraduate social work program when such work is evaluated as entirely comparable.

*Transfer Credit* is defined as the awarding of academic credit toward a degree by the School of Social Work for post-baccalaureate course or field work completed at an academic institution when such work is evaluated as entirely comparable.

*Exemption* is defined as the waiving of a required academic course by the School of Social Work following an evaluation of the student’s previous work that is determined to be essentially identical to the required course being waived. Such an exemption does not, however, reduce the number of credits required for graduation.

Consistent with the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards, the School of Social Work’s MSW Program does not grant advanced
standing, transfer credit, or exemption for prior life, volunteer, or employment experience (see Policy #25:4).

A. Persons who enter the University of Pittsburgh - School of Social Work with a degree granted within the last seven academic calendar years by a CSWE accredited undergraduate social work program may have the degree requirements for the MSW degree reduced up to a maximum of twelve course credits and six field credits. The student may also be eligible to receive exemption from those foundation courses for which advanced standing credit was not granted. The specific credits reduced or exemptions granted will depend on the curriculum of the undergraduate program from which the student received the degree and this School’s program at the Master's level. This evaluation will be done by the MSW Program Director, or his or her designate, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

The MSW Program Director, or his or her designate, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will also evaluate the student’s prior social work field experience. Advanced standing for field experience will lead to a credit reduction on the following basis:

- 400 and above hours of undergraduate supervised field experience will lead to a reduction of six credits. Under 400 hours of supervised field experience will lead to no credit reduction.

Advanced Standing granted under the provisions of this paragraph is subject to the limitations of paragraph E below.

B. Persons who have begun but have not completed one full year of Masters level work within the last seven academic calendar years at a master of social work program and who are admitted to the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work for completion of the Master of Social Work degree may receive up to a maximum of twelve course credits and six field credits. The student may also be eligible to receive exemption from those foundation courses for which transfer credit was not granted. The specific transfer credits or exemptions granted will depend on the curriculum of the master of social work program the student attended, the courses the student completed, and this School’s program at the Masters level. This evaluation will be performed by the MSW Program Director, or his or her designate, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Transfer credit for field experience will lead to a credit reduction as described in paragraph A above. If exemptions are sought for courses beyond those defined as part of this School’s foundation curriculum, the evaluation will be done by the MSW Program Director, or his or her designate, and the faculty coordinator of the course for which the exemption is being requested in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Transfer credit or exemption granted under the provisions of this paragraph is subject to the limitations of paragraph E below.

C. Persons who have completed one full year of Master's level work within the last seven academic calendar years at another master of social work program and who are admitted to the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work for completion of their Master of Social Work degree will be granted a maximum of one full year (30 credits: 24 class and 6 field work) of transfer credit by this School. The specific transfer credits granted will be determined by the MSW Program Director (or his or her designate), who, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, will review the student’s transcript. The
student will be required to complete before graduation all distribution requirements of this MSW Program’s curriculum.

For the purposes of granting transfer credit under this paragraph, the definition of a master of social work program in paragraph B above will apply. International students who have taken graduate-level social work courses from a program and who are interested in obtaining transfer credit must submit their transcript to the Council for a determination of equivalency.

Transfer credit granted under the provisions of this paragraph is subject to the limitations of paragraph E below.

D. Persons who, within the last seven academic calendar years, have completed post-baccalaureate academic work at an academic institution in some discipline or profession other than social work and who are admitted to the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work’s Masters Program are entitled to an evaluation of their academic record for possible exemptions and/or transfer credits. In cases where exemptions are sought, the evaluation will be done by the MSW Program Director, or his or her designate, and the faculty coordinator of the course for which the exemption is being requested, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Exemptions for MSW foundation courses will be determined via available examinations only.

When transfer credits are requested, the evaluation will be performed by the MSW Program Director, or his or her designate, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and, as appropriate, the faculty coordinator of the course for which the transfer credits are being sought. Transfer credits for post-baccalaureate academic work completed in a discipline or profession other than social work will not be applied to MSW foundation courses. A maximum of twelve (12) course credits may be granted as transfer credits.

Exemption or transfer credit will not be granted for internship experiences completed during post-baccalaureate work in a discipline or profession other than social work. For the purposes of granting transfer credit or exemption under this paragraph, post-baccalaureate academic work means graduate-level course work taken in an academic institution.

Exemption or transfer credit granted under the provisions of this paragraph is subject to the limitations of paragraph E below.

E. Limitations

1. Advanced standing credit, transfer credit, or exemption for prior baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate work carried into the Master’s Program will be limited to course and field work taken within seven academic calendar years prior to the students beginning this Master’s Program. Except in the case of a person covered in paragraph C above, no student may have academic requirements reduced by more than a total of 12 course credits or field education requirements reduced by more than 6 field credits. There are no limitations to the number of exemptions that may be granted to a student.

2. Advanced standing, transfer credits, and exemptions will be granted after a review of the student’s prior course work, the student's knowledge and mastery of that content, the course's correspondence to the School's course for which advanced standing, transfer
credit, or exemption is being requested, and the consent of the school officials as outlined in paragraphs A through D above. All final decisions regarding advanced standing, transfer credit, or exemption are the sole discretion of the School of Social Work.

3. In the event of a negative decision regarding the granting of advanced standing, transfer credit, or exemption, the student may ask the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs to reconsider the decision. The decision of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is final.

4. Academic work or field education completed at an social work program or other academic institution will be considered toward advanced standing, transfer credit, or exemption only if the grade earned in the course (or course sequence) is equivalent to the grade A, A-, B+, B, B-, or S as defined by the University of Pittsburgh.

5. The number of credits reduced or granted for a given course can neither exceed the number on the transcript from the school where they were earned nor the number earned in the corresponding course at the University of Pittsburgh.

NOTE: In any case of advanced standing, transfer credit, or exemption, students must complete all distribution requirements in the foundation and concentration curricula, even if this extends their class credits beyond the requirement for other students.

It is the responsibility of the MSW Program Director to file a "Certificate of Advanced Standing" and/or a Certificate of Transfer Credit and/or a "Certificate of Exemption" in the student's folder.

**Concentration Requirements in the MSW Program (#5:5)**

There are two skill concentrations offered by the MSW Program: Direct Practice with Individuals, Families, and Small Groups (Direct Practice) and Community, Organization, and Social Action (COSA). Students are required to take at least four skill courses in their concentration to complete their MSW degree requirements. Additional elective course work must be completed to fulfill the credit requirements for the MSW degree.

Direct Practice with Individuals, Families, and Small Groups (Direct Practice): The required courses include: Models of Intervention and an Advanced Direct Practice course. Two additional skill electives are required from among a list of available electives offered each term. Second-level HBSE, Research, and Policy courses that have content relevant to Direct Practice must also be completed. Finally, a concentration-relevant field placement must be completed.

Community, Organization, and Social Action (COSA): The required courses include: Community Organization and Social Administration and two additional skill electives from among a list of available COSA electives offered each term. Second-level HBSE, Research, and Policy courses that have content relevant to COSA must also be completed, along with a concentration-relevant field placement.
**Policy on Change of Concentration (#5.3)**

**Definition**

Students indicate in their application to the MSW Program the concentration they intend to complete. To request a change of concentration after beginning the MSW Program, students must show that the change would contribute directly to their educational goals and career plans. Students also must be able to demonstrate in a projected plan of study that they will be able to complete all classes and field requirements in the new concentration within four years of their date of entry into the MSW Program, as specified by the Council on Social Work Education. Such requests should be made and finalized no later than the end of the Drop/Add period of the second semester of matriculation for full-time students and the third semester of matriculation for part-time students.

If both concentration chairpersons approve the student’s request, they will forward their decision in writing to the MSW Program Director. A Change of Concentration form, signed by both concentration chairpersons and the MSW Program Director, will be placed in the student’s folder.

**Procedures**

Students seeking to change their concentrations should first discuss the matter with their faculty advisor. After meeting with the faculty advisor, the student can make formal written requests to the two concentration chairpersons. The student should discuss his or her intentions with each concentration chair. Among the concerns to be addressed at these meetings are:

a. Is the student presently being supported by a grant or funding source that limits the concentration that can be pursued?

b. Is there a field placement available in the new concentration that would foster the student’s educational goals and career plans?

c. Is there anything in the student's background, experience, or prior education that mitigates against or supports the request for a change?

d. Is there any indication (from the advisor, the present or the new concentration chairperson) that the request for change is not educationally sound or is being made for a non-educational purpose?

e. Regardless of enrollment status (i.e., full or part time), can the MSW degree requirements be completed within a four-year time period starting with the date of entry into the MSW program (i.e., when the student started taking classes in the MSW program)?

**Criteria for Directed Study (#27:1)**

**A. Definition**

A directed study is defined as a student-initiated experience, guided by a faculty member, that significantly supplements the social work curriculum and conforms to academic course content expectations appropriate to the student’s degree level. This definition of directed study is broadly conceived, and subsumes the category of "reading course." It is
recommended that directed study be the generic title for all courses meeting the above definition.

1. A directed study course may offer 1, 2, or 3 credits depending on the level of work required.

2. A directed study course should provide a supplementary educational experience focusing primarily on one of the following areas:
   
a. Exploration of the existing literature in a specified content area.
b. Engaging in research that contributes to knowledge and practice applications in a content area.
c. Development of professional materials.

B. Statement of Purpose

The major purpose of directed study is to provide students with the opportunity to explore in depth a specific area of social work interest beyond that available in regularly scheduled courses. This means of tailoring educational content to students' learning goals and backgrounds adds flexibility and diversity to the standard curriculum. Directed study can either be devoted to the pursuit of advanced knowledge in a specialized area, or to the mastery of a broad area relevant to social work but not included in course offerings. With the exception of the Directed Study in Research available to MSW students, a directed study cannot be used as a substitute for required or prerequisite courses.

Directed study should:

1. Be an extension of a student's previous academic and/or professional development.
2. Represent a rigorous and challenging intellectual and professional undertaking.
3. Demonstrate integration with the student's overall academic career.
4. Exhibit congruence with the academic and professional thrust of the school.
5. Be geared to creative endeavors.

MSW students considering a Directed Study in Research in place of the second-level research course:

1. Should have received a grade of at least “A-“ in the foundation research course or been exempt from the foundation research course via examination. Those entering with advance standing should have received a grade of at least “A-“ in the undergraduate research course.

2. Should not be in their last term of the study and anticipating graduation.

   The rationale for the first restriction reflects the level of performance needed to undertake an independent research project under a faculty member’s supervision. The rationale for the second restriction is based on the fact that research projects can result in “I” grades because of unavoidable delays in data collection and/or analysis, and the intent is to avoid delaying a student’s graduation because of the vicissitudes of data collection projects.
C. Faculty Participation

In order to meet the definition of a directed study and to fulfill its educational purpose, the reading, research, or field activities delineated above, while independently performed by the student, assumes faculty contribution which guides and enhances the student's progress. This faculty contribution is as essential a component to directed study as it is to any course offering.

Faculty participation is a voluntary endeavor. Faculty members are expected to meet regularly with the students doing directed study courses with them. Directed study will not serve as a substitute for basic faculty teaching workload. It is imperative, therefore, that faculty members be certain they have sufficient time available before consenting to offer a directed study and that their respective competencies encompass the study area being proposed.

D. Directed Study Plan

All students engaging in directed study should have a written study plan developed in concert with the faculty mentor. At minimum, the written study plan must address the following criteria:

1. Brief but concise statement of educational objectives of the directed study.

2. Clear statement of the issues or problems under analysis and the rationale for selecting them.

3. Selected bibliography or other similar documents to be examined.

4. Statement of the methodology the student will follow in implementing the directed study project.

5. Statement identifying the products (e.g., paper, report, literature review, presentation, computer-aided formats) of the directed study project and their due dates.

6. Statement describing how the Directed Study grade will be computed.

E. Directed Study Evaluation

The faculty evaluation of directed study should assess the student's understanding of the study area. Minimal criteria should be that:

1. There be a tangible product resulting from the study.

2. The evaluation carefully assesses whether the original educational objectives set out in the directed study plan have been fulfilled.

3. The work clearly demonstrates the student's mastery and comprehension of the subject.
F. Procedures

1. Students wishing to pursue a directed study should identify the subject and discuss with their faculty advisor the appropriateness and feasibility of doing a directed study given their overall course of study plan for their degree.

2. Students should then consult with members of the faculty with whom they would like to work and who they believe have expertise in the proposed subject area.

3. After a faculty member and student have agreed to a directed study program (e.g., subject, hours, format, product(s), due date(s), and evaluation procedure), a final one to two page summary of the entire plan must be signed by the faculty member and student. Copies of the signed summary must be submitted to the Student Records Office for inclusion in the student’s folder and to the relevant Program Director.

Statute of Limitations for School of Social Work Degrees

Leaves of Absence (#26:1) - MSW Program

There is a four-year limitation on the earning of the MSW degree. The four-year period is counted from the date of entry into the program for four full academic calendar years. Under extenuating circumstances (listed below), an advisor can recommend an extension of time to the MSW Program Director and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. If approved, the period of extension and conditions for completing the program will be recorded in the student’s folder, with a copy sent to the student. Extenuating circumstances include the following:

   a. extended illness of the student
   b. extended personal emergency
   c. involuntary mobilization into the US military unit
   d. death of a close family member

Under special conditions, MSW students may be granted one leave of absence. A maximum leave of one full academic year may be granted to master’s students. A student wishing to take a leave of absence must submit in advance to the MSW Program Director a written request that indicates the length and rationale for the leave. The MSW Program Director and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will review the request. If approved, the time of the leave will not count against the total time allowed for the degree being sought by the student. Readmission following an approved leave of absence is a formality.

Academic Standards in the MSW Program (#25:2)

A. In the MSW Program, required courses must be taken for a letter grade (see Grading Policy). Should a student receive a grade below a “B-” in any required course, the course must be taken again. The option of re-doing a required course in which a grade of “C+,” “C”, “C-“ or "F" was earned can be exercised once only per course. The second grade earned is the grade that will be counted in the student's QPA, provided a Course Repeat Option form has been completed. A student will be dismissed, without expectation of
readmission, from the MSW Program if he or she does not receive a grade of “B-“ or higher in a required course on the second attempt.

B. Some courses in the MSW Program build directly on others and can be thought of as constituting a sequence. Typically, these sequences involve required skill and substantive courses. Thus, Community Organization or Social Administration and Models of Intervention, the first required COSA and Direct Practice skill courses, are premised on students having achieved basic competence in the two foundation skill courses (Generalist Foundations of Social Work Practice and Foundations of Social Work Practice with Diverse Populations). Similarly, the more advanced required skill courses in each concentration build on the first required skill course in the concentration. Sequences exist as well with research, human behavior and social environment, and social welfare/policy courses, wherein the second-level courses build on the foundation courses in each of these areas. For courses offered as part of a sequence, students must receive a grade of “B-“ or better in an earlier course (or courses) in order to register for a more advanced course.

C. Field education is graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/NC) basis. Students are expected to demonstrate satisfactory performance in their field-based learning assignments. Should a student receive a grade of "NC" in a field placement, the field credits for that placement will not be counted towards the number needed to satisfy MSW degree requirements. The option of re-doing a field placement in which a grade of "NC" was earned can be exercised once only. A student will be dismissed without expectation of re-admission from the MSW Program if he or she does not demonstrate satisfactory performance in a second field placement opportunity. Field placement grades are not included in the calculation of student’s GPA.

D. Students in the MSW Program must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00. If, after completing at least nine (9) quality point credits, a student’s cumulative GPA falls below 3.00, the student will be placed on academic probation. Students will be allowed to register for nine (9) to twelve (12) additional quality point credits, typically completed in one term by full-time students, to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.00. Part-time students will be allowed to register for a total of twelve (12) credits over two (2) consecutive academic terms to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0. Failure to do so in both of the above will result in dismissal without possibility of readmission to the MSW Program.

E. To qualify for graduation, students must have a final cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher. No student will be permitted to graduate from the MSW Program with a final grade of “C+”, “C”, “C-”, “D+”, “D”, “D-” or “F” in a required course or an "NC" in field placement. A student will be permitted to graduate from the MSW Program with a “C+”, “C”, “C-” in an elective course (not including required elective courses\(^1\)) as long as the student’s cumulative QPA is 3.00 or higher.

\(^1\) A required elective course is defined as one that fulfills concentration, specialization, or certificate requirements. Required courses are defined as the five foundation courses, the required concentration skill courses, the second-level human behavior, policy, and research courses, and any specific courses needed to fulfill specialization or certificate requirements.
Academic Probation in the MSW Program (#9:6)

A student in the MSW Program will be placed on academic probation if:

1. after completing at least nine (9) grade-point credits, his or her cumulative GPA falls below 3.00;

2. he or she receives a grade lower than a “B-“ in a required course; or

3. he or she receives an NC grade for field placement (SWGEN 2099, SWINT 2099, or SWCOSA 2099).

The MSW Program Director will send a letter to the student and his or her advisor notifying them of the student’s placement on academic probation. The letter will advise the student and his or her advisor of the date and location of an academic review meeting, to be convened by the MSW Program Director, to discuss the terms of the student's academic probation. A copy of this letter will be placed in the student’s folder. Depending on the outcome of the meeting, a student placed on academic probation may be required to modify his or her course of study in the MSW Program, including changing the academic courses for which the student is registered and/or delaying entry into or suspending field placement.

Academic Review (#12:1)

SECTION I. Statement of Purpose and Definition

A. The purpose of Academic Review is to provide a mechanism for insuring qualitative standards of achievement for degree students in the School of Social Work. Achievement embraces field-based performance and learning, grades in academic courses, and reasonable rates of progress toward completion of degree requirements.

B. Academic review is a problem solving and decision making process that seeks to establish just procedures for reaching decisions on those matters defined herein.

SECTION II. Types of Academic Review

A. Mandatory Review

Under certain conditions, consistent with the educational responsibilities of the School, academic review proceedings are required. For the Master's Program, this would be obtained in instances where:

1. a student’s cumulative GPA falls below the 3.00 level on a 4.00 scale;

2. a student receives a grade below a “B-“ in a required course;

3. a student receives a grade of NC in field.

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2 A required elective course is defined as one that fulfills concentration, specialization, or certificate requirements. Required courses are defined as the five foundation courses, the required concentration skill courses, the second-level human behavior, policy, and research courses, and any specific courses needed to fulfill specialization or certificate requirements.
B. Discretionary Review

This pertains to academic matters not specified above such as the accumulation of "G" or "I" grades, a term GPA of less than 3.00 for an MSW student, two or more grades below “B” for an MSW student, and/or other instances as set forth in Section I, paragraph A. Discretionary review is not meant to by-pass the relationship between the student and her or his faculty advisor (or field liaison). Nor is it meant to preclude problem solving by these parties. Rather, discretionary review offers a formal venue for addressing and attempting to resolve impediments to a student’s academic performance and progress.

SECTION III. Process

A. The director of the program in which the student is enrolled shall send written notification of the academic review to the student and to her or his advisor. The notification shall indicate the reason for the review, the parties being asked to attend, and the date, time, and location of the meeting. Notification and scheduling of reviews shall occur as soon after the start of the following term as possible. A copy of the notification shall be placed in the student’s folder.

The director of the program in which the student is enrolled, or his or her designate, shall convene the academic review meeting. The meeting shall include the student and his or her advisor. As appropriate, course or field instructors, Office of Field Education staff, or other relevant parties may be asked to attend.

The discussion shall seek to arrive at a plan that will permit the student to improve his or her academic performance and to make reasonable progress toward his or her degree. Such a plan may entail:

1. modification of the student’s current registration.
2. delay or suspension of field placement.
3. specification of a course of study to be followed to complete the degree.
4. use of academic support services.
5. use of other supportive services or a short-term leave of absence when significant personal issues are impeding the student’s academic performance and progress.

The time frame, consistent with the length of time specified in the Policy on Academic Probation, for demonstrating satisfactory performance and progress shall be noted in the plan.

A written copy of the recommended plan shall be sent to the student no later than three working days after the meeting. A copy of the plan shall be placed in the student’s folder.

B. Referral to the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee

The matter shall be referred to the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee, except in those instance where failure to demonstrate satisfactory academic performance results in dismissal, if:

1. it is not possible to develop a plan during the academic review meeting;
2. subsequent to accepting the plan, the student does not abide by its provisions or fails to demonstrate satisfactory performance and progress.

The director of the program in which the student is enrolled shall submit a request to the Chair of the School’s Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee that the Committee be convened. The rationale for the request should identify:

1. a statement of the problem;
2. efforts at resolution by the faculty advisor, other involved parties, and the Program Director;
3. a summary of the academic review meeting, including the plan accepted, if appropriate;
4. the Program Director's recommendation to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

The Chair shall schedule a meeting of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee within 15 working days of his or her receipt of the Program Director’s request. He or she shall notify Committee members of the scheduled meeting and shall make available for their review, no later than three days before the meeting, a file to be kept in a central location that contains:

1. the Program Director’s request;
2. other documents considered during the academic review;
3. materials provided by the student, if any.

The Chair shall inform the student by certified special delivery mail of the scheduled Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee meeting and shall request that the student attend the Committees meeting, if he or she chooses. The student will be informed that she or he can submit materials for the Committee’s consideration; The Chair must receive such materials no later than three working days before the meeting. The student shall be advised that she or he may invite up to two faculty members and/or students to attend the meeting with her or him; however, a student shall not be permitted to bring as a representative an attorney or law student. The letter shall include a copy of the School’s Policy on Academic Review.

No later than three working days prior to the meeting, the Chair shall send the student by certified special delivery mail a copy of the materials made available to the Committee for review.

The Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee proceedings (exclusive of the Committee's deliberations to arrive at a decision) must be recorded. The meeting should proceed in five (5) major phases identified below:

**Phase 1: Statement of Problem**

The director of the program in which the student is enrolled should offer a clear statement of the problem(s) under consideration. Discussion during this phase should be limited to a charting of the historical development of the problem(s) and prior attempts at resolution and to defining the specific problem(s) to be addressed by the Committee.
Phase 2: Identification of Facts

All pertinent information regarding the problem(s) under consideration should be presented to the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee. Such information may be provided in the form of written statements submitted to the Committee via the Chair and/or in the form of direct information that may be given at the request of the Chair.

Only those persons who have been identified prior to the date of the proceedings to provide direct information may appear before the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee. These individuals must appear separately and are not to remain to hear information from other persons scheduled to appear. Exceptions can be made when the information to be provided by two (2) or more persons is so closely related that separate appearances would seriously diminish the value of the information to be provided. The Chair shall determine the order in which persons who are to provide direct testimony are to appear before the Committee. Any member, and each of the parties present, shall be permitted to question each person providing direct information.

Phase 3: Student Responses

If present, the student and the maximum of two (2) representatives as previously designated (faculty member and/or student) must have an opportunity to address the Committee.

Phase 4: Committee Deliberations

Only the members of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee are to be present for the deliberations. All persons who are not members of the Committee are to be excused and the tape recorder must be turned off prior to the beginning of the deliberations.

Phase 5: Voting

The Committee must arrive at a decision. A minimum of five (5) concurring votes is required for a Committee decision. The Committee can uphold the recommendations of the academic review, accept the student’s recommendations in place of those of the academic review, or formulate its own recommendations.

If the student is available, she or he will be informed of the Committee’s decision immediately upon completion of the meeting.

The Committee via the Chair shall submit the following material to the Dean, who shall make an independent review of the hearing proceedings.

1. the complete file as available to the Committee;
2. a summary of the proceedings;
3. the tapes of the proceedings intact;
4. the signed recommendations of the Committee

The Dean may affirm or overrule the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee on any matter, in whole or in part, or may remand the matter for further consideration. Upon
completion of such additional proceedings, if any, and within a reasonable time the Dean shall issue a final decision.

SECTION IV. Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee

A. Permanent Members

The Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee is to be composed of seven (7) permanent members of whom four (4) are faculty persons appointed by the Dean and three (3) are degree students selected by the Student Executive Council. It is required that the student representation consist of one (1) individual from each degree level (undergraduate, master's, and Ph.D.).

B. Alternate Members

There are to be a total of seven (7) alternate members of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee. Four (4) of the alternates are to be faculty persons appointed by the Dean and are to be designated as 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Alternate. Three (3) of the alternates are to be students selected by the Student Executive Council and are to be designated as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Alternate. If a vacancy occurs, a replacement shall be immediately appointed.

The Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee can be convened only when there are seven (7) members present of whom four (4) are faculty and three (3) are students. In the event that permanent member(s) cannot attend the initial Committee session for any given review proceeding, the Chair must contact the appropriate alternate (faculty or student) in the sequence in which they were designated. The Alternate(s) would then serve on the Committee for the duration of those proceedings.

All appointments to the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee are to be for a twelve-month term. The Dean is to submit a written request for identification of student members and student alternates to the Student Executive Council. This request should specifically mention the requirement set forth above.

C. Chairperson

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs shall serve as the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Committee without the benefit of vote. In the extended absence of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the person appointed by the Dean to perform the Associate Dean’s functions shall serve as Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee. If the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is not available, the Dean shall appoint an alternate chair from among the Administrative Officers.

D. Conflict of Interest

Any faculty member, class or field, with a current academic relationship with the student under review may be included in the discussions, but will not be included in the formal deliberations and vote.
In the event that circumstances involving conflict of interest results in the elimination of permanent members and the three (3) alternates in either category, the Dean shall appoint faculty replacements and the Student Executive Council shall identify student replacements.

SECTION V. Review and Appeal

A student may seek to have a Dean’s final decision reviewed by the Provost, who may seek the advice of the University Review Board, or the student may appeal to the University Review Board, whose recommendation shall be made to the Provost. The action of the Provost, taken with or without the advice of the University Review Board, shall constitute an exhaustion of all required institutional remedies.

SECTION VI. Timeliness

It is the responsibility of all parties, including administrative officers, to take prompt action in order that grievances may be resolved quickly and fairly. While no explicit time limit could apply to all cases, failure to use diligence in seeking redress may constitute grounds for denial of a hearing or other relief, especially if prejudice results. Parties have the right to seek review of the Provost or to petition the University Review Board for an appeal from a decision of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee within five (5) working days of the date of the decision letter.

SECTION VII. Retention of Materials

The Dean is to be responsible for safeguarding the materials given to him or her by the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee. All materials should be retained no less than two (2) years and may be retained longer at the Dean's discretion.

Academic Integrity (#11:1)

A. Student Obligations

A student has an obligation to exhibit honesty and to respect the ethical standards of the social work profession in carrying out his or her academic and field placement assignments. Without limiting the application of this principle, a student may be found to have violated this obligation if he or she:

1. Refers during an academic evaluation to materials or sources, or employs devices, not authorized by the faculty member

2. Provides assistance during an academic evaluation to another person in a manner not authorized by the faculty member.

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3 There may be instances where the charging party may more appropriately invoke the University of Pittsburgh Student Code of Conduct and Judicial Procedures. This may occur where the alleged wrong mainly involves factual determinations and not academic (including field placement) issues.
3. Receives assistance during an academic evaluation from another person in a manner not authorized by the faculty member.

4. Engages in unauthorized possession, buying, selling, obtaining, or using any materials intended to be used as an instrument of academic evaluation in advance of its administration.

5. Acts as a substitute for another person in any academic evaluation process.

6. Utilizes a substitute in any academic evaluation proceeding.


8. Depends on the aid of others in a manner expressly prohibited by the faculty member, in the research, preparation, creation, writing, or publication of work to be submitted for academic credit or evaluation.

9. Provides aid to another person, knowing such aid is expressly prohibited by the faculty member, in the research, preparation, creation, performing, or publication of work to be submitted for academic credit or evaluation.

10. Presents as one's own, for academic evaluation, the ideas, representations, or words of another person or persons without customary and proper acknowledgment of sources.

11. Submits the work of another person in a manner which represents the work to be one's own.

12. Knowingly permits one's work to be submitted by another person without the faculty member's authorization.

13. Attempts to influence or change one's academic evaluation or record for reasons other than achievement or merit.

14. Indulges, during a class (or examination) session in which one is a student, in conduct which is so disruptive as to infringe upon the rights of the faculty member or fellow students.

15. Indulges, during a field placement in which one is a student, in conduct which is so disruptive as to infringe upon the rights of the field instructor, other staff, or clients.

16. Fails to cooperate, if called upon, in the investigation or disposition of any allegation of dishonesty pertaining to a fellow student.

17. Violates the canons of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers. Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate decorum and ethical behavior in class and field situations as well as in their contacts with the broader community. Specific agency policies concerning professional conduct may also be applicable for students in fieldwork, especially in those host settings where another profession is predominant.
B. Statement on Plagiarism

In order to help students avoid problems in infractions against academic integrity, the statement below will describe plagiarism and its interpretation within the School of Social Work and the University.

According to Webster’s International Dictionary, plagiarism is the act or instance of stealing or passing off as one's own the ideas or words of another, or presenting as one's own the idea or product derived from an existing source. When submitting a paper or written work to a faculty member, appropriate acknowledgment must be given in the paper as to whose work is being directly quoted, paraphrased, or used as the source of ideas or data. This means using correct citations and referencing according to an accepted academic style manual. Most social work classes require students to follow the referencing style set out in the most current APA manual.

It is also inappropriate and unacceptable (without prior approval by the faculty members involved) to submit a paper written for one class as a completed assignment for a different class. At times, a student may wish to study a subject in depth from varying viewpoints and to meet requirements for different courses. However, consultation with and approval of both faculty members is necessary.

C. Procedures for Adjudication

No student should be subject to an adverse finding that he or she committed an offense related to academic integrity, and no sanction should be imposed relating thereto, except in accordance with procedures appropriate for disposition of the particular matter involved. The degree of formality of proceedings, the identity of the decision maker or decision makers, and other related aspects properly reflect such considerations as the severity of the potential sanction, the probable impact upon the student, and the extent to which matters of professional judgment are essential in arriving at an informed decision. In all cases, however, the objective is to provide fundamental fairness to the student as well as an orderly means for arriving at a decision, starting first with the individual faculty member and then with designated administrative officers or bodies.

These Guidelines are not meant to address differences of opinion over grades issued by faculty in exercising good faith professional judgments of student work. They are meant to address matters in which a faculty member intends to penalize a student based upon an alleged breach of academic integrity. In matters of academic integrity the succeeding procedural steps must be followed:

1. Any member of the University community who has evidence may bring to the attention of the faculty member a complaint that a student has failed, in one or more respects, to meet faithfully the obligations specified in the above Section A. Acting on his or her own evidence, and/or on the basis of evidence submitted to the faculty member, the faculty member will advise the student that he or she has reason to believe that the student has

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4 Faculty, for the purposes of this policy, includes those who are full-time and part-time as well as doctoral student TAs.
committed an offense related to academic integrity, and the student will be afforded an opportunity to respond. If the accused student and the faculty member accept a specific resolution offered by either of them, the matter will be considered closed if both parties sign a written agreement to that effect, and submit it to the Office of the Dean. The Office of the Dean will maintain a written record of the agreement, signed by the student and the faculty member. These records are not to be added to the student's individual file, and they are to be destroyed when the student graduates or otherwise terminates registration. The Office of the Dean may provide such information identifying an individual student for the following use.

a. to a faculty member who is involved with a student integrity violation at the initial stage and who wishes to use this previous record in determining whether a resolution between the faculty member and the student or an Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee hearing may be most appropriate, especially in the case of repeat offenders; and, to the School’s Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee after a decision of guilt or innocence has been made in a case, but before a sanction has been recommended.

b. If an agreed upon resolution between the faculty member and the student cannot be reached, the faculty member will file a written statement of charges with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (hereafter the Academic Dean). Such statement should set forth the alleged offenses which are the basis of the charges, including a factual narrative of events and the dates and times of occurrences. The statement should also include the names of persons having personal knowledge of circumstances or events, the general nature and description of all evidence, and the signature of the charging party. If this occurs at the end of a term, and/or the last term of enrollment, the "G" grade should be issued for the course until the matter is decided. In situations involving the student's last term, before graduation, degree certifications can be withheld, pending the outcome of the hearing, which should be expedited as quickly as possible.

2. The Academic Dean will transmit these charges to the student, together with a copy of these regulations.

3. The letter of transmittal to the student, a copy of which will also be sent to the charging party, will state a time and place, when a hearing on the charges will be held by the School’s Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee.

4. In proceedings before the School’s Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee, the student shall have the right:

a. to be considered innocent until found guilty by clear and convincing evidence of a violation of the student obligations of academic integrity;

b. to have a fair disposition of all matters as promptly as possible under the circumstances;

c. to elect to have a private or public hearing;
d. to be informed of the general nature of the evidence to be presented;

e. to confront and question all parties and witnesses except when extraordinary circumstances make this impossible;

f. to present a factual defense through witnesses, personal testimony and other relevant evidence;

g. to decline to testify against himself or herself;

h. to have only relevant evidence considered by the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee; and

i. to a record of the hearing (audio recording), at his or her own expense, upon request.

5. The hearing should provide a fair inquiry into the truth or falsity of the charges, with the charged party and the faculty member or charging party afforded the right to cross-examine all adverse witnesses. At the level of the School’s Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee, legal counsel shall not be permitted, but a non-attorney representative from within the University community shall be permitted for both faculty and students. A law student can not be used as a representative at the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee hearing.

6. Any member of the University community may, upon showing of relevancy and necessity, request witnesses to appear at the hearing. Witnesses who are members of the University community will be required to appear, and other witnesses may be requested to appear at a hearing. When necessitated by fairness or extraordinary circumstances, the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee may make arrangements for recorded or written testimony for use in a proceeding.

7. **HEARING PROCEDURE**: The hearing will be conducted as follows:

a. the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee will not apply technical exclusionary rules of evidence followed in judicial proceedings nor entertain technical legal motions. Technical legal rules pertaining to the wording of questions, hearsay, and opinions will not be formally applied. Reasonable rules of relevancy will guide the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee in ruling on the admissibility of evidence. Reasonable limits may be imposed on the number of factual witnesses and the amount of cumulative evidence that may be introduced;

b. the alleged offense or offenses upon which the complaint is based will be read by the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee;

c. objections to procedure shall be entered on the record, and the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee shall make any necessary rulings regarding the validity of such objections;
d. the charging party will state his or her case and shall offer evidence in support thereof;

e. the accused or representative(s) for accused shall have the opportunity to question the charging party;

f. the charging party shall be given the opportunity to call witnesses;

g. the accused or representative(s) for accused shall be given the opportunity to question each witness of the charging party after he or she testifies;

h. the charging party shall inform the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee when his or her presentation is completed, at which time, the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee members shall be given an opportunity to ask questions of the persons participating in the hearing;

i. the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee shall recess, and the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee shall make a determination as to whether the charging party has presented sufficient evidence to support a finding against the accused if such evidence is uncontested. The parties may be required to remain in the hearing room during the recess or may be excused for a time period set by the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee;

j. depending upon the determination of the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee, the matter will be dismissed or the accused shall be called upon to present his or her case and offer evidence in support thereof;

k. the accused may testify or not as he or she chooses;

l. the charging party shall have the opportunity to question the accused if the accused voluntarily chooses to testify;

m. the accused or a representative for the accused shall have the opportunity to call witnesses;

n. the charging party shall have the opportunity to question each witness of the accused after he or she testifies;

o. the accused shall inform the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee when his or her presentation is complete, and the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee members shall have an opportunity to ask questions of the accused as well as the accused witnesses;

p. the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee will have an opportunity to address the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee on University regulations or procedure in the presence of all parties, but shall not offer other comments without the consent of all parties; and,
q. the hearing shall be continued and the members of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee shall deliberate in private until a decision is reached and recorded.

8. A suitable record (audio recording) shall be made of the proceedings, exclusive of deliberations to arrive at a decision.

9. The proposed decision, which shall be written, shall include a determination whether the charges have been proven by clear and convincing evidence, together with findings with respect to the material facts. If any charges are established, the proposed decision shall state the particular sanction or sanctions to be imposed. Prior violations or informal resolutions of violations may be considered only in recommending sanctions, not in determining guilt or innocence. Once a determination of guilt has been made, and before determining sanctions, the Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee should find out from the Office of the Dean whether prior offenses and sanctions imposed have occurred.

10. The proposed decision shall be submitted to the Dean, who will make an independent review of the hearing proceedings. The Dean may require that the charges be dismissed, or that the case be remanded for further proceedings whenever he or she deems this to be necessary. Upon completion of such additional proceedings, if any, and within a reasonable time the Dean will issue a final decision. The Dean may reject any findings made by the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee adverse to the student, and may dismiss the charges or reduce the severity of any sanction imposed, but the Dean may not make new findings adverse to the student, and may dismiss the charges or increase the severity of a sanction, except in the case of repeating offenders of Academic Integrity Guidelines.

11. The Chair of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee shall then transmit to the charged party and the faculty member copies of all actions taken by the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee and the Dean. If a sanction is imposed, the notice to the student will made reference to the students opportunity, by petition filed with the Provost, to appeal to the University Review Board.

D. Timeliness

It is the responsibility of all parties, including administrative officers, to take prompt action in order that charges can be resolved quickly and fairly. Failure of the faculty member to utilize these procedures diligently may constitute grounds for dismissal of charges. Parties have the right to seek review of the Provost or to petition the University Review Board for an appeal from a decision of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee within five (5) working days of the date of the decision letter.

E. Sanctions

The alternative sanctions which may be imposed upon a finding that an offense related to academic integrity has been committed are the following:

1. Dismissal from the University without expectation of readmission.
2. Suspension from the University for a specific period of time, with no additional conditions.

3. Suspension from the University for a specific period of time, with additional conditions specified by the Committee.

4. Reduction in grade, or assignment of a failing grade, in the course (academic or field) in which the academic integrity violation was committed.

5. Reduction in grade, or assignment of a failing grade, on the paper or examination in which the offense occurred.

F. Review and Appeal

A student or faculty member may seek to have a Dean’s final decision (or a determination that the charges are not subject to adjudication) reviewed by the Provost, who may seek the advice of the University Review Board, or the student may appeal to the University Review Board, whose recommendation shall be made to the Provost.

The action of the Provost, taken with or without the advice of the University Review Board, shall constitute an exhaustion of all required institutional remedies.

G. Retention of Materials

The Dean is to be responsible for safeguarding the materials given to him or her by the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee. All materials should be retained no less than two (2) years and may be retained longer at the Dean's discretion.

Section II: Academic Integrity and Faculty Obligations

A. Faculty Obligations

A faculty member accepts an obligation, in relation to his or her students, to discharge his or her duties in a fair and conscientious manner in accordance with the ethical standards generally recognized within the academic community as well as those of the social work profession.

Without limiting the application of the above principle, members of the faculty are also expected (except in cases of illness or other compelling circumstances) to conduct themselves in a professional manner, including the following:

1. To meet their classes when scheduled.

2. To be available at reasonable times for appointments with students, and to keep such appointments.

3. To make appropriate preparation for classes and other meetings.
4. To perform their grading duties and other academic evaluations in a timely manner.

5. To describe to students, within the period in which a student may add and drop a course, orally, in writing, or by reference to printed course descriptions, the general content and objectives of a course; and announce the methods and standards of evaluation, including the importance to be assigned various factors in academic evaluation and, in advance of any evaluation, the permissible materials or references allowed during evaluation.

6. To base all academic evaluations upon good-faith professional judgment.

7. Not to consider, in academic evaluation, such factors as race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, and political or cultural affiliation, sexual orientation, and life style, activities, or behavior outside the classroom and the field experience unrelated to academic achievement or professional development.

8. To respect the confidentiality of information regarding a student contained in University records; and to refrain from releasing such information, except in connection with intra-University business, or with student consent, or as may be required by law.

9. Not to exploit their professional relationship with students for private advantage; and to refrain from soliciting the assistance of students for private purposes in a manner which infringes upon such students' freedom of choice.

10. To give appropriate recognition to contributions made by students to research, publication, service, or other activities.

11. To refrain from any activity which involves risk to the health and safety of a student, except with the student's informed consent, and, where applicable, in accordance with the University policy relating to the use of human subjects in experimentation.

12. To respect the dignity of students individually and collectively in the classroom and other academic contexts.

B. Grievance Procedures

Any member of the University community having evidence may bring to the attention of the Dean a complaint that a faculty member has failed, in one or more respects, to meet faithfully the obligations set forth above. The Dean, in his or her discretion, will take such action by the way of investigation, counseling, or action—in accordance with applicable University procedures—as may appear to be proper under the circumstances. The faculty member's and student's interest in confidentiality, academic freedom, and professional integrity in such matters will be respected.

C. Individual Appeals

In order to provide a means for students to seek and obtain redress for grievances affecting themselves individually, the following procedures should be followed. These are not intended and shall not be used to provide sanctions against faculty members.
D. Procedures

Where an individual student alleges with particularity that the actions of a faculty member have resulted in serious academic injury to the student, the matter shall (if requested by the student) be presented to the School’s Academic Review and Academic Integrity Review Committee for adjudication. Serious academic injury includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the awarding of a lower course grade than that which the student has earned or suspension from a class. However, this is not intended to address normal grading decisions of faculty exercising good-faith professional judgments in evaluating a student’s work.

It is the responsibility of the student, before seeking to have a grievance adjudicated, to attempt to resolve the matter by personal conference with the faculty member concerned, and, if such attempts are unavailing, to call the matter to the attention of the appropriate Program Director for consideration and adjustment by informal means. If a matter remains unresolved after such efforts have been made, the following grievance procedures shall be employed:

1. The aggrieved student will file a written statement of charges with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

2. If the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs determines that the charges are subject to adjudication under the terms of the Academic Integrity Guidelines, he or she will transmit the charges to the faculty member, together with a copy of these regulations.

3. The letter of transmittal to the faculty member, a copy of which will also be sent to the student, will state the composition of a committee that has been named to make an informal inquiry into the charge. The purpose of this committee is to provide a last effort at informal resolution of the matter between the student and the faculty member.

4. This committee shall meet with the faculty member, the student, and others as appropriate, to review the nature of the problem in an attempt at reaching a settlement of the differences. This is not a formal hearing, and formal procedural rules do not apply. Upon completion of this meeting, if no mutually agreeable resolution results, the committee may produce its own recommendation for a solution to the conflict.

5. Should the committee recommend that the faculty member take some corrective action on behalf of the student, its recommendations shall be provided to the faculty member. As promptly as reasonable and at least within five (5) working days after the faculty member receives the recommendations of the committee, the faculty member shall privately take that action which he or she elects, and so advise the student and the chair of the committee of that action.

6. Should the committee conclude that the faculty member need not take corrective action on behalf of the student, this finding shall be forwarded to both the faculty member and the student.

7. If the student elects to pursue the matter further, either because he or she is dissatisfied with the resulting action of the faculty member or the conclusion of the committee, he or she should discuss this intent with the chair of the committee, who should review the
procedures to be followed with the student. If the student wishes to proceed with a formal hearing, the chair of the committee will advise the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs that the case appears to involve a student’s claim of serious academic injury, and that the formal hearing procedure must be initiated.

8. The formal hearing should provide a fair inquiry into the truth or falsity of the charges, with the faculty member and the student afforded the right to cross-examine. At the level of the School’s Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee, legal counsel shall not be permitted, but representatives from within the University community shall be permitted for both faculty and students.

9. A suitable record (audio recording) shall be made of the proceedings, exclusive of deliberations to arrive at a decision.

10. The proposed decision, which shall be written, will include a determination of whether the charges have been proven by clear and convincing evidence, together with findings with respect to the material facts. If any charges are established, the proposed decision shall state the particular remedial action to be taken.

11. The proposed decision shall be submitted to the Dean, who will make an independent review of the hearing proceedings. The Dean may require that the charges be dismissed, or that the case be remanded for further proceedings whenever he or she deems this to be necessary. The Dean may limit the scope of any further proceedings or require that part or all of the original proceedings be reconvened. Upon completion of such additional proceedings, if any, the Dean will issue a final decision. The Dean may reject any findings made by the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee, may dismiss the charges or reduce the extent of the remedial action to be taken. If the Dean believes the remedial action to be taken may infringe upon the exercise of academic freedom, he or she will seek an advisory opinion from the Senate Committee on Tenure and Academic Freedom (TAF) before issuing his or her own decision. The decision of the Dean shall be in writing, shall set forth with particularity any new findings of fact or remedies, and will include a statement of the reasons underlying such an action.

12. The Dean will then transmit to the faculty member and to the student copies of all actions affecting them taken by the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee and the Dean. Suitable records will be maintained as confidential and retained in the Office of the Dean.

E. Remedial Action

Remedies on a student’s behalf should usually be those agreed to willingly by the faculty member. Other remedial action to benefit a student may be authorized by the Dean only upon recommendation of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee and limited to: allowing a student to repeat an examination; allowing a student to be evaluated for work that would otherwise be too late to be considered; directing that additional opportunities be afforded for consultation or instruction; eliminating a grade that had been assigned by a faculty member from the transcript; changing of a failing letter or numerical grade to a pass or satisfactory grade, so as not to adversely affect a student’s grade average; allowing a
student to repeat a course without paying tuition or any other penalty, schedule and program permitting.

If some action is contemplated that might be deemed to infringe upon the academic freedom of the faculty member, the Dean will seek an advisory opinion from the Senate Committee on Tenure and Academic Freedom (TAF). In such cases, the Senate TAF may identify other acceptable remedies or render such advice as may be appropriate in the particular situation.

No action detrimental to the faculty member will be taken, except as in strict accordance with established University procedures. An adjustment hereunder in the student’s behalf shall not be deemed a determination that the faculty member was in any way negligent or derelict.

F. Review and Appeal

A student or faculty member may seek to have a Dean’s final decision (or a determination that the charges are not subject to adjudication) reviewed by the Provost, who may seek the advice of the University Review Board, or the student may appeal to the University Review Board, whose recommendation shall be made to the Provost. The action of the Provost, taken with or without the advice of the University Review Board, shall constitute an exhaustion of all required institutional remedies.

If any such determination may be deemed to have a possible adverse effect upon the faculty member's professional situation, the faculty member may seek the assistance of the Tenure and Academic Freedom Committee of the University Senate.

G. Timeliness

It is the responsibility of all parties, including administrative officers, to take prompt action in order that grievances may be resolved quickly and fairly. While no explicit time limit could apply to all cases, failure to use diligence in seeking redress may constitute grounds for denial of a hearing or other relief, especially if prejudice results. Parties have the right to seek review of the Provost or to petition the University’s Review Board for an appeal from a decision of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee or investigatory committee within five (5) working days of the date of the decision letter.

H. Investigatory Committees and the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee

The informal investigatory committees and the formal Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee shall be composed of both students and faculty. An investigatory committee shall consist of one faculty member appointed by the Dean and one student selected by the Student Executive Council. The faculty member shall chair the investigatory committee. The composition, selection procedures, and terms of members of the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee are described above in Part I Section F of this policy.
I. Retention of Materials

The Dean is to be responsible for safeguarding the materials given to him or her by the Academic Review and Academic Integrity Committee. All materials should be retained no less than two (2) years and may be retained longer at the Dean's discretion.

Section III: Grievance Procedures Against Senior Administrators

A student complaint of arbitrary or unfair treatment against the Dean of the School of Social Work should be made to the Provost or appropriate Senior Vice Chancellor. There must be a prompt review and decision on the grievance. Members of the faculty who may be called upon to review and advise on the grievance should be drawn from outside the jurisdiction of the administrator against whom the charge is made.

Definition of Student Status

Continuing Student

A student who has been accepted into a school of the University's Oakland Campus and has registered for classes at the Oakland Campus during any term or session within the past calendar year.

Inactive Status

All candidates for graduate degrees including Ph.D. students who have completed their required course work and are working on their dissertation research on the Oakland Campus, or elsewhere, must be registered for a minimum of 1 credit in each 12-month period whether they use University facilities/faculty time, or not. Those students not registering within the 12-month period will be placed on inactive status and must be readmitted or reinstated in order to continue in their programs. The student’s request for readmission must be submitted to the program director for approval. Those students in inactive status for 2 years or more may be required to retake the qualifying or comprehensive exams for readmission.

All students must be registered in the term in which they are to be graduated. Deans may grant exceptions in certain cases. However, written notification must be submitted to the Registrar before the first day of the term in which the student is to be graduated.

Policy on Re-Admissions

Students who have not been registered in the School for one calendar year or longer for any reason are required to apply through the Admissions Office for re-admission. Re-admitted students enter the School under the curriculum requirements current at the time of their re-admission.
Grading Policies

Policy on Grades for Required Courses (#9:1)

A. All required classroom courses taken in the School of Social Work shall be graded under the conditions of an expanded letter grade system: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, and F. (D+, D-, D grades are used ONLY for students in the baccalaureate program.)

All required courses in the undergraduate and graduate curriculum must be taken for a letter grade. This includes all the foundation courses, all the concentration-specific required courses, and all the courses which make up the package of a certificate program.

The grading system quality points are:

- A+ 4.00
- A  4.00
- A- 3.75
- B+ 3.25
- B  3.00
- B- 2.75
- C+ 2.25
- C  2.00
- C- 1.75
- D+ 1.25
- D  1.00
- D- 0.75
- F  0.00

The following grades carry no quality points:

- G  Unfinished Course Work - Course work unfinished because of extenuating personal circumstances
- H  Honors - Honors (exceptional) completion of course requirements
- I  Incomplete - Incomplete course work, due to the nature of the course, clinical work, or incomplete research work in individual guidance courses or seminars
- N  Audit - Non-credit
- NC No Credit
- R  Resignation - Student resigned from the University
- S  Satisfactory - Satisfactory completion of course requirements
- U  Unsatisfactory - Unsatisfactory completion of course requirements
- W  Withdrawal
- Z  Invalid Grade - Invalid grade reported
- ** No Grade - No grade reported

B. All graduate field instruction courses shall be taken for S/NC(Satisfactory/No Credit) grades only.
Options (#9:1)

Elective Courses

Graduate level elective courses, (not including required elective courses) offered and taken in the School of Social Work may be taken for a letter grade or an H/S/U grade. The student who chooses the H/S/U option must complete and sign the Grade Option Form, have it signed by the faculty advisor, and either the student or faculty advisor shall submit this form to the Office of Student Records (2110 C.L.) no later than the 9th week of a full term, the 6th week of a 12 week Session, or the 4th week of a 6 week Session. Once made, the decision to take the course on a grading option basis cannot be changed, nor may a grade using one system be changed to a grade of the other system without the approval of the Dean.

"G" Grades

The "G" grade may be assigned for course work which should have been completed within the term in which the course was taken but, for extenuating circumstances, was not.

In order to request such consideration, which may be accepted or rejected by the instructor, the student should:

a. inform the instructor in writing, except under emergency conditions.

b. state reasons for needing this consideration

c. be prepared to present evidence substantiating the unique conditions necessitating this request.

Upon the award of a "G" grade the student will have six weeks into the term following the term for which the "G" grade was awarded to complete the work. This time may be extended by the course instructor for:

a. extended illness beyond the usual six-week period for completing work.

b. personal emergency.

The time extension may be up to one year after the "G" grade was recorded. Thereafter, the "G" grade remains permanently on the transcript.

Graduating students must complete coursework by the end of the term in which they are to be graduated. Any delay in completing requirements will necessitate a later graduation with registration of a minimum of 1 credit in the term of graduation.

"I" Grades

The "I" grade is applicable to courses which, by design, are not time-bound to one term, and for which a final grade can be given upon completion of the stipulated course work.

The time limit for the change of the "I" grade to another grade is one calendar year from the date of the end of the term in which the "I" grade was given. Exceptions to this policy can be made under the following circumstances:
a. Extended illness beyond the term following the term in which the "I" grade was given;

b. Death or extended personal emergency - if the student does not return within the next term;

c. Academic Probation;

d. Doctoral Student engaged in dissertation writing.

Thereafter, the "I" grade remains permanently on the transcript.

For the above-mentioned grades, the student must request the extension in writing from his/her instructor and this letter, together with a memo from the instructor indicating the granting of the extension, the reasons for the extension, and the length of time for which the extension will be valid will be placed in the student's folder.

Graduating students must complete coursework by the end of the term in which they are to be graduated. Any delay in completing requirements will necessitate a later graduation with registration of a minimum of 1 credit in the term of graduation.

"W" Grades

A student may withdraw from a registered School of Social Work course and a "W" grade be assigned if the withdrawal occurs no later than the 9th week of a full term or the 4th week of a Summer Session.

After the 9th week of the term (4th week of the session), a student will be permitted to withdraw from a course only in extraordinary circumstances and with the permission of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

A student who wishes to withdraw from a course after the add-drop date, but prior to the end of the 9th week of the term (or 4th week of the session), must complete a Monitored Withdrawal Request Form, available from the Office of the Social Work Recorder in Room 2110 Cathedral of Learning.

For courses offered by the School of Social Work, each individual instructor must be notified (as evidenced by the instructor's signature on the University form). The form must then be submitted to the Social Work Recorder, Room 2110, Cathedral of Learning.

Completion of this process will result in the entry of a "W" grade on the academic transcript.

A student who stops attending a course and does not initiate and complete the withdrawal procedures may be assigned an "F" grade.

"Audit" (N) Grades for Academic Courses

The student must apply for the option to audit an academic course at the beginning of the term (at the time of registration, in fact, or at the latest by the first session of the class). The student pays full tuition fees for the course, earns no credit, and the course appears on the student's transcript. As far as requirements are concerned, usually the student meets all the performance expectations of the instructor: papers, presentations, examinations, etc. However, it is within the privilege of the faculty
member to permit the Audit student merely to attend the lectures and to participate only as much as the student wishes. For example, the student and the instructor can agree that the student will not write any papers for the class, or the student will not take any exams, but this, too, must be cleared in advance.

Grade Changes

Grade changes, in virtually every case, should be put through no later than one year after the initial grade was assessed. There may be conceivable reasons which justify a later change of grade, but they are surely quite unusual in character, and should be considered most exceptional. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs must approve a change in grade before it will be honored by the Registrar.

Grades for Courses in Other Departments

Courses taken in other schools and departments of the University of Pittsburgh by students from the School of Social Work shall be graded according to the policy adopted by the school or department in which the course is being taken.

Grade Assignments: "Z" Grades (#9:1)

It is the responsibility of each faculty member of the University to assign only a standard letter grade or option grade as approved within their own school's grading policy to each student enrolled in an approved University course. All other grades will be recorded by the Registrar as a "Z", an invalid grade.

Field Work Grades in the MSW Program (#9.4)

Students in the MSW Program will be evaluated and graded separately for each of the terms (including Summer sessions) that they are in field. Students will be graded on a “S” (Satisfactory)/"NC" (No Credit) basis. For each term or session during which the student is at a field placement, the field instructor will complete the written Field Evaluation form, including making a recommendation about the student’s grade. It is the field liaison’s responsibility to submit a student’s field grade to the University. The field liaison’s determination of the student’s field grade shall be based on:

a) the field visit completed during that term or session;
b) the School’s receipt of the Field Evaluation form and time sheet;
c) the field instructor’s recommendation; and
d) the liaison’s review of the Field Evaluation form (which shall be documented by the liaison signing the form) and verification of the requisite number of field hours documented on the time sheet.