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I. PREFACE

This manual is intended to cover the academic year as noted on the front cover. Updates and/or changes to this manual will be communicated to students as necessary. Core requirements will remain consistent throughout your designated program; however schedules, curriculum, and some policies and procedures may be adapted.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Welcome

On behalf of the faculty and staff of the Social Work Department, I am delighted to welcome you to the Master of Social Work Program at California State University Northridge and to the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Our MSW Program is recognized for our high educational standards, innovative research activities and commitment to social justice. The MSW program provides a dynamic environment for teaching and learning that strengthens and nurtures intellectual, emotional, technical, and practical knowledge and skills. Our faculty and staff encourage and support innovative scholarship, practice, and research. We strive for excellence in teaching, advising, and mentoring. Community service is an important part of our work that links the MSW Program and its resources with local communities to provide service and support in furtherance of the goals of eliminating poverty and injustice, improving community life, and solving challenging social issues. Our students are united by a passion to help others and are motivated to actively participate in their educational experience. We trust that you will be an active participant and caring member of the MSW program, the University and the communities we serve. We invite you to join us as we work together to renew and strengthen community based urban family practice.

The CSUN MSW Program is committed to education which furthers social and economic justice in the urban environment and strives to incorporate this commitment into its programs and activities. The Department is especially concerned with empowerment of all oppressed groups. Our goal is to educate exceptional social work practitioners in order to be able to attend to the needs and build on the strengths of individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities in diverse, urban settings.

You will find that our faculty have a wide range of skills and interests in micro, mezzo and macro practice. Our faculty are experts in trauma and mental health, children and families, public health, public policy, LGBTQ issues, aging and international social work. We make social work training relevant. Our students build valuable skill sets to bring out into the world and utilize in the field. Our students become agents of change and positively impact communities at the micro, mezzo and macro levels.

Our faculty is dedicated to your learning in an environment in which you will be encouraged to think beyond yourselves and to inquire into the most complex - yet fundamental - ideas about the human condition. In addition, your ideas will be tested in the arena of practical experience through intensive field placements. As you struggle with ideas and test them in the real world, you will have the opportunity to explore and to grow. The faculty is here to support
you, challenge you, and help you become professional social workers who act compassionately, thoughtfully, and ethically. Talk with them, get to know them, and be prepared to stretch your mind in the process.

The information provided in this handbook and field manual will answer many of your questions regarding the program and its structure. You will also want to familiarize yourself with the University Catalog. Understanding your rights and responsibilities as presented in this Handbook and the University Catalog is essential to your success in the program. We are here to support your growth and we wish you well in achieving your goals.

Welcome!

Dr. Amy C. Levin

B. Community Advisory Board

The Community Advisory Board serves as the official bridge between the Department of Social Work and the community.

The Board advises the faculty on issues relevant to the Community/University relationship, and serves to support the Department in a variety of ways. They discuss the nature of field instruction and the relationship between class and field. They participate in fundraising efforts, and represent the department at events at both the University and in the community. The Chair of the Department is the link between the Board, faculty, and student body.

C. Faculty and Staff

1. Full-Time Faculty

Alejandra Acuña, Ph.D., MSW

Alejandra Acuña, Assistant Professor, joins the CSUN faculty in fall of 2015. Dr. Acuña earned her PhD in Social Welfare from UCLA and her MSW from UC Berkeley. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and has over 20 years experience in health and human services. Dr. Acuña has experience in macro- to micro-level social work practice in various settings – non-profit community based organizations, child protective services, and public school districts. Dr. Acuña has taught social work courses at CSULA, UCLA and CSUN and won local and national awards for field instruction.

Her research interests include urban youth and families, PTSD and resilience, and cultural/traditional approaches to mental health treatment.

Wendy Ashley, Psy.D., LCSW

Wendy Ashley, Assistant Professor, joined the CSUN faculty in fall of 2008. Dr. Ashley received her Psy.D. from Ryokan College and she received her MSW from the University of Southern California. She has been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker since 1998 and has over twenty years of social work experience in the areas of community mental health and child welfare.
Dr. Ashley has been employed in many settings within the arena of community mental health, including Family Preservation, Mental Health, Adoptions, Foster Care, Wraparound, Residential and Group Homes, and Day Treatment. Dr. Ashley has also worked as an Adjunct Faculty at the University of Southern California and National University, and has served as a field instructor for CSU Northridge, CSU Long Beach, Pepperdine and Alliant University (for MSW, MA and Psy.D. programs).

In addition to the Practice, Policy, Trauma, Psychosocial Assessment and Diagnostic Formulation, Human Behavior and other courses she teaches at CSUN, Dr. Ashley currently works as a clinical consultant at Soba Recovery Center, maintains a private practice and provides training for multiple community agencies.

Dr. Ashley has published articles entitled: The Angry Black Woman: Impact of Pejorative Stereotypes in Psychotherapy with Black Women and The Impact of Combat Status on Veterans’ Attitudes Toward Help Seeking: The Hierarchy of Combat Elitism. Additional research interests include treatment models for working with African American and Transgender clients, creative engagement of involuntary clients, the impact of power and privilege on macro and micro practice, and child welfare.

Eli Bartle, Ph.D., MSW

Eli Bartle, Professor, joined the CSUN faculty in the fall of 1998. Dr. Bartle received his Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of Kansas, Lawrence and his MSW from the University of Nebraska, Omaha. Dr. Bartle has practice experience as a caseworker and youth counselor in both Child Protective Services and other Child Welfare agencies in Nebraska and Arizona. His MSW Internship involved establishing a research center to assist students and faculty in conducting and disseminating their research. During his Ph.D. work, Dr. Bartle was part of a team of ethnographers who worked with staff and clients to document the empowerment progress of families who had pre-school-aged children at risk for developmental difficulties.

Prior to being hired at CSUN, Dr. Bartle worked for a year as a researcher at the Family & Children Research Center and Social Work Program University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign campus. Dr. Bartle’s research interests are in the areas of public assistance, workplace policy, child welfare supervision, hate crimes, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender health care issues. He has published several juried articles. Dr. Bartle also serves on the editorial board of the Journal of Poverty.

Jodi Constantine Brown, Ph.D., MSW

Jodi Constantine Brown, Associate Professor, Director of Online and Offsite Programs, and Associate Chair of the Social Work Department, joined the CSUN faculty in the fall of 2011. Dr. Constantine Brown earned her MSW from the University of Illinois-Chicago and her Ph.D. from Washington University in St. Louis. She completed a post-doctoral research fellowship in mental health economics at the Department of Health Care Policy, Harvard Medical School. In her previous position as Program Director for Team Survivor, a non-profit that provides free exercise for women with cancer, Dr. Constantine Brown developed and implemented the organization’s first program evaluation, expanded the program by six percent annually, and generated over $300,000 in grant funding. Dr. Constantine Brown has presented locally, nationally, and internationally, and has recently published refereed journal articles on mindfulness and compassion fatigue, program evaluation, and alcoholism. Her teaching and research interests
include program evaluation, pedagogy, complementary alternative medicine (CAM), mental health care policy, organizational networks, and access to care.

**Luis O. Curiel, MSW**

Luis O. Curiel, CalSWEC Field Consultant and Part-time Lecturer, joined the CSUN faculty in the spring of 2011. He received his MSW from California State University, Northridge in 2008 making him the first CSUN MSW alumni to join faculty. Mr. Curiel teaches the Child Welfare Services elective courses including Family Crisis, Trauma and Grief in Urban Settings and Spanish Conversation for Clinicians and Community Organizers as well as introductory Child Welfare to undergraduate sociology students. In addition, Mr. Curiel’s child welfare and community mental health experience includes working as a children’s Social Worker for the Los Angeles County, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) where he investigated cases of child abuse and neglect in an emergency response capacity as well as provided Family Maintenance and Reunification services to families with medically fragile/terminally ill children in the Department’s Medical Case Management Services unit. Also, Mr. Curiel has seven years of experience working with the medically fragile/terminally ill child and adolescent population through his work with the Los Angeles Ronald McDonald House of Charities non-profit organization. In addition, he has worked as a Bilingual, In-Home Outreach Counselor providing Family Preservation services to Spanish-speaking families under the supervision of the DCFS. Mr. Curiel’s teaching experience includes working for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) where he developed literacy curriculum for K-3rd grade students and taught professional development, community service/organizing, creative teaching techniques and methods to literacy tutors, LAUSD teachers and community-based literacy tutoring programs. Mr. Curiel currently serves as founding President of CSUN’s MSW Alumni Association.

**Judith A DeBonis, Ph.D., MSW**

Judy DeBonis is an Assistant Professor who joined the CSUN faculty in the fall of 2011. She has over 25 years of professional experience in clinical practice and research, program development, teaching and training in clinical, academic, and business environments. A Ph.D. Social Work practitioner with international experience in integrated healthcare, Dr. DeBonis is currently interested in the changes in the healthcare system resulting from the Affordable Care Act and in the opportunities for social work to serve in the "new" healthcare roles that are emerging to provide comprehensive, whole-person care for physical health, mental health, and substance health needs. With an extensive background in mental health, as a clinical consultant to Pfizer Health Solutions Dr. DeBonis designed curriculum based on the empowerment model to promote patient self-management for both mental health and physical health chronic conditions that was adapted and implemented for U.S. and international markets. In 2012, she worked with the Council on Social Work Education and the Center for Integrated Health Services as a contributor in the development of the first integrated healthcare curriculum for social workers that was piloted across 22 schools of social work nationally. In 2013, Dr. DeBonis was awarded funding for students to participate in a piloted field placement in integrated healthcare, serving as the field instructor. Currently, Dr. DeBonis is working to design a workforce training curriculum for mental health practitioners that will enhance staff skills and confidence to regularly incorporate physical health components into the mental health services currently
provided. Dr. DeBonis holds a Ph. D. from the USC of Social Work and an MSW from the State University of New York at Albany. She received a funded dissertation grant from NIMH. Currently, she is a principal investigator on a Garret Lee Smith Campus Grant focused on increasing awareness about the stigma associated with suicide and offering suicide first-aid trainings for members of the CSUN and Northridge communities. Dr. DeBonis also represents CSUN as a Co-Principal Investigator on a Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) grant, working with researchers from USC and UCLA to examine the impact of advocacy on healthcare outcomes in eight Los Angeles based hospital settings.

Herman L. DeBose, MSW, Ph.D.,

Dr. DeBose is currently a professor in the MSW department and chair of the department’s admission committee. During the past six and half years, he served as chair of the Sociology department where he was responsible for the departmental administration, 22 full time, 34 - 40 part time faculty members and 1950 majors. He has been a faculty member at CSUN for the last 20 years and teaches Introduction to Social Welfare, Introduction to Social Work Practice, Social Work Practice in Multicultural Communities, Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Race Relations, Social Policy and Ethnic Diversity in America. Additionally, he teaches Organizational Theory and Behavior in the Masters of Public Administration program at CSUN. Also, he was one of the founding members of the CSUN MSW program ten years ago. During his 20 years at CSUN, he has received the Distinguished Teacher of the Year Award (1999-2000) and the Extraordinary Service Award (2000-2001). His primary areas of research are Diversity in the Workplace, Biracial/ Multiracial Identity, At-Risk Youth, Community Policing, and HIV/AIDS among minority populations. The research has afforded him the opportunity to make at least sixty presentations at international, national, regional and local professional conferences and meetings over the last 20 years.

James T. Decker, Ph.D., LCSW

James T. Decker, Professor, joined the CSUN faculty in the summer of 2006 as chair/director of the social work department until 2009. He was appointed as the Director of the Institute of Social and Behavioral Science in the summer of 2009. His degrees include a Ph.D. in Organizational Development from the University of Minnesota, Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute, and MSW degree from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Dr. Decker has been the Director and Graduate Coordinator of three different MSW Programs: Bridgewater State College, Bridgewater, Massachusetts. University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota, and Radford University, Radford, Virginia. Dr. Decker was also Chair of the Department of Social Work, Human Services, and Allied Heath at Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, Kentucky as well as Director of the BSW Program at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Dr. Decker has published thirty juried articles, has one book published, twenty book chapters, monographs, and has presented over 100 juried papers at international and national conferences. He presently serves on five editorial review boards and has served as Principal Investigator for over thirty-five federal, state and county grants totaling over $11,366,288. Dr. Decker also has experience in organizing and writing self-studies for CSWE in addition to his role as a Site Reviewer for CSWE.
Julie Gould, LCSW

Julie Gould, CalSWEC Project Coordinator and Mental Health Program Coordinator, joined the CSUN faculty in 2008. She received her MSW from University of Southern California in 1993. She teaches Family Crisis, Grief and Trauma for students in their concentration-year. In addition, she also teaches foundation year Generalist Social Work Theory and Practice. Professor Gould has twenty-two years of child welfare and community/public mental health experience, serving in both direct practice and administrative roles. After holding several clinical positions, she has also served as Regional Coordinator, Program Director of the Children’s Bereavement Program, Clinical Supervisor, and Program Director of Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS), in several LA County social service agencies. Additionally, she has worked providing clinical services and supervision in Ventura County at Ventura County Behavioral Health. Prior to joining us at California State University, Northridge, her teaching experience has included clinical, policy, and theory-based training for both post-bachelor and post-graduate level employees in an agency setting.

Jennifer Henningfield, MSW, LCSW

Jennifer Henningfield, Director of Online & Offsite Field Education and Part-time Lecturer, joined the CSUN MSW faculty in the fall of 2006. She received her MSW from University of California, Los Angeles and completed her undergraduate work at CSUN. She has taught core courses including Psychosocial Assessment & Diagnostic Formulation, Family Crisis & Trauma, foundation & Concentration Field Seminars, Human Behavior in the Social Environment, and the Social Work in Health Care Settings elective.

Ms. Henningfield serves on multiple committees relevant to field, including the Joint Field Consortium, GSWEC, and coordinates events to support students in securing internships and post graduate employment. She has over 20 years of social work practice experience in medical and mental health settings. Professor Henningfield has served as a SCAN team coordinator and clinical consultant. Prior to coming to CSUN she was a Field Instructor for CSUN, CSULA and UCLA. She currently serves on the board of directors Santa Clarita Valley Youth Project.

Amy Levin, Ph.D., MSW

Amy Levin, Professor and Chair of the Social Work Department, joined the CSUN faculty in the fall of 2004. Dr. Levin received her Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of Southern California and her MSW from Columbia University. Dr. Levin has 15 years of practice experience as a clinician in mental health and child welfare agencies in New York and California. Dr. Levin has been a Field Liaison and a Field Instructor and has held teaching positions at the University of Southern California and Hebrew Union College in Social Work and Public Administration. Dr. Levin’s research interests are in the area of at-risk youth and their self-esteem and motivation to stay in school, retention among child welfare employees, and integrated health among military Veterans. She has published numerous juried articles and monographs, presented papers at local, national and international conferences and is currently serving as Principle Investigator for two Federal Grants. Dr. Levin currently serves as Vice President of the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) and Vice-President of the National Association of Deans and Directors Schools of Social Work (NADD).
Susan M. Love, Ph.D., LCSW
Susan M. Love, Associate Professor, joined the CSUN faculty in the fall of 2007. Dr. Love received both her Ph.D. in Social Welfare and MSW degree from the University of Washington. She also holds a MS in Marriage, Family and Child Therapy from JFK University, and a BA in Psychology from UC Berkeley. Dr. Love has taught at California State University, Long Beach and University of Southern California. She was also a trainer at University of California, Los Angeles and the IUC Field Education Coordinator at CSU, Long Beach. Dr. Love has over 28 years of direct mental health practice experience with children, youth and family. She has 10 peer-reviewed published articles, and has presented papers at professional conferences in Antwerp, Belgium; Glasgow, Scotland; Sydney, Australia; San Francisco; and, Washington, D.C. As the principal investigator of an International team of scientists, she is completing a research grant (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, grant #69451, $1.18M) that successfully built, and tested an evidence-based parenting program delivered in social media for highly vulnerable families—shifting the developmental trajectory of at-risk children. Her current projects are developing a prevention model for the Affordable Care Act, and developing strategies and process in the child welfare Differential Response System.

David McCarty-Caplan, Ph.D., MSW
David McCarty-Caplan, Assistant Professor, joined the CSUN faculty in the Fall of 2015. Dr. McCarty-Caplan received his Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of Illinois, Chicago and his M.A. in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago. Dr. McCarty-Caplan specializes in research and teaching related to intersections of macro and micro-level social work education and practice, with a special focus on the health of at-risk youth, support of LGBT populations, social policy, and HIV/AIDS prevention. His clinical experience includes training youth activists to be sexual health educators, counseling HIV+ incarcerated adults and their families, and mentoring emotionally disturbed adolescents. Dr. McCarty-Caplan has also recently presented at local and national conferences, and published refereed journal articles on drug use and sexual risk among men who have sex with men, and the impact of school-based sex education on LGBT families.

Katie Mortimer, LCSW
Katie Mortimer, Executive Director of Grants, Field Education and Contracts and Part-time Lecturer, joined the CSUN faculty in fall of 2006. She oversees our Field Department and various stipend programs. She received her MSW from University of Southern California. She teaches many practice, human behavior, and elective courses focused on Mental Health and Recovery and Child Welfare Services. Specifically, she teaches the required courses Family Crisis, Trauma and Grief in Urban Settings, and Beginning and Advanced Practice courses. Ms. Mortimer has twenty years of practice experience with specialization in child welfare and community mental health settings, serving in both direct practice and administrative capacities in the field. After holding clinical positions, she was promoted to Clinical Supervisor, Program Director of Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS), and Program Director of Outpatient Services. Prior to joining us at California State University, Northridge, her teaching experience has included clinical, policy, and theory-based training for both post-bachelor and post-graduate level employees in an agency setting. Ms. Mortimer serves on multiple committees relevant to admissions, recruitment, student success, child welfare, and other areas of interest.
Sarah Mountz, Ph.D., MSW
Sarah Mountz, Assistant Professor, joined the CSUN faculty in the fall of 2013. Dr. Mountz received her Ph.D. in Philosophy (Social Welfare) from the University of Washington and her MSW from Columbia University. Her work focuses on the experiences of LGBTQ youth in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems.

José Miguel Paez, LCSW
José Miguel Paez, Full-time Lecturer, joined the CSUN faculty in the fall of 2009. Mr. Paez received his MSW from the University of Southern California in 2001, with an emphasis on families and children. His theoretical and research interests include Postmodern Theory (Critical Race, NeoFeminism, Marxism, Queer, Self-Efficacy, and Attachment theories), Trauma and Restorative Justice, Social and Racial Justice, Intersectionality, Liberation and Transformative Based Social Work Practice, Examining social inequality and pursuing change efforts toward equity and peace. He has many years of experience working with children and families. He served as a bilingual outpatient clinician for Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services for 6 years. In 2007, he worked in collaboration with the USC School of Social Work, and USC Civic and Community Relations, and the USC Community Education Academy to create and develop a social work program that serves as a free community resource to residents within the area, and also as field education placement for USC first year social work graduate students. He served as the program director, field instructor, and clinical supervisor. He continues to provide ongoing consultation, mentoring, and psychoeducational trainings to families and professionals.

Mr. Paez has a background in theatre, improv, spoken word, and was also a basketball coach at various levels for over 10 years.

Hyun-Sun Park, Ph.D., MSW
Hyun-Sun Park, Associate Professor, joined the CSUN faculty in the fall of 2008. Dr. Park received both her Ph.D. in Social Work and MSW degree from the University of Texas at Austin. She is chair of department assessment since fall 2009. Her area of interest is psychological well-being among immigrant and elderly populations. Dr. Park has published peer-reviewed articles in journals and presented at competitive national conferences including CSWE (Council on Social Work Education), SSWR (Society for Social Work and Research), and APA (American Psychological Association).

Jose Ramos, Jr., MSW
Jose Ramos, Full-time Lecturer, joined the CSUN faculty in 2007 serving as a Field Liaison and assumed his position as a full-time lecturer in fall 2008. Mr. Ramos received his MSW from California State University, Long Beach. He has fourteen years of experience in the social work field including: Program Director, Program Instructor, and Program Coordinator. Mr. Ramos also has three years of experience as an Adjunct Professor and one year of Field Liaison experience at CSUN in the MSW Program.
Steven Sherry, MSW, LCSW
Steven Sherry joined the CSUN faculty in 2012 as a Field Liaison, and assumed his position of Child Welfare Specialist in fall of 2015. He received his MSW from University of Southern California in 1998 and earned his LCSW in 2002. He started his career working at Hathaway Children and Family Services residential treatment center, working with adolescents from the Probation department, DCFS and Department of Mental Health. In 2003 he was hired by Casa Pacifica in Ventura County to start the Wraparound program in the county. In 2006, Steven was hired by the Ventura County Behavioral Health as a Clinic Administrator overseeing the mental health services at a special education school.

Robin Sims, MSW
Robin Sims, joined the full time CSUN faculty in 2013 as a CalSWEC field consultant. Ms. Sims came to CSUN with 20 years of professional practice experience in public child welfare. Ms. Sims has worked in adoptions, training and education within the public child welfare system. Ms. Sims graduated from Loyola Marymount University with an undergraduate degree in Urban Studies and earned her MSW from California State University Long Beach. Upon arriving at CSUN, Ms. Sims’ teaching experience within the MSW program includes Field Education, Human Behavior in the Social Environment and a Public Child Welfare elective.

Jolene Swain, ACBSW, MSW
Jolene Swain, joined the full time CSUN faculty in fall 2015 as the Director of Field Education. Ms. Swain has developed field education curriculum, taught foundation courses, and has coordinated multiple stipend programs. Most recently, she co-developed the conceptual framework to implement an evidence-based practice/translational science field education student unit and its course curriculum. Also among her credits is the development of a social work internship unit for a community partnership/neighborhood school academic achievement program. Ms. Swain has spent over 10 years administering programs for high-risk adolescents at the Los Angeles Free Clinic and Childrens Hospital of Los Angeles, Division of Adolescent Medicine, where she helped develop a state funding policy and legislation for runaway and homeless youth.

2. Part-time Lecturers and Field Liaisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark Abelson, MSW</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia Alba, LCSW</td>
<td>Field Liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicola Alenkin, MSW</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Bartlett, MSW</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiffani Brooks, LCSW</td>
<td>Field Liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marjorie Chase, LCSW</td>
<td>Field Liaison</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tia Cochran-Otis, LCSW</td>
<td>Field Liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susanna Curry, MSW</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sharon Greene, LCSW  
Field Liaison

Monicka Guevara, MSW  
Lecturer/Field Liaison

Vanessa Hirsi, LCSW  
Field Liaison

La Tina Jackson, LCSW  
Lecturer

Jennifer Jorge, MSW  
Lecturer

Noach Kaplan, MSW  
Lecturer

Alison King, LCSW  
Field Liaison

Patricia Lane, MSW  
Field Liaison

Allen Lipscomb, Psy.D., LCSW  
Lecturer

3. Administrative Staff

Marlene Cardozo  
Administrative Admissions Coordinator II

Aaron Guillory  
Administrative Support Coordinator I

Rachel Navarro, MSW  
Off-site Program Coordinator

Caroline Nersessian, LCSW  
Field Liaison/Lecturer

Dina Olivas, LCSW  
Lecturer

Luis Pereira, LCSW  
Field Liaison

Ioana Schmidt, MSW  
Lecturer

Elizabeth Tarantini, MSW  
Lecturer

Victoria Terrill, LCSW  
Field Liaison

Kimberly Wong, DCSW, LCSW  
Field Liaison

Tarek Zidan, MSW  
Lecturer

Janice Ollis  
Administrative Support Assistant II

Gretchen Serrano  
CalSWEC Administrative Support
## 4. Faculty and Staff Directory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
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III. OUR MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

A. Department of Social Work Mission Statement

The mission of California State University, Northridge, Department of Social Work, is to prepare professional social workers to promote the well-being of individuals, families and communities in the urban setting.

The Department will teach students research-based knowledge, values, and skills to:

- Prevent social, emotional, and behavioral problems; improve the well-being of individuals and families; and support the recovery process.
- Develop programs and policies which build on the strengths of urban families.
- Empower and be relevant to the needs of the multi-national, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural San Fernando Valley and its surrounding communities.
- Advocate for a diverse and just society.

B. Student Competencies (http://www.cswe.org/File.aspx?id=81660)

The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally (2015 CSWE EPAS, pg. 5).

The Council on Social Work Education requires nine Competencies:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

The CSUN Department of Social Work has expanded on the 2015 CSWE Competencies to reflect our specific mission and goals. Social workers who graduate from the CSUN MSW Program will:

1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly — prepared to seek out and act on opportunities for social work involvement to promote the well-being of urban families.
2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice — prepared to apply ethical decision-making skills to promote the well-being of urban families.
3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgment — prepared to act from an integrated knowledge base regarding the social/political/economic environmental impacts on urban families.
4. Engage diversity and difference in practice — prepared to act from an understanding of the strengths-based perspective and importance of diversity & culture on individuals, families and communities.
5. Advance human rights and social and economic justice — prepared to promote social and economic justice.
6. Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research — prepared to seek out, critique and apply published research findings of effective prevention, intervention and recovery protocols/models.
7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment — prepared to use knowledge including risk and protective factors; vulnerability and resiliency; and their interactions to support urban families.
8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services — prepared to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance the well-being of urban families on the local, state, national and global levels.
9. Respond to contexts that shape practice — prepared to attend to and modify their actions based on new research and changing contextual factors (changing venues; service settings; local, state, and federal involvement; the contribution of legislation; and resource distributions).
10. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to promote the well-being of urban families. Specifically, graduates of our department are prepared to:

**Engage**

- Engage individuals, families and communities across urban populations
- Build collaborative relationships with clients as the expert on own life & culture
- Use engagement strategies consistent with the client’s culture

**Assess**
Seek out information on the strengths of individuals, families and communities
Seek out client’s goals
Utilize standardized (as available and appropriate), culturally-sensitive assessment tools, to make meaningful discriminations for intervention planning
Include knowledge of agency expertise to formulate intervention options

**Plan and Intervene**
- Implement prevention strategies
- Implement published research findings of effective intervention protocols and/or models
- Implement effective recovery community programs

**Evaluate**
- Apply objective and systematic evaluation strategies to assess progress
- Apply objective and systematic evaluation strategies to assess outcomes

**C. Strengths-Based Framework of the CSUN MSW Program**

The MSW Program is committed to promoting the well-being of individuals, families and communities in the urban setting. The Program’s mission and goals are grounded in the strengths-based framework and incorporates seven theoretical perspectives and practices. The following seven knowledge bases provided the foundation for the development of our strengths-based framework:

- Social justice perspective
- Ecosystems perspective
- Social constructionism perspective
- Biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual theories of development
- Community development practice
- Empowerment-based practice
- Value and multicultural competent practice

**D. Overview of Knowledge Bases**

- **Social justice perspective**: Social justice is increasingly described as the organizing value of social work (Swenson, 1999). Van Soest (1995) noted three components of social justice: legal justice (what one owes society), commutative justice (what people owe each other), and distributive justice (what society owes the individual). A commitment to human rights and social justice provide the moral grounding for social work practice and research. These concepts reflect our belief that all people should fully participate in the “culture’s construction of the good and the real” (Gergen, 1994, p. 180). They direct social work resources and activities toward people who are oppressed and marginalized. Since respect for basic human rights provides the necessary conditions for a just society, freedom and well-being are the starting
points and ultimate criteria by which we judge the value of social work practice and research. Social workers contribute to a just society by helping to create the structural arrangements and social processes in which these fundamental rights are honored and resources are obtained and distributed in an equitable manner. Theorists and practitioners have increasingly addressed the role of social justice and human rights in social work practice and social work education over the last two decades - such consideration is invigorating and imperative for a profession whose goal is to ensure that economic and social resources are available on an equal basis to all citizens. The valuing of social justice and human rights and the implications of that valuing for the profession underlies the MSW Program at California State University, Northridge and its efforts to enlighten and empower social workers to be active change agents on behalf of those who face adversity or are oppressed. Knowledge and skills related to social justice are fundamental to the curriculum, as is indicated in the course syllabi.

- **Ecosystems perspective**: The conceptual framework of ecosystems perspective “provides a way to comprehend human diversity and explicates the relationship between humans and their environment” (Miley, O’Melia & DeBois, 2010, p. 41). This perspective borrows from two bodies of work: *Human Systems* and *Ecology*. *Human Systems* argues that humans form groups that can be distinguished by their unique way of interacting with each other. Human systems are defined by shared meaning, characteristics and/or structural arrangements e.g. boundaries and hierarchy. Furthermore, all *human systems*, are part of a larger system, the system’s environment, and may have subsystems (e.g. siblings in a family system). Moreover, membership in social systems influences perceptions, interactions with others, and access to power and resources. Individuals act on and respond to their human systems. “The effects are mutual” (Miley et al., p. 31).

*Ecology* argues that the capacity of a human system, and its members, to *thrive* depends on its ‘goodness-of-fit’ in its environmental context. Our department’s focus is the family system inside of the urban environment. This includes a concern for how individuals interact within a specific family system, how that family interacts in its environment—workplace/school, neighborhood, community and the greater society—and how urban environments promote family well-being.

- **Social constructionism perspective**: Social constructionism argues that “each of us selectively attends to, interprets and acts on our beliefs about ourselves and the world around us” (Miley et al., p. 28). Furthermore, practicing social workers do not help individuals, families or communities find answers to human problems, but construct solutions (DeJong & Berg, 2001). It shifts the focus from a pathology perspective to a strengths-based, arguing that all humans have the capacity for positive change; change is occurring all the time; small change is generative; cooperation is inevitable; people are resourceful; and that meaning and experience are interactionally constructed (Walter & Peller, 1992).

- **Biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual theories of development**: Integrating biological-social-cultural-psychological-spiritual theories of human development in the MSW curriculum, enhances students’ insights and knowledge about the human condition. (Cicchetti, 2010) argues that the emotional/social and behavioral health of human beings are the outcome of accumulative adaptations to risks and protective factors in a social context. Our program will educate students to identify risks and protective factors, resiliencies and vulnerabilities in
human systems and their interactions in promoting or thwarting human development. The focus will not only include individuals and families living in an urban context, but the human systems they interact with (e.g. public policies on child care). Students will get a foundation in human behavior in the social environment in the first year and a more in depth understanding of how to apply this knowledge in the advanced year.

- **Community development practice:** A strengths-based perspective views communities as critical human associations. These associations are based on ties of kinship, relationship, and shared experiences in which individuals voluntarily attempt to provide meaning in their lives, meet individual needs, and accomplish personal goals (Brueggeman, 1996). Communities are social systems that may take on various forms, including religious institutions, ethnic and cultural organizations, neighborhoods, and kinship networks. Social workers grounded in a strengths-based approach are cognizant of the interrelatedness of clients’ well-being and the conditions in and of the larger community. This theory base helps social workers understand behavior in context and illustrates how systems have an impact on individual social functioning. Strengths based practice stresses that social workers must be involved in strategies aimed at changing the social environments of clients. These strategies include advocacy, empowerment, policy development, and change implementation.

- **Empowerment-based practice:** The strengths perspective has become the principal orientation of much of social work practice over the last decade and provides a thematic direction for the development of our practice approach. Among its most articulate proponents, Dennis Saleebey (2006) states that:

  Practicing from a strengths orientation means this – everything you do as a social worker will be predicated, in some way, on helping to discover and embellish, explore and exploit clients’ strengths and resources in the service of assisting them to achieve their goals, realize their dreams, and shed the irons of their own inhibitions and misgivings, and society’s domination. (p. 1).

- **Value and multicultural competent practice:** Developing a strengths-based approach must include knowledge of culturally competent practice. Intercultural understanding has been a mainstay in social work in its efforts to address the needs of all client systems in sensitive and relevant ways. Recent literature has suggested difficulties with the concept of cultural competence (Dean, 2001, Dyche & Zayas, 2001; Poole, 1998) and other language has been offered that may be more specific to our goals, such as culturally congruent or culturally relevant practice. Embracing the need to give voice to marginalized communities, the California State University, Northridge MSW curriculum addresses ways for students to learn and practice working with diverse groups of clients that best enable members of those communities to achieve their goals. Diversity may include the above philosophy defines the conceptual parameters and commitments of the program. It articulates the assumptions that grounds our curriculum and outlines our vision of professional social work.
IV. FOUNDATION CURRICULUM

A. Foundation Design

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<td>Human Behavior and the Social Environment II</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWRK 503</td>
<td>Psychosocial Assessment and Diagnostic Formulation</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>SWRK 510</td>
<td>Generalist Social Work Theory &amp; Practice I</td>
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<td>SWRK 520</td>
<td>Generalist Social Work Practice in Multicultural Settings</td>
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<td>SWRK 521</td>
<td>Generalist Social Work Theory &amp; Practice II</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWRK 522/522P</td>
<td>Foundations of Field Education I</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWRK 523/523P</td>
<td>Foundations of Field Education II (may be taken twice for credit)</td>
<td>3-6</td>
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<td>SWRK 525</td>
<td>Social Welfare Policy and Services</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWRK 535</td>
<td>Research Methods for Social Work Knowledge &amp; Practice</td>
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B. Foundation Courses

SWRK 501: Human Behavior and the Social Environment I

This course provides understanding of human behavior and social environment from an ecosystemic and value-based perspective as applicable in social work practice. Content includes theories and knowledge of human, bio-psycho-social development, and that of the range of social systems, (families, groups, organizations, institutions and communities) in which individuals live. This course looks at the larger view of the interaction of human behavior and the social environment across the life span from the human ancestor and family genetic inheritance to birth, childhood, youth, adult life, old age, and death.

SWRK 502: Human Behavior and the Social Environment II

This is the second of two human behavior and the social environment courses, which provides understanding of human behavior and social environmental relationships from an ecological perspective. It will focus on the developmental dynamics of larger social systems, specifically groups, organizations, and communities, and their influence on individuals and families. The systems’ interdependence with political, social, cultural, and economic and natural
environments is explored. Content emphasizes multiculturalism, diversity, and social justice in relation to social systems.

**SWRK 503: Psychosocial Assessment and Diagnostic Formulation**

This course will expose students to multiple perspectives in assessing and diagnosing adults, adolescents and children implementing culturally sensitive theories and practices founded on social work values and ethics that incorporate a strengths based approach to social work practice. Students will learn how to assess a client system within the framework of the social work system which relies upon the DSM-5.

**SWRK 510: Generalist Social Work Theory & Practice I**

This is an introductory course in generalist social work practice methods and skills of social work intervention with individuals. Attention is given to the historic development of social work practice, the nature and application of social work values and ethical principles, the theoretical framework of helping methods and the helping process of assessment, planning, intervention, termination and evaluation. Emphasis is on a generalist approach to helping within an ecosystem approach for understanding the person-in-situation.

**SWRK 520: Generalist Social Work Practice in Multicultural Settings**

This course is designed to assist graduate social work students in understanding and interacting in a culturally competent manner with the multitude of groups that are identified by race, culture, ethnicity, class, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, and regional and national origins that compose the diverse cultural mosaic of the U.S. The course will also cover issues relating to international social work practice and the increasingly interconnected global economy.

**SWRK 521: Generalist Social Work Theory & Practice II**

This course is designed to help students understand organizations, institutions and communities, and the knowledge bases of social work generalist practice for interventions at this level. It provides an opportunity to explore selected macro models of practice, and learn about human service organizations that often serve as an immediate context for community practice.

**SWRK 522/522P: Foundations of Field Education I**

Field education in the professional foundation year is designed to permit the student to apply the knowledge, skills, and values learned in courses in the liberal arts, social work practice, social welfare policy and services, human behavior in the social environment, and social research in an educationally supervised experience. Students are required to complete approximately 200-250 hours of supervised practice during the course in an assigned social service agency. Agency assignments are made by the field coordinator after consultation with the student. **The field course combines a seminar and practicum component. Student will receive one unified grade for both sections (i.e. 522 & 522P) each semester.**

**SWRK 523/523P: Foundations of Field Education II**

Field education in the professional foundation year is designed to permit the student to apply the knowledge, skills, and values learned in courses in the liberal arts, social work practice,
social welfare policy and services, human behavior in the social environment, and social research in an educationally supervised experience. Students are required to complete approximately 250-300 hours of supervised practice during the course in an assigned social service agency. Agency assignments are made by the field coordinator after consultation with the student. The field course combines a seminar and practicum component. Student will receive one unified grade for both sections (i.e. 523 & 523P) each semester.

**SWRK 525: Social Welfare Policy and Services**

This course examines economic, historical, political, intellectual, socio-cultural, leadership, values, ideologies, and other such factors shaping social welfare, economic policy, programs and services. It addresses various frameworks for studying social welfare policy, programs and services, and examines the roles of policy-makers, the processes of social change, and the roles of social workers as facilitators of positive social change. Special emphasis is placed on effects of social and economic policy decisions on impoverished and oppressed people.

**SWRK 535: Research Methods for Social Work Knowledge and Practice**

This course provides an overview of social science research methods useful for social work practice. It provides the foundation knowledge and skills that enable students to be intelligent consumers of information, to conduct social research, and to critically evaluate social work practice. The application of social research methods to social work practice in various size systems is a primary emphasis.

**C. Considerations for Advancement to Concentration Level Courses and Field**

The Department Chair has discretion to initiate a mid-program Advancement to Concentration Year Assessment for any student whose success in the program is considered at risk. Student will be assessed based on the framework set forth in Evaluation of Student Performance in the MSW Program (Section VII). If necessary, the Chair of the Department will convene an Advancement Committee of faculty and professional staff to determine if student will be allowed to advance to the concentration portion of the program.
V. CONCENTRATION CURRICULUM

A. Concentration Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SWRK 601</td>
<td>Advanced Social Work Practice with Urban Families I</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWRK 602</td>
<td>Advanced Social Work Practice with Urban Families II</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWRK 621</td>
<td>Advanced Social Work Practice with Urban Communities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWRK 622/622P</td>
<td>Advanced Field Practicum with Urban Families I</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWRK 623/623P</td>
<td>Advanced Field Practice with Urban Families II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWRK 630</td>
<td>Family Crisis, Trauma &amp; Grief</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWRK 635</td>
<td>Advanced Skills in Program Evaluation and Research with Urban Families</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWRK 645</td>
<td>Urban Social Policy and Advocacy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWRK 650</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWRK 698</td>
<td>Graduate Project (Capstone)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Concentration Courses

**SWRK 601: Advanced Social Work Practice with Urban Families I**

This course emphasizes theories, concepts, and skills of social work practice with urban families. The application of advanced practice skills used in working with individuals, families, and small groups is the central content of the course. Special attention is given to practice with special populations who face the social and personal problems of urban community life. Family practice methods are a major focus of the course. This advanced year course concentrates on what is unique about various individuals, couples, and families and how to deal with these unique issues.

**SWRK 602: Advanced Social Work Practice with Urban Families II**

In this course students develop knowledge, skills, and values for several models of group and organization practice to help families. The emphasis is on practice dealing with meeting the needs of urban families through working with larger systems and through advocacy and organization. The theme of strengths-based practice is carried through from the foundation courses. The major focus is on developing skill in working with those larger systems in addressing the issues faced by urban families. Special attention is given to group methods for working with urban families and family members.
SWRK 621: Advanced Social Work Practice with Urban Communities

This course is designed around social justice and critical multicultural theoretical frameworks to help students understand and apply mezzo-macro social work interventions in urban settings with families/groups, communities, organizations and institutions. Building upon the material in SWRK 521, the course will provide an opportunity to explore and apply selected advanced social work mezzo-macro practice skills such as planning, organizing, program development and implementation, organizational assessment, and evaluation. In addition, students will learn about leadership integration and human service organizations that often serve as an immediate context for community practice.

SWRK 622/622P: Advanced Field Practicum with Urban Families I

Advanced Field Practicum I is the first semester of the advanced concentration field practicum courses. In the advanced field practicum, students continue to build upon the knowledge and skills gained during the foundation program. The course provides field education related to the advanced concentration curriculum, which focuses on social work with urban families. Students are required to complete approximately 250-300 hours of supervised practice in their assigned social service agency and attend the field practicum course designed to integrate classroom learning and field experience. The field course combines a seminar and practicum component. Student will receive one unified grade for both sections (i.e. 622 & 622P) each semester.

SWRK 623/623P: Advanced Field Practicum with Urban Families II

Advanced Practice with Urban Families Field Practicum II is the second semester of the advanced concentration field practicum courses. The course provides field education about the advanced concentration curriculum, which focuses on social work with urban families. This second practicum is designed to provide experience in larger system work with and on behalf of families, coordinating with the content classroom learning. During the second semester of field practicum, students continue at their first semester assigned placement site while continuing to enhance their social work practice skills. Students are required to complete approximately 300-360 hours of supervised practice in their assigned social service agency. The field course combines a seminar and practicum component. Student will receive one unified grade for both sections (i.e. 623 & 623P) each semester.

SWRK 630: Family Crisis, Trauma & Grief

This course examines the complex issues of family crisis, trauma, and grief for social workers working with urban families and individuals who have experienced these conditions. Several theoretical approaches are examined, with an emphasis on crisis intervention in traumatic and stressful situations, as well as issues of death and dying and the grief and loss that are associated with them. In the modern urban environments, many people experience traumatic events in their daily lives. The purpose of the course is to acquaint social work students with the nature and impact as well as some of the concepts, theories, and principles for dealing with client systems of all sizes when they face crisis, trauma, and grief. The significance of crisis, trauma, and grief for fields of practice such as mental health, hospital social work, child welfare, gerontology, and other social services and in community violence and terrorism are explored.
SWRK 635: Advanced Skills in Program Evaluation and Research with Urban Families

This course provides a more in-depth view of social science research methods useful for social work practice. It provides the knowledge and skills that enable students to be intelligent consumers of information, to conduct social research, to critically evaluate social work practice and policy. Students will also learn how to use research to scientifically evaluate their own practice. The current sociopolitical climate is increasingly focusing on assessing the costs, quality, and effectiveness of social services. Therefore, this course is based on the assumption that as a practicing social worker, you will be engaged in applying research findings in your clinical work and using research methods to monitor and evaluate clinical interventions and services to urban families.

SWRK 645: Urban Social Policy and Advocacy

This course is designed to help students gain knowledge and skills of policy practice (including both analysis and advocacy) to effectively participate in the development and advancement of policies that support and effect change at multiple levels of diverse client systems in urban environments. This course complements Advanced Social Work Practice with Urban Families I by skill-building in both formal and informal policy analysis, identifying underlying values, and communicating and organizing to effect policy formation and change.

SWRK 698: Graduate Project (Capstone)

Offered as the culminating experience of the Graduate Program, students complete an individual or group research project reflecting the students’ interests and needs in working with urban families. This project meets the culminating experience requirements.

The Capstone course is taken in your final semester of the MSW program. This course involves carrying out a small research project that the student conducts under the supervision of a department faculty member. It is not a thesis. Rather, it is a research-oriented graduate project that is intended to give you an opportunity to consolidate what you have learned in the social work program and apply it to social work practice in an urban family context. You are encouraged to use a variety of research methods to make the Capstone project meaningful based on your current interests and future social work plans. Although different models may be used, a common design of the Capstone course is for students to write a short questionnaire and distribute it to research participants that they have recruited for their study. Students may also consider using secondary data previously collected (e.g. agency charts, case notes, Census data, or other administrative data sets). Based on the data collected and analyzed, students write a report to document their research findings and demonstrate the implications of the findings for the field of social work. In addition, students display their findings at a Capstone poster session at the end of their final year in the MSW program. Distance Learning (online) students are required to present their project, but will work with their Capstone advisor to determine the appropriate venue.

SWRK 650 A-Z: In-depth study of a selected theme or issue in Social Work. Topics offered may change from semester to semester. Critical writing and reading is required. (A) Child Welfare; (B) Addictions; (C) Mental Health; (E) Practice DSM-IV-TR; (G) Supervision; (I) Aging and Families; (J) Immigration Issues and Practice in Urban Settings; (K) Dream Work/Interpretation; (L) Social
Work with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Individuals, Families, and Communities; (M) Group Therapy in Mental Health Settings with Urban, Multicultural Clients; (N) Couples Therapy: A New Research-Based Approach; (O) Social Work in Healthcare Settings; (P) Family Therapy for Social Workers; (Q) LCSW Preparation Course; (R) Social Work Practice in Schools. The above list is subject to change. Electives offered vary by semester. Students are required to complete a minimum of three elective units.

VI. ETHICAL CONDUCT

1. Preamble of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics

   The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession’s focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attending to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

   Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. “Clients” is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organization, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals’ needs and social problems.

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

   - Service
   - Social justice
   - Dignity and worth of the person
   - Importance of human relationships
   - Integrity
   - Competence

   This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

   To review the NASW Code of Ethics in its entirety please refer to the following website: http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp.
2. **Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics**

   Professional ethics are the core of social work. The profession has an obligation to articulate its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. The NASW Code of Ethics sets forth these values, principles, and standards to guide social workers’ conduct. The Code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

3. **NASW Code of Ethics as applied to MSW Program**

   It is the expectation of the CSUN MSW Department for students to uphold the NASW Code of Ethics in the classroom and during the field practicum experiences. Please refer to the MSW Field Education Application and the MSW Field Education Student Agreement. Student behavior that is contrary to the guidelines for professional conduct for social workers as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics will be reviewed by the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee (PARC) and could result in dismissal of student from program.

**VII. General Policies and Procedures**

This section of the Handbook is divided into University Policies and Procedures, and Department Policies and Procedures. The Department abides by all University policies and procedures.

**A. University Policies and Procedures**

1. **Non-Discrimination Policy**
   California State University provides equal opportunity for all. CSUN is a public institution with a long-standing commitment to equal opportunity for all. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, or disability in admission to the University. Nor does California State University, Northridge discriminate in treatment of employees, selecting a candidate for a job position, or selecting which students can participate in an activity or program. Concerns or questions regarding the implementation of this policy can be directed to the Office of Equity and Diversity.

2. **Transfer Credit**
   Students may transfer up to nine hours of foundation credits from other Council on Social Work Education accredited graduate programs in social work. Only “A” and “B” grades are granted credit at California State University, Northridge. The MSW Chair must approve all transfer credit. If the student is transferring elective credit, the MSW Chair must approve the elective. Under unusual circumstances, upon approval from the Department Chair and Associate Vice President of Graduate Studies more than nine hours of credit may be transferred.
3. **Student Conduct Code**

The University is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy living and learning environment for students, faculty, and staff. Each member of the campus community must choose behaviors that contribute toward this end. Students are expected to be good citizens and to engage in responsible behaviors that reflect well upon their university, to be civil to one another and to others in the campus community, and contribute positively to student and University life.

Student behavior that is not consistent with the CSUN Student Conduct Code is addressed through an educational process that is designed to promote safety and good citizenship and, when necessary, impose appropriate consequences. Student Conduct Code violations are referred to the Vice President of Student Affairs for adjudication. The following is a partial list of the grounds upon which student discipline can be based. For a complete listing of the California Code of Regulations; Title 5, Article 2, please refer to: www.csun.edu/a&r/soc/studentconduct.html.

### i. **Grounds for Student Discipline**

The following grounds for student discipline can be found on the CSUN website:

http://www.csun.edu/catalog/policies/student-conduct-code/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grounds for Student Discipline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Dishonesty, including:</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty that are intended to gain</td>
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<td>unfair academic advantage.</td>
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<td>B. Furnishing false information to a University official, faculty member, or campus office.</td>
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<td>C. Forgery, alteration, or misuse of a University document, key, or identification instrument.</td>
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<td>D. Misrepresenting one's self to be an authorized agent of the University or one of its</td>
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<tr>
<td>auxiliaries.</td>
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<td>2. Unauthorized entry into, presence in, use of, or misuse of University property.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Willful, material and substantial disruption or obstruction of a University-related</td>
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<td>activity, or any on-campus activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Participating in an activity that substantially and materially disrupts the normal</td>
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<td>operations of the University, or infringes on the rights of members of the University</td>
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<tr>
<td>community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Willful, material and substantial obstruction of the free flow of pedestrian or other</td>
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<td>traffic, on or leading to campus property or an off-campus University related activity.</td>
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<td>6. Disorderly, lewd, indecent, or obscene behavior at a University related activity, or</td>
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<td>directed toward a member of the University community.</td>
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<td>7. Conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person within or related</td>
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<td>to the University community, including physical abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment,</td>
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<td>or sexual misconduct.</td>
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<td>8. Hazing, or conspiracy to haze. Hazing is defined as any method of initiation or pre-</td>
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<td>initiation into a student organization or student body, whether or not the organization or</td>
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<td>body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious</td>
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<tr>
<td>bodily injury to any former, current, or prospective student of any school, community college,</td>
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</tbody>
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college, university or other educational institution in this state (Penal Code 245.6), and in addition, any act likely to cause physical harm, personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm, to any former, current, or prospective student of any school, community college, college, university or other educational institution. The term “hazing” does not include customary athletic events or school sanctions events. Neither the express or implied consent of a victim of hazing, nor the lack of active participation in a particular hazing incident is a defense. Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of hazing is not a neutral act, and is also a violation of this section. 6. Use, possession, manufacture, or distribution of illegal drugs or drug-related paraphernalia, (except as expressly permitted by law and University regulations) or the misuse of legal pharmaceutical drugs.

9. Use, possession, manufacture, or distribution of alcoholic beverages (except as expressly permitted by law and University regulations), or public intoxication while on campus or at a University related activity.

10. Theft of property or services from the University community, or misappropriation of University resources.

11. Unauthorized destruction, or damage to University property or other property in the University community.

12. Possession or misuse of firearms or guns, replicas, ammunition, explosives, fireworks, knives, other weapons, or dangerous chemicals (without the prior authorization of the campus president) on campus or at a University related activity.

13. Unauthorized recording, dissemination, or publication of academic presentations (including handwritten notes) for a commercial purpose.

14. Misuse of computer facilities or resources, including:
   A. Unauthorized entry into a file, for any purpose.
   B. Unauthorized transfer of a file.
   C. Use of another’s identification or password.
   D. Use of computing facilities, campus network, or other resources to interfere with the work of another member of the University community.
   E. Use of computing facilities and resources to send obscene or intimidating and abusive messages.
   F. Use of computing facilities and resources to interfere with normal University operations.
   G. Use of computing facilities and resources in violation of copyright laws.
   H. Violation of a campus computer use policy.

13. Violation of any published University policy, rule, regulation or presidential order.

14. Failure to comply with directions, or interference with, any University official or any public safety officer while acting in the performance of his/her duties.

15. Any act chargeable as a violation of a federal, state, or local law that poses a substantial threat to the safety or wellbeing of members of the University community, to property within the University community or poses a significant threat of disruption or interference with University operations.

16. Violation of the Student Conduct Procedures, including:
   A. Falsification, distortion, or misrepresentation of information related to a student discipline matter.
   B. Disruption or interference with the orderly progress of a student discipline proceeding.
   C. Initiation of a student discipline proceeding in bad faith.
   D. Attempting to discourage another from participating in the student discipline matter.
E. Attempting to influence the impartiality of any participant in a student discipline matter.
F. Verbal or physical harassment or intimidation of any participant in a student discipline matter.
G. Failure to comply with the sanction(s) imposed under a student discipline proceeding.

17. Encouraging, permitting, or assisting another to do any act that could subject him or her to discipline.

ii. Classroom Misconduct

Instructors are responsible for setting both the academic and behavioral standards for their courses. Students are expected to comply with established class standards as well as the Student Conduct Code. Students who display disruptive, threatening, or abusive behavior in class are subject to discipline and may be referred for a Departmental Professionalism & Academic Review Committee (PARC) and/or to the Office of Student Affairs. Faculty may eject a student from a single class session when necessary to end seriously disruptive or threatening behavior. Such actions will be reported to the appropriate campus officials.

iii. Reporting Misconduct

Behavior believed to be in violation of the Student Conduct Code should be reported, in writing, to the Chair of the Department and/or other faculty members and the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs.

iv. Harassment

All matters of harassment are referred to Office of Equity and Diversity. Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual or gender-based behavior that occurs when one person has formal or informal power over the other. There are three elements to sexual harassment:

- The behavior is unwanted or unwelcome.
- The behavior is sexual or related to the gender of the person.
- The behavior occurs in the context of a relationship where one person has more formal power that the other (such as a supervisor over an employee or a faculty member over a student) or more informal power (such as one peer over another).

Any student believing to be sexually harassed should report incident(s) to the Department Chair, their advisor, or other faculty member. Title IX policies will be adhered to in terms of reporting structure. Substantiated charges of sexual harassment by a student may result in dismissal from the program. In addition, Chair, advisor, or faculty member may assist student with reporting the alleged misconduct/violation of the Student Conduct Code to the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs.

Harassment is unwanted behavior that occurs when one person has formal or informal power over the other. There are three elements to harassment:

- The behavior is unwanted or unwelcome.
- A person is being harassed when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons.
- The behavior occurs in the context of a relationship where one person has more formal power that the other (such as a supervisor over an employee or a faculty member over a student) or more informal power (such as one peer over another).
Any student believing to be harassed should report incident(s) to the Department Chair, their advisor, or other faculty member. Title IX policies will be adhered to in terms of reporting structure. Substantiated charges of harassment by a student may result in dismissal from the program. In addition, Chair, advisor, or faculty member may assist student with reporting the alleged misconduct/violation of the Student Conduct Code to the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs.

If You Believe You Have Been Sexually Harassed And/Or Harassed:
- Understand that it is not your fault
- Do not be intimidated by a threat of retaliation to you or a family member

4. Students with Disabilities
Students with documented disabilities may request reasonable accommodations for their classes and/or field placement through the Disability Resources and Education Center (DRES). The DRES office is located in Bayramian Hall, Room 110. The office can be contacted by phone at (818) 677-2684. Students with documented disabilities are advised to register with DRES upon entering the program so that they may take full advantage of the support and services offered by CSUN. These services range from note taking/transcribing services and exam proctoring to ASL interpreters and mobility assistance. Students who may need an accommodation for their field placement experience should identify this need on the MSW Field Education Application and with their Director of Field Education so that reasonable accommodations can be facilitated in a timely fashion. Students are encouraged to take charge of how they present their disability to the prospective placement agency, especially if reasonable accommodations are required.

5. Drug, Smoke, and Tobacco-Free Campus Policy Information
Consistent with its mission of enabling students to reach their educational goals, CSUN is committed to creating a campus environment that is free from both the illegal and harmful use of alcohol and drugs.
It is the policy of CSUN that the manufacture, possession, distribution, sale, or use of alcohol or illicit drugs on-campus, or off-campus while on University business or participating in university sponsored functions, is prohibited. Drugs may be possessed or used as legally prescribed or when lawfully permitted for the purpose of research or instruction.
The purpose of this policy is to delineate University regulations concerning alcohol and drugs, provide procedural guidelines, communicate the consequences of failing to adhere to established policies, and provide guidance as to available resources.
Complete text of the policy and procedural guidelines can be viewed at www.csun.edu.
CSUN is a smoke and tobacco-free campus, which means that smoking is prohibited on campus. CSUN implemented this policy because we are committed to providing a cleaner and healthier, smoke-free environment for the entire campus community. Please visit the Clear the Air Website (http://www.csun.edu/clear-the-air) for additional information.

6. Withdrawals for Medical Reasons
A withdrawal from the CSUN MSW program for medical reason constitutes a withdrawal from the University for the academic period in question. Students who are granted withdrawals for
medical reason forfeit their right to use those student services available to regularly enrolled students until the first day of classes in the semester they return to school.

To request a withdrawal for a medical reason, refer to information provided on the Klotz Student Health Center website (www.csun.edu/shc/essential/withdrawals.htm) and complete the Petition for Withdrawal for Medical Reason form. Mail or bring the form to the Klotz Student Health Center Room 235 with a letter from your doctor stating the medical reason for your withdrawal and supporting your withdrawal request. Before going to the Klotz Student Health Center, please call (818) 677-3691 to arrange a review of your application with the Medical Withdrawal Coordinator. To comply with California State University requirements, CSUN requires that your request be confidentially reviewed by the Klotz Student Health Center Director. Students may be required to obtain signatures from Professors, Department Chair, and/or other University Administrators. The Coordinator will advise you of the specific requirements you will need to complete your request after reviewing your application at the time of your visit.

Please Note:
- The medical withdrawal process should be completed as soon as possible. After one semester, applications are no longer valid. You will have to re-apply with a request for a retroactive withdrawal.
- Withdrawals for medical reasons may affect a student's financial aid. Students are encouraged to contact the Financial Aid Office (ext. 4085) for clarification.
- Withdrawals for medical reasons may affect a student's academic status. Contact Admissions and Records (ext. 3700, option 7).
- If students are registered with the International Programs office, a withdrawal may affect their student visa. Please contact International Programs (ext. 3053) prior to submitting the application.
- If a student applies for more than three withdrawals for medical reasons during their college career, they may be required to seek academic advisement before their return to school.
- If a hold is placed on a student record because of a withdrawal for a medical reason, it will be necessary for the student to provide written clearance from a medical provider before they will be allowed to return to school. Please bring the clearance note to the Klotz Student Health Center Room 235 prior to registration.
- If a student applies for a withdrawal for a medical reason during the last three weeks of instruction, consultation is required with the Associate Vice President of Graduate Studies. The Student Health Center does not handle refunds. If students believe they are entitled to a refund, they should contact Student Financial Services (ext. 4085, press 9) after receipt of written notification from Admissions and Records that the medical withdrawal has been completed.

7. **Enrollment in Classes**
Students must be enrolled in all required courses prior to the first day of the semester. Please adhere to all Admissions and Records tuition payment deadlines to avoid being dis-enrolled in classes. Students that do not enroll in their classes prior to the first day of the semester may not be able to attend classes and/or internship and may be terminated from the program.

8. **Conditionally Classified Status**
Accepted students may be required to complete additional examinations prior to achieving Classified Status. Classified Status must be obtained, or a request for extension must be submitted to the department prior to completion of 12 units of graduate classes. The deadline for this
academic year is October 1, 2015. If you are unable to meet the requirement(s) due to extenuating circumstances, please contact the Department immediately to see if an adjustment can be arranged.

i.  **Upper Division Writing Proficiency Exam (WPE)**
Students who completed their undergraduate degree outside of the California State University system must complete the UDWPE. Information regarding this exam can be found on the Testing Center website at [http://www.csun.edu/testing/upper/#general](http://www.csun.edu/testing/upper/#general). To pass a student must receive a score of eight (8) or higher. This requirement can be waived if the applicant or student receives a score of 3 or higher on the analytical writing portion of the GRE.

ii.  **Graduate Record Examination (GRE)**
Students that have a cumulative GPA less than 3.0 in their undergraduate studies must complete the GRE. If a Master’s degree has been completed prior to entering into the MSW Program with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above the GRE requirement is waived. Please refer to the GRE website for testing information, [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org). To pass a student must receive a score in the fiftieth (50th) percentile or higher on one of the three sections of the exam. Please know that the University will only accept scores from the past five years.

iii.  **Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)**
All students from countries in which the official language is not English are required to take the TOEFL exam. Those who do not possess a bachelor’s degree from a postsecondary institution where English is the principal language of instruction must receive a minimum score on the internet (iBT) version of the TOEFL of 84. Please refer to the TOEFL website for testing information, [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org).

9.  **Grade Appeals**
The University considers all grades reported at the end of each semester to be final. Students are responsible for reviewing their grades for accuracy before the end of the subsequent semester. Students who believe they have received a grade in error should promptly ask the instructor to verify and, if appropriate, correct the grade. Please refer to the Academic Grievance and Grade Appeal (AGGA) process for grade or academic process disputes.

Grades received for the semester of graduation will be considered sealed 60 days after the official date of graduation. However, the deadline to request a grade correction is the end of the semester following that in which the grade was assigned. If the instructor is absent from campus during the subsequent semester, students should promptly consult with the Department Chair about the grade in question. If the Department Chair is unable to contact the instructor, he/she will notify the Associate Dean of the College in writing that an extension of the grade correction deadline, up to one year, has been granted.

10.  **Grades of Incomplete**
Students may be granted an incomplete grade (I) when a portion of required course work has not been completed and evaluated in the prescribed time period due to unforeseen but fully justified reasons, and that a substantial portion of the course requirement has been completed with a passing grade and that there is still a possibility of earning credit. The work that is incomplete normally should be of such a nature that can be completed independently by the student for later evaluation by the instructor. An Incomplete shall not be assigned when a student would be required to attend a major portion of the class when it is next offered.
It is the responsibility of the student to bring pertinent information to the attention of the instructor and to determine from the instructor the remaining course requirements that must be satisfied to remove the Incomplete. A final grade is assigned when the agreed-upon work has been completed and evaluated. An “I” must normally be made up within 1 calendar year immediately following the end of the term during which it was assigned. This limitation prevails whether or not the student maintains continuous enrollment.

Students who believe they meet the necessary conditions to be assigned an Incomplete should secure a Request for a Grade of Incomplete form at www.csun.edu/anr/forms.

Students should complete the form and submit it in person to the course instructor on or before the day of the final exam. The instructor should check all appropriate boxes in the Instructor Information section of the form and complete the information that describes the assignment(s) to be completed and the due date. If students fail to submit the request by this deadline, they should receive the grade that they have earned for the entire course, including work completed and penalties for work not completed. No retroactive incomplete grades are permitted. If the request for an Incomplete is granted, the instructor will assign a grade of Incomplete on the SOLAR class grade roster and add an Incomplete contract.

When the required work is completed, the instructor will fill out a Correction of Grade or Removal of Incomplete form and submit it to the Department office.

11. CSUN Academic Dishonesty Policy

Department faculty members and/or the PARC are obligated to refer all cases of dishonesty to the Vice President of Student Affairs as outlined in the CSUN Faculty Policy on Academic Dishonesty Policy (http://www.csun.edu/catalog/policies/academic-dishonesty/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSUN Academic Dishonesty Policy</th>
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<tr>
<td>The maintenance of academic integrity and quality education is the responsibility of each student within this university and the California State University system. Cheating or plagiarism in connection with an academic program at a campus is listed in Section 41301, Title V, California Code of Regulations, as an offense for which a student may be expelled, suspended, or given a less severe disciplinary sanction. Academic dishonesty is an especially serious offense and diminishes the quality of scholarship and defrauds those who depend upon the integrity of the campus programs. Such dishonesty includes:</td>
</tr>
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<td>Cheating</td>
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<td>Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. Comments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Faculty members are encouraged to state in advance their policies and procedures concerning examinations and other academic exercises as well as the use before examinations of shared study aids, examination files, and other related materials and forms of assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Students completing any examination should assume that external assistance (e.g., books, notes, calculators, pagers, cell phones/cameras, PDAs, other electronic devices, conversation with others) is prohibited unless specifically authorized by the instructor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Students must not allow others to conduct research or prepare any work for them without advance authorization from the instructor. The comment includes, but is not limited to, the services of commercial term companies.</td>
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4. Substantial portions of the same academic work may not be submitted for credit in more than one course without authorization.

Fabrication: Intentional falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Comments:
1. “Invented” information may not be used in any laboratory experiment or other academic exercise without notice to and authorization from the instructor. It would be improper, for example, to analyze one sample in an experiment and covertly “invent” data based on that single experiment for several more required analyses.
2. One should acknowledge reliance upon the actual source from which cited information was obtained. For example, a writer should not reproduce a quotation from a book review and indicate that the quotation was obtained from the book itself.
3. Students who attempt to alter and resubmit returned academic work with intent to defraud the faculty member will be in violation of this section. For example, a student may not change an answer on a returned exam and then claim that they deserve additional credit.

Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty. Comments: For example, one who knowingly allowed another to copy from his or her paper during an examination would be in violation of this section.

Plagiarism
Intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, or work of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. Comments:
1. Direct Quotation: Every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks, or by appropriate indentation or by other means of identification, and must be promptly cited in a footnote. Proper footnote style for any academic department is outlined by the MLA Style Sheet or K. L. Turabian’s A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations. These and similar publications are available in the Matador Bookstore and at the reference desk of the Oviatt Library.
2. Paraphrase: Prompt acknowledgment is required when material from another source is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in your own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: “to paraphrase Locke’s comment . . .” and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material.
3. Borrowed Facts or Information: Information obtained in one’s reading or research which is not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. Examples of common knowledge might include the names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc.

Materials which contribute only to one’s general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography and need not be immediately footnoted. One footnote is usually sufficient to acknowledge indebtedness when a number of connected sentences in the paper draw their special information from one source. When direct quotations are used, however, quotation marks must be inserted and prompt acknowledgment is required.
B. Department Policies and Procedures

1. Advising
Upon admission to the Master of Social Work Program, students are assigned a faculty advisor. The Program will notify the student who their advisor is. Advisors serve as resources for academic and professional advising, and may serve as advocates or mediators should problems occur in class. Under unusual circumstances, the student may ask the Chair of the MSW Program to be reassigned to a different advisor. The department may re-assign the student to a new advisor at any time.

2. Progress Evaluation
It is the responsibility of each student to keep up to date on his or her own progress in classroom and field. In other words, the professor is not responsible for seeking out a student. Students may make appointments with professors, leave voice messages, or correspond by e-mail. The professor’s obligation as a teacher is to be available on a regular, posted basis and to respond to messages in a timely manner. However, the student must initiate discussion about progress in courses and fieldwork.

3. Program Absences
Please refer to individual syllabi for specific information on attendance for each course.

The Department may request a medical release from a physician stating that the student is able to return to classes and/or internship following any illness or medical procedure.

In some circumstances a leave of absence up to one academic year may be granted by the Chair of the Department. Students are required to consult with their Academic Advisor prior to requesting a leave of absence and must submit a formal request by email to the Chair of the Department or the Director of Online & Offsite Programs.

Due to our cohort model it may not be possible for a student to take a leave of absence and return to a comparable schedule.

Students requesting a leave of absence may be required to reapply to the program.

Please note: the MSW program does not have any form of sick, maternal, paternal or family leave from academic and/or field courses. Please refer to the “withdrawals for medical reasons” sections for more information.

4. Academic and Professional Conduct Standards

i. Academic Concerns in the Classroom
   - Students are advised to deal with concerns or problems before they become tremendous. The following steps should be followed when students have concerns or problems:
Resolution of student academic difficulties should first be initiated and negotiated between the student and the classroom instructor. Students should assume responsibility in initiating and negotiating a resolution of the academic difficulty with the faculty member.

If the student feels that resolution of the academic difficulty appears improbable, then the student should consult his/her faculty advisor.

It is the intent of these guidelines that most student academic difficulties can be resolved at the classroom level or in joint consultation with the faculty advisor.

If, following these steps, the student feels that the resolution of the difficulty is not satisfactory, the student should consult with the Department Chair or Director of Offsite Programs.

The Department Chair or Director of Offsite Programs may refer the matter to the Professionalism and Academic Review Committee.

In the event of an unresolved academic dispute, the student may elect to use the University Academic Grievance and Grade Appeal (AGGA) Procedures (http://www.csun.edu/studentaffairs/policies-and-procedures).

ii. **Academic Performance**

Academic standards apply to class work attendance and performance, field education performance and attendance, as well as ethical and professional conduct. (Please refer to the Field Education Manual for further information on academic standards for field education performance.)

- Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 (“B”) GPA to remain enrolled in the program.
- Students are permitted three units of a “C” grade. An additional 3 units or more of a grade of “C” (or below) will result in dismissal from the MSW program. Students are permitted to have only one grade of “C” (C+ is not the same) on their transcript.
- Students who receive a grade of “C” in any course are required to notify the Department. Students should notify their Academic Advisor of their grade via email.
- No grade below a “C” can be counted toward graduation.
- Any grade of “C-” or below must be repeated after an approved course repeat form has been filed with Graduate Studies. If the student does not receive a “C” or better on the second attempt, the student will be dismissed from the MSW program. A maximum of 6 units may be repeated.
- Due to our cohort model, repeating a course (with the exception of SWRK 523) may result in delayed program continuation and graduation.
- Students must have a minimum 3.0 GPA to graduate. Students who complete their course work without the 3.0 average must meet with their faculty advisor to discuss additional requirements which must be approved in writing by the Chair and Professionalism & Academic Review Committee and are subject to the final approval of the Dean of the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences and Graduate Studies.
- Students are expected to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and Standards of the Social Work Department. Failure to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics will result in recommendation for a PARC and potentially in dismissal for professional reasons.
- Students who are dismissed for academic reasons have the right to meet with a Professionalism & Academic Review Committee (PARC) for the purpose of presenting information in support of possible reinstatement.
The Social Work department is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. Anyone caught cheating will be subject to University and Departmental discipline and may be reported to the University for further disciplinary action.

- **First Offense:** Course instructor is authorized to drop student’s grade below a C-(under 70%) for assignment in question. Referral to Professionalism & Academic Review Committee, notification sent to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and dismissal from program optional.
- **Second Offense:** Referral to Professionalism & Academic Review Committee and notification sent to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Dismissal from program optional.
- **Third Offense:** Notification sent to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and dismissal from program.

### iii. Professionalism and Academic Review Committee (PARC) Process

Students may be referred to the PARC review process by any Department faculty or staff member. Outcome of review may result in recommendation to the Department Chair for dismissal from the program.

**The Professionalism & Academic Review Committee will:**

- Review identified professionalism and academic problems, including those from the field practicum, which cannot be resolved through other specified channels with the parties involved.
- Review concerns of student conduct which are contrary to the guidelines for professional conduct for social workers as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Recommend to the Chair/Associate Chair a course of action resulting from the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee (PARC) deliberations.
- The PARC will refer all violations of academic dishonesty to the Vice President of Student Affairs.

**Review Protocol:**

- Any student who receives a failing grade for a course will be referred for review.
- Any student who receives one “C” grade may be referred for a PARC by a faculty member. The Student may also request a PARC or a meeting with the faculty member
- Any student at risk of receiving a second “C” grade, or below may be referred for review.
- Any student who receives a grade of a “C” in field education will be referred for review.
- Any student who is at risk of receiving a “C” or lower in field education may be referred for review.
- Any faculty, staff, or field liaison from the Department of Social Work may recommend a review for any student who is perceived to be professional or academic difficulty in the classroom or in the field, or who appears to have engaged in inappropriate conduct in violation of the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Any student whose behavior does not meet professional and/or ethical standards as specified in the student handbook or NASW Code of Ethics will be referred to the Professionalism & Academic Review (PARC) process.
Written referrals (with specific concerns) for review are sent to the Chair/Associate Chair of the Department of Social Work, who assigns a Professionalism & Academic Review Committee Chair and members of the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee (see Professionalism & Academic Review Committee Structure).

The Chair of the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee may convene a pre-conference meeting in order for the committee to review preliminary information. The committee will then decide if it is necessary to proceed with full process.

If deemed necessary, the Chair of the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee will convene one or more meetings, if possible, within one week after receiving the request for review.

The Chair of the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee will coordinate logistics with PARC members and notify the Associate Chair of the Department of the meeting time and location.

The Associate Chair of the Department will email notification of the review meeting to the student and to his/her faculty advisor as needed. A copy of the notification will be placed in the student’s folder.

The Professionalism & Academic Review Committee should seek to arrive at a plan that will allow the student to improve his/her professional or academic performance and to make reasonable progress toward his/her degree.

The Professionalism & Academic Review Committee will formulate a recommendation to the Chair/Associate Chair of the Department in writing within one week of the review. A copy of the recommendation will be placed in the student’s file.

The Chair/Associate Chair of the Department will notify via email the student and the faculty making the referral of any resulting decisions within one week of the committee recommendation.

The Professionalism & Academic Review Committee may reconvene at the request of the Chair/Associate Chair of the Department, faculty, or student to determine if satisfactory progress is being made toward improved performance.

If satisfactory progress is not being made toward improving professional or academic success, the PARC may recommend program delay or dismissal.

In addition to considering recommendations made by the PARC, the Chair/Associate Chair of the Department may consider the recommendations of University entities outside the Department (e.g. Graduate Studies, Student Affairs) when making decisions about program matriculation.

Students under review may be subject to changes in academic standing which could impact student’s ability to complete the program. In some instances, the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee may not have completed the review process in time for a student’s graduation. Participation in graduation and commencement activities does not ensure official completion of program.

While the student is under review they are prohibited to contact, discuss, or communicate with the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee members and referring faculty members regarding proceedings outside of officially sanctioned meetings.

Professionalism & Academic Review Committee recommendations and decisions may be subject to review by the CSUN Graduate Studies Department.
The Professionalism & Academic Review Committee will work in conjunction with University policies and procedures (e.g. AGGA or Student Conduct and Discipline) to maintain high professional and academic standards and students’ due process.

**Professionalism & Academic Review Committee Structure:**
- The Professionalism & Academic Review Committee shall consist of three MSW faculty or teaching staff with a preference for one field and one non-field faculty member. The Chair/Associate Chair of the Department will appoint a Professionalism & Academic Review Committee Chair.
- In cases where the Chair of the Department is directly involved in the concern of record, the Associate Chair of the Department or Chair of the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee will assume the responsibilities of the Chair/Associate Chair of the Department in that matter.
- In cases where committee members are directly involved in the concern of record, they will be excused from participation and the Chair/Associate Chair will find an alternate faculty member for this review.
- If the Chair of the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee is directly involved in the concern of record, he/she will recuse him/herself and the Chair/Associate Chair of the Department will appoint an alternate faculty member to make up the third member of the committee.

**Other Professionalism & Academic Review Committee Considerations:**
- Only those persons who have been identified prior to the date of the proceedings to provide information attend the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee meeting. Those individuals must participate separately and are not to remain to hear information from other persons scheduled. Exceptions can be made when the information to be provided by two or more persons is so closely related that separate appearances would seriously diminish the value of the information to be provided.
- If a student fails to attend a PARC meeting, recommendations will be based on related materials and input provided by the instructor or other identified individuals with relevant information. A copy of the final recommendation letter will be sent to the student and placed in the student’s file.
- The location and/or format of the PARC meeting(s) may be arranged to facilitate the attendance of those (i.e. online students) who are not required to be present on the CSUN campus. This could take the form of a teleconference or Skype meeting.
- The committee chair is responsible for all meeting notes and documentation. A copy of the formal notification and any PARC communications to the student, including the final decision of the committee, shall be placed in the student’s file.

**Procedures Governing Reinstatement**
If a student has been terminated from the program due to an academic, professional, or ethical issue, reinstatement in any of the CSUN graduate social work programs will not be allowed.

**Evaluation of Student Performance in the MSW Program**
The expectations and standards for students of professional versus non-professional degree programs are different. In professional programs, the student is often thrust into course work concurrent with hands-on practice situations that have real impact on the lives of real people with real problems and needs. The expectations and standards
of professional programs must therefore interweave scholarship with codes of ethical conduct and scientific rigor with professional competency.

The Department of Social Work establishes chief among its goals in delivering a program of graduate education, the preparation of individuals committed to the knowledge, values, and skills of professional social work practice. The establishment of and adherence to a clearly articulated set of programmatic goals and performance standards for the Department’s students begins with a recognition that becoming a competent and well trained professional in social work is a gradual process. Functional standards of performance capitalize on strategies that uplift and do not focus on diminishing people. The Department believes that its program expectations and requirements promote redemptive not punitive interventions when success or progress toward success is not easily forthcoming. This means that not all criteria are expected to be met at all times.

Persons who teach and supervise students, along with program administrators, will assess student performance and apply their professional judgment to determine if standards are being met during a student’s educational career. Professional judgment is the capacity to assess a situation by applying the values and knowledge of the social work profession, combined with a professional’s own experience and practice wisdom.

The Department of Social Work employs the following evaluative framework to guide program faculty and administrators in their responsibility for carefully assessing and regularly monitoring students in the Department’s programs regarding the student’s ability to function effectively across a variety of professional situations including but not limited to the classroom, field placement, and other settings where the individual is operating as a social work student. There are currently three areas of student capacity, performance, and functioning, which are viewed as inexorably linked in determining if program standards are being achieved. As an example, scholastic ability is not sufficient in determining or justifying continued enrollment in the program. That is, all three areas, taken together and/or separately are subject to assessment at regular intervals to determine the appropriateness of a student’s continued enrollment in the program. A Professionalism and Academic Review (PARC) process, including ethics and the professional use of self, will take place if the department leadership deems the student as having difficulty in one or more of the following student academic performance areas. The three areas of student academic performance are:

1. **Ability to acquire professional skills**
   a. **Communication Skills**
      i. Demonstrates sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings.
   b. **Written Communication**
      i. Writes clearly, uses correct grammar and spelling, and applies appropriate writing style, including American Psychological Association (APA) referencing, appropriate source citation, and documentation. Demonstrates sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and complete adequately all written assignments as specified by faculty. Written work must be mechanically and stylistically acceptable. Serious deficiencies in areas such as spelling, punctuation, sentence structure,
and coherent organization will result in lower grades. Students are encouraged to seek resources to improve academic skills such as writing and study.

c. Effective use of knowledge: the integration of concepts, theories, and information from readings, lectures, and seminar discussions.

d. The inclusion of personal points of view along with rationale, logic, and examples.

e. Organization: thesis as part of the introduction, smooth relationship between ideas and between paragraphs, and overall structure, integrative concluding section.

f. Clarity: understandability, good style and form.

g. Syntax, grammar, and spelling

h. Timely completion and submission of all written assignments.

i. Oral Communication

a. Communicates effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals. Expresses ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates a willingness and an ability to listen to others. Demonstrates sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to complete adequately all oral assignments, and to meet the objectives of field placement experiences, as specified by faculty and field placement agency.

iii. Interpersonal Skills

a. Demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals and to meet or exceed the ethical obligations of the profession. These skills include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and demonstration of respect for and consideration of others. The student takes appropriate responsibility for own actions and considers the impact of their actions on others. Effective learning demands active participation. In order to enhance feelings of safety, and to create a positive learning environment, the following must apply:

b. Attends classes and field placement and is prompt, timely, and engaged in the learning process.

c. Reads assigned course material.

d. Get their needs met by interacting with others and by raising their concerns and criticisms with the instructor. Completes all of one’s work.

e. Takes personal ownership of expressions of bigotry. In other words, rather than attribute a negative characteristic to a social group or to a member of that group, one begins with, "this is how I have been taught to believe," or "I don't like to admit it but I do have the belief that..."

f. Commits to personal/professional growth and self-exploration and behaves in a nonviolent manner.

iv. Cognitive Skills

a. Exhibits sufficient knowledge of social work and clarity of thinking to process information and applies it to appropriate situations in classroom and field placement settings. Demonstrate a clear grounded-ness in relevant social, behavioral and biological science knowledge and research - including
knowledge and skills in relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of practice and self as practitioner. Exhibits ability to conceptualize and integrate knowledge and apply that knowledge across various settings the student must function in, including but not limited to settings and transactions in the classroom, field placement, with clients, supervisors, faculty, and other classmates.

v. Physical Skills
   a. Exhibits sufficient motor and sensory abilities to regularly attend and actively participate in class and field placement with or without accommodations. All accommodations recommended through the DRES office will be provided.

      • Emotional and mental abilities
      • Professional performance skills

2. Emotional and Mental Abilities Necessary for Performance in the Program and Professional Practice

i. Stress Management
   a. Demonstrates ability to recognize and deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. Handles stress effectively by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive (appropriate) relationships with colleagues, peers, and others. Students are encouraged to seek department (academic advisor) and University level (counseling center) resources to assess the best approach to better coping and adaptation.

ii. Emotional Mental Capacities
   b. Uses sound judgment based on assessment by advisor, faculty, and/or department leadership. Seeks and effectively uses help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance. Students are encouraged to seek department (academic advisor) and University level (counseling center) resources to assess the best approach to better coping and adaptation. Engages in counseling resources for self or seeks out support and help if personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties:

      • Compromise scholastic performance.
      • Interfere with professional judgment, behavior, and performance.
      • Jeopardize the best interests of those for whom the social work student has a professional responsibility (as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics, Section 4.05a, which can be viewed online at http://www.naswdc.org/). MSW students whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their academic or professional judgment, behavior, or performance will be referred to the PARC process with recommendations to make adjustments in workload, terminating the program,
or taking any other necessary steps to protect clients and others (as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics, Section 4.05b, which can be viewed online at http://www.naswdc.org/).

3. **Professional Performance Skills Necessary for Work with Clients and Professional Practice**

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

   ii. **Self-Awareness**
      b. Students are to exhibit knowledge of how one’s values, attitudes, beliefs; emotions and past experiences affect thinking, behavior and relationships. Accurately assesses one’s own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice. Shows awareness of self and how one is perceived by others. Reflects on one’s own limitations as they relate to professional capacities. Is willing to examine and change behavior when it interferes with working with clients and other professionals.

   iii. **Ethical Obligations**
      c. Current behavior and classroom performance demonstrate adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional practice, noted in the NASW Code of Ethics. Ethical behaviors include:
         d. Adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics.
         e. No history of convictions which are contrary to professional practice.
         f. Systematic evaluation of clients and their situations in an unbiased, factual way. Suspension of personal biases during interactions with others.
         g. Comprehension of another individual’s way of life and values. Empathic communication and support of the client as a basis for a productive professional relationship.
         h. Appreciation of the value of diversity. Effective and nonjudgmental relation to and work with others who are different from oneself. Appropriate service to all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person’s age, class, race, religious beliefs, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and/or value system. No imposition of personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on clients.
         i. Demonstration of respect for the rights of others. Commitment to clients’ rights to freedom of choice and self-determination. Maintenance of confidentiality as it relates to human service, classroom activities, and field placement. Demonstration of honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences and
A. Philosophy

The philosophy of the California State University, Northridge (CSUN) Field Education Program is that field practice supplements and reinforces classroom instruction through the utilization of a field practicum site. The practicum offers students an opportunity to come in contact with a variety of populations that have various types of needs and problems reflective of the population the student may encounter in future practice. In the practicum, the student is able to go where the client population is located, provide a service, and assist in meeting the individual, families, groups, organizations, communities, and societal needs. The practicum plays a vital role in the preparation of competent future social work professional practitioners. In addition to the skills and theoretical knowledge needed for direct service with various client systems, students also gain a hands-on understanding of the social work profession’s value base, its expectations in terms of practice and its codes of conduct, communication, and protocols.

B. Council on Social Work Education

Field Education is recognized by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) as the “signature pedagogy” of social work education and the CSUN MSW Field Education Program adheres to the CSWE's Educational Policy. The MSW Program administers field education consistent with program goals and objectives that emphasize the importance of multicultural, multiracial focus on human systems and the helping process. The CSUN Field Education Department admits only those students who have met the program’s specified criteria for field education, has a written criteria for selecting field placements, a process for monitoring students and maintaining contact between the Field Liaison and agencies, and a method for evaluating students and the effectiveness of agencies providing field instruction.

C. Field Education Experience

The fieldwork experience is an extension of the classroom. It is designed to provide a challenge to the student, exposing them to a myriad social work practice opportunities. The fieldwork experience is designed to engage students in supervised direct service at macro, mezzo, and micro levels. The fieldwork experience provides students with the opportunity, under supervised conditions, to apply theories and knowledge, learned in both the foundation and concentration-year courses, of social work practice. Additionally, the fieldwork experience
provides students an opportunity to reflect on their learning and to experiment and develop confidence in the skills they are developing during the experience. It is an integral part of the preparation process for students for entry into the social work profession and allows them to develop a range of intervention techniques and strategies suitable for use in diverse practice settings, with a variety of cultural, ethnic, and racial groups.

Each student is given assignments that build upon each other, focusing on the outcome goals of a self-directed and competent practitioner. Optimally, students will be exposed to diagnostic, leadership, and administrative skills through a combination of field experiences during foundation and concentration years. Emphasis in the foundation-year (first year) of fieldwork is placed upon developing appropriate foundation social work practice skills and knowledge.

During the concentration-year (second year), the student is expected to develop increased insight and depth of understanding of agency and/or client systems and social work practice skills via exposure to a variety of experiences.

The fieldwork experience is tailored to the individual student’s needs in an ongoing assessment process involving the student, Field Instructor, and Field Liaison. During the first few weeks of the placement period, a Learning Agreement will be developed between the student and the Field Instructor. The Learning Agreement will specify learning objectives for the student, the experiences and activities in which the student will participate to meet these learning objectives and specific timelines for their implementation and completion.

D. Selection of Agencies and Field Instructors

The selection of agencies for field education is an important part of the Master of Social Work Program. It is the responsibility of the Field Education Program to determine an agency’s suitability for student training and to work closely with interested agencies in this process.

1. General Criteria Used in Selection of Agencies

- The agency’s philosophy, goals, programs and policies are compatible with professional social work standards and the agency practices are consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.
- The agency is compliant with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and in the delivery of services, no person shall be excluded from participation or denied benefits or is otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of that agency or center on the basis of race, color, or national origin.
- The agency maintains a working and learning environment free from discrimination and harassment of students and employees (refer to MSW and/or University policy).
- The agency is in good standing in the community.
- The agency’s training program must be compatible with the MSW Program’s educational objectives.
- There should be a correlation between the agency and the program’s Urban Family Practice Perspective so as to provide an integrated class/field curriculum and a consistent learning experience for the student.

- The agency is committed to the Field Education Program, its goals and objectives, and due process protection of the student.

- The agency will support staff time availability for effective supervision and professional learning, including participation in the MSW Program’s orientation, field instruction training, and Liaison visits. It is expected that students receive a minimum of one (1) hour of weekly supervision for Foundation and concentration-year students.

- The agency should provide a range of assignments on an ongoing basis that are appropriate to the student’s educational needs. The student work load should reflect opportunity for involvement in varying modalities of service as well as exposure to diverse populations.

- The agency must provide the necessary space and facilities, including privacy for interviewing.

- The agency is willing to sign a Field Practicum Agreement with California State University, Northridge.

2. Criteria Used in the Selection of Field Instructors

- Field Instructors must hold an MSW degree from an accredited program of social work and must have two years of MSW experience. Occasionally an exception to these criteria will be made if an MSW is not available. Criteria for non-MSW Field Instructors include:
  - Master degree in related discipline
  - Completion of Field Instructor/Preceptor Training
  - Individual Consultation with Field Department faculty

- Field Instructors supervising concentration-year students should be licensed at the LCSW level when applicable.

- Field Instructors must be committed to the teaching function of social work field education.

- Field Instructors must have an interest in, and time to fulfill, the responsibility of teaching social work students.

3. Requirements of Field Instructors

- A Field Instructor Information Form.

- A resume which includes:
  - Educational Experience
- LCSW number if applicable
- Work experience for at least the past five years, including job titles, agency names, length of employment, and description of duties
- Release of Information Authorization Form, if requested
- Field Instructor Training (CSUN offers introductory eight-hour training to be completed one time only. A certificate from a previously completed Field Instructor Training from an approved institution is also acceptable). In addition, CSUN offers an advanced session of Field Instructor Training for current Field Instructors who would like Continuing Education credits and additional skills.

The Field Department reviews this information in order to insure that all selected Field Instructors meet the selection requirements listed above. The geographic location of field placements encompasses the San Fernando Valley, San Gabriel Valley, Antelope Valley, Los Angeles, and Ventura Counties and other locations serving our distance students in the Online Program. Placement sites are based on population served by agency, meeting CSWE Field Instructor qualifications, and various student needs. Each student is placed at two different agencies (private, nonprofit, or public) during their two years of field education. The program places a strong emphasis on offering each student at least one placement experience different than their prior experiences and sometimes current interests. The purpose of this approach is to further expand upon strengths and maximize student learning in the CSUN MSW Program.

E. Generalist and Strengths-Based Perspective

A generalist and strengths-based perspective are concepts covered extensively in all foundation year coursework. They provide the basic theoretical framework for the generalist practicum coursework. Students begin to demonstrate an ability to utilize critical thinking skills during the process of assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation, termination, and follow-up practice. Also encompassed in this process is the utilization of multiple levels of interventions such as: interviewing skills; support and empowerment; and advocacy for oppressed and at-risk populations.

F. Critical Thinking Skills

Students begin to demonstrate an ability to utilize critical thinking skills during the process of assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation, termination, and follow-up practice. Encompassed in this process is the utilization of multiple levels of interventions such as interviewing skills, support and empowerment, and advocacy for oppressed and at-risk populations, when working with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. Students are able to utilize research knowledge as it relates to various information collection and assessment data tools that assist in the development of effective and appropriate treatment plans and interventions, and to help them evaluate outcomes of interventions and their own practice. The merging of classroom content with the field practicum is achieved when the Field Instructor and student collaboratively focus attention on the actual application of skills via the material covered in the classroom.
G. Code of Ethics

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics is addressed and discussed in field group discussions as part of vignette discussions, in practice scenarios, and in supervision in order to help the student combine course content with developing ethical practice skills (refer to the NASW Code of Ethics online at: http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp). In field practicum, the student develops and demonstrates a basic understanding and commitment to social work values and ethics in their practice via gained self-awareness (identification of his/her own value system, biases, the ability to manage complexities involved with ethical dilemmas, including confidentiality, boundaries, and right-to-self-determination issues, etc.). The student also demonstrates beginning competence in this area, through professional commitment to the Code of Ethics and the standards of the social work profession regardless of client, agency, community, or one’s own values and expectations. This is reflected in their attitudes, behaviors, communications, and practices.

X. FOUNDATION AND CONCENTRATION-YEAR FIELD REQUIREMENTS

A. Description of Courses

Field education is a core requirement of the MSW Program. Field education encompasses an integration of a service agency, a Field Instructor, and a University Representative (Field Liaison) all working together to help provide the student with the most well-rounded social work educational experience possible. The student is expected to demonstrate a progressive and incremental level of social work practice proficiency based on the foundation and concentration-year field goals and objectives. Therefore, the sequence of field education courses (SWRK 522/522P, SWRK 523/523P, SWRK 622/622P, SWRK 623/623P) must be taken concurrently with the social work practice courses.

Currently, each of the practicum courses is a three-unit credit course consisting of field internship and weekly field classes. The field courses, taught by the Field Liaison(s), are approximately one hour per week throughout the program. The student’s field experiences, journals, and reading materials provide rich topics for group discussions.

B. Foundation-Year

The focus of the foundation-year field practicum is to provide the students with generalist social work practice/hands-on skills. In the foundation-year, students are placed in an identified social work agency which has met CSWE, CSUN, and MSW Program placement requirements. The assignment is based on faculty assessment of prior experience and entry-level learning needs. In order for the field staff to make the most appropriate field placement, students are asked to fill out a foundation-year Field Application and attend a pre-placement field interview in the late spring prior to the beginning of the program in the subsequent (fall) semester.
The foundation-year practicum requires that students spend sixteen hours per week not including lunch at the same field site during the first academic year. Schedules may vary depending on which cohort the student is in. All schedules must be approved by the Field Education Program. In addition to the field practicum placement, students participate in a field course that offers support, feedback, and input from peers regarding challenges, positive and negative situations, etc. occurring in their field settings (the specific schedule is determined at the beginning of each academic year).

In the first semester of field students initiate their assignments by becoming oriented to the agency placement. Students initially observe professionals in practice and later in the semester may begin to carry caseloads, case assignments, and participate in client, agency, and community activities. If students are assigned caseloads, they are expected to carry and manage them with the guidance of the Field Instructor. The foundation-year placement focuses on generalist social work practice skills. The following are the specific foundation-year field courses:

**SWRK 522/522P**
Foundations of Field Practicum I (3 units)

**SWRK 523/523P**
Foundations of Field Practicum II (3 units, may be repeated)

*N*OTE: For three year program students, course assignments (including field work hours) may be distributed over fall, spring and summer semesters.

* The assigned semester grades are the same for the regular two-unit section and the one unit “P” section.

### C. Concentration-year

In the concentration-year of field education, students continue to build upon the micro, mezzo and macro knowledge and skills gained during the foundation-year, and through advanced coursework, continue to expand their application of new skills. Some of these advanced practice skills consist of increased self-analysis and reflection, autonomy, constructive utilization of supervision, management of more complex case load assignments and legal and ethical issues. Orientation for the concentration year field experience is generally held during the semester prior to the beginning of concentration year placement. All students will be required to complete a concentration-year Field Application.

The concentration-year practicum schedules may vary depending on which cohort the student is in. All schedules must be approved by the Field Education Program. In addition to the field practicum placement, students participate in a field course that offers support, feedback, and input from peers regarding challenges, positive and negative situations, etc. occurring in their field settings (the specific schedule is determined at the beginning of each academic year).

In the concentration-year of field, in most cases students have more input on their selection of a placement site. Exceptions include those students in certain off-site cohorts and/or those students subject to the Flex Group Field Education Agreement (See Section IV.,F). The focus of the concentration-year field practicum is to provide the student with more advanced social work practice/hands-on skills. The focus of this concentration-year encompasses helping the student
develop advanced interventions and strategies that will help them work more effectively with all populations. The following are the specific concentration-year field courses:

SWRK 622/622P * Advanced Field Practicum with Urban Families III (3 units)

SWRK 623/623P * Advanced Field Practicum with Urban Families IV (3 units)
*The assigned semester grades are the same for the regular two-unit section and the one unit “P” section.

D. Assignments and Expectations for Foundation-Year Field

Grading components for the field practicum coursework include professional use of self, class attendance, class participation, and a variety of assignments. An in-depth description of these components will be covered during the beginning of the field course; although a partial listing is offered below:

1. Field Placement Time Requirements

The student is required to complete at a minimum 400-600 hours during the foundation-year of field education at one CSUN-approved field placement agency. However, hours vary by cohort and program. Field days are usually Monday, Wednesday and/or Thursday for two-year on-campus program students and a varied schedule for three-year and on-line program students. All three year program and off-site students must have two full days available during regular business hours in order to complete the required field hours.

2. Learning Agreement

The student, in conjunction with their Field Instructor, will need to complete a Learning Agreement at the beginning of the academic year. Learning Agreements are to be completed and turned in to the Field Liaison during the first month of field.

3. Supervision

Students are expected to participate in one hour of individual or group supervision with their Field Instructor during each week of field. It is recommended to set up a regular supervision time.

4. Student Field Evaluation

Field Instructors are to complete a mid-semester evaluation (approximately the 7th or 8th week of field) for both fall and spring semesters and again at the end of the fall and spring semesters. For off-site cohorts, additional evaluations may be required for the summer session.
5. Field Practicum Course

The practicum is scheduled for every week students are in field placement. Students are expected to attend all classes and assume an active role in class discussions and activities. Absences, tardiness, and early departures will impact the overall grade.

6. Journals

From the time the student begins field placement, students are expected to submit nine, 1-3 page Field Journals to their Field Liaison per semester they are in placement, unless otherwise specified by the field instructor. Journal entries should be reflective summaries of the previous week’s field experience.

7. Educationally Based Recordings

Students are to submit one educationally based recording per week to their Field Instructor during the foundation-year or as specified in the course outline. The recordings are useful learning tools for both the student and Field Instructor. Because it is impossible for the Field Instructor to be with the student during every client contact, the recording helps the student keep the Field Instructor informed about their activities. The Field Instructor evaluates the student’s assessment of the process, their use-of-self, ability to implement interventions, and overall ability to engage with the individual and/or group. The educationally based recordings enable the student to gradually gain better listening and content retention skills, reflect on their activities, explore the process issues that they were unaware of, analyze the methods they used to handle situations, and explore new learning and skills gained via the supervisory process. The recording also allows the student and Field Instructor to use these field experiences as the spring board of the supervisory hour. When writing a recording on a group, it should include the above identified information as well as the group dynamics between members, roles that members take on, and the group process. Students may use field placement time to complete their Educationally Based Recordings, when possible.

8. Confidentiality

Information shared in the practicum about human service organizations and clients is covered by the NASW Code of Ethics and shared only in a classroom setting for supervisory purposes. Given the nature of the field practicum and the fact that it will focus on concerns and issues faced by students working with actual clients, it is critically important that client confidentiality be maintained. Under no circumstances should a student reveal the name of a client or provide descriptive information that might identify the client, even when names are not mentioned. Discussions outside the classroom regarding information about clients, Field Instructors, peers, or agencies are considered a Breach of Confidentiality and subject to consequences by the CSUN Social Work Department, NASW, and the individuals whose confidentiality was breached.
9. Channels of Communication

It is vital that students understand and practice appropriate communication skills when attempting to resolve issues with Field Instructors, peers, Field Liaisons, etc. Students need to identify ways of expressing their needs, concerns, or frustrations directly versus behaving unprofessionally (gossip, engaging in negative talk, aggressive or passive behaviors, etc.). Evaluations will also provide feedback regarding the level of integrity and professionalism students utilize when handling conflict or issues with clients, peers, agency staff, supervisor, Field Instructors, etc.

E. Concentration-year Field Requirements

In order to reach concentration-year field practicum status, students must have successfully completed the foundation-year field practicum sequence, complete a concentration-year Field Application, and must enroll in SWRK 622/622P and later in SWRK 623/623P. In the Concentration year of field, students will continue to meet once a week in the field practicum class.

F. Assignments and Expectations for Concentration-year Field

1. Preparation for Field

The concentration-year field placement process includes the selection of a placement consistent with the student’s area of specialization, area of interest, or learning strategy. concentration-year field placements are chosen from a group of agencies compiled by the field faculty and include on-site interviews. Process for placement in concentration-year field work begins during the spring semester of the foundation-year.

2. Field Placement Time Requirements

The student is required to complete between 500 and 700 hours at one field placement agency (public, private, or non-profit agency). Hours vary by cohort. Field days are usually Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for on-campus two-year program students. The three year and on-line program student schedules are varied. All field schedules must be approved by the Field Education Program. The specific field schedule is distributed and reviewed during the field seminars at the beginning of the academic year.

3. Learning Contract

The student, in conjunction with their Field Instructor, will need to complete a Learning Agreement for the concentration-year field placement. Learning Agreements are to be turned in to the Field Liaison during the first month of field.
4. Supervision

Students are expected to participate in one hour of individual supervision with their Field Instructor during each week of field. Any additional supervision opportunities, including group supervision, is welcome, but may not replace the individual supervision provided by the Field Instructor. It is recommended to set up a regular supervision time.

5. Student Field Evaluation

Field Instructors are to complete a mid-semester evaluation (approximately the 7th or 8th week of field) for both fall and spring semester and again at the end of the fall and spring semesters. Evaluation dates for three year program students may vary.

6. Field Practicum Course

The practicum course is scheduled for every week the student is in field. Students are expected to attend all classes and assume an active role in class discussions and activities. Absences, tardiness, and early departures will impact the overall grade.

7. Journals

Journal assignments for Concentration Year Students are determined by Field Liaison. Journal entries should be reflective summaries about the previous week’s field experience.

8. Educationally Based Recordings

Students are to submit one educationally based recording per week to their Field Instructor during the concentration-year. The recordings are useful learning tools for both the student and Field Instructor. Because it is impossible for the Field Instructor to be with the student during every client contact, the recording helps the student keep the Field Instructor informed about their activities. The Field Instructor evaluates the student’s assessment of the process, their use-of-self, their ability to implement interventions, and overall ability to engage with the individual and/or group. The educationally based recordings enable the student to gradually gain better listening and content retention skills, reflect on their activities, explore the process issues that they were unaware of, analyze the methods they used to handle situations, and explore new learning and skills gained via the supervisory process. The recording also allows the student and Field Instructor to use these field experiences as the spring board of the supervisory hour. When writing a recording on a group, it should include the above identified information as well as the group dynamics between members, roles that members take on, and the group process.

9. Confidentiality

Information shared in the practicum about human service organizations and clients is covered by the NASW Code of Ethics and shared only in a classroom setting for
supervisory purposes. Given the nature of the field practicum and the fact that it will focus on concerns and issues faced by students working with actual clients, it is critically important that client confidentiality be maintained. Under no circumstances should a student reveal the name of a client or provide descriptive information that might identify the client, even when names are not mentioned. Discussions outside the classroom regarding information about clients, Field Instructors, peers or agencies are considered a Breach of Confidentiality and subject to consequences by the CSUN Social Work Department, NASW, and the individuals whose confidentiality was breached.

10. Channels of Communication

It is vital that students understand and practice appropriate communication skills when attempting to resolve issues with clients, Field Instructors, peers, agency staff, supervisors, Field Liaisons, etc. Students need to identify ways of expressing their needs, concerns, or frustrations directly versus behaving unprofessionally (gossip, engaging in negative talk, aggressive or passive behaviors, etc.). Evaluations will also provide feedback regarding the level of integrity and professionalism students utilize when handling conflict or issues.

G. Field Education Grading Policy

Students receive one combined grade for their field practicum and field course work. The field education course requires that the student earns a grade of “B-” or above in order to continue in the CSUN MSW Program. The determination of the grade for the field practicum is made by the Field Liaison with input from the Field Instructor, and is based on the following:

- Student performance at their placement agency as reflected, in part, by the outcome of the one or more Student Evaluations;
- Student’s participation, attendance, and punctuality in the field course and field practicum;
- Student’s completion of field practicum course and field placement assignments (quality and timeliness);
- Student’s ability to work through and resolve conflicts with peers, supervisors, agency staff, clients, Field Department staff, Field Instructors, etc.;
- Student’s Professional Use of Self
- Student’s prompt and professional follow-through during placement process
- Status of any active Performance Enhancement Contracts; and,
- Student’s professional behavior as evaluated by adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics.

H. Failure to Perform Satisfactorily

If a student earns a “C+” or “C” grade, the student may not advance to the next semester of the Field Education Program without permission from the Director of Field Education. If the
“C+” or “C” grade is earned in last semester of the MSW Program, the student will be referred to the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee for consideration (see Professionalism & Academic Review Committee section in the handbook). If the student receives a “C-” or lower grade in field, the grade will not count toward graduation and the units will need to be repeated (refer to the Academic Standards section of the Student Handbook). Should a student be granted the opportunity to retake a field class, this must be done concurrently with at least one academic course.

If a student obtains an “Incomplete” grade in a field course, they will need to complete all unfinished work prior to the beginning of the following semester, otherwise they will receive a failing grade for the field practicum course. The field practicum is a graded course and if a student fails to perform, their grade will be impacted accordingly. In addition, due to the fact that each semester’s field practicum course is built upon the previous semester’s field coursework, the student would not be allowed to continue to the next sequence of coursework until the course/area of deficiency has been corrected.

If it is behavior that resulted in the student receiving an “Incomplete” and that behavior is judged by the field faculty and the Director of Field Education to be of such a nature that placing the student on an educationally-directed field placement would not help or cause change in the behavior, the student will be referred to the PARC process. Generally, unchangeable behaviors that negatively impact field placement stem from an individual’s inability to set and maintain personal and/or professional boundaries, an inability to allow for client self-determination, displaying intolerance and/or judgment of clients, poor communication skills, and other behaviors that go against core social work values. Please refer to the Professionalism & Academic Review section of the student handbook.

XI. EVALUATION

Evaluations of all program areas are conducted at various points throughout the academic year and with a variety of evaluation tools.

A. Mid-Semester Student Progress Report

This report is written each semester by the Field Instructor and submitted to the MSW Field Education Program via IPT (Intern Placement Tracking database). Contents of the report may or may not be reviewed with the student directly. The progress report provides the Field Liaison with an update of the student’s current progress, identifies any concerns or issues that need to be addressed, and identifies current areas of work, strength, and need for the remainder of the semester.

B. End of Semester Student Evaluation

This evaluation is completed at the end of each semester by the Field Instructor via IPT, and reviewed by the student and Field Liaison. The evaluation assesses the student’s progress in each
of the areas identified in the Learning Agreement, and as such, the student earns a specific evaluation result per area.

C. Evaluation of Field Liaison by Student and Field Instructor

This evaluation process is conducted at the end of every academic year as required by the department. The evaluations provide the Director of Field Education with varied perspectives of the Field Liaison, evaluating the assistance and support provided to the above noted individuals, as well as the Field Liaison’s areas of strength and areas for needed improvement.

D. Student and Field Liaison Evaluation of the Agency Site and the Field Instructor

This area of evaluation provides the student and Field Liaison an opportunity to evaluate the agency site and Field Instructor, and provide feedback related to areas of strength and challenge.

XII. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR MSW FIELD EDUCATION

A. Identification as a MSW Student Intern

Often clients, staff, or community personnel assume that the credentials of all the staff who work at the same site are the same, therefore, not identifying oneself as a student would result in a misrepresentation of credentials. All students are required to represent themselves to clients, staff, and community professionals as a “student intern”.

B. Student Privacy/Confidentiality Waiver

All information related to the student placement and performance in an agency is neither private nor confidential, even if the student is in an employment-based practicum setting. Field Instructors are considered adjunct faculty and thereby entitled to receive and share with the CSUN MSW Program faculty information pertinent to the student’s educational process.

C. Student Responsibilities and Field Policies

- Complete all required prerequisites by the University, Department of Social Work, and agency prior to commencing field (fingerprinting/criminal background checks, TB test and written verification of test status and clearance if test is positive, current Immunization Record, etc.). CSUN MSW Field Education Program makes every effort to have agencies incur the costs of above requirements; however, in some situations the student may need to pay for certain items.

- The CSUN Department of Social Work expects students with prior felony convictions to inform the Director of Field Education of such convictions prior to commencement of the field process. A question regarding all felony and misdemeanor convictions appears on the MSW Field Education Application. Individuals with felony convictions may not be allowed to work with children or be placed in certain agencies or situations. Students
misrepresenting information on the MSW Program and/or Field Education Application will be administratively dropped from the MSW program.

- Students are representatives of the agency and are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner as well as adhere to the policies and regulations of the agency, just as an employee is expected to do, including dress code and agency hours.

- Students are required to remain in their field placements for the duration of the academic year, unless otherwise approved by the field department.

- Students must demonstrate professionalism (e.g., avoid engaging in gossip or negative talk), appropriate behavior (e.g., not unprofessional, avoidant, or aggressive behavior), and use chain of authority when dealing with conflict. The student will be evaluated on their ability to communicate with others.

- Abide by the NASW Code of Ethics.

- Notify their Field Instructor if they are going to be absent (planned or unplanned) and discuss how they will make up the work and hours. Significant changes in schedule require approval from the Field Education Program. **NOTE:** If there is an issue of absences or chronic absenteeism the issue needs to be addressed with the Field Liaison and the Field Instructor. If the absenteeism is found to be disruptive to the field experience and/or clients, an evaluation as to whether the student should continue or be terminated from the field placement will be addressed. Any deviation from originally approved schedule must be approved by the Field Instructor, the Field Liaison, and in some cases, the Director of Field Education. Students may not end their placement or change placements without the prior approval of the Director of Field Education.

- Develop a Learning Agreement in collaboration with the Field Instructor at the beginning of the field practicum.

- Complete and participate in all scheduled evaluations.

- Students should not perform duties outside of their scope of practice.

- Students are to disclose previous paid and volunteer work experience during the Field Pre-Placement Interview. Students are not permitted to secure an internship placement at a location where they have previously worked and/or volunteered.

### D. Employment-Based Internships or Job Conversions

In rare instances, a student is granted approval for utilizing their employment as a field site during the concentration year. A Memorandum of Understanding is used for this purpose to outline the parameters. Applications for job conversions are generally due in February. The agreement must be signed by the Agency Director, the Field Instructor’s supervisor, the Field Instructor (who must be someone who is not the employment supervisor), the student/employee, the CSUN Field Department Director, and the Field Liaison. If the job conversion is approved, there is a clear understanding that:
• The duties that the individual performs during their employment hours are very different than their duties as an intern;
• The supervision is provided by two separate individuals; and
• The student/employee schedule is set so blocks of time for field education are provided for (such as two or three full days to perform only student tasks).
• For non-CalSWEC DCFS employees receiving release time, please consult the Director of Field Education.
• In the event of a voluntary or involuntary leave from place of employment, the student may be ineligible to continue with a job conversion placement.

E. Paid or Stipend Field Placements

Paid or stipend field placements are greatly appreciated by the students and CSUN but the majority of field placements are not paid or stipend. It is important that expectations related to a student’s productivity not be evaluated as that of an employee. Even when students are being paid or given a stipend, their role in the agency is not of an employee, but of a student intern. The student’s assignments must be educationally focused. Information on any available stipends will be sent to eligible students. Additional private stipends may be available depending on funding and the individual needs of the agency.

F. FLEX Group Field Education Agreement

For students with limited schedule flexibility or other issue(s) impacting student ability to be placed in field internship, a FLEX agreement will be instituted. The agreement stipulates that placement options will be limited and student may need to travel over an hour from home to assigned placement. In addition, a limited number of placements may be available to FLEX student for either the 1st or 2nd year internship, student may not be available for some or all stipends given schedule or other restrictions, and student will not be able to participate in the standard second year placement process involving directed interviewing and selection unless granted permission from Field Education.

G. Conflict of Interest Policy for Field Internships

Student is to inform Field Department of any personal relationship student may have with individuals associated with potential or assigned internship, for example, internships employing significant others, spouses, parents, relatives, or other close personal acquaintances. Such a relationship, combined with the power and responsibility of supervising or coordinating internships and making determinations regarding evaluations, is considered to be a conflict of interest. For more information or questions, please consult the Director of Field Education.
XIII. STUDENT PLACEMENT PROCESS

The placement of a student in a field practicum site involves an evaluation and assessment regarding the student’s educational experiences, their work experiences, and career goals. This information helps in narrowing and selecting the most appropriate field placement sites for the student.

Placement decisions are made by the Field Department after considering educational needs, student preferences, agency capacity, community capacity, and input from Field Liaison and Field Instructor. Not all student requests can be met, but every reasonable effort will be made to consider their requests. Each placement assignment is for an entire academic year, or longer for three year program students. Placements generally begin in the fall semester and continue through the end of the spring or summer semesters, depending on cohort. Students must have a working car and car insurance. Students may have to travel up to an hour each way to and from their home to the placement site, or longer if under the FLEX Group Field Education Agreement. Students may not pursue their own field placements and should not contact an agency prior to referrals made by the Department of Field Education. Field grades may be negatively impacted for students attempting to secure their own placement outside the direction of the Field Department. Every effort is made to secure a broad range of experiences for student experiences which encompass the micro-mezzo-macro practice continuum.

NOTE: The Field Education Department may have difficulty placing some students. Many agencies will not accept interns with criminal backgrounds. Some students are deemed inappropriate for agency placement for other reasons. In some situations, student will be counseled to explore other graduate program options. Please refer to FLEX language.

A. General Steps for Securing a Field Placement

- Student completes the foundation-year and concentration-year Field Application per the direction of the Social Work Department and submits it to the Field Education Department. Failure to submit a completed application by the deadline may jeopardize the student’s ability to participate in field practicum for the following academic year.

- Student attends the Field Consultation Meeting to discuss prior and current work experiences as well as the overall field practicum process.

- If student has difficulty adhering to the field internship schedule or is deemed by Field Education staff as difficult to place in an available field internship option, a FLEX Group Field Placement Agreement may be utilized or the student may not be eligible to enroll in the program.

- Following review of application and field consultation meeting, student is either deemed appropriate for field education or referred to Chair of Department for further review.
The Field Department will contact agencies in order to confirm placement slots for the following academic year. Students are not to contact agencies directly, unless specifically instructed to do so by the field department.

For foundation-year students, the Field Department will inform incoming students of practicum sites and instructs students to set up meetings with Field Instructors.

During the concentration-year, the student receives referral(s) and sets up an interview directly with the agencies, except for students in cohorts with other concentration-year field arrangements. The student will be given two agency referrals/interview opportunities, unless otherwise specified by Field Department. The CSUN MSW Program does not guarantee that all students will be successful in the placement interview process or that going on an interview will result in a guaranteed placement.

The student will prepare, at minimum, a one page resume for their interview(s). A specific form is provided for concentration-year students.

If possible, the agency Field Instructor will give verbal or written feedback to the Field Department as to whether a student will be accepted or not by their particular agency for placement.

The Field Department makes the final decision of placement and informs student.

The student attends all required orientations and meetings.

The Field Instructor and Site Field Preceptor attend the Field Instructor Orientation and Training (if applicable).

B. Student Requirements

All students must sign an acknowledgment in the Field Application that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- I hereby certify that the statements contained in this completed Field Education Application, and any other information included as part of this application and attachments, are true and correct. I agree and understand that any misrepresentation or omission of any material facts on my part may be cause for delay in field placement, separation from the field practicum, and/or can initiate immediate review by the Director of Field Education.

- I hereby give permission to the CSUN School of Social Work, Field Education Department, and its faculty members, and any of the approved field education agencies or field instructors to verify any and all information contained within this application. This can include contacting former employers, field internships, and/or field instructors, reviewing graduate school records, etc.

- I am advised that if any information should come to Field Department’s attention, which could affect my professional student status and/or internship role, and thus the field practicum experience, the School shall be authorized to assess and discuss the significant information with the appropriate parties.
I understand that any information contained in this field practicum application packet and/or any pertinent information relating to my professional student role shall be discussed between CSUN faculty and approved field practicum agencies and their representatives.

I understand that most field practicum agencies request security background investigations, fingerprint checks, random drug screens, physical examinations, TB tests, immunization verification, and a valid CA driver’s license, etc. as requirements for their placement interview process and for practicum site confirmation. Agencies may also require random drug screening(s) at any time during the year. I am willing to participate in these additional screenings/evaluations and give permission for the results to be provided to the School when requested. I also understand that if I fail these screenings, I will not be confirmed at the specified agency, can become ineligible for field practicum, and therefore not be placed for an entire Academic Year. I also understand that if during the year I fail a screening, I will be removed from the agency and not placed in another agency for the remainder of the academic year. The Field Course Instructor will review my case to determine whether I am eligible to continue the program, and if so, the timeline for returning to field. I understand that failing a drug screen(s) or other agency screening may be grounds for disqualification from the MSW Program.

I understand that I may be financially responsible to pay for clearances, health screenings and trainings (i.e. CPR) if the agency does not cover the cost.

I understand the placement site has the right to dictate suitable intern attire.

I shall fulfill the responsibilities of the student intern role, be in compliance with all School Policies and Procedures as outlined in the Field Education Application, the MSW Field Education Manual, and the MSW Student Manual.

At all times, I shall maintain professional conduct in accordance with the School’s academic standards, i.e., the NASW Code of Ethics, professional social work values, and laws regulating social work practice.

If I terminate prematurely, I am aware that I will not be placed in the same field practicum setting should the department approve for my re-entry into a field placement and I will, in most cases, forfeit all completed hours.

Please refer to most current field application for additional information.
XIV. PLACEMENT FAILURE, GRIEVANCES, PROBLEM RESOLUTION, AND TERMINATION OF FIELD STUDENTS

A. Placement Failure

During both the foundation and concentration-years of field, students who either do not want to be placed at any of the agencies that they are assigned to, have been denied a placement by two or three different agencies, have demonstrated a lack of professionalism and competence at either the field site, field course, or elsewhere in the program, or a combination thereof, will meet with the appropriate Field Department and Social Work Department representatives. The possible outcome of a placement failure could result in:

- Student will be advised to sit out the year due to personal life complications that seemingly interfere with the student’s ability to present well in interviews or perform the work of a social worker, and referred to appropriate community resources.
- Student will be advised that social work is not an appropriate profession for them and will be offered career counseling through the University Career Center, and/or referred to the University Counseling Services for personal counseling.
- A negative impact on the assigned grade in SWK 522/522P, SWK 523/523P, SWK 622/622P or SWK 623/623P.

Please note: The above circumstances may involve the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee (PARC) process.

B. Grievances Regarding Field Practicum

The student has the right to express disagreement or displeasure related to placement site, Field Instructor, or their Student Evaluation. Refer to Academic Grievance and Grade Appeal (AGGA) process. As is previously stated (see Section IV. a. Student Responsibilities) the student should first discuss any grievance(s) with the individual with whom they have a disagreement. If this method does not resolve the matter, then they should proceed through the administrative chain of authority, for instance, Field Liaison → Director of Field → Education Executive Director of Grants, Field Education & Contracts → Associate Department Chair or Department Chair → PARC and/or AGGA process.

In most situations, the CSUN MSW Field Education Program will not credit field hours if student changes placements.

C. General Field Problem Resolution Process

When issues involving conflict or other types of issues occur in the placement setting, all parties are encouraged to try and resolve the matter at the lowest level of authority prior to elevating the matter. If one or both parties feel that they have tried to resolve the matter but there still is not resolution, then the Field Liaison and the Field Instructor (if they are not one of the two
original parties in the conflict) should be involved. A meeting should be set up between the Field Instructor, Field Liaison, and student in order to address the current problem.

D. Field Problems as a Result of Student Performance Issues

Problems relating to student performance include not achieving academic expectations and/or violation(s) of the NASW Code of Ethics. If the problem is not resolved within a reasonable period of time, the Field Instructor and/or Field Liaison will notify the Field Education Department of the ongoing issue(s) and write a summary addressing the ongoing issue(s), what progress and/or lack of progress the student has made. In such situations, another meeting can occur between pertinent parties. If appropriate, the Director of Field Education would meet with the student to discuss the issue(s) and make a determination as to what action should be taken at that time. A Performance Enhancement Contract (see below) may be utilized at this time. Situations such as these should be reflected in the student’s semester evaluation and they should reflect the growth and ongoing challenge the student had in placement.

NOTE: The student should be aware that they will not be allowed to change their placement but will have to stay at their current placement and attempt to resolve the issues that exist there for them.

If the Field Instructor identifies that the student’s behavior(s) places the clients, agency, or themselves in a dangerous position or violates agency policies, the Field Instructor has the right to dismiss the student and notify the student that they are terminating their field placement due to the identified violation(s). The Field Instructor must notify the Field Liaison and Director of Field Education immediately.

E. In-Progress Educational Contract

An In-Progress Educational Contract should be written by the Field Instructor or Field Liaison with the oversight of the Director Field Education, forwarded to the Executive Director of Grants, Field Education, and Contracts, with a copy to the Chair of the Department. The contract should include: a) specific behaviors or duties that need to be improved upon; b) how the progress or lack of progress will be monitored and evaluated; and c) the date(s) by which the objectives identified must be accomplished by.

If the student’s performance does not improve or does not improve to a level the Field Instructor or agency deems appropriate, an evaluation will be made by the Field Liaison and the Director of Field Education regarding whether the student should be removed from the agency. If the performance problem is more pervasive and has implications greater than field, the Field Education Program will refer the matter to the Professionalism & Academic Review Committee. An In-Progress Educational Contract may impact a student’s grade in their field practicum course.
F. Field Performance Problems Due to Student Personal Issues

If the field problem is a result of personal problems/conflict/challenges that the student is experiencing (e.g. crisis, illness, death in the family, etc.), it is expected that the student will keep the Field Instructor and Field Liaison apprised of the situation on an ongoing basis. All parties involved should follow the General Field Problem Resolution Process guidelines found in Section VI.C. of this manual. If these personal problems continue, or negatively impact the clients, agency, or student’s ability to meet their social work field obligations/expectations due to absences and/or their ability to competently perform social work functions, then the student will be removed from placement.

If a student decides to officially withdraw academically or is unable to complete the semester at the same agency, they may be required to reapply to the MSW Program. In certain circumstances, the student may request a leave of absence from the Chair of the department or the Director of Offsite Programs. For students returning after a leave of absence, the student will need to reapply for Field Education. A new field placement will need to be secured for the student, if it is determined by the field staff that the student is appropriate for field upon return.

NOTE: Students may need to repeat field hours regardless of how many field hours the student previously completed.

G. Field Performance Problems Due to Agency Deficiencies

If the student’s performance problems are due to deficits in the placement agency’s practices (e.g. lack of or poor quality supervision, personality problems negatively affecting learning, etc.), violations of the NASW Code of Ethics (e.g. harassment or discrimination, placing student in dangerous situations, etc.), or due to major agency changes that would greatly impact the student’s learning, the process for attempting to resolve this type of issue would follow the same procedure as under the General Field Problem Resolution Process found in section VI of this manual. If there is no solution that supports the educational objectives of the student and University, then the Field Liaison will discuss the matter with their Director of Field Education. If the consensus is that it is not in the best educational interest of the student to continue at that field placement site, then the student will be removed from that agency and placed at a different agency.

H. Failure to Meet Academic Requirements

If the student does not successfully fulfill the field requirements, the student grade will be negatively impacted. Please refer to Field Education Grading Policy.

I. Termination of Field Placement

Students are required to remain in the same field placement for the entire academic year. However, a field placement may be terminated if:

- The student has violated the NASW Code of Ethics.
• The agency has failed to provide an appropriate learning experience, appropriate and qualified supervisor, or has not insured a safe and healthy placement for the student.

• The student fails to meet expected performance standards including an ongoing lack of professionalism by the student at either the field placement site, field practicum course, or both (e.g. poor boundaries, tardiness, absenteeism, missing appointments, inappropriate and/or unprofessional conduct, communicating in an inappropriate or rude manner, turning in assignments late, marginal or below marginal assignments, etc.).

• A life event or major change which results in the failure to meet the learning objectives, and is not as a result of negative circumstances brought on by either party (e.g. funding cuts, unable to provide supervisor, etc.).

• If the student realized that social work is not the right profession for them.

• In most situations, the CSUN MSW Field Education Program will not credit field hours if student changes placements.

XV. SAFETY GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS

In an effort to improve student safety and help the student increase skills and knowledge about how to more appropriately and effectively handle situations, it is very important for students to gain information regarding the policies, procedures, and expectations that the University, agency, and Field Instructors have related to safety issues.

A. The MSW Program Safety Policy

Due to the nature of the work students are involved in, issues related to safety, role-playing scenarios, discussions related to safety incidents, etc. will be an ongoing topic during the Field Education Program. The purpose of these discussions will be to give the student different perspectives on situations and different ways to approach them, increasing the likelihood that the student will be able to stay safe and more effectively handle even volatile situations. The CSUN MSW Program also expects that agencies will provide their student a safe place (preferably with a lock) where the student can keep their personal belongings.

B. Policy and Procedures if an Incident Occurs at the Field Site

If an incident involving a physical or psychological injury to a student occurs, the Field Instructor or an agency representative should contact the Director of Field Education immediately. A discussion would need to occur regarding the incident, what the current status of the situation is, and what the desired outcomes are of the agency, Field Instructor, and student. Both the Field Instructor and Field Liaison will need to document the incident and plan. The Field Liaison will contact the student and assess the student’s safety and mental well-being, as well as determine if and when the student can return to their placement or if they need to be removed from that placement and be relocated elsewhere.
C. Zero-tolerance for Harassment

Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. Any student believing to be harassed at their field placement should report incident(s) to their Field Liaison, Department Chair, their advisor, or other faculty member. Chair, advisor, or faculty member will then convene a formal investigation, if necessary. Field Liaison, Chair, advisor, or faculty member may assist student with reporting the alleged misconduct/violation of the Student Conduct Code to the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs.

Substantiated charges of harassment by a student may result in dismissal from the program. See page 38 of the Student Handbook for additional information regarding University and Department harassment policies and procedures.