



UNIVERSITY OF
TEXAS
ARLINGTON

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

MSW Program Manual

Regina T. Praetorius, PhD, LMSW-AP-S

Director of Graduate Programs

rtpraetorius@uta.edu

October 2023

UT Arlington respectfully acknowledges the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes upon whose historical homelands this University is located. Their ancestors resided here for generations before being forcibly displaced by U.S. settlers and soldiers in the mid-1800s. We recognize the historical presence of the Caddo Nation and other Tribal Nations in the region; the ongoing presence and achievements of many people who moved to the area due to the Indian Relocation program of the 1950s and 1960s; and the vital presence and accomplishments of our Native students, faculty, and staff.



Table of Contents

Welcome from the Director	3
Welcome from the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs	4
Welcome from the Interim Dean.....	5
Vision and Mission	6
The MSW Program	6
Policies Related to Altering your MSW Path	8
Academic Advising.....	9
Field Education.....	9
Student Resources.....	9
School of Social Work Additional Student Policies	10
Professional Standards Policies and Procedures	100
Grade Grievances	11
University-Level Information	12
Graduation.....	12
MSW Licensure Statement.....	13
Conclusion	13
Appendix A: Thesis Guidelines	15

Welcome from the Director

I am honored to be your Director on your MSW Journey. Given the needs of our fellow humans, I am grateful on their behalf that you have chosen to answer the call to serve others in this important career of social work. You have chosen to pursue a career path that I have found fulfilling, rewarding, and enjoyable. I wake up every workday excited to go to work and on weekends, must remind myself that a break from this work I love is part of the recipe for being successful in my role. That kind of love for and dedication to your work is what I hope for each of you.

As you move through your journey, I encourage you to keep one of our social work values at heart—the importance of human relationships. As Mother Teresa noted, *"We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty. We must start in our own homes to remedy this kind of poverty."* Building relationships with the faculty, staff, students, and leadership are all important avenues toward your own success in serving others in need of social work support. We offer many opportunities for you to connect with each other and us and I sincerely hope you will take advantage of those as often as possible.

At times, this journey may seem difficult not only due to the rigor of our program but also because many of you embark upon it with other responsibilities such as employment, and care for family members. Your sacrifices toward this journey are seen, acknowledged, and appreciated. I often say students are my heroes—you take on so much and I am always in awe of what you accomplish. Please remember to *"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible"* (St. Francis of Assisi). Please also remember that at times, you may become frustrated. As you experience this, please remember the importance of respect as we work together toward your success; in other words: *"When things go wrong, don't go with them"* (Elvis Presley). We are here to help and support you but please don't take your frustrations out on us!

As you move through your journey, you will no doubt have questions pertaining to a wide range of topics and situations. This manual is designed to guide you. However, if your question is not answered here, please use [this protocol](#) to identify the person to assist. When in doubt, don't hesitate to contact me and I will either answer or get you to the person who can. If you are a prospective MSW student, we are excited you are interested and ask that you please visit [Social Work Admissions](#) for assistance.

In closing, please call me Regina if you feel comfortable—though I have certain decision-making authority related to your degrees, we are colleagues in partnership. I'm so honored to join you on your journey to the MSW. Social Work is an amazingly fulfilling profession that allows us to be supportive forces toward our clients' achieving their best lives. Whether it be through individual, couples, groups and family counseling (micro and mezzo) or community, state and federal level (macro) advocacy and program development, we are afforded opportunities to strive for change for the betterment of all—what a gift that is for us in our work!

Once again, I welcome you to the MSW Program at the UTA School of Social Work with a warm heart!

Kind Regards,



Regina

Regina T. Praetorius, PhD, LMSW-AP-S | She/Her/Hers

Director of Graduate Programs

Jillian Michelle Smith Professor in Family Violence Research

Distinguished Teaching Professor

rtpraetorius@uta.edu

I acknowledge the grave harm brought by colonialism to this land, especially the systematic attempts to erase indigenous and African identities through violence, slavery and racist segregation laws.

Welcome from the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs

Greetings, and welcome to the Master of Social Work program! As Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, I am thrilled that you have chosen to pursue your MSW degree in the School of Social Work at The University of Texas at Arlington. Here you will find dedicated staff who are committed to supporting you in your journey, and more than fifty faculty members with expertise in clinical and community practice and cutting-edge research ([Click here](#) to learn about UTA SSW Faculty). As a graduate student in the School of Social Work, you will have the unique opportunity to develop specialized expertise in a specific area of social work practice, and can further customize your degree with the addition of one of our six [certificate options](#) or [dual degree programs](#).

Our innovative curricula and flexible program options are designed to meet students exactly where they are, so whether you're a full-time student ready to embrace everything that our on-campus program has to offer, a working professional drawn to our online course offerings, or someone in between, we've got you covered. I encourage you to get involved in our thriving community of scholars by engaging in one (or more) of our [student organizations](#), our [Graduate Student Leader program](#), and in the many events that we hold in virtual and on-campus spaces throughout the year.

Congratulations to you for making the decision to pursue your MSW at UTA. The journey starts now, and we are ready to walk alongside you as you gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to launch your career as a social work professional!

In Maverick Spirit,



Diane Mitschke

Diane B. Mitschke, PhD | She/Her/Hers
Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs
Distinguished Teaching Professor

Welcome from the Interim Dean

Thank you for your interest in the UTA School of Social Work. The UTA School of Social Work (SSW) is a nationally recognized leader in Social Work education. For more than 50 years, we've been dedicated to educating and developing leaders and scholars committed to social justice. We have more than 12,000 alumni making a difference every day with many leading government agencies and organizations, as well as creating and leading non-profits, working in the military, in private practice and serving as deans, professors and directors in Social Work programs worldwide.

As one of the most diverse school or college on campus ([Click here to learn about UTA](#)), our Social Work students represent the best and brightest with a commitment to Social Work, social justice, diversity, equality, and inclusion. As a top-research university ([Click here for rankings](#)), we have award-winning Social Work faculty who are nationally and internationally recognized as leading research scholars and evidenced-based clinical practitioners in many areas of Social Work and social welfare. Students can take a variety of courses from professors committed to education, social justice, social welfare, research, scholarship, advocacy, and the advancement of the Social Work profession integrated throughout the curriculum.

The School Social Work is committed to life-long learning and provides an atmosphere supporting reflection, personal development, and professional growth. Faculty are practitioner scholars dedicated to teaching excellence while maintaining a high level of academic and professional involvement including research, professional development activities, practice, and consultation. Many of our faculty serve on agency boards or are otherwise involved with local, state, or national agencies, and professional associations.

We are proud of our history, and we look forward to you joining us as we continue our commitment to social justice and furthering our success in developing partnerships for a just society. I encourage you to learn more about the UTA School of Social Work by browsing this website. Your comments and questions are welcomed, and we hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,



Debra Woody, Ph.D., LCSW
Interim Dean and Associate Professor

UTASSW Vision

Educating Leaders to create community partnerships for promoting a just society.

UTASSW Mission

The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work promotes the highest standards of integrity, and excellence in research, teaching and service, and creates collaborative scholarly and educational opportunities for students and the community, with the goal of achieving a just society.

UTASSW Priorities

Five major goals describe our priorities as a School, each of which will be elaborated further in the goals section (below) with their corresponding objectives and the departments/offices responsible for their execution.

Five Goals

1. To enhance our research capacity and impact.
2. Recruit, retain and graduate high quality BSW, MSW and Ph.D. students.
3. Foster a culture of professional development and mutual respect.
4. To enhance the quality of external collaborations and professional service by faculty and staff.
5. To enhance donor participation through external relations and strategic solicitation.

The MSW Program

Council on Social Work Education Policy and Accreditation Standards

The MSW program at the UTASSW is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). As such, our program prepares students to actively promote human and community well-being through their future roles as professional social workers. Guided by a person in environment construct, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, social work's purpose 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 (CSWE, 2015, p. 5). The program is guided by the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of CSWE that includes the competencies students are expected to achieve upon graduation. These competencies are reflected in the learning outcomes for each of the courses offered.

MSW Program Mission

The MSW program provides a generalist Social work foundation upon which to build evidence-informed and social justice-focused advanced practice within a diverse society. An environment of excellence in research and engaged community partners, including field educators, creates a professional training atmosphere for developing core competencies and advanced practice skills and behaviors across a range of available specialty programs infused with effective and ethical practice, an understanding of the organizational contexts of social work practice, and inclusive of highly valued social work knowledge.

General Program Requirements and Policies

Total number of credit hours to graduate:

1. Traditional students (students without a BSW or students with a BSW who were not granted advanced standing): 61 hours including two field internships and either thesis or integrative seminar.
2. Advanced Standing students (students with a BSW who are granted advanced standing): 38 hours including one field internship and either thesis or integrative seminar.
3. Minimum GPA requirement to graduate: 3.0.
4. Time to completion: Traditional students (without a BSW) can complete the program in as little as 2 years if attending full-time; part-time attendance will result in completing the program in as little as 4 years. Students with a BSW who meet criteria for Advanced Standing can complete the program in 1 year if attending full-time or 2 years if attending part-time. Students have six years to complete the program, but may petition for further time, if justified. Courses completed outside of the six-year completion window may be required to be retaken. This decision is at the discretion of the Director of Graduate Programs.

Course Load

- **Maximum Course Load:** The maximum course load for full-time graduate students is 15 semester hours for fall or spring semesters and 12 hours for the summer session.
- **Minimum Course Load:** The minimum semester hours for full-time are 9 hours for fall and spring semesters and 6 hours for summer session.
- **Excess of Maximum Course Load:** Registration in excess of this maximum must be approved by the Director of Graduate Programs at the School of Social Work ([click here for approval request](#)).
- **Minimum Course Load for International Students:** International students must be enrolled for a minimum of nine semester hours to maintain their visa status.

Transfer Policy

Transfer credits for graduate level social work courses may, at the discretion of the Director of Graduate Programs, be accepted by the School of Social Work from comparable coursework taken and passed with a grade of 'C' or better at another CSWE accredited program within the last six years. Students wishing to transfer completed course work to the School of Social Work should submit course syllabi to the Director of Graduate Programs for comparison and evaluation. Transfer credit determination from another CSWE accredited program's coursework will be made by the Director of Graduate Programs in collaboration with the student's academic advisor. At no time may the total transfer credits awarded exceed 75% of the total program credits needed for the degree. At no time will Pre-Thesis, Thesis or Integrative Seminar courses be accepted for transfer credit.

Planning your MSW

New Student Orientation

1. At Acceptance, and before advising, students are asked to complete the **Map for the Journey** course in Canvas by clicking [here](#). This self-paced course provides information about what you can expect in the MSW Program and will provide answers to many of the questions you may have as you prepare to begin your journey in graduate school. **Completion of this course is required prior to the beginning of the term.**
2. After the MSW Program Assistant verifies completion of the Map for the Journey, students will be invited to either a face to face or virtual orientation—Phase 2 of orientation.
3. Phase 2 Orientation will include the GSL program, advising, field and the MSW program. The main goal will be to ensure there are no remaining questions **after** the Map for the Journey.
4. There will also be group advising for the following groups; pending staff availability, the groups will be more specific by specialty as well:
 - a. Foundation (cohort and noncohort together)
 - b. Cohort advising
 - c. Noncohort advising

Traditional Students' First Year

Students without a BSW or those with a BSW who are not granted advanced standing are considered traditional students. Traditional students spend the first year of their MSW in the Foundation Curriculum. The MSW Foundation Curriculum consists of 26 Semester Credit Hours (SCH) of coursework, and includes a 480 hour Foundation Field Placement in which students gain generalist social work practice experience at a social work organization in their community. [More information about the Foundation Curriculum is available on the first page of this linked document.](#)

Advanced Standing Students and Traditional Students' Second Year (Advanced Year)

Students who have completed the foundation curriculum and students with a BSW who are granted advanced standing complete the MSW Advanced Curriculum. The MSW Advanced Curriculum consists of five options for specialization ([See page 2 of this linked document for more on each specialty](#)):

- Aging (Online Only)
- Children & Families (Online and Face to Face at the Arlington Campus Options),
- Community and Administrative Practice (Online Only),
- Health (Face to Face at the Arlington Campus Only), and
- Mental Health & Substance Misuse (Online and Face to Face at the Fort Worth Campus Options).

The Advanced Curriculum includes another 480 hour Advanced Field Placement in which students gain advanced social work practice experience aligning with their chosen specialty at a social work organization in their community different from where the foundation field placement was completed. Additionally, students either complete a capstone course or a thesis.

Capstone Option: In this option, in a 3-hour course (SOCW 5395: Integrative Seminar), students complete an in-depth case study paper focusing on the helping cycle with a client from the student's advanced field placement.

Thesis Option: In this option, students complete a research study over 6 hours of coursework (SOCW 5396 and 5398). Three of the hours replace an elective in the degree and the remaining 3 hours replace the Capstone course. The steps for completing the thesis are found in Appendix A.

Traditional students undertaking the MSW program full-time, can complete the MSW in 2 years; if traditional students undertake the program part-time can complete the program in 4 years. Advanced Standing students with the BSW can complete the MSW in 1 year if completing the program full-time and in 2 years if part-time.

Course descriptions for all courses within the MSW curriculum are available in the University Graduate Catalog. Students may pursue their MSW in a number of ways including online, face to face at the Arlington Campus, and face to face at the Fort Worth Campus. These may be done in either cohort or non-cohort format.

Policies Related to Altering your MSW Path

Adding a Graduate Certificate or Dual Degree

The SSW offers graduate certificate options and dual degree options that can be added to the MSW to further specialize or diversify your degree. These options will likely extend time to graduation and incur additional cost but for many students, these costs are outweighed by the benefits. For more information on certificates offered, please [click here](#).

Dual degrees entail a student adding a Master's degree from another discipline to their MSW. By participating in a dual degree program, students can apply some semester hours jointly to meet the requirements of both degrees, thus reducing the total number of hours which would be required to earn both degrees separately. The number of hours which may be jointly applied ranges from 6 to 18 hours, subject to the approval of Graduate Advisors from both programs; in the SSW, the Graduate Advisor is different than your academic advisor—the Graduate Advisor is the Director of Graduate Programs. If you are interested in a dual degree with a discipline not listed here, please consult with the Director of Graduate Programs. To elect a dual degree, students must not have completed more than 24 hours in their MSW degree plan; [this link](#) will offer more information on dual degree offerings.

If you choose to add a certificate, please work with your academic advisor to do so. To pursue a dual degree, please contact the Director of Graduate Programs. For students in a cohort, decisions may be required related to remaining in the cohort and completing the second degree or certificate after the cohort or exceeding credit hours each semester to add certificate or dual degree classes to the cohort plan. This can be weighed and decided with your academic advisor.

Change in Degree Plans

Regardless of whether a student is enrolled in a cohort degree plan or a non-cohort degree plan, changing one's specialty can have implications that impact the courses required for the degree, additional costs and potential delays in one's graduation timeline. If a student decides to change degree plans, they must meet with an academic advisor to document the change.

Cohort Specific Policies

Students who select one of our cohort programs—online, Fort Worth, or Arlington—must follow their assigned degree plan in order to remain in the cohort. If a student enrolled in a cohort receives a failing grade in a course, does not complete a course, or is unable to stay on track with the cohort degree plan, the student will be removed from the cohort and will be shifted to the non-cohort degree plan of their choosing. **Selecting the thesis option does not remove a student from the cohort.**

Availability of Classes

Students enrolled in a cohort (online, Fort Worth, or Arlington) will enroll in the prescribed courses on their respective degree plan, and these students are guaranteed a space in these courses, provided they:

1. Remain in good standing;
2. Remain on track with their cohort degree plan; and
3. Enroll in the correct course and section number within the prescribed registration window during the registration period.

Should any of these criteria be unmet, the student will lose their preferred registration status and may register for courses with the non-cohort student population. A number of factors impact the availability of courses each semester. While we work diligently to ensure that a variety of required and elective courses are offered at various times, and in both online and face to face formats, there is no guarantee of the amount and types of courses offered outside of those available in the cohort degree plans. Students are encouraged to be flexible in selecting their courses.

Graduation Timeline

Students in cohort degree plans are provided an expected graduation date upon entry into the program. If a student is not in a cohort program, the expected graduation date cannot be guaranteed, as course availability will be dictated on a first-come, first served basis.

Academic Advising and Academic Success

Academic Advisors at UTA guide students through exploration, identification, and pursuit of their educational, personal and career goals. Advisors equip students to attain academic success and promote lifelong learning. Ultimately, academic advisors offer essential academic services that help students persist and graduate. To learn more SSW Academic Advising, [please click here](#). Frequently asked MSW Academic Advising questions and answers can be found [here](#).

Field Education

Field Education is the most exciting moment for students pursuing their social work education and future. Through your real-life experience in your foundation (if a traditional student) and advanced at the School of Social Work you will gain the skills required to be a professional, exceptional, and successful social worker. To learn more about the field education experience including to sign up for field orientation, please [click here](#). You are strongly encouraged to review the guidance on preparing for field found [here](#).

Student Resources

We are here to help you! The Academic Affairs Office welcomes you to the School of Social Work. It is our mission to make your higher education journey as simple, fun, and meaningful as possible. We offer helpful information and events designed to provide you with academic support and resources for your health and well-being—integral to your academic success in completing your degree.

Graduate Student Leaders (GSL)

The GSL program is designed to build community and connections between MSW students and strengthen the bond that students have with the School of Social Work by facilitating the exchange of accurate and timely information. Each MSW student in the program is assigned to a GSL, a fellow student who has received extensive training on leadership, communication, and information on the School and MSW program.

GSLs serve as advocates and communication facilitators for MSW students, fielding questions about all of aspects of the graduate experience, including advising, field, registration, orientation, scholarships, deadlines, program policies, and more. They can track down accurate answers to questions quickly by reaching out directly to program administrators and connecting students to services and resources. Students who reach out to their GSL with a question most often receive resolution to their presenting issue within minutes or hours of posing a question.

Your GSL can be reached anytime via email or on MS Teams. Your GSL will be reaching out to you at least once every two weeks to check in via email or Teams conference. If you are unsure of who your GSL is or have not received a response to your inquiry within 24 hours, please visit the [GSL website](#) for the interns' contact information and ask the interns who your GSL is.

Student Success

The Student Success Coordinator is committed to supporting you in successfully navigating your personal and educational goals by offering services and resources focusing on health, wellness, and support outside the classroom. We can help reduce barriers and assist you with the basic needs of life so you can achieve your goals. We are also available for students who may be in distress or exhibit behavior that raises concerns about the physical or mental well-being of themselves (or others). Please complete the [Care Referral Form](#) for assistance. This form is not for emergency situations. For life-threatening emergencies, including threat of injury to self or others, call Campus Police at 911 on a campus phone or 817-272-3003.

Connections Lab

The Social Work Connections Lab offers tutoring for social work students by social work students who can help with brainstorming and getting started, research and finding sources, writing and revising major assignments, APA citing and more. You can book time with a tutor [here](#). (If this link is giving you trouble, try opening it in an incognito window.) The Lab offers appointments Mon-Sun virtually on teams. There is also a Social Work Connections Lab Canvas Course in case you prefer to work on your own. To enroll, [click here](#). (If you're brought to the Canvas login, login to Canvas and open the link again.) This course has guidance on APA, tutorials for specific writing assignments like the policy paper or the integrative seminar, and more. Once you enroll, click "Modules" to browse offerings.

Student Organizations

Maximize your Social Work experience through student organizations! We have several student organizations to choose from, so there's something for everyone. Student organizations offer opportunities for connecting with others, engaging in meaningful work around the organization's mission, leadership and career development, and networking. For more information on the student organizations at the SSW, [click here](#).

Career Development

Learn the skills to improve your career and professional outlook upon graduation with resume workshops, featured job opportunities, licensure, and more. Visit the [Career Development Corner](#).

Scholarships

The UTA SSW offers (small) scholarships to help our students financially. Scholarships are described [here](#). Typically, scholarship applications open 2 months before the start of the next semester and are posted [here](#).

School of Social Work Additional Student Policies

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is highly prized at the School of Social Work and aligns with our Profession's Ethical Standards (Integrity) and Principles (NASW Code of Ethics). Plagiarism and the inappropriate use of an author's material are considered serious violations of scholarly and professional ethics. All instances of suspected plagiarism will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct using their procedures. Plagiarism can be defined as the failure to give proper credit to authors for their information, ideas, or words found in published or written materials, such as journals, books, monographs, handbooks, manuals, or other scholarly papers. Citations should conform to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. This applies to both paraphrased and quoted statements. Students must submit original work. It is also a violation of plagiarism to purchase a paper from another source and submit it as your original work. For a guide on avoiding plagiarism, [visit this tutorial](#).

Professional Standards Policies and Procedures

Social work education serves as a critical learning forum during which students are acculturated into the social work profession. [This document](#) establishes Professional Standards that apply to students enrolled at the School of Social Work at The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). Professional Standards include behaviors observed in the

classroom, field internship experiences, and in interactions with faculty, staff, fellow students, clients and community members. For students who demonstrate concerning behavior, a student success referral will be filed and the chair of professional standards and the coordinator for student success will decide next steps based on the referral.

Three levels of review can occur at the School of Social Work in reviewing student's Professional Behavior. The level of review depends upon the potential severity of the concern. Three levels of review exist in the School of Social Work:

- Level 1: Issues of concern between a specific instructor (or advisor) and student (Professional Standards Referral form Required).
- Level 2: Unresolved disagreements from Level 1 or claims of unprofessional behavior about a social work student deemed too severe for a Level 1 (Professional Standards Referral form required).
- Level 3: Unresolved situations from Level 2 and/or new situation warranting this level of intervention (Professional Standards Referral form required).

The procedures for each level are listed in the [policies and procedures](#).

Grade Grievances

The UTA School of Social Work follows the policies and procedures of UTA pursuant to grade grievances. Individual course instructors retain primary responsibility for assigning grades. The instructor's judgment is final unless compelling information shows:

Preferential Treatment

Example: Providing exceptions or benefits to one or more students but not to all students in the class.

AND/OR

Procedural Irregularities

Example: Failure to follow a requirement described in a course syllabus, adding a new requirement, or using criteria for grades that are not on the syllabus or in the university catalog.

The procedures for grade grievances are listed [here](#).

Nondiscrimination

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, handicap, disabilities or veteran status, be denied employment or admission, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity which it sponsors or conducts. The University shall not tolerate any behavior or verbal or physical conduct by any administrator, supervisor, and faculty or staff member, which constitutes sexual harassment. If a student believes discrimination has occurred, they should contact [Equal Opportunity Services](#).

Attendance

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. Instructors will provide, as part of course syllabi, any other absence and lateness policies they establish.

MSW Academic Affairs Student Protocol

Do you have questions about the MSW program, registration/course information, your degree plan, field, graduation, or something else about the MSW program? Are you having issues navigating your class information or have instructor questions? Use [this protocol](#) to reach the right point of contact. When in doubt, the Director of Graduate Programs is always happy to help you navigate the challenge you are experiencing.

Student rights

The following policies, procedures, and guidelines describe student rights and responsibilities while enrolled at the UTA School of Social Work.

1. Students have the right to organize in their own interest.
2. All standing committees (with the exceptions of the Executive Committee, Faculty Development and Review Committee—Tenure Track, Faculty Development and Review Committee—Non-Tenure Track, Faculty Annual and Post-Tenure Review Committee, Committee on Committees, and the Professional Standards Committee) shall have student members. Full and meaningful participation is expected. Elections to these positions are through the SSW Academic Affairs.
3. Students will not be prohibited from exercising their rights to Constitutional and lawful activity. This expressly includes freedom of speech and dissent.

Student files

Student records are stored electronically. Another person may not see a student's record unless the student gives written permission. Faculty and staff members of the University have access to student educational records in performance of regular duties. The School may confirm that a student (or graduate) is enrolled in school (or has graduated), but requests for additional information will be honored only at the request of the student (or graduate) unless the inquiring agency has provided a stipend, with this stipulation, for the student. Written evaluations by the field instructor are to be shared with the student and the student is to have the option of expressing in writing, as part of the evaluation document, any difference or exception that he/she wishes to take to the evaluation.

University-Level Information

Graduate Enrollment Policy

Graduate students must enroll in at least one credit hour of work related to their degree each long semester (Fall and Spring) in order to remain classified as an enrolled student. Students who will not meet this requirement may request a Leave of Absence.

Adding and Dropping Courses

Students wishing to add or drop courses outside of registration periods may see the University's policies on adding and dropping found [here](#). Students who need to drop courses due to medical or other challenges are encouraged to view the university's policies on [compassionate withdrawal](#).

Academic Probation and Dismissal

Graduate students failing to maintain an overall 3.0 grade point average (GPA) will be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation will have one semester to recover their GPA to a 3.0. Students failing to recover their GPA after one semester will be dismissed from the program. Students who are dismissed may file a [petition](#) to request to continue the program. Students who are dismissed and away from the program for a semester or longer must apply for readmission. Petitions (active students) and readmission applications (non-active or former students) must be approved by the Director of Graduate Programs. In rare cases, the Director may reach out to students for information on their plan for success upon readmission as part of the decision-making process. Decisions may be appealed to the Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs.

Readmission

A student previously enrolled in The University of Texas at Arlington Graduate School wishing to resume graduate work after an absence of either a fall or spring semester and/or longer period (summer excluded) must submit a readmission application and pay the required application evaluation fee. A note of importance with readmission is that social work courses older than 6 years will not be counted toward continued work—the courses must be retaken. When a student is ready to return, at least a month prior to the start of the semester in which they want to return, they will need to reapply to the university using [this form](#). In rare cases, the Director may reach out to students for information on their plan for success upon readmission as part of the decision-making process. Decisions may be appealed to the Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs.

Graduate Grading Policies

Information about graduate grading policies can be found in the [Graduate Catalog](#). Incomplete grades (I) are typically used when a student has satisfactorily completed a substantial part of the coursework, and represents an arrangement for completion between the faculty and the student. The grade of incomplete is given at the sole discretion of the instructor of the course. [Incomplete Forms](#) completed by both the student and instructor must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Programs prior to the grade entry deadline for the semester.

Graduation

Degree Conferral and Commencement Ceremonies

Degrees are awarded at the end of the fall semester (December), spring semester (May) and summer session (August). *All graduating students must file an Application for Graduation through their Student Center in MyMav by the published deadlines for the semester of graduation.* Students are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor to ensure that they will meet degree plan requirements in a timely way to allow graduation. Students who fail to apply for graduation by the specified deadlines may apply late by completing the Application for Graduation and paying a late fee. More on applying for graduation can be found [here](#).

Formal commencement ceremonies are held every May and December. More information on commencement ceremonies can be found [here](#).

Diplomas

Diplomas will be issued approximately 6-8 weeks after commencement ceremonies and will be sent to graduates via USPS mail. Graduates with account balances or transcript or any diploma holds must clear these before their diploma can be released for mailing. Diplomas are only kept and available for mailing for one (1) year after graduation. After one year, the graduate will need to order a replacement diploma.

Graduation with Honors

The university does not confer honors on students at the graduate level. However, the SSW honors students graduating with a 4.0 GPA at the SSW's Celebration of Excellence.

Additional Policies including graduating under a different catalog and posthumous degrees can be found [here](#).

MSW Licensure Statement

Graduates from our Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Accredited MSW program are eligible to apply for social work licensure in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Canadian provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, and Manitoba. Our curriculum, through its compliance with CSWE's Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), encompasses the content included in the Association of Social Work Boards' (ASWB) three categories of Master's level licensure exams. These exams are accepted in all 50 U.S. states; Washington, D.C.; the U.S. Virgin Islands; and the provinces of Alberta, British Columbia and Manitoba in Canada. Certain locales may have additional requirements; this information is available from ASWB.

Conclusion

This handbook is a general information publication only. It is not intended to, nor does it contain all regulations that relate to students. The provision of the handbook does not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between any applicant, student or faculty member and the University of Texas at Arlington, The University of Texas System, or the University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work. The University reserves the right to withdraw courses at any time, change fees, rules, calendars, curriculum, degree programs, degree requirements, graduation procedures and any other requirements affecting students. Changes will become effective whenever the proper authorities so determine and will apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled.

Students are held individually responsible for complying with all requirements of the rules and regulations of the University and the Board of Regents of the University of Texas System. Failure to read and comply with policies, regulations, and procedures will not exempt students from whatever penalties they may incur.

Appendix A
University of Texas at Arlington
School of Social Work

Master's Thesis Guidelines

Project Description: The master's thesis should be a paper that is potentially publishable. It should contain either original research, using data that has been collected or secondary data that has been analyzed (scoping or systematic reviews are also options), or it can be a substantial review of literature that advances a new conceptual frameworks or theoretical contribution.

It will be ideally 25 to 35 pages in length and will include an introduction, a literature review, a methods section, findings, discussion, and conclusion.

The Committee: Comprised of three members, one thesis chairperson and 2 thesis committee members. The chair is responsible for helping the student to conceptualize and refine the thesis plan, support them in executing it, and provide feedback and support as they write the final paper.

The Process (2 semesters)

1. The student meets with their academic advisor to determine how completing a thesis will impact their degree plan. Thesis typically involves the final two semesters of a student's degree plan, but this is not required (it can happen earlier).
2. The student identifies their committee chair and two committee members.
3. The student informs their academic advisor of their identified committee chair, and the advisor sets up SOCW 5396 with the chair as the instructor; the student enrolls in the course.
4. Student sets dates with committee for research proposal defense (4 to 8 weeks before the end of the first semester) and thesis final defense (3 to 4 weeks before the end of the 2nd semester).
 - a. Final defense must be by date listed for the graduating semester on this site:
<https://www.uta.edu/records/graduation/deadlines.php>
5. Student meets with chair to conceptualize and refine research plan.
6. Student writes research proposal: Introduction, Literature Review and proposed Methods. If IRB application will be required, this should be drafted simultaneously.
7. Student works with chair to refine and finalize proposal. Then sends to committee by 2 weeks before the proposal defense date.
8. Student defends thesis proposal.
 - a. Chair submits the Thesis Proposal Defense Form found here: <https://resources.uta.edu/social-work/faculty-academic-and-student-affairs-resources/index.php>
 - b. Student submits IRB Application (if applicable) immediately after defense.
9. Chair submits a grade of P (Pass) or F (Fail) for SOCW 5396.
10. Student meets with Academic Advisor to enroll in SOCW 5398.
11. Student collects and/or analyzes data (research articles if doing a lit review/systematic or scoping review). If student would like to recruit students in the school of social work for participation, please note the following:
 - a. Flyers may be posted on campus but must be first approved by the IRB and second must be approved by the student organizations office; please be sure your flyer conforms to student organizations' requirements. [Click here for procedures.](#)
 - b. Flyers to recruit any UTA students may be posted on campus monitors but must first be approved by the IRB. The flyer can be submitted [here](#).
 - c. Flyers may be distributed to BSW and MSW students in the newsletter with approval of the Director of Graduate or the Director of Undergraduate Programs.
 - d. Flyers may be distributed via classes but when submitting the IRB, the instructors' names and class information must be included for approval.
12. Student writes up Final Thesis (proposal plus findings, discussion and conclusion), and submits to chair for feedback/approval.

13. Once student has refined final thesis to chair's satisfaction, the final thesis is circulated to the committee at least 2 weeks before thesis defense date.
14. Committee meets for student thesis defense.
15. After final defense, chair completes and turns in final Master's Exam Report (found here: <https://resources.uta.edu/social-work/faculty-academic-and-student-affairs-resources/index.php>) to Director Graduate Programs and student submits thesis to library. Due dates for these items are found at: <https://www.uta.edu/records/graduation/deadlines.php> for each semester.
 - a. The examination is "Oral Thesis" (select this on the form)
 - b. If student passed conditionally, when the student makes the requested changes to the thesis, the chair must let the Director of Graduate Programs know so that this can be noted and the degree can be conferred
16. Chair enters a grade of P (Pass), F (Fail), or R (progress made but thesis not completed). If an R is given, the student must register for SOCW 5398 again in the subsequent semester. Incompletes are not given for thesis courses.