

# MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

## Mission Statement

The UMass Global, Master's in Social Work program is dedicated to fostering human and community well-being through a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, and respect for diversity. Guided by scientific inquiry, our mission is to equip students with the values of service, social justice, dignity, relationships, integrity, competence, and human rights. We are committed to preparing compassionate and skilled professionals who actively pursue social, racial, economic, and environmental justice, eliminate poverty, and enhance the quality of life for all, locally and globally, shaping a future of equitable and inclusive societies.

## Department of Social Work Anti-Racist Statement and Commitment to ADEI Practices.

The Social Work Department at UMass Global recognizes that most institutions, including higher education institutions, are inherently racist. At the core of social work is the commitment to social justice and transformation in all practice settings. We recognize that regardless of one's positionality, we are all at a different point in the journey of becoming anti-racist and aware of how we exercise power and privilege. The social work department faculty, staff, and students emphatically believe the advocacy of racial justice and anti-racism (intersecting with many other systems of oppression) are critical to social work and are embedded in our CSWE accreditation standards (<https://www.cswe.org/accreditation/>), our NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English/>), the NASW technology standards (<https://www.socialworkers.org/Practice/NASW-Practice-Standards-Guidelines/Standards-for-Technology-in-Social-Work-Practice/>) and the Grand Challenges for Social Work (<https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/#the-challenges>). As a collective social work department, we denounce white supremacy, systemic and anti-Black racism, oppression, and bigotry of any form. We actively disavow all racism, xenophobia, homophobia, sexism, transphobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, ageism, classism, ableism, and hate speech or actions that attempt to silence, threaten, and marginalize individuals and groups. As a learning community, we strive to identify, challenge, and evaluate behaviors, policies, and practices through self-reflection and group discussions.

We are committed to create and sustain change through the following action plan:

1. Commit to decolonization of course curriculum;
2. Recruit and retain a diverse representation of students, staff, and faculty;
3. Adhere to equitable practices in assessment and evaluation throughout the department, coursework, and practicum experiences;
4. Include voices with intersectional identities when discussing department initiatives or policies;
5. Encourage and appreciate expressions of different ideas, opinions, and beliefs, so that conversations and interactions that could potentially be divisive turn instead into opportunities for intellectual and personal growth and enrichment; and
6. Intervene when students, faculty, staff, or administration exhibit racist, sexist, homophobic, discriminatory, or colonized language and/or actions.

## Program Description

The advanced generalist MSW curriculum provides students a conceptual lens to identify and understand multidimensional problem solving and use evidence-based assessment and intervention models that reflect best practices in current social work practice. This multidimensional perspective prepares practitioners to navigate ambiguity when confronting complex problems. University of Massachusetts Global's MSW graduates are also knowledgeable about how global issues, such as human trafficking, wars, and natural disaster, influence individuals, families, and communities whether their clients are refugees fleeing war-torn nations or communities, agencies or governments recovering from unpredictable events such as economic crises, epidemics or outbreaks, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, or nuclear plant failures.

Because advanced generalist practitioners often hold leadership positions within agencies, organizations, and government programs, University of Massachusetts Global's advanced generalist MSW program prepares students to critically evaluate information, weigh competing demands of stakeholders, and consider how technological, staffing, and resource issues impact program design, social service delivery, and evaluation design. The program nurtures MSW students to develop and strengthen self-reflective leadership skills so they can identify and meet the competing demands affecting social service design and delivery in vulnerable communities.

Graduates of the MSW program are prepared for employment across a broad spectrum of settings, including child protective services agencies, mental health and substance abuse treatment programs, school-based settings, long-term care facilities, home-based programs, hospitals and other health care settings, human rights and advocacy organizations, criminal justice and legal service organizations, and local, state, and federal agencies. Other employment options for graduates could include work for government agencies such as the Veterans Administration, criminal justice programs, or non-profit organizations.

## Program Choices

University of Massachusetts Global has two ways to obtain an MSW: the Standard Advanced Generalist MSW option and the Advanced Generalist, Advanced Standing option. Both program options prepare students for advanced generalist social work practice.

### Standard Advanced Generalist Option (SAG)

The SAG option consists of a 69-credit hour degree plan which includes required foundational curriculum, advanced core curriculum and specialized electives. The first part of the curriculum provides an orientation to the profession and important foundational social work practice skills. The second part of the curriculum provides students with advanced generalist social work skills and knowledge and includes specialized electives that allow students to choose a focus area of study. Students admitted to the SAG option must complete a total of 1000 hours of field placement practicum.

### Advanced Generalist, Advanced Standing Option (AG/AS)

The AG/AS option consists of a 39-credit hour degree plan which includes required advanced core curriculum and specialized electives. The Advanced Standing curriculum provides students with advanced generalist social work skills and knowledge and includes specialized electives that allow students to choose a focus area of study. Students admitted to the AG/AS option must complete a total of 600 hours of field placement practicum.

Applicants who have earned a BSW/BASW/BSSW from a CSWE-accredited program within the past five years may be considered for

acceptance into the Advanced Standing Program. The BSW/BASW/BSSW degree must have been conferred five years or fewer from the date of admission into the MSW program. If over five years have elapsed since graduation from a CSWE-accredited BSW/BASW/BSSW program, the applicant will need to apply to the standard program (SAG), unless the applicant has social work practice experience. In such cases, the applicant may submit a petition letter with documentation of their social work practice experience to the MSW Program Director via email at [msw@umassglobal.edu](mailto:msw@umassglobal.edu), for evaluation to determine whether the applicant is eligible for admission to the Advanced Standing program (AG/AS). Such evaluations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

### States Where the MSW Program is Not Available

The MSW Program is available in most states. However, for state-specific regulatory reasons, the MSW program is not authorized in certain states and cannot provide field placements or MSW degrees in those states. When a student plans to move from the state in which they began their program to a different state, it is essential that the student consult in advance with their Advisor and Program Director. If the student relocates to a state in which the program is not authorized, the student will be unable to complete the program.

### Field Placement Practicum

Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work education. MSW students complete their field placement practicums at social service agencies within their geographic area. Field placement practicums allow student practitioners the opportunity to build, apply, and integrate classroom training and evidence-based interventions within a practice setting. As University of Massachusetts Global MSW students gain direct practice experience working with diverse populations, they also help to strengthen opportunities, resources, and capacity for local agencies that provide direct services for vulnerable families and communities.

### Accreditation

University of Massachusetts Global is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission. In California, the Master of Social Work Program at University of Massachusetts Global meets and exceeds the curriculum requirements set forth in the California Business and Professional Code section 4996.2 and has notified the Board of Behavioral Science (the licensing board for social workers in California) of its curriculum as required by law. In Washington State, University of Massachusetts Global's Master of Social Work Program meets and exceeds the curriculum requirements established by state licensing law under the Revised Code of Washington (RCW 18-225).

The MSW program earned initial accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in March 2021. The program can be found on the CSWE website: <https://www.cswe.org/accreditation/about/directory/> (<https://www.cswe.org/accreditation/about/directory/>)

### Educational Competencies (Program Learning Outcomes)

University of Massachusetts Global's MSW Program provides a curriculum that is grounded by the nine Social Work Competencies presented in the Council on Social Work Education 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. Program benchmarks are based on assessment of the following competencies at the generalist and specialization years:

- **Competency 1:** Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice.
- **Competency 3:** Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice.
- **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.

### Admission to the MSW Program

Admission to the MSW program is based on evaluation of all application materials and information provided by the applicant. For all applicants, the admissions committee members will decide if the applicant will be accepted into the program or denied admission. If denied admission, the applicant may submit a written appeal to the MSW Program Director via email at [msw@umassglobal.edu](mailto:msw@umassglobal.edu), within 30 calendar days from the date of the admission decision. Appeals will not be accepted after the 30-day window. After submitting an appeal, the applicant will receive a letter indicating the final decision to accept or uphold the admission committee's decision. An applicant who is denied admission to the MSW program must wait four months before becoming eligible to reapply for admission to the program.

The MSW program admissions committee members will consider only fully complete application packets. Decisions are based upon the quality of all application materials and information provided by the applicant. Submission of all required application materials does not guarantee admission into the MSW program. The MSW program admissions committee may request an interview with the applicant and/or the submission of additional recommendation forms. **Students admitted to the MSW program will be admitted under the catalog year based upon their program start date and not their program admission date.**

All applicants should note that licensing and field placement agencies may have regulations denying field placement and/or future licensure to anyone who has been convicted of a felony, especially convictions involving a record for child abuse or neglect, elder abuse or neglect, or domestic violence. Please contact the licensing board in the state in which you plan to seek licensure, for clarification on how a prior conviction may affect your career goals and licensing. This clarification should be done before the application for admission to this program is submitted.

### Admission Requirements

The prospective MSW student must demonstrate his or her readiness to succeed in graduate-level academic coursework by satisfactorily fulfilling one of the following admission options. All graduate admissions options listed below require an earned baccalaureate degree from

an institutionally accredited institution. Specific program admission requirements must also be met.

### Admission by GPA

A 3.0 grade point average (GPA) calculated over the most recent 30 graded semester (45 quarter) credits completed in either a bachelor's or post-bachelor's program, including credits earned toward a teaching or other credential. All credits used for GPA calculation must be from an institutionally accredited institution. For graduates of institutionally accredited institutions that do not conduct a GPA calculation, an official letter from the University determining grade equivalency will be accepted.

### Admission by Prior Graduate Degree

An earned master's degree or higher from an institutionally accredited institution.

### Admission by Portfolio

Submission of a portfolio of evidence that shows adequate preparation for graduate studies. The portfolio will contain writing samples that show graduate level communications and analytical skills; a detailed resume showing professional development and achievements; awards; professional recognition; three (3) letters of reference from persons who can attest to the applicant's ability to do graduate level work; and a letter of explanation detailing the reasons the student believes they are a good candidate for graduate study in the discipline requested. If the portfolio meets substantive approval of the committee, the applicant may be invited for an interview. The decision of the School Graduate Admissions Committee will be final.

Please note: If the applicant is applying with the portfolio option and has a bachelor's degree in social work and is accepted into the program, the applicant will be accepted as a Standard Advanced Generalist (SAG) until they contact the MSW Program Director. An email should be sent to the Program Director with the applicant's resume, letter from a current supervisor, training/workshop certificates, and any other documentation to show their social work practice experience and eligibility for advanced standing. Materials should be emailed to [msw@umassglobal.edu](mailto:msw@umassglobal.edu), for evaluation to determine whether the applicant is eligible for admission to the Advanced Standing program (AG/AS). If the applicant has not worked consistently in the social work field since graduating with their social work bachelor's degree, but feel they are eligible for advanced standing, the applicant may submit a letter with the same documentation listed above to the MSW Program Director. The Program Director will evaluate the materials and provide a decision about advanced standing status. Such evaluations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

In addition to the University requirements above, all MSW candidates must submit the following:

1. A personal narrative, written in APA format and limited to three typed pages in length. The narrative should include the following components:

- Two relevant life experiences that influenced the choice of social work as an academic and career goal. Examples of these life experiences should be provided with a discussion of how the experiences influenced the applicant personally and professionally.
- Relevant professional, internship, volunteer, and/or research experience.
- A discussion of social justice that includes personal experiences with anti-racism, equity and inclusion and a strategy to uphold this value as a social work student. (see: <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English> ([https://](https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English)))

[www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English/](https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English/))

2. Completion of the following:

- Signed professional and ethical responsibility statement
- Acknowledgement of the program professional dispositions.
- Acknowledgment of the technology standards for the social work profession.
- Acknowledgment that the program orientation video was viewed.

**Please note: Students cannot register or enroll in MSW courses without first being admitted to the program.**

### Advanced Standing

The program only awards advanced standing to graduates holding degrees from baccalaureate social work programs accredited by CSWE, recognized through its International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Services, or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors. This and all future references to degrees from social work programs accredited by CSWE, include degrees from CSWE-accredited programs or recognized through CSWE's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Services, or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors.

The admissions committee will make the determination if a student is qualified for AG/AS (Advanced Standing). If the date of BSW/BASW/BSSW degree conferral qualifies an MSW applicant for AG/AS under the eligibility standards listed earlier in the MSW program description, the admissions committee will put the applicant in the AG/AS category. Students coming into the program with a BSW/BASW/BSSW degree will not need to complete any additional generalist level coursework.

### Credit for Life Experience

The program does not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

### Transfer of Coursework

A maximum of 15 semester graduate credits may be accepted in transfer toward the SAG option. A maximum of 12 semester graduate credits may be accepted in transfer toward the AS/AG option. If the applicant has taken undergraduate or graduate social work courses from a CSWE accredited social work program, those courses may be eligible for transfer into the MSW Program. Non-social work courses will be evaluated to determine if they meet CSWE curriculum standards and are eligible for transfer. The Student Services Division will review all credit transfers based on guidelines provided by the program faculty and the Dean/Associate Dean. Any questions, ambiguities, or special requests will be brought to the Program Director by the registrar's staff and a final decision by the Program Director.

Please note: prior field seminar courses and field practicum placement hours are not transferable into the program.

### Pupil Personnel Services Credential in School Social Work (PPS-SSW)

UMass Global received initial Accreditation from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) for the PPS-SSW program on October 26, 2023.

UMass Global, School of Arts and Sciences, offers the **Pupil Personnel Services Credential in School Social Work (PPS-SSW)**, which is issued by the State of California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)

(<https://www.ctc.ca.gov/>). In addition to successfully completing all requirements for the MSW degree, students seeking the PPS-SSW must take the following elective courses as part of their program of study:

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| SOWK 631   | Social Work Practice with Adolescents   | 3 |
| SOWK 660   | Social Work Policy in School Settings   | 3 |
| SOWK 661   | Social Work Practice in School Settings | 3 |
| <b>** MSW AG/AS students must also complete:</b> |   |   |
| SOWK 655   | Substance Abuse                         | 3 |
| SOWK 657   | Mental Health and Mental Illness        | 3 |

All PPS-SSW candidates must also complete at least 1000 hours of field practicum with school-age children, including at least 450 hours in the public schools and 150 hours toward CWA (Child Welfare Attendance) authorization. Additionally, they must meet other credential prerequisites and administrative requirements mandated by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). For information, please email: [schoolsw@umassglobal.edu](mailto:schoolsw@umassglobal.edu).

## Field Education

Prior to becoming eligible to begin foundational field education (the 500-level practicum courses), SAG students must successfully complete the required prerequisite classes (SOWK 502 Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families & SOWK 503 Social Work Practice with Groups, Communities, and Organizations) with a letter grade of "B" (3.0 GPA) or higher in each; successfully complete the field readiness interview; successfully complete a field site interview; and be approved to begin field (the 500-level practicum courses) by the Director of Field Education or MSW Assistant Field Director. Standard students must successfully complete all foundation courses and 500-level practicum courses before beginning advanced field (the 600-level advanced practicum courses).

SAG students must take SOWK 502 and SOWK 503 before starting field practicum. Students must complete SOWK 502 and SOWK 503 with a letter grade of B or higher before taking the first field practicum seminar and being placed in a field practicum.

SOWK 511 and SOWK 512 (Human Behavior and the Social Environment I and II) can be taken anytime but students would benefit from having these courses completed before starting field practicum.

- SOWK 593 Social Work Practicum Seminar I students take SOWK 504 Diversity and Social Justice before or concurrently with this course.
- SOWK 594 Social Work Practicum Seminar II students must pass **SOWK 593**. Students take SOWK 509 Social Welfare Policy before or concurrently with this course.
- SOWK 595 Social Work Practicum Seminar III students must pass **SOWK 594**. Students should take SOWK 507 Social Work Research before or concurrently with this course.

Prior to becoming eligible to begin advanced field education (the 600-level advanced practicum courses), AG/AS students must successfully complete the advanced field education application form and the advanced field education orientation, successfully complete a field site interview, and be approved to begin advanced field (the 600-level advanced practicum courses) by the Director of Field Education or MSW Assistant Field Director.

All required documents including the agency agreement must be completed and students must be enrolled in a practicum course or advanced practicum course prior to starting any trainee hours at the

approved site. Detailed field policies, procedures, and requirements appear in the MSW Field Practicum Manual. Questions should be directed to the Director of Field Education or the MSW Assistant Field Director.

The practicum courses are graded on a pass/no pass basis. Courses in the 500-level practicum course sequence are to be taken consecutively. Courses in the 600-level advanced practicum course sequence are also to be taken consecutively. Below are the courses that should be taken before or concurrently with each field practicum seminar course. SOWK 602 Social Work Law and Ethics and SOWK 603 Social Work and Human Sexuality, can be taken anytime but students would benefit from having these courses completed before starting field practicum.

- SOWK 693 Advanced Social Work Practicum Seminar I students should take SOWK 622 Advanced Generalist Practice I before or concurrently with this course.
- SOWK 694 Advanced Social Work Practicum Seminar II students must pass **SOWK 693**. Students should take SOWK 623 Advanced Generalist Practice II before or concurrently with this course.
- SOWK 695 Advanced Social Work Practicum Seminar III students must pass **SOWK 694**. Students should take SOWK 601 Family Violence before or concurrently with this course.
- SOWK 696 Advanced Social Work Practicum Seminar IV students must pass **SOWK 695**. Students must take SOWK 625 Practice Evaluation before or concurrently with this course.

\*If a student does not complete the required 400 practicum hours during the SOWK 593, 594, 595 course series, or the 600 required practicum hours during the SOWK 693-696 course series, they will be enrolled in a required SOWK 597 or SOWK 697 Practicum Continuation course (0 credits) and required to pay a Graduate Practicum Continuation Fee until the student completes the total required hours. Students will accumulate hours toward their practicum requirements only when enrolled in SOWK 593, 594, 595, or 597 or SOWK 693, 694, 695 696 or 697.

### Grade Point Average Requirements

Students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average throughout their course of study in the MSW program. A student must receive a letter grade of "C" or better in a course for successful completion. Social Work practice courses (SOWK 502, 503, 622, and 623) require at least a "B" or higher. If a student falls below a 3.0 in a practice course or a 3.0 overall GPA, student remediation will occur via the university's probation process, found in the current university catalog.

## Specific Requirements for the Master of Social Work

Requirements for students obtaining the Standard Advanced Generalist MSW (SAG Students) include the Foundation Core Courses (30 credits), Advanced Generalist Core Courses (30 credits), and Elective Courses (9 credits), for a total of 69 credits.

Requirements for students obtaining the Advanced Standing MSW (AG/AS Students) include the Advanced Generalist Core Courses (30 credits) and Elective Courses (9 credits), for a total of 39 credits.

### Foundation Core Courses (only required for SAG students)

|          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
| SOWK 502 | Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families               | 3 |
| SOWK 503 | Social Work Practice with Groups, Communities, and Organizations | 3 |
| SOWK 504 | Diversity and Social Justice                                     | 3 |



|                      |  |           |
|----------------------|--|-----------|
| SOWK 507             | Social Work Research                         | 3         |
| SOWK 509             | Social Welfare Policy                        | 3         |
| SOWK 511             | Human Behavior and the Social Environment I  | 3         |
| SOWK 512             | Human Behavior and the Social Environment II | 3         |
| SOWK 593             | Social Work Practicum Seminar I *            | 3         |
| SOWK 594             | Social Work Practicum Seminar II *           | 3         |
| SOWK 595             | Social Work Practicum Seminar III *          | 3         |
| <b>Total Credits</b> |  | <b>30</b> |

#### Advanced Generalist Core Courses

|          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
| SOWK 601 | Family Violence                              | 3 |
| SOWK 602 | Social Work Law and Ethics                   | 3 |
| SOWK 603 | Social Work and Human Sexuality              | 3 |
| SOWK 622 | Advanced Generalist Practice I               | 3 |
| SOWK 623 | Advanced Generalist Practice II              | 3 |
| SOWK 625 | Practice Evaluation                          | 3 |
| SOWK 693 | Advanced Social Work Practicum Seminar I *   | 3 |
| SOWK 694 | Advanced Social Work Practicum Seminar II *  | 3 |
| SOWK 695 | Advanced Social Work Practicum Seminar III * | 3 |
| SOWK 696 | Advanced Social Work Practicum Seminar IV *  | 3 |

**Total Credits** **30**

#### Electives (9 credits)

Choose 9 credits from the following:

|          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
| SOWK 630 | Child Welfare  | 3 |
| SOWK 631 | Social Work Practice with Adolescents                                | 3 |
| SOWK 632 | Prevention and Intervention in Child Abuse and Neglect               | 3 |
| SOWK 650 | Crisis Intervention and Trauma Response                              | 3 |
| SOWK 651 | Social Work Response to Disasters                                    | 3 |
| SOWK 652 | Military/Veteran (SMVF) Social Work                                  | 3 |
| SOWK 653 | Social Work Practice with SMVF Populations                           | 3 |
| SOWK 654 | Death, Loss and Grief  | 3 |
| SOWK 655 | Substance Abuse  | 3 |
| SOWK 656 | Sexual Abuse   | 3 |
| SOWK 657 | Mental Health and Mental Illness                                     | 3 |
| SOWK 658 | Healthcare Social Work I: Integrated Health Care Policy and Services | 3 |
| SOWK 659 | Healthcare Social Work II: Social Work Practice in Integrated Health | 3 |
| SOWK 660 | Social Work Policy in School Settings                                | 3 |
| SOWK 661 | Social Work Practice in School Settings                              | 3 |
| SOWK 662 | Child and Family Policy  | 3 |

|          |                                       |   |
|----------|---------------------------------------|---|
| SOWK 663 | Social Work Management and Leadership | 3 |
| SOWK 664 | Psychopathology and Clinical Practice | 3 |

## Ethical and Professional Standards and Conduct Policy

Upon admission to the social work department programs (BASW, MSW, DSW), students are expected to meet all social work department standards and abide by the NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/>) and the University of Massachusetts Global Student Code of Conduct. The social work department prepares students to work in the helping profession at a variety of levels and the program faculty assume the responsibility for reasonably assuring that individuals who complete one of the programs in the department are academically competent, aware, and adhere to the established ethical and professional standards of the profession, the NASW Code of Ethics. A student enrolled in any program within the social work department must adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and should understand that they are being trained in a program which is not only academic, but also professional in nature.

Faculty, directors, and deans in the social work department have the right and ethical obligation to continually evaluate, and, if necessary, to suspend or terminate the student's participation in the program at any point for ethical violations and/or personal unsuitability for the profession. This philosophy is consistent with that of other professional programs which are engaged in certifying that their graduates are competent to engage in the practice of professional social work. Please see NASW Code of Ethics, Standard 2 (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English/Social-Workers-Ethical-Responsibilities-to-Colleagues/>): Social Workers Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues; Standard 2.08 Impairment of Colleagues, Standard 2.09 Incompetence of Colleagues, and Standard 2.10 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues.

It is understood, therefore, that students will be required to follow the NASW Code of Ethics to be admitted into any of the programs within the social work department. Faculty will assess each student's status in meeting these standards on a continuing basis, and students experiencing difficulties will be advised as to the appropriate means of remediating such difficulties by the faculty, program director, or Dean's Office as appropriate. A full listing of the NASW Code of Ethics can be found at [socialworkers.org](https://www.socialworkers.org), under the About tab. In addition, the Social Work department has adopted a set of professional dispositions that represent expected conduct standards for social work students, consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics. The dispositions are examples of the kind of conduct expected of students in the social work program but are not intended to be exhaustive. The professional dispositions can be found on the myumassglobal website on the social work webpage in the Student Handbook for the BASW, MSW, and DSW programs.

#### Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and/or Other Personal Challenges:

Please note the following standard from the NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English/Social-Workers-Ethical-Responsibilities-as-Professionals/>):

#### Social Workers Ethical Responsibilities as Professional, Standard 4.05, Impairment.

(a) Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance

or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.

(b) Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.

Students with a mental health or some other diagnosis are encouraged to share their circumstances early in the professional conduct process with the program director and/or the Office of Accessible Education ("OAE") upon receipt of the conduct meeting letter. If you are not already registered with the OAE, any documentation related to your diagnosis should not be shared with the program, unless you voluntarily choose to do so. In this scenario, students are encouraged to consider registering with the OAE, as that is the university office charged with assessing diagnoses or conditions that may qualify for university accommodations. Upon receipt of the student information, the program director will guide the faculty member in charge of the conduct meeting, ensuring consideration of this condition. All information shared will be kept confidential and only provided to other staff or faculty on a need-to-know basis. A student's mental health condition may be considered if or when sanctions are applied by the program to assist with the remediation of the identified challenging/problematic behavior (i.e. counseling, etc.). Failure to take adequate steps to address or remedy personal challenges include but are not limited to, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, suicidality, or mental health impairment that interfere in the field practicum or the classroom learning environments. Impaired performance in the classroom or in field practicum include, but are not limited to, active substance use, inability to focus or communicate, distortion in thought processes, or inability to develop appropriate working relationships in the social work context. In order to appropriately consider students' mental health diagnoses and other conditions, the program may consult with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). If a student does not have a current plan with the OAE, a referral will be recommended by the program director or faculty member who is working with the student.

Students who are unable to address how their personal challenges impact their work with clients or interfere with ethical, evidenced-informed practice, will be required to postpone engagement or completion of their program or field practicum until they are able to demonstrate awareness and effectively address how their challenges intersect with the work they engage in with clients.

The CARES team is a campus-wide team of appointed staff and faculty responsible for identifying, assessing, and responding to concerns and/or disruptive behaviors by students, faculty/staff, and community members who struggle academically, emotionally, or psychologically, or who present a risk to the health or safety of the university or its members. For assistance contact CARES:

Email: [cares@umassglobal.edu](mailto:cares@umassglobal.edu)

Hotline: 949-383-3119

The University of Massachusetts Global is committed to providing an accessible educational experience for all learners. If a student requires accommodations for a disability to fully participate in the professional conduct process below, please contact the appropriate program director

or the Office of Accessible Education (OAE) at [oea@umassglobal.edu](mailto:oea@umassglobal.edu) to request disability accommodations.

### Professional Conduct Policy and Conduct Meetings

The professional conduct policy applies to current students and graduated students and follows a restorative justice model. A restorative justice conduct process emphasizes repairing harm, fostering accountability, and promoting the well-being of all individuals involved. The process aligns with the values of social work, respect for the dignity and worth of people, the importance of human relationships, and the promotion of social justice. There are three steps to this process which include a step one meeting (first offense), a step two meeting (second offense), and a step three recommendation (suspension or dismissal from the BASW/MSW/DSW program).

### Current Social Work Students

For current social work students, the professional conduct procedures are as follows. For step one and two meetings:

- The meeting shall be held in Zoom or on a similar virtual conference platform.
- Subject to written approval from the student, the meeting shall be recorded and the URL for the recording provided to the student, the presiding faculty, and the program director.
- Students are expected to be in a quiet and private area during professional conduct meetings with faculty.
- Students must have their webcam working and turned on for the duration of the meeting.
- Students are expected to plan to attend conduct meetings at the date and time scheduled, during regular business hours. Canceling and rescheduling a meeting will only be considered for those students with extenuating circumstances such as major illness, hospitalization, death of a family member, etc.
- The student may choose to have a silent observer attend the meeting. This does not include attorneys. The presence of attorneys at the meeting is not permitted as the meeting is not meant to function as a court of law. The silent observer may not participate directly in the meeting. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the removal of the silent observer or the termination of the meeting. One five-minute recess may be requested during the meeting if the student wishes to consult with the silent observer.

**Step One Meeting:** When a program faculty member observes or becomes aware of behavior that brings into question a student's ability to maintain the NASW Code of Ethics, the faculty member shall meet with the student to discuss the behavior and to advise as to appropriate means of remediating such behavioral concerns.

A second faculty member will be in attendance if the first faculty is an adjunct instructor. The second faculty member will be the course manager of the adjunct instructor's course or the field placement faculty for those students experiencing issues in field practicum. Full-time faculty members will not need a second faculty member in attendance at step one meetings. A staff member will attend the meeting silently for the purpose of documenting the meeting's proceedings.

During the meeting, the faculty member(s) will identify the behaviors of concern, discuss the behavioral concerns with the student, solicit the student's response to the behavioral concerns in question, and advise the student as to appropriate means of remediating the behavioral concerns. The staff member will document the meeting's proceedings. After the meeting, the faculty member who ran the meeting will write the meeting summary and provide it to the program director for review.

Once approved, the program director will provide the written summary of the meeting to the student. The summary will include the identified behaviors of concern, any guidance provided by faculty, the student's response during the meeting, and any additional recommendations for remediating the behavioral concerns warranted by the meeting's proceedings.

Student non-attendance for a step one conduct meeting is considered a second conduct violation and will be treated as such. If the student fails to attend the step one conduct meeting, the faculty member will complete a meeting summary indicating such and complete a second professional dispositions summary initiating a step two conduct meeting with the program director and field director. For DSW students, the DSW Program Director and a program director from either the BASW or MSW program will meet with the student for a step two meeting.

**Step Two Meeting:** At any time after the Step One Meeting, it is deemed that a student's ability to maintain the NASW Code of Ethics remains in question and behavioral concerns remain unresolved, a second, step two conduct meeting shall be scheduled. Other reasons why a step two may be scheduled; non-attendance at a step one meeting or the student had a previous step one meeting and now has a new issue to be resolved.

This second meeting shall be attended by the program director or designee, field director or designee, and student. For DSW students, the DSW Program Director and a program director from either the BASW or MSW program will meet with the student for a step two meeting. If the faculty member who met with the student in step 1 was the program director or field director, the Dean, or dean's designee, will appoint a different faculty member to substitute for the program director or field director. A staff member will also attend the meeting silently for the purpose of documenting the meeting's proceedings.

During the meeting, the program or field director will identify the behaviors of concern, discuss the behavioral concerns with the student, solicit the student's response to the behavioral concerns in question, and advise the student as to appropriate means of remediating the behavioral concerns. The staff member will document the meeting's proceedings. After the meeting, the program director will provide a written summary of the meeting to the student, including the identified behaviors of concern, any guidance provided by faculty, the student's response during the meeting, and any additional recommendations for remediating the behavioral concerns warranted by the meeting's proceedings. Student non-attendance for a step two conduct meeting will automatically result in a step three recommendation.

**Appealing a Step One or Two Decision:** There is no appeal process for step one or two recommendations or decisions. All decisions and recommendations made by faculty or program directors in step one or two meetings are based on program policy and are final.

**Step Three Recommendation:** At any time after the Step Two Meeting, if the program director and field director deem that the student's ability to maintain appropriate professional, ethical, and/or personal standards remains in question and the behavioral concerns remain unresolved, or if the student did not show up for a step one or two meeting, they may recommend to the Dean that the student be suspended or dismissed from the program. The Dean may suspend or dismiss the student from the program, with written notice provided to the student. The suspension or dismissal takes effect upon the Dean's issuance of the official letter of suspension or dismissal. A student dismissed from the program under the professional conduct policy is not eligible for readmission to the program.

A notice of suspension will specify (a) the earliest date at which the Dean will consider lifting the suspension; (b) the steps that the student must take for the Dean to consider lifting the suspension; and (c) the deadline by which the student must complete those steps and request that the suspension be lifted. If, by that deadline, the student has not submitted a request that in the Dean's assessment is sufficient to warrant lifting the suspension, the suspension will convert to dismissal from the program, with written notice provided to the student. That dismissal takes effect upon the Dean's issuance of the official letter of dismissal.

**Appealing a Step Three Decision:** A student who is dismissed or suspended from the program may, within 30 calendar days of receipt of the dismissal or suspension notification, petition the Dean's ruling to a professional review committee. The petition process is documentation-based and does not include a synchronous hearing. To file a petition, the student must submit to the Dean a written petition with supporting documentation appended. The Dean will forward the written petition and supporting documentation to the professional review committee. After review, the professional review committee will issue a final ruling within 30 calendar days of the Dean's receipt of the student's petition. The committee's ruling is not subject to appeal.

### Conduct Process for Graduated Students

For graduated students, for whom information is discovered after the time of their degree completion regarding alleged ethical or professional violations that occurred during the time they were enrolled in any program within the social work department, the professional conduct procedures are as follows:

- Faculty or staff will alert the program director about the graduated student and the ethical or professional violation.
- The program director will investigate the ethical or professional violation allegations.

After reviewing their findings, the program director may choose to convene a Professional Conduct Meeting. This meeting shall be attended by the Program Director/designee, Field Director/ designee, and graduated student. For DSW students, the DSW Program Director and a program director from either the BASW or MSW program will meet with the student for a step two meeting. A staff member will also attend the meeting silently for the purpose of documenting the meeting's proceedings.

- The meeting shall be held in Zoom or on a similar virtual conference platform.
- Subject to written approval from the student, the meeting shall be recorded and the URL for the recording provided to the student, the presiding faculty, and the program director.
- Students are expected to be in a quiet and private area during professional conduct meetings with faculty.
- Students must have their webcam working and turned on for the duration of the meeting.
- Students are expected to make arrangements to attend conduct meetings at the date and time scheduled, during regular business hours. Canceling and rescheduling a meeting will only be considered for those students with extenuating circumstances such as major illness, hospitalization, death of a family member, etc.
- The student may choose to have a silent observer attend the meeting. This does not include attorneys. The presence of attorneys at the meeting is not permitted as the meeting is not meant to function as a court of law. The silent observer may not participate directly in the meeting. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the removal

of the silent observer or the termination of the meeting. One five-minute recess may be requested during the meeting if the student wishes to consult with the silent observer.

During the meeting, the program director and field director will identify the behaviors of concern, discuss the behavioral concerns with the graduated student, and solicit the student's response to the behavioral concerns in question. The staff member will document the meeting's proceedings. After the meeting, the program director will provide a written summary of the meeting to the graduated student, including the identified behaviors of concern and the graduated student's response.

Based on their investigation and on the proceedings of the Professional Conduct Meeting, if the program director and field director (in the case of DSW students, BASW or MSW Program Director) deem that the graduated student committed egregious violation(s) of ethical or professional conduct during the time that they were enrolled in the program, and that such violation(s) would have merited a recommendation to the Dean of suspension or dismissal from the program if the violation(s) had been discovered when the graduated student was enrolled in the program, the program director and field director/designee (in the case of DSW students, BASW or MSW Program Director) may recommend to the Dean that the graduated student's degree be revoked. The Dean may issue the graduated student a letter of intent to revoke the graduated student's degree.

A graduated student receiving a Dean's letter of intent to revoke the student's degree may submit a written appeal to the Dean with supporting documentation, within 30 calendar days of transmission of the Dean's letter of intent. This appeal process is documentation-based and does not include a synchronous hearing. After review of the student's written appeal and supporting documentation, the Dean may or may not decide to revoke the graduated student's degree, with written notice of either outcome provided to the student.

A graduated student whose degree is revoked may, within 30 calendar days of transmission of the notification of degree revocation, petition the Dean's ruling to a professional review committee. The petition process is documentation-based and does not include a synchronous hearing. To file a petition, the graduated student must submit to the Dean a written petition with supporting documentation appended. The Dean will forward the written petition and supporting documentation to the professional review committee. After review, the professional review committee will issue a final ruling within 30 calendar days of Dean's receipt of the graduated student's petition. The committee's ruling is not subject to appeal.

If a graduated student's degree is revoked, and if the student had been a California resident at the time of degree conferral, the program's Board of Behavioral Science (BBS) liaison will inform the BBS that the student no longer holds a degree from University of Massachusetts Global. If the graduated student resided in Washington at the time of degree conferral, the program's Washington State Department of Health (WDH) liaison will inform the WDH that the student no longer holds a degree from University of Massachusetts Global. In addition, and only if known, the University representative will also inform the state governing body where the student is currently in clinical authorized practice.

#### **Conduct Process: What to Expect**

Students are expected to be in a quiet and private area during professional conduct meetings with faculty/directors. Students must have their webcam working and turned on for the duration of the meeting. The lead faculty/director for the meeting will review the PDI and concerns

that led to the PDI. The faculty/director will discuss the link to the NASW Code of Ethics and why the student's conduct was in violation to the code. The student will be given an opportunity to comment on the concerns. The meeting will close with the faculty/director making recommendations to the student for ways in which they can improve their behavior and provide next steps for after the conduct meeting.