Student Handbook

MSW Program

We strive to be supportive and responsive in helping you cope with the academic, personal, and internship demands of graduate school. This support begins by making certain you know how to locate the wide variety of resources available to you. As graduate students and beginning professionals, you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with all School policies, procedures, guidelines, and program requirements.

The Student Handbook and School policies are available on the SSSW website. Please check the website regularly for important, up-to-date information: sssw.hunter.cuny.edu.

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SILBERMAN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK MISSION STATEMENT

The Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College (SSSW) educates and trains outstanding social work professionals, who are lifelong learners engaged in knowledgeable, ethical practice with communities locally and nationally. Guided by this mission, we are uniquely committed to social work excellence in the public interest. Our classroom curriculum, practicum experiences, and community-engaged partnerships are focused on supporting persons, families, organizations, and communities, while respecting the humanity of all individuals.

MSW PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The Silberman School of Social Work MSW Program is committed to educating ethical, culturally competent social workers to build community partnerships and strengthen community capacity to achieve social justice in diverse, urban communities. This mission promotes the creation, transformation, evaluation and assumption of leadership roles in services across systems to meet the complex and unmet needs of underserved and underrepresented populations through community-engaged education, intervention, research, and advocacy.

MSW PROGRAM GOALS

• To graduate excellently prepared and diverse social work practitioners for New York City and other major urban areas who use a range of interventions with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, and who operate out of a strengths-based perspective and resiliency framework;

• To emphasize urban contexts in the person-in-environment perspective, particularly as it relates to preparation for employment as clinical practitioners, community organizers and social services organization leaders;

• To develop life-long learners able to respond innovatively to emerging practice challenges in an ethical and research-informed manner;

• To produce culturally competent social work practitioners and community engaged scholarship and practice-based research;

• To instill a commitment to social and economic justice that produces graduates who skillfully and assertively advocate on behalf of clients and causes;

• To educate students in partnership with New York’s communities, agencies, and organizations to promote the expansion and dissemination of effective socially just practice.

The School is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.
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THE MSW PROGRAM

Overview
The Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College (Silberman, SSW, SSSW, or “the School”) adheres to the principle that social work education is based upon a common core of practice values, skills, and knowledge that result in professional competency. The MSW curriculum at the Silberman School of Social Work reflects a commitment to human rights, cultural complexity, and social and economic justice. The curriculum includes Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Social Welfare Policy and Services, Social Work Practice Methods, Social Work Research, the Field Practicum, and the Professional Seminar.

Students are required to take a year-long Social Work Practice Learning Lab and to select one of three practice methods: Clinical Practice with Individuals, Families, and Small Groups; Community Organizing, Planning and Development; or Organizational Management and Leadership.

In addition, students in their second/advanced program years have the option of choosing specialization in a Field of Practice (FOP)1. The following eight FOP specializations are offered: Aging; Child Welfare – Children, Youth and Families; Health; Mental Health; Global Social Work and Practice with Immigrants and Refugees; School Social Work; Criminal Justice; and Sexuality and Gender.

The School has strong ties to many social agencies which provide students with field placements in a variety of practice areas. Qualified agency staff serve as accredited field instructors. All field instructors must be SIFI certified. For detailed information on the field practicum, please see the Silberman School of Social Work Field Education Manual.

Programs of Study—Pathways to the MSW Degree
The Silberman School of Social Work offers several pathways leading to the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree.

Two-Year, Full-Time Program (TYP)
The Two-Year, Full-Time Program (TYP) is designed for students who can devote themselves to full-time academic and field study. Students are expected to attend classes two days a week with their pathway cohort, and to be in field placement three days a week during

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1 Please see Chapter 2 >> Field of Practice Specialization below for more detail on FOP structure and requirements.
standard business hours. Under this pathway, students complete the 60 academic credits required for graduation in two years.

One-Year Residency Work-Study Program (OYR)
The One-Year Residency (OYR) Program provides opportunities for advanced social work education to human services workers employed full-time within a social services agency in a social-work-related role. Individuals are eligible for the OYR program if they have completed a minimum of two years of post-baccalaureate full-time employment in a recognized human service organization and if their current social welfare employer agrees to provide them with a field internship, approved by the school, during their second year in the program. Students in the OYR program are permitted to take up to 30 hours of course work on a part-time basis while remaining in full-time employment. The OYR Program is usually completed in two and a half years of continuous study, but in some instances may take longer. The field instruction requirement is completed during the second year of the OYR Program, when students are enrolled in classes one day per week and are in field placement four days per week. The field practicum takes place in the agency at which the student is employed.

Advanced Standing Program
The Advanced Standing Program is an intensive program for a limited number of outstanding students who have graduated from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited baccalaureate social work program. Applicants must have received their undergraduate degree within the last five years and must meet all other admission criteria for acceptance into the graduate social work program at Hunter, including above-average performance in their undergraduate social work major. Applicants accepted into the program will be waived from some courses required in the first year of the MSW program. Students should review and confirm their individual registration requirements with an academic advisor prior to the start of classes. Advanced Standing students begin their studies in the fall; complete one academic year of full-time study, including a field placement that takes place three days per week during standard business hours; and continue their studies over the summer to finish the program. Alternatively (and depending on the student’s chosen Practice Method), Advanced Standing students may choose to extend their program of study so they finish in the following fall.

Dual Degree Program: School of Social Work and the Bank Street College of Education
The Dual Degree Program is designed to prepare social workers to understand and work with the special needs and vulnerabilities of children aged birth to three and their families. The program prepares social workers for professional roles that combine both educational and clinical skills. The curriculum design incorporates theoretical and practice aspects of each degree into a cohesive educational and professional program. Applicants apply to each institution separately. The MSW and the MS in Education degrees are awarded simultaneously, upon completion of each program at the respective institution. The program requirements satisfy the accreditation standards for each degree. In the first two
years of the program, students have an intensive experience at each institution. In the third year, students move between both institutions to complete coursework. Both institutions require a supervised field practicum. Applicants must meet all admission requirements of the MSW program and are required to have experience in work with children. For the Dual Degree Program, courses required at Bank Street total 36 academic credits; credits required at Hunter total 51.

**Accelerated Program**

This program is designed for students ready to participate in an intensive, year-round learning experience. It is a 60-credit program; as of this writing, the program is for Clinical Practice majors only. Full-time accelerated students matriculate in January, are assigned field placements, and complete their first-year requirements by the end of the summer. They start their third semester in the fall and graduate in the following August. Students who are already working in the human services field, enter the Accelerated OYR program beginning with evening study in January through the summer, then commence their Time Frame II studies the following fall and spring. They are able to graduate the following August. Please note: Given the trajectory of the Accelerated Program, it is likely that the total tuition cost will exceed that of the regular Two-Year Full-Time pathway. In addition, the variety and volume of course options may be limited for this cohort.

Students in the **Accelerated Program** begin the field practicum in the spring semester and continue through the summer of their first year—following the same requirements as students on the full time track (21 hours each week, during regular business hours for a total of 300 hours per semester). In their advanced field sequence, they follow the pattern for second year students in the Two-Year Full Time Program.

**All MSW students must complete their degree requirements within five years of matriculation.**

**Change of Degree Pathway**

All requests to change the chosen degree pathway – for both incoming and continuing students – are referred to the Director of Enrollment Management. Requests will be reviewed to confirm the student’s motivation for seeking the change, and to confirm that the change is supported within the admissions criteria.

- Students seeking to change their pathway to the One-Year Residency (OYR) must demonstrate the requisite minimum of two [2] years’ full-time, direct social service employment related to their practice method, along with the Agency Agreement and letters of recommendation.

- Students seeking to change to the Full-Time Two-Year pathway must be able to confirm the time commitment of a full-time course schedule and weekday/daytime field placement.
If Enrollment Management grants a student’s request for pathway change, the student will meet with both the Department of Student Services and the Department of Field Education to confirm and agree to their revised course trajectory. Depending on timing and other case details, the student may need to repeat some courses. The Office of Enrollment Management will confirm the student’s status change with the Departments of Student Services and Field Education. The student is then assigned an academic advisor for oversight and registration confirmation.
The Silberman School of Social Work curriculum is organized around professional curriculum areas: Social Welfare Policy and Services; Human Behavior and the Social Environment; Social Work Research; Social Work Practice Learning Laboratory; Practice Methods (Clinical Practice with Individuals, Families, and Small Groups; Community Organizing, Planning and Development; and Organizational Leadership and Management); Field Practicum and Professional Seminar. All students must fulfill specific requirements in each of these professional curriculum areas. Students must complete 60 credit hours to graduate with a master’s degree in social work.

The School’s curriculum is also organized to ensure that all students attain competencies and associated practice behaviors as required by the Council on Social Work Education. Students will, in particular, gain advanced skills and practice behaviors associated with their chosen Practice Method. The three charts below outline the core competencies and associated practice behaviors which students in each Practice Method are expected to attain.

See appendix for EPAS

Method Concentration
Students select their Method Concentration prior to admission. OYR students are generally admitted to the method in which they have practice experience. Students must take three sequential method concentration courses that start in their first semester of enrollment and are concurrent with a supervised field practicum in that method. Practice method courses must be taken concurrently with field placement. Please note that students cannot register for method classes different from their chosen method. OYR students must take two semesters of method concentration courses concurrently with the field practicum and a third methods course either prior to or after the practicum, depending on their method.

Change of Method Concentration
Once a student is enrolled and placed, changes in one’s method concentration can be considered only after consultation with the field advisor, the Director of Student Services and the Director of Field Education. Approval must be obtained from the chairpersons of the method areas one is leaving and entering, with final approval typically granted by the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs. A change of method may also require additional classes in the chosen method. Since field placement assignments are provided to maximize practice in a method concentration, a change of method...
concentration may require a change of field placement as well as an extension of time in field, and may therefore cause a disruption in a student's program of study.

For admitted students prior to starting classes at Silberman

Students are referred to the Enrollment Management Department to reassess the initial application and acceptance criteria and determine the suitability of granting the request. The student must provide Enrollment Management with a written statement explaining the reason for their request. If the request is approved, Enrollment Management will notify the Field Education Department and the Department of Student Services.

Additional Program Requirements

Some of the required courses are sequential and are scheduled accordingly (e.g., SSW 717718, The Social Work Practice Learning Lab; 711-713, Human Behavior and the Social Environment; Research I & II).

- The Field Practicum is sequential and constitutes a year-long educational experience. If a student has passed the first semester but cannot complete the second semester, a repeat of the entire year is usually necessary. In such situations, students must meet with the Director of Field Education and the Director of Student Services to develop an appropriate plan.

- Students should consult with published and e-mailed registration materials as well as with an academic advisor before selecting courses.

Please review pg. 3 of Appendix to Student Handbook, attached, for Course Requirements.

- In addition to coursework, students are required to complete the Mandated Reporter training and the licensure information training - both are available online. The Mandated Reporter training workshop is required for eligibility to take the New York State Exam to become a Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW). It is also a requirement for commencing field placements.

- Students are required to take SSW 751 and 752, Social Work Research. The research sequence will be taken concurrently with the field practicum. Please note: Students must continue in the same section from SSW 751 into SSW 752.

- In their final semester, students enroll in SSW 790, the Professional Seminar. In this course, students have the opportunity to integrate their learning and write a paper or prepare a project whose central focus is a social work issue of particular interest. The paper or project requires students to utilize research findings, scholarly works, and professional
experience to consider how the current state of knowledge, current thinking on policy, and current approaches to practice affect the resolution of an appropriate issue.

FOR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR CURRICULUM AREA CHAIRS CONTACT STUDENT SERVICES

Attendance Requirements
An integral part of professional comportment is punctuality and dependability. Given this, students should make every effort to attend every course session for all courses in which they are enrolled. We realize that absences are at times unavoidable. Students should review course syllabi to confirm the attendance requirements and policies for each of their courses prior to the start of the semester. Generally, students are allowed three (3) excused absences in 15-week courses and one (1) excused absence in other course timeframes (this includes absences due to illness or medical issue). Students who enroll in specially designed weekend/summer courses may have other attendance requirements, and should confirm attendance policies with the instructor prior to the start of the class. Students must contact professors to discuss unavoidable absences extending beyond these parameters and will subsequently be referred to Student Services for discussion of next steps. Note: If a student plans to miss the first course meeting of a semester, they should contact the professor well in advance, to avoid being dropped from the course roster.

Summer Session
Summer courses are part of the OYR, Accelerated, Advanced Standing, and Dual Degree Programs. Required courses and electives are available during the summer months of June, July, and August for students to meet program requirements. Advanced Standing students take courses in the summer before and/or after their year of full-time study. Seats in the summer sessions are available for Two-Year Program students if space permits.

Summer courses run for either five or 11 weeks. Courses in the 5-week session meet two evenings per week; those in the 11-week session meet one evening per week. Students who are required to take courses in the 11-week session, however, must be available two evenings per week so they may take two courses during the Summer. Accelerated Program students are required to take summer courses in the 11-week session, some of which will be offered during the day.

Fields of Practice Specialization:

As a reflection of both our commitment to a social justice and human rights framework and the nature of the service systems where we do our work students who wish to specialize in an optional field of practice can choose among eight FOP specializations:
Aging; Child Welfare – Children, Youth and Families; Health; Mental Health; Global Social Work and Practice with Immigrants and Refugees; School Social Work; Criminal Justice; and Sexuality and Gender.

Students may select a Field of Practice (FOP) specialization in the spring of their foundation year (in conjunction with planning their second-year field placement). OYR students select their FOP with their Time Frame I advisor when confirming their agency plan. The FOP specialization is organized around a population group of interest, agency or institutional practice setting, or policy issue. The purpose of the field of practice specialization is to accomplish the following:

1. Provide students with opportunities to develop in-depth knowledge and skill in an area of social work beyond the method.

2. Better prepare students for a competitive job market given the current organization of most service delivery systems.

3. Provide a potential cluster of faculty, students, and field agencies with similar interests for developing and sharing knowledge about contemporary issues and trends.

4. Provide an additional vehicle for generating general innovation and new course material in the curriculum.

5. Maintain the focus of the School, the faculty, and the curriculum on the changing needs of a multicultural urban community.

Students who choose an optional field of practice specialization should complete the following: (a) a second or residency year (OYR) field practicum related to the chosen field of practice, (b) a Professional Seminar project and/or Research topic related to the FOP, and (c) at least [1] elective option that falls under the FOP. When students complete the requirements of their FOP specialization they may add this achievement to their resume and they will receive a certificate upon graduation. Please note: Although it is not an FOP requirement to do so, students are encouraged to take policy and elective courses as available that support their Field of Practice Specialization. Students are limited to (2) additional policy 2 classes to be used towards elective requirements.

Consult the FOP Handbook for a list of Chairs and contact information.
The OYR Program: Overview
Established in 1971 as the very first program of its kind, Silberman’s One-Year Residency (OYR) Program is a unique work-study MSW pathway for social service professionals, distinguished by a formal arrangement between the School and the student’s employer. An adjusted work schedule and part-time class schedule allow OYR students to balance professional and academic responsibilities over a roughly 27-month program period; this includes the completion of a yearlong field practicum “residency” within the organization where they already work, in a new, method-focused capacity.

Individuals are eligible for the OYR Program if they have completed a minimum of two years of post-baccalaureate full-time employment in a social work-related role within a recognized human service organization, and if their current employer agrees to provide them with a field internship, approved by the school, during their second year
in the program. Students in the OYR Program are permitted to take up to 30 hours of course work on a part-time basis while remaining in full-time employment. The OYR Program is usually completed in two and a half years of continuous study, but in some instances may take longer. The One Year Residency Program is organized around three “time frames” made up of both part-time and full-time study.

**Time Frame I: Part-time Evening Courses**
The first phase or Time Frame I (TF I) of the OYR Program comprises evening coursework. While remaining in full-time paid positions, OYR students take courses two evenings a week between 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. throughout one complete academic year (September to May) and the subsequent summer session. Students may take courses offered during the day if their work schedules permit. Three courses are taken in the first semester of TF I, and three courses are taken in the second semester. (See model course programs on pgs. 4-11 of the Appendix attached). Students earn 24 credits in this initial phase of the program. 24 earned credits are required, except in rare circumstances, for entrance into the residency year phase of the program.

**Time Frame II: Residency Year**
The crux of the OYR Program is the student’s second-year field practicum – the “residency” – within the organization where they already work. The time period during which the student completes this field practicum residency is called Time Frame II. Prior (and requisite) to their admission, the student’s employer agrees to provide them with a Fall and Spring semester internship, approved by the School, in a method-focused capacity distinct from their existing role. The terms of this agreement are initiated in the agency executive agreement; refined during Time Frame I in dialogue between the student, the Department of Field Education, and the agency; and finalized in a written agreement/OYR contract prior to the start of the residency. The details of Time Frame II are as follows:

The residency year includes four days of supervised field practicum per week and one day of classes per week, over two semesters from September through May. In their single yearlong practicum, OYR students must complete a minimum of 900 practicum hours. (14 hours per week). The single practicum requirement is predicated on the student’s prior knowledge of social service organizations and delivery of social services.

Agencies that enter an agreement with the School to support their employee as an OYR student must commit to provide the following throughout the in-house field practicum:

1. Supervision of the student by a field instructor, who must meet all criteria outlined in Chapter 4 below.

2. The designated field instructor cannot be the student’s current or previous supervisor.

3. The assignment must be changed substantially from the student’s existing role, to give the student a new learning experience.
4. The workload must be reduced for the same reason.

5. The assignment must be designed to provide learning experiences in the student’s chosen Practice Method.

6. The student must have one day off per week from the agency to attend classes.

Note: In the very unusual circumstance that a field agency is, or becomes, unable to identify field instructors who hold a social work degree from a CSWE-accredited institution, the School will collaborate with the agency to identify an alternative individual to provide on-site task supervision for the student. Because the School believes that formal social work supervision is vital to the student’s professional development, the School and the agency will together ensure the provision of ongoing social work supervision. If the School and agency are unable to solidify an arrangement for formal social work supervision, students will not be placed within that field setting.

The student, the School, and the agency share responsibility for planning the OYR field practicum, in accordance with these parameters, during TF I. The Field Education Department will help the student plan their residency placement during the spring and summer semesters of TF I, beginning with a preliminary planning form. The student is responsible for returning the completed form to the Department of Field Education, which will work with the agency to plan the placement.

All arrangements between the Department of Field Education and the agency should be finalized by May 15 of TF I for residency in the following fall semester. The student may not proceed into their residency year until the final written agreement has been submitted and approved by the Field Education Department. A copy of this agreement will be sent to the student when plans have been confirmed. The School reserves the right to ultimately determine any student’s readiness for entry into Time Frame II. If for any reason the employing agency cannot meet its educational commitment, or if problems arise during residency planning, the student should immediately contact the Field Education Department.

Students must be in good standing with their employer in order to enter TF II. They must be actively able to undertake both their academic work and their field placement responsibilities. If any disciplinary actions have been taken against the student by their employer, or if the student takes a leave of absence from the agency for any reason, the student needs to inform the Field Education Department right away.

Once TF II is underway, the student will be assigned a field advisor who is familiar with the OYR program and the student’s Practice Method. The field advisor can assist the student in balancing the dual roles of student and employee. If the student is on a special grant or scholarship program, a professional development counselor remains with the student through the entire program.
OYR students are evaluated at the end of the first semester of their practicum by the same standards applied to students completing the foundation or first-year practicum in the Full-Time Program. At the end of the second semester of their practicum, OYR students are evaluated by the same standards applied to students completing the advanced or second-year practicum in the Full-Time Program.

For additional information, see the Field Education Manual or contact the Department of Field Education.

**EMPLOYMENT CHANGES DURING TFI**

If a student’s existing job changes or the student takes a different position within the same agency during TFI the following must occur:

1. The student must immediately upon securing a new job or a different position within the same agency provide a new Agency Executive Agreement Form to Enrollment to confirm the new employment satisfies criteria for OYR Program.

2. The student must notify the Department of Field Education and Office of Enrollment immediately.

3. In order for the new job or position to be considered for field practicum, the student, at a minimum, must be in the job or new position for the agency’s probationary period, or if there is no probationary period a minimum of 3 months.

4. At the conclusion of the probationary period, or if there is no probationary period after the student has been employed for three months, the student must complete and submit to the Department of Field Education a field practicum planning form by June 30th prior to the residency year.

5. Any new job or position must satisfy the requirements described above to be approved as a residency placement by the Department of Field Education. The School will work with the agency to provide a proper field practicum assignment for the residency year.

6. If the student becomes employed at a new agency that does not agree to sponsor the student, or if the student becomes unemployed, the student must decide whether to pursue a “self-financed” placement assigned by the School or to defer entrance into TF II. Self-financed placements must be structured so that the student is in placement during regular weekday business hours Monday–Friday for a total of 28 hours a week. The School cannot provide paid placements or evening and/or weekend placements.

Time Frame III: Finishing Up
Time Frame III (TF III) is the period for students to complete course requirements necessary for the degree and may comprise one or more semesters. Courses generally are taken in the evening, although day courses may be taken if the student’s work schedule permits. All students are required to take SSW 790, the Professional Seminar, and may take an elective course during Time Frame III if needed. In TF III, classes are scheduled on Wednesday evenings.
The following chapter provides a broad introduction to Silberman’s field practicum experience and requirements. For the greatest level of detail, students are encouraged to consult the SSSW Field Education Manual, available online at http://sssw.hunter.cuny.edu/ssw/?page_id=1261.

Field Practicum Overview

The field practicum, where students integrate classroom learning and theory into field-based practice, is the signature pedagogy of social work education and a vital requirement of the program.

The primary purpose of the field practicum is to enable students to develop competence within the framework of social work values and ethics. The agency-based field instructor provides educational supervision; the school-based field advisor plays an integrating and monitoring function between the school and the agency; and the Field Education Department staff coordinates and has oversight for the field experience.

The Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College expects students to master two sets of measurable practice behaviors that operationalize core social work competencies:

1. Core (or Foundation) practice behaviors;
2. Advanced practice behaviors associated with the student’s chosen Practice Method: Clinical Practice with Individuals and Families, and Small Groups; Community Organizing, Planning, and Development; or Organizational Management and Leadership.

The primary purpose of the field practicum is for students to develop, demonstrate, and deepen practice behaviors in the following areas:

1. Identification as a professional who adheres to the core values and ethics of the social work profession;
2. Application of social work ethical principles and tolerance for ambiguity in practice;
3. Critical thinking in the formation and communication of professional judgments;
4. A respect for, and acceptance of, difference associated with culture, ethnicity, religion, race, class, sexual orientation, age, gender, and physical and cognitive abilities;

5. Application of knowledge from the study of human behavior and the social environment to practice;

6. Advocacy in the advancement of human rights and social and economic justice, through the provision of social and human services that support the diverse communities of New York City and its metropolitan area;

7. Advocacy for the needs and opportunities of vulnerable groups in society, through the promotion of economic and social justice for clients and communities;

8. Utilization of research evidence to inform practice, and practice and practice experience to inform research, as assessed through performance in the classroom, the field practicum, research courses, and the professional seminar;

9. Achievement of practice competencies in social work methods, including clinical practice with individuals, families, and small groups; organizational management and leadership; and community organizing, planning and development, as assessed through their performance in the field practicum;

10. Advocacy for human rights and economic and social justice in agency and community practice;

11. Ability to respond to the contexts in which practice occurs; Understanding of the contexts that shape practice, including local, state and federal policy, organizational policies, the political and social organization of communities;

12. Cultivation of a commitment to lifelong learning and ongoing professional development;

13. Effectiveness in assessment, intervention, and evaluation of practice with individuals, families, groups, organization, and communities.

Field practicum agencies are responsible for providing sufficient assignments in the student’s primary practice method (Clinical Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups; Community Organizing, Planning and Development; or Organizational Management and Leadership). The agency must ensure that the student is supervised by a qualified field instructor. Qualification includes at least three years of post-MSW experience (in certain cases, the Director of Field Education may approve someone with two years of post-master’s experience); SIFI (Seminar in Field Instruction) certification or eligibility; and, New York State license (license is not necessary for supervision of COPD students). Field instructors must provide at least an hour, preferably an hour and a half, of supervisory conferencing with each student each week. The field instructor follows all practicum guidelines described in the SSSW Field Education Manual, is responsible for timely communication with school, completion of Educational Plans, Evaluations as well as any additional necessary documentation (such Performance Improvement Plans).
Field advisors are the liaisons between the school and practicum agencies. They teach mandatory field seminars, complete site visits, grade and hold a range of additional responsibilities that help ensure the quality and safety of the student's field experience. For more information about field advising, please see Chapter 5 of this Student Handbook, Field Advising.

Students in the **Two-Year Full-Time Program and the Accelerated Program** are placed in a different social service agency each academic year. Students are in placement for three days per week (21 hours each week, during regular business hours) for a minimum of 300 hours per each of four semesters. Evening and/or weekend placements are not available. Agencies are primarily located within New York City; students must be willing to travel up to one and a half hours, each way, by public transportation to get to their field placement. This time may be longer for students outside of New York City.

Students in the **Accelerated Program** begin the practicum in the spring semester and continue through the summer of their first year. In the second year, they follow the pattern for second year students in the Two-Year Program. They are expected to complete 21 hours per week, for 300 hours per semester, and total of 1200 hours.

Students in the **Advanced Standing Program** are placed as second-year students in a social service agency for three days each week (21 hours) for a minimum of 300 hours per semester and 600 hours total.

Students in the **Bank Street Dual-Degree Program** complete one year of field practicum, attended four days per week (28 hours) for a total of 900 hours.

Students in the MPhil Dual Degree program complete 2 years of full time, 21 hours per week for the total of 1200 hours of field practicum.

Students in the **One Year Residency Program** are in a field practicum for one year, referred to as Time Frame II. This is the only cohort that completes their practicum at the place of employment. Students spend 2 business days, or 14 hours completing “new learning” per week; 14 hours of work per week is credited, for the total of 28 hours per week, 450 hours per semester and 900 hours for completion. New learning includes working in a new program or with new clients; agency must also provide a new, qualified supervisors that is different from student’s employment supervisors.

For more detail about the OYR Program, please see Chapter 3 of this Student Handbook, OYR Program.

**Concurrence**

When enrolled in Field Instruction I, Field Instruction II, Field Instruction III, and Field Instruction IV in the Two-Year Full-Time and Accelerated Programs, students must be concurrently enrolled in the Practice Learning Lab (first and second semester) and subsequently in the sequence of Practice Method courses I, II, and III. Students in the Advanced Standing program who are Clinical Practice majors will be enrolled in
Field Instruction III and Field Instruction IV while also enrolled in Method I and II (in the fall) and Method III (in the spring). Advanced Standing students who major in Community Organizing, Planning, and Development (COP&D) enroll in Field Instruction III and Method II in the fall semester and then in Field Instruction IV and Method III in the spring semester.

Students in the OYR program enroll in the Practice Learning Lab in the fall and spring semesters of their first year, and begin their Method studies in the second semester. In the second year of their program, the field practicum will be concurrent with the second and third semesters of the method concentration sequence. Students in the Accelerated OYR program enroll in the Practice Learning Lab in the spring and continue with Practice Lab and Methods in the summer. During their TF II year, they follow the same pattern of method learning as the OYR program students.

**Grades**

The field practicum is graded like all other courses (Credit, No Credit, Incomplete, and Honors). Please refer to the *SSSW Field Education Manual* section *Guidelines for Evaluation of Student Performance* for field performance criteria. A grade of No Credit in the field practicum will prevent a student from moving on with both field education and method courses (which receive a separate grade but, as stated previously, are integral to the field practicum). A grade of Incomplete in field education may necessitate extending the field placement until the criteria are met for a grade of Credit. Field practicum grades are determined by the field advisor with the recommendation of the field instructor. An Honors grade is given for extraordinary performance; it is the equivalent of an A+ grade.

**Process Recordings**

Process Recording are an essential social work practice tool that furthers accountability in learning while enhancing social service delivery. It is a tool for students and field instructors to use purposefully, with specific learning objectives in mind. It allows the student to demonstrate both core and advanced competence in many aspects of practice under the supervision of the field instructor, and helps develop quality, professional communication between the student and field instructor. Recording also fosters the student’s own internal dialogue and reflection process. The process of writing itself stimulates an internal dialogue. It reflects the full range of a student’s activities in the agency from telephone calls, collateral contacts, agency meetings as well as client/worker interactions.

There are some important educational goals for recording in field instruction: (1) to provide information which furthers the student’s understanding of client needs and available resources; (2) to provide written documentation which serves as a stimulus for reflective practice; (3) to provide information about the student as a practitioner and learner which is the basis for the educational assessment of competencies and learning plan; (4) to provide information about the student’s collaboration with other practitioners; (5) to provide content for teaching about communication within the profession, and with other disciplines; (6) to provide content for teaching about ethics including privileged communication, informed consent and confidentiality; (7) to provide an opportunity for a
student to learn systematic accountability for practice; (8) to provide materials for classroom teaching; and (9) to provide data for potential research purposes.

Recording requirements and formats vary, depending on the student’s Practice Method and assignments. Other factors that may affect the format, quantity, and other requirements for process recording include the student’s educational needs and stage of development as a social worker, and the agency’s accountability needs and service goals.

For specific information about process recordings in each Practice Method, please see the SSSW Field Education Manual section Guidelines for Practice Assignments and Recordings. For example process recordings in each Practice Method, please see the SSSW Field Education Manual Appendix, or go to http://sssw.hunter.cuny.edu/ssw/?page_id=2676.

Expectations of Students
In order to complete the field practicum productively, professionally, ethically, and in a manner consonant with School and agency standards of excellence, Silberman School of Social Work students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines throughout their internship. Please refer to Chapter 2 of this Student Handbook for competencies and associated practice behaviors that apply not only to student learning but also to the development of professional practice in the field practicum. See also Chapter 8 for further professional expectations.

1. Adherence to the values, ethics, and standards in the NASW Code of Ethics and the NASW Standards for Cultural Competence.

2. Active and responsible participation in an ongoing learning process, both in the classroom and in the practicum. In the classroom, this includes attendance, classroom and Blackboard participation, timely and successful completion of all assignments and tests. In the practicum, this includes the preparation of an agenda; the timely presentation of required recordings, logs or journals; availability for learning, as evidenced by attention to time and attendance; and adherence to the professional standards and policies required by the agency.

3. Professional comportment in the classroom and the practicum at all times, including clear, open, and respectful communication.

4. Readiness to become a self-reflective learner, and to evaluate the role and use of self in the learning opportunities afforded both in the classroom and the agency.

5. Accountable to the School and the agency for achieving learning goals, objectives, and core and advanced practice behaviors in the practicum.

6. Adherence to the policies and procedures of the School and the agency, consistent with the ethics, values, and standards of the profession.

7. Accountable to the School and the agency for completing the required practicum hours (a minimum of 600 or 900 hours yearly, depending on program), and for appropriate progression through their selected degree pathway.
8. Participation in the academic and field advisement processes, including attendance at regular meetings and presentation of recordings (logs, journals, etc.) to the advisor (and/or classroom teacher) as requested.

9. Preparation of a supervision agenda that includes questions/topics for discussion in field instruction conferences. Agenda points should pertain to engagement, assessment, intervention, evaluation of practice, information about resources, and general practice concerns or learning needs. The supervision agenda is primarily student-generated, but field instructors may contribute additional topics for discussion.

10. Maintenance of professional confidentiality in all of the student’s activities. Agency material being used for class assignments should be disguised. Audio and video tapes of practice can be used for teaching in the classroom only with written permission of clients and the agency.

11. It is the policy of the School, and a professionally ethical principle, that students identify themselves as students or interns in their work with clients and agency representatives. If an agency is requesting otherwise, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the Director of Field Education immediately.

**Expectations of the Agency**

In order to provide for the educational needs of the student in the field practicum, the School expects that the agency and its administrators will accept and support the field practicum arrangements made between the School’s Department of Field Education and the agency’s designated educational coordinator. Broad expectations include:

1. The agency will select qualified staff to serve as field instructors and provide them with adequate time to carry out educational functions. The field instructor must have:
   
   a. An MSW degree from an accredited school of social work;

   b. At least three years of post-master’s agency-based work experience, preferably more;

   c. Competency in the area of practice which they will supervise, and;

   d. The ability to allocate sufficient time to field instruction, so that the three primary forms of support it entails – administrative, educational, and emotional – are fully covered.

   e. To supervise Clinical Practice students, in addition to the above, a field instructor must hold a New York State license (or another state’s equivalent).

   f. Field instructors should have completed the Seminar in Field Instruction (SIFI) and received certification; if they have not, they must be enrolled in a SIFI concurrently with field instruction.
g. Any exceptions to these requirements must be made with the express permission of Silberman’s Director of Field Education.

2. The agency maintains policies and procedures that are consistent with those of the School including non-discrimination and sexual misconduct policies (see pgs. 16-26 of Appendix attached, and the SSSW Field Education Manual Appendix).

3. The agency maintains policies, procedures, and practices in accord with the NASW Code of Ethics and NASW Standards and Indicators of Cultural Competence.

4. The agency provides a program that has a clear purpose, sufficient stability, and a structure that enables it to carry out its mission and conveys this to the student.

5. The agency is committed to evaluation of its practice and helps students to develop practice-informed research skills.

6. The agency is committed to developing the competence of its staff and improving its services through means such as staff development, self-evaluation, and the establishment of professional personnel practices and policies.

7. The agency agrees to treat all information about students as confidential, including evaluations.

8. The agency provides a range of assignments on an on-going basis that are consistent with the objectives of the School, including practice opportunities that should enable students to acquire core and advanced practice behaviors.

9. The agency clearly informs students of its safety protocols and procedures, and procedures to follow in the event of an emergency, including the disclosure of any client reports of danger to self or others, or any instances of abuse;

10. The agency provides privacy and physical supports for a student to carry out their professional role and responsibilities including office and storage space, access to a telephone, and reimbursement for expenses incurred in the performance of assignments.

11. In the event of student performance which does not achieve the standard for competence in the practicum, the School expects full participation of the agency in educational assessment and in the mechanisms established for review of problems in academic standing.

12. The agency recognizes the importance of timely submission of a written practicum evaluation prepared by the field instructor for both the ongoing educational experience of the student and as a major reference for the field advisor assigned by the School in determining a grade for the practicum.

13. The agency signs CUNY Affiliation Agreement
For more information on the expectations of agencies and agency-based field instructors in the field practicum, please see the SSW Field Education Manual section Expectations of Agencies.

Educational Plan
By the fifth week of the semester, the agency-based field instructor submits a written Educational Plan to the field advisor, outlining the current and future assignments for the student as well as the learning goals and objectives in the practicum. The format for the plan can be found on the SSSW website. If the field advisor has not received the education plan from the field instructor by the seventh week of the semester, they should inform their Assistant Director of Field Education immediately.

Field Practicum Policies

Days and Duration of Field Practicum
Student schedules in the field practicum are determined by the program in which they are enrolled.

Full time, 2-year students & Accelerated full time students: Complete 1200 over 2 years. That is 21 hours per week for 300 hours per semester and 600 hours per academic year. The hours are completed during work week and during standard business hours. For example, 9am-5pm = 8 hours per day x 3 days per week = 24 hours per week, which includes 1 mandatory hour of lunch per day.

First-year students are typically in the field Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Variation in this schedule may be necessary due to classroom schedule and agency needs. Students in the Organizational Management and Leadership (OML) Method may follow a different schedule.

Students in the Bank Street Dual-Degree Program complete one year of field practicum, attended four days per week (28 hours) for a total of 900 hours.

Students in the MPhil Dual Degree program complete 2 years of full time, 21 hours per week for the total of 1200 hours of field practicum.

Students in the One Year Residency Program complete 900 hours. That is 14 hours per week, plus 14 hours of credited work for total of 28 hours per week and 450 hours each semester.

Practicum Attendance Policies
Regular attendance at the practicum agency is expected of all students. Chronic lateness (or leaving early) is unacceptable. Students must inform the agency of planned absences or lateness.
On their days in the practicum, students observe agency hours and the calendar followed by agency staff. For Thanksgiving, Winter Recess, Spring Recess, and designated Hunter College holidays, students typically follow Silberman’s Field Education calendar; however, students in the One-Year Residency and Bank Street Dual Degree programs may still follow their agency’s schedule. Students should not plan to take vacation time during the field practicum. **No credit for hours is given if the agency is closed for a holiday that school doesn’t observe.**

If absences for illness, religious observance or personal emergencies exceed three days during an academic year, this time must be made up in order to meet the practicum hour requirements. If a student anticipates any extended absences for any reason, they should inform their field instructor and field advisor right away.

Students are only credited for the hours in practicum attended. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure completion of program requirements each semester.

The School considers student participation on official committees such as the Curriculum Committee to be a part of the educational program; agencies are asked to release students who hold committee positions in order for them to attend such meetings, generally held once a month. Students are expected to discuss a plan for appropriate coverage of their responsibilities with the field instructor well in advance of the planned absence.

If the field placement is significantly interrupted, regardless of reason or how many hours were completed, it may be necessary for the student to begin a new placement to maintain learning integrity. **If a student takes a leave of absence from the program lasting more than one (1) academic year, the first year of their field practicum will need to be repeated, likely at a different agency.**

**Workload Distribution**
The student’s workload in the field practicum typically comprises the following:

1. Assignments in the major method concentration
2. Individual supervision
3. Process Recordings
4. Staff meetings, team meetings, seminars, case conferences, and in-service trainings

At least half the time in practicum should be spent in client contact as described above. Second-year students will typically spend more time than first-year students in carrying out practice assignments. A greater number of clients, groups, and more extensive and complex assignments are assigned to second-year students. Second-year students may achieve a full workload earlier in the semester than first-year students.

The number of cases assigned will vary according to the agency mission, client needs, and service delivery expectations (e.g., in a residential or milieu setting, clients may be seen more frequently than once per week and thus fewer cases will be assigned). On the other hand, in settings where clients are not seen on a weekly basis, a greater number of
cases may be assigned. If there are questions about the quantity or quality of assignments, students should always consult with the field instructor and then the advisor.

**Dress Code**
Students are expected to follow the dress code in effect at the agency where they are placed, and standards for professional comportment, when selecting their attire for field placement. It is important that students present themselves in a professional manner, and use their best judgment in accordance with the agency’s policy.

**Labor Disputes in Agencies**
The School recognizes that employees may sometimes take part in labor actions. Since student safety may be jeopardized and the educational environment compromised, students in programs other than the One-Year Residency program are **NOT** permitted to continue in the practicum under such circumstances. Agency personnel are required to notify the School of any impending labor actions or interruptions in agency services. The Department of Field Education will arrange a substitute field assignment in cases where the interruption to the practicum is prolonged. Students in the One-Year Residency Program, who are employed by their practicum agencies, should discuss their individual situations with the field advisor and the Assistant Directors of Field Education. Generally, employee status takes precedence over student status in such circumstances.

**Legal Issues in the Agency Setting**
If legal action of any type is taken against a social service organization where Silberman School of Social Work students are concurrently placed for their field internship – including action taken against any employees of the organization; action taken against the student them self in their capacity as an intern or employee of the organization; or action taken against the organization after the Silberman student’s internship/employment has ceased, but relating to their former capacity within the organization – it is the responsibility of the organization to immediately inform the Silberman School of Social Work Department of Field Education. The School will inform the Hunter College Office of Legal Affairs, which will work with the organization and the School to resolve the issue. Under no circumstance should an organization respond to legal action during or related to the student’s internship/employment by contacting the student directly.

**Accessibility**

Agencies are expected to provide reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability. However it is within the agency’s authority, not the School’s, to determine what accommodations they will provide under this standard.
**Guidelines for Home Visits (consider deleting this section)**

The provision of effective service implies that students be prepared to undertake all activities necessary to understand a client’s life situation and to intervene appropriately toward a resolution. Home or community visits are important aspects of service provisions. The following guidelines are intended to ensure that home visits can be completed safely and effectively.

When **planning the home visit**, it is recommended that:

1. Never visit a facility/home without someone at the agency knowing where they are. A safety plan should be created and shared with someone at the agency, such as a supervisor, a co-worker, or an administrative staff member. This plan should include the name of the person being visited, the student’s contact information, and the expected duration of the visit.
2. Verify the visit address and directions before the visit, and plan a travel route in advance.
3. Conduct home visits with a supervisor if possible.
4. Consider visits between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.
5. Use the middle car of the train, where the conductor is present, when traveling by subway.
6. Consider meeting the client in a community meeting place (e.g., church, community center) if it is appropriate and also feasible for the client.
7. Ask a community member or client to meet and accompany them if they feel unsafe entering a building alone.
8. Carry official identification or a letter that establishes their status as an agency representative.

**During the home visit**, students should:

1. Clearly and respectfully identify themselves, their agency, and their purpose to the person who answers the door.
2. Be aware of their surroundings at all times.
3. Remain in an area with easy access to an exit, and always know their exit strategy.

**Transportation and Reimbursement**

Some agencies provide car service for home visits. Students should verify their agency’s policies on transportation. Agencies are expected to reimburse students for expenses incurred as part of any field assignment, if they similarly reimburse staff. If a difficulty
emerges around reimbursement, the student should contact the Director of Field Education. Students should not use their own vehicle for any assignments within the field practicum. If a student is being asked to drive an agency-owned vehicle as part of their assignment, they should inform the Director of Field Education immediately. In some cases, students may drive an agency-owned vehicle as part of their assignment, if they have a valid driver’s license, agency approval, and agency insurance coverage.

Grade for Field Course

In order to receive credit in Field Course, students must complete their hourly requirements as well as demonstrate competencies, as indicated in their final semester evaluations. (See Chapter 5 for additional information on grading procedures).

Being asked to leave field placement or resigning may result in grade of NO CREDIT. Such may result in having to repeat the semester (including the hours again), or being referred to the Educational Review Committee.

Communication Pathways (to be added by Agnes)

Questions or conflicts that arise at field practicum should be directed to 1) field instructors 2) field advisors 3) Assistant Directors, in that order.
Overview of the Field Advisor’s Role and Responsibilities

The field advisor is typically an adjunct faculty member who is assigned by the Field Education Office to serve as the student’s advisor and the field liaison to the practicum agency. Advisors carry responsibility for the student’s education in the field through supporting, monitoring, and evaluating the student, enhancing the experience and ensuring fit with the School’s standards.

In addition to serving as an advisor to the student, the field advisor serves as a resource and consultant for the field instructor and the educational coordinator, who are both based at the practicum agency. The advisor may help the field instructor understand the SSSW curriculum and, particularly, help the instructor understand the types of work assignments that are needed for the student to integrate classroom and field learning. The field advisor represents, and works to consistently ensure, the educational objectives of the field practicum.

The field advisor will:

• Meet with students at the Field Practicum Orientation at the beginning of the academic year.

• Meet individually with each advisee at least once each semester.

• Meet with students for group advisement meetings during scheduled times (once monthly).

• Make a minimum of one annual field visit to each student’s field placement site including a meeting with the student’s instructor.

Group and Individual Advisement

Group Advisement Sessions

Advisors meet with their assigned group of students once per month, to address students’ progress in their field practicum. One of the many benefits of the group advisement model is that students learn through mutual engagement and support. During group advisement, the advisor will:

• Provide information about various issues concerning field requirements and expectations, such as: Process recordings for Clinical Practice students (logs for
Community Organizing and Organizational Management and Leadership students); use of supervision; the field evaluation process; and professional development.

- Assist and support students in integrating classroom knowledge with practice in the field, and in attaining the core/foundational and advanced practice competencies.

- Ensure there is time and support for students to share experiences from their field placements, and provide feedback to one another.

- Provide relevant knowledge and expertise in dialogue with students and their needs.

**Individual Advisement Sessions**

Individual meetings between the advisor and each advisee should be scheduled at least once per semester separately from the field site visit. These meetings must take place at Silberman. Advisees should also maintain ongoing contact with their advisors through telephone calls and emails.

**Evaluation of Student Performance**

The field advisor is responsible for monitoring the student’s performance in field placement throughout the year; receiving information from the field instructor and other parties as appropriate to inform their assessment of the student; and assigning the official Field Practicum grade for each student they advise.

In this capacity, the advisor is responsible for ensuring that the field instructor completes and submits the Field Practicum Evaluation at the end of each semester. The Field Practicum Evaluation is a comprehensive assessment of the student’s field performance. The advisor uses this evaluation to help determine the student’s grade.

For more information on the Field Practicum Evaluation and practicum grading policies, please see the Silberman Field Education Manual section on Guidelines for Evaluation of Student Performance.

**Handling Field Performance Issues**

Field advisors are expected to proactively identify potential concerns with the student’s field placement and practicum throughout the semester. This involves close dialogue and ongoing engagement with the student and the field instructor.

When the field advisor or field instructor identify a concern, either in a phone call or in a scheduled site visit, the first step is to assess the concern, hear each party’s view of the situation, and determine whether the concern can be easily remedied through discussion. Some concerns about performance can be addressed, for example, by assessing and
amending the Educational Plan; clarifying or strengthening the nature of the field assignment; airing differences in teaching/learning styles; or stating expectations regarding deadlines, quality and use of supervision, or time and attendance issues.

In cases where the concerns cannot be readily remedied through such a review of the issues, a written **Field Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)** will be considered. If agency policy does not allow for a PIP, the Field Education Department will work in conjunction with the student’s field advisor and field instructor to implement a plan to determine the student’s best path forward in the field practicum. This plan will follow the structure of the PIP as closely as possible.

**Field Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)**

The PIP is a formal agreement implemented when a student is evaluated to have not met Practice Competencies assessed as part of Field Education, or when significant difficulties emerge in the field internship. The field advisor writes the PIP. The first part of the document states the problem or areas of concern; the second part of the document must outline a detailed plan for improvement and achievement of satisfactory performance, with a designated timeframe for completion. (For more detail on the written format of the Field PIP, please see the SSSW Field Education Manual section on Handling Field Performance Issues.)

As soon as possible once the field advisor has written the Field PIP, a **three-way meeting** must be convened between the field advisor, the field instructor, and the student.

**This meeting is mandatory for all three participants. It is crucial that the field advisor is present for this meeting.**

During this meeting, the advisor, instructor, and student will work together to ratify the drafted Field PIP. All three participants must agree to a finalized plan; before the end of the meeting, all three must sign the document to confirm their agreement. All three participants must also have a personal copy of the final, signed Field PIP.

If the agency, for whatever reason, tells the advisor that the student must be withdrawn from the placement, an additional three-way meeting must occur so that the student and the field advisor are present to hear and understand the reasons for this request. (In exceptional circumstances, such as if the agency asks the School to withdraw the student immediately from placement, it may not be possible to convene a meeting.)

At the re-evaluation date specified in the Field PIP (or the absolute closest possible date on which all three parties can meet), another **mandatory three-way meeting** is held. At this juncture, the advisor, instructor, and student will assess the student’s progress and measure whether the Field PIP objectives have been met.

If the student has not met the terms of a Field PIP within the specified time frame, or has been removed from the field placement during that time frame, the next step may be a **Field Consultation Meeting** or referral to the **Educational Review Committee (ERC)**.
Field Consultation Meeting
Based on the student’s progress in meeting competencies identified in the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), the Director of Field Education may arrange a consultation with the student, the field advisor, and two Assistant Directors of Field Education before rendering a recommendation about the need for further improvement and assistance. This Field Consultation Meeting must occur within 10 business days of the specified end of the PIP agreement timeframe. After the consultation meeting, the Director of Field Education reviews the recommendation, makes a determination, and shares that determination with the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs. In cases where the student’s improvement has not been sufficient in accordance with the terms of their PIP agreement, the Assistant Director of Field Education may ask that the Educational Review Committee (ERC) review the student’s performance.

Educational Review Committee (ERC)
For detailed information about the Educational Review Committee, please see Chapter 10 of this Handbook, Appeals and Reviews.

Student Evaluation of Field Advisors
At the end of each semester, students complete a written evaluation of their field advisors in order to assist the Field Education Department in identifying and evaluating the efficacy, strengths, and limitations of the advisor and the advisement system.

Student Concerns with the Advising Process

Process for students who have concerns about the field placement?

If students develop concerns about the advising process and/or the advisor at any point during the semester, they may contact the Director of Field Education. Students requesting to change their field advisor should make the request in writing to the Director of Field Education. Requests for a change of field advisor must be predicated on serious problems or concerns, which can be remedied only by a change in advisor.

Procedure for change:

1. The student and field advisor are expected to discuss the need for a change of advisor, before any written request is made to the Director of Field Education. Once completed, the request must clearly stipulate the reasons a change is warranted. The Director will consult with the student and the advisor prior to making a final decision, to determine if both parties are in agreement.

2. If the request for a change of advisor is granted, the Director will send a memo informing the student, the current field advisor, and the newly assigned field
advisor of the change. It is expected that current and new advisors will consult with each other regarding the advisement that has already taken place.

If the request for a change of field advisor is denied, the Director will send a memo to the student and advisor explaining why the advisement assignment should remain the same. Appeals of the Director’s decision must be made in writing to the Office of the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs within five business days of the date of the memo.

**Second-Year Placement Planning**

Planning the second-year field placement is a collaborative effort that takes the combined input of the student, the field advisor, and the Assistant Directors of Field Education.

First-year students will meet as a group with Field Education Department staff for a **placement planning meeting**. Students are introduced to the placement planning process at this time. New advisors may wish to attend the placement planning meeting. At the time of this meeting, first-year students will gain access to a field practicum planning form, which the advisor will help them complete.

The field advisor is expected to carry out the following with the first-year student, after the initial placement planning meeting:

- The advisor should schedule an **individual appointment** with the student in person – or, if necessary, by phone or Skype – to discuss field learning goals for the second year. Advisors will assist first-year students in identifying learning needs and interests for the second-year placement, with attention to a range of possible placements.

- Informed by this conversation, the student will complete their **field practicum planning form**, and will show their completed form to the field advisor.

- The advisor will write their own **Advisor’s Summary**. Based on their conversation with the student, and the student’s field practicum planning form, this summary will outline what was discussed and offer advisement on potential placements. The advisor must give their Advisor’s Summary to the student once it is complete.

- The student will submit their field practicum planning form together with the Advisor’s Summary letter to the Department of Field Education. This package is due to the Field Education Department in **mid-March**.

- During the spring semester, field advisors will work with first-year students to **prepare for interviews** with prospective field agencies. Students should be
advised about how to approach these meetings and be prepared to discuss first year placement as well as their interest in the second-year placement; they should also be able to identify skills, interventions, and practice principles they have learned in the first year (e.g., engagement, assessment, advocacy, group formation, etc.). Students should be encouraged to role-play during meetings.

**Other Pertinent Issues**

Students with academic issues should be referred to an academic advisor. Degree audits are also the responsibility of academic advisors. Contact an Assistant Director of Field Education for information on how to locate a student's academic advisor or contact the Director of Student Services at 212-396-7574.

An effort is made to match students with advisors who are familiar with, and who have had work experience in, the student’s chosen Practice Method. Whether or not the advisor is an expert in the Practice Method, they may wish to seek guidance on curriculum expectations from the Method’s chairperson.

Even though field advisors do not provide academic advising, they should be familiar with the sample programs and course requirements associated with Silberman’s various MSW pathways and Method areas.

All field advisors must have a valid Hunter College ID and email address, as assigned by the Department of Human Resources.
All MSW students should access academic advisement as part of the graduate program at SSSW.

Academic advising is available to all students in the school. Academic advisors are available for consultation about matters including (but not limited to) the following: a review of program requirements; course selection and registration issues; referral to the Writing Program; field of practice (FOP) specialization information; and graduate degree audit information. In addition, academic advisors are available to refer students to various resources offered at Silberman SSW or on the 68th Street campus. Academic Advisors can also consult with students around policies and procedures at the school – including change of practice method, grade appeal, and the Educational Review Committee.

Academic Advisors may have contact with faculty members around issues that arise in the classroom, such as attendance or performance in classroom (including writing). Academic advisors may also have contact with field advisors to coordinate assistance for a student who is experiencing difficulties in the field and/or the classroom.

Academic Advisors are not assigned. Students may reach out to any of the Academic Advisors at any time during their trajectory through the program. Advisors are available in-person, via email or zoom Monday through Friday during the day and on selected evenings. Students can contact Advisors at (sswacademicadvisor@hunter.cuny.edu).
The following excerpt from the CUNY By-Laws summarizes the importance and significance of student evaluations: “Student evaluation of faculty teaching and course handling is a significant factor in the professional appraisal of faculty performance for purposes of reappointment, promotion and tenure” (CUNY By-Laws, Section 4.1.3). In addition to aiding individual faculty in reviewing and improving classroom teaching, these evaluations have a direct bearing on faculty retention and promotion. Evaluations are formally administered online by Hunter College at the end of each semester. In addition to the online College-wide form, students may be requested by their instructors to complete mid-term evaluations which are used for making changes or revisions during the semester. The Office of the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs reviews all of the evaluations as a measure of quality of instruction.
ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE

Edited and reorganized for clarity and to avoid duplication. Incorporated some of the material from Chapter 10 (Grade Appeals). Added a new section that included in one place the standards for separation.

Essential Abilities and Attributes for Students at the Silberman School of Social Work and in Professional Practice

Becoming a competent social worker is a complex process that begins upon entrance into the School of Social Work. In order to maintain matriculation in Hunter’s program and to meet their obligations to the people for whom they have a professional responsibility, students will need to meet the standards for social work education and practice described here and in the NASW Code of Ethics. The following section describes professional and ethical standards, academic integrity standards and academic and field competencies which students at the Silberman School of Social Work are expected to meet, at a level appropriate to their stage/phase in the program. Attention to these standards will be part of the evaluations made by classroom faculty, field instructors, advisors, and other School representatives who come in contact with students. An inability to effectively meet these standards will have consequences for successful continuation in—and completion of—the program.

Students are expected to maintain high levels of achievement in both (1) academic performance in courses and the field practicum and (2) professional behavior in relationships with faculty, staff, peers, clients, and field practicum personnel.

Professional and Ethical Standards
Upon entrance into the program, the student is expected to be committed to learning about the values and ethics of the social work profession. As students progress in the program, they are expected to demonstrate a strong commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession. The students must be committed to the essential values and ethics of social work, which include respect for the dignity and worth of every individual and his or her right to a just share in society’s resources (see NASW Code of Ethics).

Upon entrance into the program, the student is expected to commit to learning what is required for professional behavior. This includes an emphasis on ethical conduct in the social work profession. Students are expected to incorporate the highest ethical standards in every element of their work and to conduct themselves in ways that manifest the maturity and emotional stability necessary to function as professionals. Students are expected to maintain high levels of professional behavior in relationships with faculty, staff, peers, clients, and field practicum personnel.

Professional behavior includes keeping commitments to and respecting clients/community members, research participants, other professionals, faculty, colleagues, and fellow students and being able to work effectively with others regardless of level of authority. Other aspects of professional behavior include being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, and completing assignments on time in school and in the field practicum. Understanding and maintaining confidentiality with regard to clients/community members is of utmost importance; as students progress in the program, they are expected to demonstrate professional behavior in all aspects of social work practice.

Social work students are expected to conduct themselves according to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and should demonstrate tolerance and respect for human diversity. Students are also expected to comply with the College’s policies and regulations outlined in the Campus Code of Conduct; CUNY Policy on Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination; CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct; and this Student Handbook.

Empathy

Upon entrance into the program (and increasingly as students progress through the program), they are expected to work diligently to understand and appreciate the ways of life and the value systems of others. Students must be able to communicate empathy and support to clients/community members based on an understanding and respect for the world views and cultural values of others.

Acceptance of Diversity

As students progress through the program, they are expected to demonstrate an appreciation of the value of human diversity. In the field practicum, they must serve and be willing to serve in an appropriate manner all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person’s age, class, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation (or lack thereof), gender, ability, sexual orientation, and value system.
Interpersonal Skills

Upon entrance into the program (and increasingly as students progress through the program), they are expected to demonstrate the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to fellow students, faculty, other professionals, and clients/community members. These skills include compassion, altruism, integrity, and respect for and consideration of others.

Objectivity

Upon entrance into the program, the student is expected to learn the values, skills, and knowledge required for professional practice. As students progress in the program, they are expected to demonstrate a shift from lay to professional values, skills, and knowledge in order to be sufficiently objective when evaluating the life situations of clients/community members and others.

Self-Awareness

Upon entrance into the program, students are expected to make a commitment to learning about self-awareness and to use self-reflection consistently. As the students progress in the program, they are expected to be willing to examine how their values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and past experiences may affect their thinking, behavior, and relationships. Students are expected to be willing to recognize, examine, and change their behavior when it interferes with their work with clients/community members, instructors, fellow students, and other professionals.

Self-Care

 Upon entrance into the program, students are expected to commit to learning about self-care. As the students progress in the program, they are expected to recognize current life stressors and to use appropriate self-care tools in mitigating the effect of these stressors on academic and field performance. Self-care includes the development of cooperative and facilitative relationships with faculty, field instructors, administrators, colleagues, and peers. Students are expected to seek and utilize help for medical or emotional problems if they interfere with scholastic and professional performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Skill Areas</th>
<th>Required Behavior</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Ethics:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct conforms to values and ethics of the social work profession as codified in the NASW Code of Ethics</td>
<td>Adheres to legal and ethical standards in all practice and academic roles and settings.</td>
<td>Does not engage in social relationships with clients; maintains appropriate boundaries with clients.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates integrity in all dealings with clients, agency and collateral staff, faculty, and student colleagues.</td>
<td>Makes appropriate use of supervision and refers client when needed services are beyond his/her competence.</td>
<td>Keeps commitments to clients, colleagues, and faculty.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understands and follows all laws pertaining to client confidentiality.</td>
<td>Disguises clients’ identity in class discussions and academic papers.</td>
<td>Accepts responsibility for working with vulnerable populations and participates in advocacy activities on behalf of clients.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates willingness to work with and advocate on behalf of vulnerable populations.</td>
<td>Demonstrates awareness of and respect for diversity</td>
<td>Willingly accepts and works with a diverse client caseload.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional Comportment and Conduct:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstrates responsible, accountable professional behavior, protecting peers, colleagues, clients and others from the adverse consequences of personal performance problems and misconduct.</th>
<th>Explores and identifies strengths and weaknesses related to professional practice.</th>
<th>Makes productive use of supervision sessions and/or other forms of professional and academic advising and mentorship.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solicits and makes use of feedback regarding performance.</td>
<td>Works to correct performance problems through the development of goals and strategies for professional growth.</td>
<td>Actively participates in field supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks professional mental help and self-improvement services and consultation when necessary.</td>
<td>Makes productive use of supervision sessions and/or other forms of professional and academic advising and mentorship.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional Relationships:**
| All professional interactions reflect respect, integrity, criticism to field collaboration accountability, as well as and awareness of appropriate professional role, authority and educators. Informs field instructor, field |
| Develops and maintains professional working and with clients, colleagues, superiors, peers, students, agency personnel, faculty, in school staff, advisors, and |
| solid Provides feedback and alliances constructive instructor and other agency personnel that is respectful accordance with agency field protocol. boundaries. |
| Actively and constructively participates in academic and agency affairs. and works in |
| Engages, sustains, and professional Follows relationships with clients colleagues. |
| liaison, and academic adviser of problems that arise in field a professional way to address these issues. appropriately ends through on verbal and and written agreements. |
| Ends services responsibly with clients and field agency, including proper notification of all relevant parties (clients, field instructor, field liaison, and/or practice faculty). |

**Communication:**

| Verbal, non-verbal, and written communications with client, faculty, colleagues, and others encountered in student role conform to established legal and professional standards. |
| Receives and responds appropriately to verbal, nonverbal, and written forms of communication with a wide range of client systems and persons regardless of differences related to class, age, culture, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and physical or mental abilities. |
| Verbal, non-verbal, and written communications to clients, colleagues, faculty, school staff, field staff, students, and others are delivered in a respectful, sensitive manner. |
| Demonstrates timely response to—and documentation of—communication with school and agency contacts. |
| Follows agency rules and protocols for record keeping. |
| Responds in a timely manner to all correspondence from clients, agency staff, faculty, and others encountered in student role. |

**Academic Integrity**

Upon entrance into the program, the student is expected to demonstrate academic integrity in the preparation of written assignments, research, and scholarly papers and must understand and adhere to the *CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity* which prohibits academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, internet plagiarism, etc.):
1. Definitions and Examples of Academic Dishonesty

1.1. **Cheating** is the unauthorized use or attempted use of material, information, notes, study aids, devices, or communication during an academic exercise. Examples of cheating include the following:

- Copying from another student during an examination or allowing another to copy your work.
- Unauthorized collaboration on a take home assignment or examination.
- Using notes during a closed book examination.
- Taking an examination for another student, asking, or allowing another student to take an examination for you.
- Changing a graded exam and returning it for more credit.
- Submitting substantial portions of the same paper to more than one course without consulting with each instructor. **Work prepared for one course must be clearly cited if included in an assignment for another course**
- Preparing answers or writing notes in a blue book (exam booklet) before an examination.
- Allowing others to research and write assigned papers or do assigned projects, including using commercial term paper services.
- Giving assistance to acts of academic misconduct/dishonesty.
- Fabricating data (in whole or in part).
- Falsifying data (in whole or in part).
- Submitting someone else’s work as your own.
- Unauthorized use during an examination of any electronic devices such as cell phones, computers, or other technologies to retrieve or send information.
- Representing computer-generated text such as ChatGPT as their own work that the student did not write, code or create.
- Using ChatGPT or other computer generated AI sources without the consent of the Instructor. **Can we set this policy or do we need a faculty discussion first?**

1.2. **Plagiarism** is the act of presenting another person’s ideas, research or writings as your own. Examples of plagiarism include the following:

- Copying another person’s actual words or images without the use of quotation marks and footnotes or citations attributing the words to their source.
- Presenting another person’s ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging the source.
- Failing to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments.
- Internet plagiarism, including submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source, or “cutting & pasting” from various sources without proper attribution.

1.3. **Obtaining Unfair Advantage** is any action taken by a student that gives that student an unfair advantage in his/her academic work over another student, or an action taken by a student through which a student attempts to gain an unfair
advantage in his or her academic work over another student. Examples of obtaining unfair advantage include the following:

• Stealing, reproducing, circulating, or otherwise gaining advance access to examination materials.
• Depriving other students of access to library materials by stealing, destroying, defacing, or concealing them.
• Retaining, using, or circulating examination materials which clearly indicate that they should be returned at the end of the exam.
• Intentionally obstructing or interfering with another student's work.

1.4 Falsification of Records and Official Documents Examples of falsification include the following:

• Forging signatures of authorization.
• Falsifying information on an official academic record.
• Falsifying information on an official document such as a grade report, letter of permission, drop/add form, ID card, or other college document.

ACADEMIC AND FIELD COMPETENCIES
All students must master required competencies as delineated in course syllabi and in the Field Practicum Evaluation forms (available in the SSSW Field Education Manual and at http://sssw.hunter.cuny.edu/ssw/?page_id=2670. Additionally, students are required to meet the following standards of behavior for professional social work conduct outlined below which apply to conduct in the university environment, in the classroom, and in field practicums.

Cognitive Skills
Students are expected to build upon their personal experience and, as they move through the program, exhibit sufficient knowledge of social work and its foundation in social, behavioral, and biological research. When applying such knowledge in the classroom and in the field, students are expected to exhibit clarity of thinking in processing information. Professional activities such as assessment, interventions, and evaluation of practice must reflect grounding in a social work knowledge base. As students progress through the program, they are expected to demonstrate the ability to conceptualize, integrate, and apply this knowledge base to professional practice.

Communication Skills
Upon entrance into the program (and increasingly as students progress through the program), they are expected to communicate effectively and sensitively orally, in writing, and through the use of technology. With growing understanding that cultural context is influential in interactions with fellow students, faculty, staff, clients, community members, and other professionals, students are expected to express their ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and ability to listen to others. Students must demonstrate sufficient skills in spoken and written English to understand the content presented in the program as well as to participate in the classroom and the field placement. It is the student’s responsibility to utilize educational resources provided by the School and/or the College to enhance, support, or improve academic and field
performance when problems in communication have been identified by faculty, field instructors, or advisors.

Reading, Writing, and Information Literacy Requirements for Master’s-Level Students

In order to succeed at the master’s level, students are expected to be able to satisfy a number of requirements, including but not limited to the ones enumerated below.

I. Reading Requirements
In order to gain the practice knowledge and theoretical perspective necessary for licensed master social workers, students at Silberman will undertake a significant amount of academic reading, including but not limited to textbooks, journal articles, and scholarly websites. This reading is of a particularly difficult degree, dealing as it does with high level concepts in the fields of sociology, psychology, social work, social justice, and many others. In addition, the volume of reading expected on a weekly basis can also be challenging, especially when students’ other responsibilities (including their field work) are factored in. Students who are unable to comprehend this information or to keep up with the reading workload will find it difficult (if not impossible) to successfully complete their course of study.

II. Writing Requirements
In the same way that students are expected to complete a good deal of reading, so too are they expected to write frequently—in cogent and error-free prose at a level commensurate with master’s-level expectations. In most classes, students are expected to produce essays ranging from 5-12 pages each. Third- and fourth-semester students will produce essays ranging from 10-20 pages each (including the capstone project in Professional Seminar). In addition to papers, students may expect regular posting assignments, weekly case notes, process recordings, and/or journal entries.

As noted above, these essays must be free from most if not all errors in grammar, rhetoric, and logic and must correspond to the specific assignments (many of which are based on the readings and learning materials for the class).

III. Information Literacy Requirements
In order to support the arguments made in their written assignments, students must be able to find credible sources and document them using correct APA format (including in text citations, reference page entries, and correctly attributed quotations). Students must also be able to paraphrase effectively to avoid plagiarism and the overuse of quotations and to demonstrate complete understanding and mastery of the assigned material.

Resources which students may use include the following. For more resources and details, please see Chapter 15 of this handbook, Supports for Learning.

Office of AccessABILITY, Hunter College, Room 1214B, East Building, 695 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10021 http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/studentservices/access

Silberman Writing Program, Silberman School of Social Work, 2180 Third Avenue at 119th Street, New York, NY 10035 http://sssw.hunter.cuny.edu/ssw/?page_id=1207
Students Experiencing Difficulty Mastering Practice and/or Professional Competencies

**Academic:** When difficulties emerge in the classroom or school environment (as distinct from the field environment), an academic plan is developed between the student and the professor, with clear, written expectations regarding assignments and a timeline for submission. This plan will be supported by academic advisors. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, professors and students may also consider seeking consultation from Student Services and the Chair of the course sequence. If the academic plan is not successfully completed, or if additional circumstances arise, the student may be referred to the Educational Review Committee (ERC) for further evaluation (see pg. xx below).

**Field:** When a student is evaluated to have not met Practice Competencies assessed as part of Field Education (distinct from classroom/in-school education), or when difficulties emerge in the field internship, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) may be instituted, when allowed by agency policy². The PIP is completed by the field advisor with input from the field instructor and the student. The PIP is a written document that describes how the student’s professional behavior does not meet one or more Core Professional Performance Competencies, and identifies the corrective action to be taken and the time frame for completion. The problematic behaviors must be behaviorally described, using examples.

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Guidelines:

- PIP is written by practicum faculty advisor in collaboration with practicum supervisor. Meeting with student follows to agree to clearly specified performance improved goals and timeline.

- Practicum supervisor and practicum faculty advisor monitor student’s performance and evaluate student’s compliance with the PIP at the end of the specified time frame.

- If improvement is deemed to be insufficient, a special consultation with student, advisor, and two Assistant Directors of Field Education may commence before rendering a recommendation about next steps in practicum.

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² If the agency declines to participate in the PIP process, the Field Education Department will work in conjunction with the student’s field advisor and field instructor to implement a plan to determine the student’s best path forward in the field practicum. This plan will follow the structure of the PIP as closely as possible.
• In cases where student’s improvement has not been sufficient, the Assistant Director will recommend student to the Educational Review Committee (ERC).

More details on the PIP procedure and Field Consultation Meeting, along with information about other requirements for successful completion of the field practicum, are available in the SSSW Field Education Manual section Handling Field Performance Issues.

Exceptions to the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
A student may be dismissed from the program without having first been engaged in the PIP procedure, in the event of the following:

• The student’s behavior poses an imminent danger to clients, other students, faculty/staff, and/or self and others (e.g., threats and/or use of violence, and/or abusive language toward clients, colleagues, students, and/or faculty and staff).

• The student’s behavior represents an egregious breach of core performance standards or ethics (e.g., plagiarism, drugs and/or alcohol on the premises, theft, and dishonest, unethical, and/or disruptive behavior).

DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND SEPARATION FROM THE PROGRAM

Students may be disciplined or separated from the program for violations of professional and ethical standards, academic dishonesty or failure to meet academic and field competencies.

Examples of misconduct that will subject the student to disciplinary action or possible separation based on violations of professional and ethical standards or academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Violations of the College policy on Academic Integrity (e.g., plagiarism).
2. Behavior determined to be a violation of College or School policies or regulations.
3. Behaviors that do not meet professional expectations and standards, which include generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity, or emotional stability.
4. Conviction of a felony during the time of enrollment at the school.
5. Behavior determined to be a violation of the profession’s ethics (e.g., the NASW Code of Ethics). Violations include but are not limited to the following:
   a. Conduct that is potentially dangerous to current or future clients.
   b. Sexual harassment
   c. Sexual interaction with clients
   d. Physical threats and menacing or threatening behaviors or actions directed at clients, students, faculty, or staff.
e. Acceptance of gifts or money from clients that are not standard payment for services received

f. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty

g. Behaviors determined to be unprofessional conduct towards colleagues, faculty, or staff.

h. Misrepresenting to clients in any forum or platform, including but not limited to electronic communications, their professional qualifications, credentials, education, competence, affiliations, services provided, or results to be achieved

Disciplinary action or possible separation based on the failure to meet academic and/or field competencies include the following:

1. The student is asked to leave two field practicum placements during their passage through the program;

2. The student fails any two distinct sections of field practicum;

3. The student fails to secure a field practicum placement after 2 interview attempts;

4. The student fails two attempts to pass a required course;

5. The student has accumulated more than two Incompletes in any one semester;

6. The student has failed to resolve two or more Incompletes in the time period required;

7. The student has failed to maintain an average of B (82.5%) or above.

9

THE GRADING SYSTEM

The MSW degree is awarded to students who are deemed to be in good standing. Good standing is defined as the following: grades of at least “Credit” in all courses and field placements and conduct that manifests academic, ethical, and professional integrity.

Grading of students’ academic performance in course work (including in-class and online participation) and in field placement is based on criteria stated in course syllabi and in the Field Education Manual, respectively, and ultimately relies on the professor’s assessment that the student’s work demonstrates mastery.
The School of Social Work uses the following grading categories: Honors, Credit, No Credit, and Incomplete. Grades are assigned on the basis of evidence of meeting competency expectations as outlined in course syllabi.

Honors
The designation of Honors is assigned only for consistent, outstanding achievement and the capacity for advanced mastery of the competencies outlined in the course syllabus. This designation is considered to be above a grade of A. Evidence for this level of work will come from written assignments, in-class and online participation, examinations, practice (where applicable), and individual conferences, and a grade of Honors is awarded at the discretion of the professor.

Credit
Credit is assigned on the basis of written assignments, in-class and online participation, examinations, practice (where applicable), and demonstrated mastery of the competencies outlined in the course syllabus. Grades of “Credit” are given for work within the A to B range (see equivalency chart at the end of this chapter).

No Credit
A grade of No Credit is assigned based on evidence of written assignments, in-class and online participation, and examinations that demonstrate insufficiency or deficiency in mastering the competencies outlined in the course syllabus. Grades of “No Credit” are given for work that is determined to be below a grade of B (lower than 82.5%).

If students receive a grade of No Credit in a course, they must repeat that course before enrolling in the next course in that sequence. For example, a No Credit grade for SSW 72150, Clinical Practice I, precludes registering for SSW 722-50, Clinical Practice II. If the No Credit grade is received for an elective course, students have the option of taking a different elective or repeating the course. Please note that having to repeat courses may result in an extension of the student’s pathway to degree, impacting the student’s tuition cost and associated financial aid award.

Students will be permitted to repeat a required course (and/or a Field of Practice requirement) only once. In the event that a student has been unable to pass a required course after repeating it, that student will not be permitted to take it again. Two failures in the same required course will be grounds for separation from the program.

Letter Grades
Students may request to receive a letter grade for any course, in lieu of the standard Credit/No Credit grade. To receive a letter grade, students must make this request directly to the course professor before the end of the second week of classes. (The time frame for submitting a letter grade request may differ slightly, depending on the exact start date of the class.) For the field practicum, students must make this request to the field advisor. Professors and advisors provide the Department of Student Services with a list of all students receiving letter grades in their sections, by the end of the third week of classes. The Department of Student Services will send students an email confirmation. Please note: Once a student has requested to receive a letter grade, they cannot rescind the request.
Incomplete Grades

Students are expected to complete all coursework within the semester in which they are enrolled. In extraordinary circumstances and at the discretion of the instructor, students may ask for an Incomplete grade (INC). The student must demonstrate:

- satisfactorily completed at least 50% of all required work
- maintained their attendance as per the CUNY attendance policy

The instructor is under no obligation to grant requests for an Incomplete and can require that it be completed in a shorter time period than what the student proposes. If the student does not complete/submit the work by the agreed-upon deadline, a grade of “No Credit” will be assigned.

An INC grade in a sequential course must be completed before the start of the next sequenced course. (Ex: SSW 721 Clinical I must be completed before SSW 722 Clinical II). This is usually the following semester. Depending on the semester in which it occurred, this means you will have to complete the course work must be completed over intersession, or over the summer. If the INC is not resolved, the student will likely be unable to progress in the program following their academic trajectory as indicated on their curriculum grid and may incur additional tuition costs.

For non-sequential courses, the maximum period of extension is one year after the course has ended. The Instructor may require a shorter time period.

A completed INC contract with signatures or approval from both the professor and the student should be submitted to Student Services for an INC plan approval.

No Credit Grade (NC)

If a student receives a grade of no credit (NC) in a required course, including sequential courses, they get only one chance to repeat the course. Two failures in the same required course means separation from the program.

A student who receives a no credit (NC) in a sequential course cannot take the next course in the sequence until they have taken the course again and passed it.

If a student receives a no credit in an elective, students have the option of repeating the course or taking a different elective.

Concurrency

At SSSW, method classes and your field practicum (your field internship) must be taken concurrently as part of all MSW academic plans. Concurrent courses are courses taken alongside each other in the same semester to enhance the experiential learning process.
Generally, students cannot be in field without being in a method class and vice versa. If a student receives an INC grade in their method class, they will not be able to return to field or take the next course in their sequence until completing the course.

The method classes are as follows*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical Practice</th>
<th>Community Organizing, Planning &amp; Development</th>
<th>Organizational Management &amp; Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSW 721 Clinical Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups I</td>
<td>SSW 741 Community Organizing I</td>
<td>SSW 781 OML Method I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 722 Clinical Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups II</td>
<td>SSW 742 Community Organizing II</td>
<td>SSW 782 OML Method II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW 723 Clinical Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups III</td>
<td>SSW 743 Community Organizing III</td>
<td>SSW 783 OML Method III</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please refer to your curriculum grid with your specific pathway and method for a detailed academic plan.

**Grading Systems**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LETTER GRADE</th>
<th>GPA VALUE</th>
<th>GRADE SCALE %</th>
<th>IADE SCALE %</th>
<th>SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNDERGRADUATE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>97.5 -100%</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>92.5 -97.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Grade Appeals Process

When a student believes that a final grade was not graded correctly, they must first confer with the instructor, in person (or via Zoom), regarding the accuracy of the grade received. This conference should be held within the first three weeks of the semester following receipt of the grade. At this time errors may be corrected. If the grade is not an error, the student and instructor must review together all class material pertinent to the grade.

If the student is not satisfied, or if the instructor does not meet with the student within the first three weeks of the semester, the student should promptly contact the Associate Dean by submitting a written appeal, a statement that presents the basis for the grade appeal. This appeal must be submitted within the first five weeks of the semester following receipt of the grade.

The Dean shall convene a School Grade Appeal Committee of three members within two weeks of receiving the appeal. The student has the right to request in writing that the Chair appoint a student as a member of the Grade Appeals Committee. The Committee shall consist of three full time members of the School faculty, unless the student has requested that a student be appointed as the third member of the committee.

The Grade Appeals Committee must notify the student and the instructor, in writing, that they have the right to appear, separately, before the committee. Within three weeks of its appointment, the Grade Appeals Committee will convene a closed hearing where both parties have the opportunity to testify separately. The committee shall consider whether the instructor followed the grading criteria laid out in the course syllabus and whether the grading was arbitrary and capricious.

After the hearing the committee will render its judgment and prepare a brief written report, written by the chair of the committee with the support of a majority of the committee, explaining the reasons for its ruling, and whether the decision was unanimous, without mentioning any names or details that might violate confidentiality.

In cases in which the student or the instructor is dissatisfied with the decision of the
Grade Appeals Committee, they may appeal to the Senate Grade Appeals Committee. This appeal must be initiated within two weeks of having been notified of the Department/School decision. **Note:** The decision of the Grade Appeals Committee shall stand pending any such appeal, and the student should amend their registration for the following semester in accordance with the Grade Appeals Committee’s decision.

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**Academic, Ethical, and Professional Conduct**

Moved this section to **Chapter 8**

**Academic and Professional performance**

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**Educational Review Committee (ERC)**

The purpose of the Educational Review Committee (ERC) is to develop educational plans for students experiencing serious academic, non-academic, and/or practicum problems. The composition of the ERC includes the faculty chairperson, two faculty members and the Director of Field Education.

Requests to initiate the ERC review procedure can be made by the Director or an Assistant Director of Field Education, the field advisor, the professor or associated chairperson, or the Director of the MSW Program. Requests are brought to the Chair of the ERC.

**ERC Procedure**

When a student fails to meet the requirements of the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) or any other plan of support implemented, or has not maintained acceptable standards in course or field work, the following review procedure is implemented to determine the student’s best path forward in the program. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the ERC to ensure that the student has had access to due process throughout the review procedure:

- Within 15 business days of the initial referral being made to the ERC, the Chair of the ERC calls a meeting with the student, academic advisor, field advisor, and Educational Review Committee (ERC) members. While the ERC consists of five members in total, it is only necessary for three of these five members to be present.

- Based on the outcome of the meeting, the Chair of the ERC forwards a recommendation regarding the plan for the student to the Director of Student Services, the Director of Field Education, and the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs.

- It is the responsibility of the Chair of the ERC to inform the student of the ERC decision in writing, generally within 21 business days of the Educational Review Committee meeting, and to ensure that all related documents are made a part of the student's file (via Student Services).

**Possible Recommendations:**

1. Continuing in courses and field practicum with no changes
2. In field practicum: Continuing with conditions:

Repeating the semester or full year of field practicum when a student has a field practicum grade of Incomplete or a grade of No-Credit or when it appears that the student is not able to achieve a grade of Credit. Repeat semester or academic year will start with implementation of PIP

3. Academic: Continue with conditions:

   a. Setting dates for the completion of incomplete work
   b. Recommending extending coursework
   c. Directing the student to repeat the course(s) in issue

   d. Note: The ERC does not change grades

4. Intermit from the School for a specified period of time with specific guidelines for readmission. Those guidelines may include a timeline by which the student may request readmission, or directions to reapply for admission to the program.

5. Separation from the School

   a. The ERC may recommend separation from the school for violations of professional and ethical standards and/or academic integrity standards, and a failure to fulfill academic and field competencies as outlined in Chapter 8. The Associate Dean for Academic affairs will make the final determination as to whether the student will be dismissed from the school. (Does this conflict with the Appeals procedure?)

Appeal Procedure

A student may appeal the Educational Review Committee’s decision by sending a letter stating the specific grounds for their appeal to the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs within 2 weeks from the date of the decision letter from the Director of Student Services. There are two grounds for appeal:

1. The Educational Review Committee did not adhere to the procedures described in this policy.

2. New evidence has emerged that was not available at the time of the Educational Review Committee’s meeting.

The Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs determines whether the appeal is upheld and will notify the student in writing of their decision. Copies of the decision will be sent to the Dean, the Director of the MSW Program, the Director of Field Education, and the Director of Student Services, and will be placed in the student’s permanent record. The appeal determination is final.
Change of Status

Change-of-Status categories in the MSW program include (a) change from full to reduced program status, (b) leave of absence, and (c) withdrawal from the program. Students who wish to change status should consult an academic advisor and then request a meeting with the Director of Student Services. The Director makes a decision based on written documentation, consultation with the student’s advisor, the student’s academic standing and performance, and an interview. Approval of change of status may contain conditions to be met by students.

Change from Full to Reduced Program Status

As Silberman does not have a part-time program, all students are expected to follow prescribed pathway grids (see pgs. 4-11 of the Appendix attached). Requests for a reduced schedule, known as reduced load or reduced program status, must be made to the Director of Student Services, who will review the student’s performance to-date. Should the student’s record not be satisfactory, the student will need to meet stipulated requirements in order to amend their status. Upon approval of reduced load status, a revised grid will be developed for the student to follow as they proceed in the program. When the student wishes to return to a full course load, the student should request a meeting with the Director of Student Services to review and confirm their forward trajectory. Status changes may not be made at the student’s discretion through the registration process. Formal approval (as described above) must be requested. Problems should be discussed with an academic advisor prior to formal requests for reduced program status.

Leave of Absence

The School grants formal leaves of absence. These leaves may not exceed two years and are counted as part of the five-year limit within which students must complete work for the MSW degree. There are certain circumstances in which a student may request a leave of absence. There are also circumstances under which a student may be advised to take a leave of absence. Circumstances include, but are not limited to, changing family circumstances; health and mental health concerns; financial issues; changes in employment status; and challenges with coursework and/or field work. The School will make every reasonable effort to accommodate students without impeding the quality of their passage to degree.

Students considering a leave of absence should contact an academic advisor for consultation. If a leave of absence is advisable, the student will then be referred to the
Director of Student Services for more detailed planning. At this juncture, the Director of Field Education may be consulted as needed. Once a mutual decision has been made to pursue a leave of absence, the following steps will take place:

1. A Change-of-Status form must be submitted to the Director of Student Services.

2. The Director of Student Services grants the leave based on the specific circumstances, and may indicate conditions the student must meet before returning to the School.

3. The student does not lose matriculated status during the leave and need not pay maintenance of matriculation fee.

4. Students with a grade of Incomplete, when granted a leave of absence, must follow School policy on completion of work for the course (see section on grades of Incomplete). If an Incomplete is not resolved prior to readmittance, the School will consider the Incomplete as a No Credit; and two or more No Credits for a student on leave may mean that they will not be readmitted to the program.

Readmission
A student who has not been in attendance for one or more semesters must apply for readmission to the School through the Director of Student Services. If readmission is sought for a spring semester, the application must be made no later than November 1. If readmission is sought for the fall semester, the application must be made no later than May 1. Applications for readmission may be obtained from Room 301.

The readmission process follows the steps below:

1. The student will complete the readmission paperwork and submit it to the Office of Student Services, with a request for an interview with the Director of Student Services and the Director of Field Education.

2. Upon a review of the student’s transcript and the completion of an interview, the student may be approved for reentry into the MSW program. The formal approval will include a plan stipulating an academic grid and any additional requirements. The student’s readmission paperwork will be submitted for their reactivation in the Hunter College system. (A nominal fee for this will be added automatically to the student’s bursar bill.)

3. In some instances, students may be asked to reapply formally through the regular admissions process. Please note: The reapplication process does not guarantee acceptance to the program.

4. Students who are not recommended for readmission will be asked to withdraw from the program.

Withdrawing from the Program
Students may decide to withdraw from the program under various circumstances, such as poor academic standing, changes in academic goals, or changes in life circumstances. The Office of Student Services or the ERC may also recommend students withdraw from the program in lieu of being separated pursuant to the circumstances described in Chapter 8.

Students who wish to withdraw from the School are asked to submit a withdrawal form to the Office of Student Services, after consultation with the Director of Student Services. The form may be obtained in Room 301.

**Withdrawing from Current Course Work or Field Placement**

During their time in the program, students may find it necessary to withdraw from an individual class (or classes) for which they have registered, or from their field placement. This does not necessarily constitute a change of status e.g. reduced load, leave of absence, or withdrawal from the program; however, the following information and proper procedure must be followed in order to withdraw from a current course or field placement:

1. **Always consult with an Advisor:** If you decide to withdraw from a class or classes, it’s important to first consult with an academic advisor who can guide you in identifying your current options and future planning.

2. **Drop your classes:** Make sure to drop your classes via your CUNYfirst account (the same place you previously registered). *Remember that some courses are concurrent, so withdrawal may affect other courses for which you are currently registered.*

3. **Communicate immediately:** If you decide to withdraw from course work, you should immediately contact the professor(s) whose course(s) you are dropping to let them know that you will no longer attend. If you withdraw from field, please contact your field advisor for best steps around notifying your placement and completing termination.

4. **Confirm your revised academic plan:** Part of a decision to withdraw from any course or field work is confirming a revised registration grid moving forward. *Remember that not all courses are offered in each semester. If you withdraw from a course, you may need to wait the entire year cycle until it is offered again at a time appropriate for you to retake it.* Again, please consult with an academic advisor or Student Services to assure a clear path forward.

5. **Map out your finances:** As per CUNY policy, there will be irrevocable financial charges and/or curricular ramifications when withdrawing from classes and/or field **after the start of a semester.** Please consult an academic advisor to understand how a withdrawal will affect your current and future enrollment, as well as your bursar bill.
Students are able to contribute to the ongoing life of the School through active participation in the learning opportunities of class and field; student organizations; Common Time; and a variety of student and faculty committees (see below). Students are encouraged to participate actively with the faculty and administration in policy formulation and curriculum development.

**Board of Student Representatives**

The BSR is composed of a diverse group of students whose purpose is to enrich student life, advocate around student issues, and facilitate communication on school and student related initiatives and policies to school committees and the administration.

Additionally, the BSR co-sponsors student events and lectures, supports and connects student groups at the school, and helps to facilitate the Recognition Ceremony and other graduation-related events. In order to facilitate communication between the student body, committees and administration the BSR will act as a conduit relaying information from students to the various committees and administration, and reporting back to students. BSR will communicate with students through various means, including polling, surveys, discussions or other means of communication as appropriate.

**Committees with Student and Faculty Membership**

Students are encouraged to participate on key committees, including the following. It is understood that students participating on committees do so as representatives of their peers and their cohort – bringing to the committee relevant concerns from the student community broadly, and relaying committee activities back to their student cohort. Any student who is interested in participating on committees, or has further questions, should contact the Department of Student Services.

**Curriculum (Ongoing)** Reviews all matters pertaining to the curriculum of the master’s degree program

**Student Services (Ongoing)** Provides informal consultation around concerns relating to student life

Field Education Committee (need description)
BSW Committee
OYR Committee
IOD Committee

Other Committees? Field of Practice? Methods?
Grade Appeal (ad hoc) Adjudicates grade appeals

Please Note: Because the School considers student participation on official committees to be a part of the educational program, field practicum agencies are asked to release students who hold committee positions in order for them to attend meetings, generally held once a month. Students are expected to discuss a plan for appropriate coverage of their responsibilities with the field instructor well in advance of the planned absence. (The meetings are now on zoom so we haven’t asked for this year)

Student Organization Room
Room 317 in the Silberman School of Social Work is for the use of all student organizations. Organizations may reserve specific times for use via the Office of Student Services.

13 COMMUNICATIONS

Students should check their Hunter e-mail and the School website daily for important announcements. All matriculated students are given a Hunter e-mail address and a password. All official communication from the College will go to this address. Information on student mail services can be found online at http://snet.hunter.cuny.edu/smail/index.shtml. Please also provide the Office of Student Services with your personal email address.

Late-breaking information will be posted on the flat screen announcement monitors in the lobby and the 4th floor and on bulletin boards throughout the school. Some important announcements, such as weather-related bulletins, will be posted on the Hunter College homepage.

Emergency Contact
Students should check that the Department of Student Services on the 3rd floor has their current address, telephone number, and personal e-mail address for urgent notices and emergency contacts. It is essential that students inform the School of any changes in names, addresses, e-mails, or home and field placement telephone numbers.

Bulletin Boards
Notices posted by the faculty and administration may be found in several locations. Students are responsible for reading posted information. The bulletin boards in the lobby
and on the 2nd and 3rd floors may be used for posting of official notices, including the following:

- Field placement information
- Assignment of advisors and rooms for advisement
- Scholarship information
- Professional organization information
- Community programs of interest
- Student organization notices
- Course schedules
- Employment opportunities

Bulletin boards in classrooms are available for faculty and students and often include announcements of upcoming School and community events.

**Student Bulletin Boards**

Student bulletin boards are found outside Academic Advisement on the 3rd floor and outside classrooms on the 2nd and 3rd floor. Materials posted in areas other than those described above will be removed unless approved by the Office of the Dean or the Hunter College Office of Student Services.

**Telephones**

Cell phones may be used in the lobby and corridors. However, they are to be turned off when in the classroom, library, computer labs, and lecture rooms.

**Communication with Faculty**

Faculty offices are on the 4th, 6th, and 7th floors of the building. Faculty contact information including phone numbers, room numbers, and e-mail addresses on the School website. Students who wish to leave papers or paper mail for faculty members should take them to the faculty mailboxes located on the 4th floor. For adjunct faculty members, materials may be left in the file cabinet located directly under faculty mailboxes in the 4th floor Faculty Suite.

**Communication with Advisors**

All students have access to academic advisors for review of course selection, academic performance, and eligibility for graduation. During the semester, Academic Advisors are generally available Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on the 3rd floor, as part of the services of the Department of Student Services. Academic advisement is also available on-line by e-mailing sswacademicadvisor@hunter.cuny.edu. For more information, please see Chapter 6 of this handbook.

Field advisement provides an opportunity for discussion of pertinent academic and field issues. Advisors communicate with students in group advisement meetings, individual appointments, and through phone and e-mail. Attendance at these advisement meetings is mandatory. The location of advisement meetings is posted in the lobby and is available on
the 3rd floor from the assistant for the Field Education Office. For more information, please see Chapter 5 of this handbook.

Official Facebook Page
(https://www.facebook.com/SilbermanSSW)

We welcome contributions to our Facebook page. Please note that comments are monitored, and if we become aware of messages that contain advertising or commercial solicitations, are off-topic, or violate any law or any City University of New York (CUNY), Hunter College, or Facebook policy, we reserve the right to remove them. Users of this Facebook page take personal responsibility for their comments, user name, and any information or other content they post. Comments made on this site do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College, or CUNY as a whole. Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College, and CUNY are not responsible for the content of any non-CUNY website(s) linked to or from this page. In addition, Silberman School of Social Work upholds the Terms of Service standards administered by Facebook. Facebook encourages all users to utilize the “Report” links when they find abusive content (https://www.facebook.com/legal/terms).

Other Official Links

http://sssw.hunter.cuny.edu/

https://twitter.com/silbermanssw

https://facebook.com/SilbermanSSW

http://www.linkedin.com/groups/SSSW-Silberman-School-Social-Work-4800087/about

http://criticaltime.org/

http://silbermanaging.com/

http://www.nccwe.org/
Licensure Supports and Resources

**The Licensure Process**
The purpose of licensure in social work is to assist the public through the identification of standards for safe, ethical, effective professional practice. Building on the foundation laid by the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree, licensure enhances social workers’ professional opportunities, and affirms social work itself as a profession – an occupation that involves prolonged training and a formal qualification by a licensing body. Each state sets and governs its own rules for the Licensed Master of Social Work (LMSW) licensure, based on a national test administered by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB). In general, a social worker must hold an MSW degree to apply for the LMSW license.

It is each student’s responsibility to create a licensure study plan when they enter the MSW program, and to engage in their plan throughout their education at Silberman. The LMSW exam is a nationwide test, assessing general knowledge about the profession. Not all of the content on the exam may be covered in coursework. It is the student’s responsibility to learn the content that may not be covered during their course of study at Silberman, with the assistance of Silberman Licensure Central.

**Silberman Licensure Central**
Launched in 2017, Silberman Licensure Central is a digital gateway that provides students with resources, information, and practical steps to help them become licensed LMSWs. It is available on the School’s Blackboard page:

*Blackboard > SSSW Information Corner > Licensure Central*

Silberman Licensure Central provides the following for students’ use:

- Instructions on the LMSW exam registration process for New York and New Jersey;
- Specifics on test prep, test simulation, and study guides;
- Registration for one free LMSW test prep class, available to SSSW students who complete the degree requirements;
- Additional links and resources.

**Online Assistance**
For questions and concerns about the LMSW exam and licensure process, there is a Licensure Specialist available via email: ssswlc@hunter.cuny.edu.
Silberman Library Resources
The Hunter College Social Work & Urban Public Health Library, located in the Silberman Building, maintains additional resources to help students prepare for LMSW licensure. These include test prep books for loan, computerized test-taking simulations, and resource guides.

Accessing Resources After Graduation
After graduation, new alumni may obtain an Alumni OneCard by visiting the Hunter College Alumni Office, Main Campus, East Building Room 1314. (Note: Once verified and enrolled, students will obtain their physical card from the OneCard Office, West Building Room 203). With an Alumni OneCard, Silberman alumni are able to maintain their Hunter email IDs and access Blackboard, where they may continue to access LMSW help. Alumni with the Alumni OneCard may also continue to borrow materials from the Hunter College Libraries.

Employment-Related Services

Silberman School of Social Work Job Bank
Current listings of full-time, part-time, summer, temporary, voluntary, and instructional positions are compiled on the Silberman School of Social Work’s private LinkedIn group, which can be accessed by going to the Alumni section of the SSSW website.

Posting Notices in the Job Bank
Potential employers who wish to post job notices are encouraged to submit detailed job information using the School’s online Job Posting Request Form. This form is available on the SSSW website by clicking Quick Links > Forms. (Job notices may sometimes also be submitted to Method Chairs or the Director of Student Services).

MSW Job Fairs
There are MSW job fairs held periodically throughout the year in the New York area. Students will receive relevant information about these opportunities throughout their time at the School. It is important that students check their @myhunter emails regularly. In addition, all SSSW students and alumni are urged to attend the annual MSW job fair cosponsored by Silberman and other New York schools of social work during the spring semester.

Hunter College Office of Career Development Services
All Silberman students and alumni are invited to attend the career fairs sponsored by the Hunter College Office of Career Development Services, held each fall and spring semester. In conjunction with these and other local job fairs, the College provides reference materials and conducts review sessions on résumé preparation and interviewing skills for students and alumni. Career development workshops and potential-employer information sessions may also take place during Common Times. Students should consult Common Time schedules for details.
The Hunter College Libraries / Social Work and Urban Public Health Library

The Social Work & Urban Public Health Library (SWUPHL) is a graduate- and doctoral-level branch of the Hunter College Libraries. Located on the main floor of the Silberman Building, SWUPHL serves the academic and research needs of the Silberman School of Social Work and the Hunter College undergraduate Urban Public Health Programs and graduate Nutrition Program. The SWUPHL is under the administrative jurisdiction of the Chief Librarian and Dean of the Hunter College Libraries Department.

Upon entering the SWUPHL, patrons are greeted by the Information Commons, which houses the AV-ICIT Service Desk, the Circulation Desk, and the Reference Desk. The SWUPHL contains group and individual study areas, including six group study rooms which contain audio-visual equipment and monitors. There is a mini-computer lab with eight desktop computers, six study carrels with secure laptop computers, and 20 laptop computers available for check-out at the AV-ICIT desk. Printing, photocopying, and scanning equipment are available. There is wireless Internet access throughout the entire Silberman Building.

The SWUPHL contains 56,000 volumes, 80 print serials, and audio-visual materials—all of which are searchable in the online CUNY+ catalog. Students have electronic access to over 300 databases, 100,000 eJournals, and 263,000 eBooks. Students also have access to Hunter’s Cooperman Library and Zabar Art Library at 68th Street, the Health Professions Library on the Brookdale campus, and all 24 libraries in the CUNY system. Materials from other CUNY libraries are made available to Hunter students through CUNY’s intra-library transport system known as CLICS. Materials not held in any CUNY library may be requested through the national Interlibrary Loan service known as ILL.

The Library Faculty provide instruction and reference services. Silberman students will receive four hours of in-class Information Literacy Instruction for social work practice over the course of the standard two-year program. The SWUPHL’s Reference Desk is covered by a faculty librarian approximately 54 hours per week, including Saturdays. Students may “drop in” at or call the Reference Desk to work with a librarian on reference and research questions. In addition, students may email librarians directly or use the online request form to schedule one-to-one research consultations. Ask-a-Librarian, an online live chat service, is available 24 hours a day through the Hunter College Libraries website.

Important Links:

- The Hunter College Libraries website: http://library.hunter.cuny.edu/
- SWUPHL Hours: http://library.hunter.cuny.edu(hours/schools-social-workpublic-health
- Online Research Consultation Request Form:
Accessibility Services for Students

Students are encouraged to register with the Hunter College Office of AccessABILITY in order to receive services offered under ADA guidelines. The Office of AccessABILITY makes accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students who are eligible for reasonable accommodations include those with written and certified mobility, visual, or hearing impairments, learning or cognitive disabilities, mental health conditions, and any condition that limits basic functions. Also eligible are students in recovery from alcohol or substance addiction and those diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. Documentation of disability is required. All information is kept confidential and is only released with the student's written permission. The office is in the East Building, Room 1214B, Hunter College Main Campus at 68th Street, (212) 772-4857. The webpage for the Office of AccessABILITY is: http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/access. Additional information is also available on the SSSW website, Student Services page.

Accessibility Services at the Library

The SWUPHL works collaboratively with the Office of AccessABILITY, the Office of Student Services, Silberman's Educational Technologist, and the AV-ICIT Department to provide assistive technologies and universally accessible library materials. SWUPHL currently maintains access to Dragon, JAWS, and ZoomText softwares (JAWS and ZoomTEXT are now known collectively as Fusion) and access to Kurzweil 3000.

Students with disabilities may contact the Head Librarian, Margaret Bausman, at (212) 3967659 or mbausman@hunter.cuny.edu for more information about resources and services for students with disabilities. While students are not required to disclose information about the nature of their disability, when contacting the library for access assistance, students should identify themselves as registered with the Office of AccessABILITY and indicate the service accommodations they need. (Students registered with the Office of AccessABILITY have an identifying card that indicates their accommodations; however, not all accommodations may be needed for every situation.)

Assistive Technology at the Library

Students with specific Assistive Technology needs may contact the AV-ICIT Service Desk in the Information Commons of the SWPHL at 212-396-7670. The technologies currently available include the following:

• Dragon Naturally Speaking
• FUSION (JAWS/ZoomText)
• Kurzweil 1000
• Kurzweil 3000 (Note: To download the most up-to-date web version of Kurzweil 3000, students must be registered with the Office of AccessABILITY and use their assigned web credentials.)

FUSION and Kurzweil 3000 software products are also be available for download on personal and School computers throughout all CUNY campus communities.

The AV-ICIT Department will work with the Office of AccessABILITY to provide other technologies as needed.
Access & Technology Center
Under the auspices of the Office of AccessABILITY, the Access & Technology Center offers adaptive technology and individualized computer training for students with disabilities. This adaptive technology is especially helpful for students who have learning disabilities or visual and hearing impairments. The Center is in the North Building, Room 300, Hunter College Main Campus at 68th Street. The webpage for the Center is: http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/access/services-programs/accesscenter

Computer Laboratory
The Silberman Building houses four computer laboratories on the concourse (basement) level. These laboratories are regularly used for scheduled classroom instruction and research, and class schedules are posted on each door. However, when not in use for class, the laboratories are available for student use. Each lab has a printer.

The lab computers are loaded with many popular word-processing, spreadsheet, and database programs as well as a range of discipline specific software. Computer terminals specifically designated for Internet access are available at stand-up stations throughout the Silberman Building.

Audio Visual Resources
VCR, DVD, and video camera equipment are available for curriculum-related activities. Students who wish to record and/or present a video or DVD within the building in fulfillment of a course assignment can arrange to do so with the permission of their instructor. Use of the equipment is scheduled with approval. Most classrooms are smart classrooms, equipped with video and internet access. Technical support staff is available to provide assistance and are located in the Library.

The Silberman Writing Program
The Silberman Writing Program (SWP) offers free tutoring services to all students enrolled at the Silberman School of Social Work. The SWP offers a variety of resources, including one-on-one writing consultations and over 70 handouts and podcasts to help students with their writing and information literacy needs. Students can schedule an appointment for an in-person consultation by visiting the following websites: ssswwriting.youcanbook.me and ssswwriting2.youcanbook.me. If the times indicated on the site are not convenient, students can contact the director of the Writing Program, Christopher Hartley, to arrange something more suitable for their schedules (ch552@hunter.cuny.edu). Useful handouts and podcasts can be accessed by visiting the Silberman Writing Program section of Blackboard (in the SSSW Information Corner). The Writing Program offers the following services:

- One-on-One Tutoring
- "Tele-Tutoring" & Remote Tutoring
- Group & In-Class Workshops
- Writing & Information Literacy Handouts
- Writing & Information Literacy Podcasts
- A Preparatory Writing & Information Literacy Workshop for New Students
Hunter College Reading/Writing Center
The Reading/Writing Center, located at Hunter College in Thomas Hunter Hall, 4th floor, provides free tutorial assistance to registered students. Tutors are students who are trained to facilitate the development of critical reading, writing, and research skills. The services (which include tutorial assistance, e-tutor assistance, and instructional handouts) are also available on the website (http://rwc.hunter.cuny.edu/). Drop-in service operates on a first-come, first-serve basis, during which time students can meet with a tutor for up to 30 minutes. The length of the session depends upon individual needs.

When students cannot attend tutoring in the Reading/Writing Center or when they have a specific question, on-line contact is an efficient way of receiving assistance. Using E-tutor, students can ask questions about the writing process as well as send a section of a paper as a Word attachment for review. Students must include their full name, Hunter e-mail address, the course title, and basic information about the assignment. E-tutor does not read and comment on whole papers. The email address for this assistance is Etutor@hunter.cuny.edu.

Additional Student Supports
Any student experiencing any psychosocial stressors impacting their learning (financial, emotional, psychological, physical, or otherwise) should immediately contact the Department of Student Services for a range of supports, including referral to Hunter College’s Counseling and Wellness Services or Behavioral Response Team.
AID

Records and Registration

The dates and basic procedures for internet registration are determined by the Office of the Registrar at Hunter College, but most materials are also distributed by the School via the website. Filing of additional forms, validation, and payment of fees are completed at the Office of the Registrar at Hunter College, 695 Park Avenue at 68th Street.

Students should keep all bursar's receipts, copies of official registration, and grade records sent by the College. It is the students' responsibility to make sure that their records are up-to-date and correct. Students must submit all required immunization material and be cleared in the CUNY/Hunter system in order to receive approval to register. Faculty members and staff only advise and cannot register students for classes or process changes.

Hunter College Name Change options for Students

Preferred Name Changes/updates:

CUNY uses your legal name unless indicated otherwise by you the student. Should you wish to be known by something other than your primary (legal) name, you may add your preferred first name and/or middle name directly through your CUNYfirst account. Adding a preferred name to your CUNYfirst account is optional.

Your preferred name will be automatically reflected on the following applications:

- Blackboard display name and course roster(s)
- CUNYfirst Student Center
- DegreeWorks
- EAB Navigate app
- FACTS
- Student Support Portal

Steps to make this change are on this page on the Hunter main site under “Add/Update a Preferred Name.” This quick update is made through CUNYfirst.

Update Your Preferred Name on Additional Items:

In addition to adding/updating your preferred name in CUNYfirst, there are additional items that can be updated below:

- Hunter College Email Address
- Hunter College NetID
- Hunter College OneCard Name
- Microsoft Office 365 Applications Display Name
You may request that your preferred name is reflected on the items listed above by completing a Supplemental Name Change Request by clicking on the button titled, ‘supplemental name change’ at the bottom of this page.

Please note, CUNY is unable to reflect your preferred name in your CUNYfirst username, CUNY Login username, or any official university documents.

The Registration Process

Registration occurs prior to the beginning of each term and is organized in two parts:

1. Course registration is conducted via the Internet using CUNYFirst and can be accessed through www.cuny.edu: Log-in>CUNYFirst.

2. Payment of fees is completed online following registration. Students should keep the bursar's receipt for their records. ID cards are obtained in room 203 of the North Building at Hunter College.

Registration

It is the students' responsibility to register for all of their classes each semester. If they are registering and find that a class they want is full or is reserved for another group, they must select another class. If they are not registered in the class they want, they may check back periodically in CUNYFirst to see if someone has dropped that class, leaving an open seat for them to swap classes. Please consult with an academic advisor for instructions when making the swap. Failure to follow the proper procedures may generate additional bursar charges.

Detailed registration instructions, course schedules, and registration dates are available several weeks before registration begins and are posted on the School's website and on the registration page on Blackboard.

Except for incoming students, all other students should consult with their academic advisors prior to registration to confirm progress and ensure that they are enrolling in courses needed for completion of their degree requirements, and in the correct sequence. Incoming students receive specific information and instructions in the summer prior to the beginning of classes. Course sections and registration dates are posted on the Registrar's website: http://registrar.hunter.cuny.edu, as well as in each student's CUNYfirst account page. Students should check the Registrar's website for information on registration and required payment dates.

Students should also check the School's website and their Hunter e-mail accounts for course schedules; changes, and additional information.

MSW Graduate students cannot enroll in more than 15 credits per semester without the approval of the Silberman Registrar Office. Students should follow curriculum grids and reach out to academic advisors if they plan to make any variations to specified registration. Failure to do so could extend degree completion and total cost of the program.
Registration Waitlist

Approximately four weeks before the semester starts, the Silberman SSW registration waitlist will be available on Blackboard (Blackboard>SSSW Information Corner>Registration) for students who require assistance registering and who have already made every effort to register for their classes. Each request will be reviewed and students will be notified only if their requests can be fulfilled. These requests may not be used to request specific instructors. Instead, requests should be for special needs and special circumstances. Documentation will be required when students submit their requests. Students should not reach out directly to faculty to request seats in a class. All requests must be made via the registrar.

Please note: At the end of the registration process, class lists are reviewed by the Office of the Dean and professional curriculum area chairpersons. Adjustments may be made in order to relieve overcrowding or to equalize class size. If needed, new sections may be opened or classes may be canceled because of insufficient registration.

Tuition Payment

The Bursar’s Office at Hunter College (Room 238 of the North Building, 212-772-4400) has up-to-date information on tuition charges for the School of Social Work. Tuition currently can be paid online. Students are urged to pay the tuition bill before or on its due date. Failure to do so results in being automatically dropped from the courses for which the student has registered. Students are required to then register again—often when many courses have already filled.

Students should file a FAFSA form each year, regardless of financial need. Filing this and an application for a student loan will prevent potential cancellation of classes and facilitate processing of loans, scholarships, and awards.

Refund Policy

The CUNY refund policy relates to all students who withdraw from courses prior to the first day of the fourth week of classes. The refund policy is as follows:

- 100% tuition and fees prior to 1st day of classes
- 75% tuition only prior to 1st day of 2nd week of classes
- 50% tuition only prior to 1st day of 3rd week of classes
- 25% tuition only prior to 1st day of 4th week of classes

See the Hunter College Registrar's website each semester for the exact dates.

Transfer, Waiver, and Prior Graduate Credits

For incoming students entering their first year, a maximum of 12 graduate social work credits may be transferred to the Silberman School of Social Work from another accredited graduate social work program. Transfer credits will be considered for courses only in which grades received are B or better and which were taken within the last 5 years. A maximum of nine nonmatriculated credits taken at the SSW may be counted toward the 12 credit transfer limit. Official transcripts are necessary for all courses except those taken at Hunter. Courses can be transferred only in the context of the School’s requirements. No academic credit is given for life experience or previous work experience.
Courses that may be considered either for waiver or credit transfer are the first Social Welfare Policy and Services course, (SSW 701), two required courses in Human Behavior and the Social Environment (SSW 711 and 712) and the first Social Work Research course (SSW 751). Transfer credits of undergraduate courses will not be considered. Students seeking to transfer research credit may be asked to attend SSW 751 in order to develop the research project they will be required to execute in SSW 752 (Research 2). Practice method courses generally cannot be waived. Some professional curriculum areas require a waiver exam.

A maximum of six credits of non-social work graduate coursework or social work electives may be transferred to the School if these credits were taken in related fields within the last five years.

Waiver of courses does not release a student from the necessity of completing the total number of credits required for the degree. Transfer credits, when approved by the Office of the Dean, can be used toward the degree.

Instructions for Application to Transfer Credits or Course Waiver

Requirements
Transfer of credit and credit waiver fall under the purview of the Director of Enrollment Management, in accordance with the following procedure:

1. A student seeking to transfer or waive credits must submit a Transfer of Credit Form to the Office of Enrollment Management before the start of their first semester: By July 31st for the Fall Semester or December 15th for the Spring Semester. Students may obtain this form on the SSSW website or directly from the Office of Enrollment Management.

2. The student must complete the Transfer of Credit Form, and attach:
   a. Copy of official transcript(s) reflecting the courses under consideration, except for courses taken at Hunter College;
   b. Syllabi for all courses under consideration, including courses taken at Hunter College;
   c. Any additional, relevant supporting documentation.

3. The student must indicate whether the courses under consideration are intended to count toward elective or required Silberman School of Social Work credits. If being presented in lieu of required course credits, the student must include the titles of the SSSW equivalent courses.

4. The student submits their completed credit transfer request to the Office of Enrollment Management, which monitors the request’s processing and return.
5. Once the Office of Enrollment Management verifies the initial validity of the student’s request, it sends all materials to the appropriate curriculum area Chair for their review and written decision.

6. The curriculum area Chair reviews the request, and returns a signed decision – approval or denial – to the Office of Enrollment Management and the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs; Final approval is made by the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs.

7. The Office of Enrollment Management informs the student of the final decision.

8. If the student’s request has been approved:
   a. The Office of Enrollment Management sends all materials (originals) to the Registrar’s Office at Hunter College, where the student’s record is updated; the student will be given duplicates.
   b. The Office of Enrollment Management directs the student to the Director of Student Services for subsequent advisement.

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Financial Aid and Scholarships

Scholarships

The Silberman Scholarship Committee oversees several different scholarships that are administered specifically for social work students. Students who are interested in being considered for School of Social Work Scholarships should follow the instructions on the site. You can find more information out about specific scholarships and their criteria on the Silberman SSW website (go to Admissions; then click Financial Aid/Scholarships on the drop down menu).

Please note that these scholarships do not cover the full cost of the program, and are not guaranteed. Students are advised to secure additional ways to finance their education, and to have a comprehensive financial plan for the trajectory of their MSW journey.

General inquiries should be directed to scholar@hunter.cuny.edu

For external financial aid resources, you can also visit the Hunter College Scholarships page below for additional scholarship opportunities:

https://hunter.cuny.edu/students/financial-aid/financial-aid-types/scholarships/

Please note: Most scholarships are formally administered via the Hunter College Bursar’s Office and the Hunter College Office of Financial Aid. Accordingly, students who hope to receive scholarships must have a FAFSA form on file.

Awards received through the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), GSL, Perkins Loan (formerly National Direct Student Loan, NDSL), or College Work-Study
Financial Aid Office
Information about Federal Direct Loans can be obtained at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Applications for Perkins Loans, TAP, and Work Study are distributed and processed by the Financial Aid Office at Hunter College, 695 Park Avenue, Room 241, (212) 772-4820, e-mail faohe@hunter.cuny.edu or visit http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/onestop/finances/financialaid. Financial aid counselors are available on a walk-in basis at Hunter College. Billing directions and submission of direct loan forms should be directed to OASIS at Hunter College, Room 217, North Building.

The New York Higher Education Services Corporation Loan
The procedures designated by the Financial Aid Office must be followed. Applications for the NYHESC Loan must be picked up from a bank (education division). Funds are borrowed by the student from a bank and payment is guaranteed by the federal government through Hunter College. Students must complete this application and bring it to the Financial Aid Office after which a questionnaire must be completed. This questionnaire is needed so that the Financial Aid Office can insert their portion of the NYHESC application and is part of the guaranteeing process.

Eligibility for Student Loans
Hunter College requires students to be enrolled in courses totaling a minimum of six credits to be eligible for student loans.

Student Loan Deferments for Past Loans
Terms of deferment may be determined by the lending agency. The staff in the Registration and Certification Unit of the Registrar’s Office will sign and seal student loan deferments for all Hunter College students. This service cannot be performed for new students until they have registered and paid for the first term.

Liability Insurance, Health and Counseling

Liability Insurance
All students enrolled in or auditing the field practicum must purchase liability insurance coverage from the School's Professional Liability Insurance Program; a small fee is attached
to the tuition bill during the semesters when students are enrolled in either SSW 761, 763, or 767. Students who are not enrolled but who have been asked to repeat a semester in the field practicum should bring payment to the Field Education Department on the 3rd floor.

Health Services and Wellness Education
Vaccinations and emergency health care information are available through Hunter College Health Services, located at the Main Campus (68th Street and Lexington Ave), North Building Room 307. Health Services may be reached at (212) 772-4800 or healthandwellness@hunter.cuny.edu. Health/wellness education resources and programs are also available.

Health Insurance
Please refer to Hunter College Health Services for options to purchase health insurance: http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/cws/healthservices/healthservices-insurance.

Counseling Services
Students experiencing personal difficulties may wish to receive individual or group support. Free, confidential on-site counseling, as well as referrals to external support services, are available through Hunter College Counseling Services, located in East Building Room 1123 on Hunter’s Main Campus. Walk-ins are taken from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Students may also call (212)-772-4931 or email personalcounseling@hunter.cuny.edu for an appointment. Students may also contact the Director of Student Services for assistance in scheduling an appointment and for information about additional resources.

Hunter College Behavioral Response Team
Students in crisis or experiencing significant distress can be referred to the Behavioral Response Team, an interdisciplinary group of professionals affiliated with Hunter College. Additional information on the BRT, the referral process, and the protocol the BRT follows, is available at http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/brt.
The Building

The School of Social Work’s Silberman Building includes classrooms, a well-resourced library, community meeting spaces, four computer labs with extensive software, and an art gallery. The building has an interior courtyard garden and a large 2nd-floor terrace. A café is located in the building as well. Additionally, the building is home to the Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging; the library and archives of Centro: The Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College; and the undergraduate programs in Nutrition and Community Health Education are co-located in the building. In addition to resources in the School of Social Work building, there are extensive learning resources at the main campus of Hunter College (68th Street and Lexington Avenue), the CUNY Graduate Center, and other campuses of the City University of New York (CUNY).

Hours of Access

Administrative and faculty offices are generally open between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. during the week. Classes may be held within or outside of these hours. Faculty members may set office hours within or outside of these hours; and appointments may be necessary. Students are advised to consult individual faculty and staff members about their office hours. Individual administrative departments, such as Enrollment Management or Student Services, may adhere to specific office hours and may hold events outside the hours listed above.

The Hunter College Social Work & Urban Community Health Library, located in the Silberman Building, is generally open during business hours and evenings; however, its hours depend on the day of the week, time of year, and whether scheduled classes are in session. Students are advised to check the Library’s website for the most current operating hours:

http://library.hunter.cuny.edu/schools-social-work-public-health

Restrooms

The School has an All-Gender Restroom on the 3rd floor. The All-Gender Restroom is intended to demonstrate the School of Social Work's support for everyone’s right to have access to safe and comfortable facilities. Trans people and people who don’t fit gender stereotypes are often targets of harassment and violence in “women’s” and “men’s” bathrooms. Such harassment and social control has no place in an institution of higher learning. We encourage students to respect diversity in gender identity and expression and support people’s comfortable access to these facilities.

Room Requests

Student requests for space should be directed to the Department of Student Services. In general, space requests which are associated with School of Social Work programming and School community members are processed through Silberman and then referred to the
Hunter College Central Reservations System. External requests for space must be made directly through the Hunter College Central Reservations System.

Food Service
Vending machines are available on the 2nd and 3rd floors. (Delete There is also an independently operated grab-and-go café on the 1st floor, currently run by a local merchant.)

Smoking
Smoking is prohibited throughout the building. Smoking is also prohibited within a certain distance of the building’s exits and entrances, and on or near the grounds of all CUNY properties, per CUNY’s Tobacco-Free Policy ratified in 2011.

Building Restrictions
No nails, tacks, or scotch tape are to be used on the walls of the building. Notices may be tacked on the classroom bulletin boards and the student government bulletin boards and outside classrooms. The Department of Student Services may be contacted with questions regarding bulletin board use and policies.

Fire Drills
Public Safety personnel conduct required fire drills. Emergency response information is posted inside each classroom and by elevators. Doors leading to emergency stairwells should not be propped open at any time.

Fire/Emergency Procedures for Students with Disabilities at the School
1. Public Safety personnel will oversee any emergency condition.

2. Students with disabilities should familiarize themselves with the emergency procedures posted by the elevators on each floor. Unless directed otherwise by FDNY personnel or other emergency responders, disabled persons will enter the nearest stairwell and await FDNY responders to assist them in exiting the building.

3. All students, upon noticing someone in need of assistance during an emergency, should be sure to notify the nearest emergency responder as quickly and safely as possible.

Emergency conditions should be reported directly to Public Safety at 212-396-7777.
Preparation for Graduation

Graduation is held in January and in June. Students graduating in either January or June are encouraged to participate in one of the twice yearly commencement events held by Hunter College. In addition, the School holds two recognition ceremonies (January and June) organized by the administration and students. Students finishing their last six credits or less in summer may participate in the June graduation. However, their degree will not be conferred until the end of the summer semester.

In preparation for graduation, and prior to their final semester, students should check their transcript with an academic advisor to be sure that all course work has been successfully completed, that grades of Incomplete have been changed, and that transfer credits have been applied.

An integral part of completing the degree is applying for the degree audit. Students may apply for an early degree audit – which will track their credit accumulation through their two years in the program – or apply for the degree audit during their second year. Students will receive alerts regarding degree audit application. They may also contact academic advisors for information and assistance. Once confirmed as a degree audit applicant in their final semester, students are required to meet with their academic advisor for a final transcript review.

It is the student’s responsibility to apply for the degree audit by the appropriate deadlines and to meet with an academic advisor for a final review during their final semester of course work. Failure to follow these steps will cause a delay in degree conferral and will subject the student to additional fees.

All course work for the terminal semester must be completed by the deadline for grade submission. The degree cannot be awarded until all work is complete. If the work is not completed by deadline for grade submission, the degree will not be awarded until the end of the
following semester (i.e., June if the expected date of graduation is January or September if the expected date of graduation is June). Students must be enrolled for a course or pay a maintenance of matriculation fee in the semester in which they graduate.