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**MSW Student Handbook**

**Academic Year 2025 - 2026**

This handbook delineates the policies and procedures determined by the NCSSS faculty for the MSW program. Master’s students are also subject to the policies and regulations found in the CUA Student Handbook and the CUA Graduate Studies Announcements. In case of conflict among these sources, the MSW Student Handbook governs.

**Updated: August 2025**

**National Catholic School of Social Service**

**The Catholic University of America**

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***National Catholic School of Social Service***

*Washington, DC 20064*

Dear New and Continuing MSW Students:

We are excited to welcome you to the MSW program at The Catholic University of America National Catholic School of Social Service (CUA NCSSS). You have picked a great time to become a professional social worker as our nation and world deals with the aftermath of the pandemic, increased mental health issues, economic uncertainty, racial unrest and numerous social justice issues. Social workers are needed now more than ever! Each day more than 700,000 social workers nationwide make life better for others. I am grateful that you have chosen our beloved social work profession and will help contribute to making society a better and more equitable place for all!

We are grateful that you have chosen NCSSS to pursue your social work degree. I, along with the faculty and staff at NCSSS, are ready to support you as you begin this academic year. For NCSSS, there is nothing more important than our students’ success as we prepare social workers who will serve people and communities who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. Since 1918, NCSSS has provided excellent social work education that prepares you for a meaningful career as a professional social worker.

As a MSW student at CUA NCSSS, you will be part of an academic community located in Washington, D.C. and beyond, that explicitly promotes the dignity of all people and a commitment to social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. It is the grounding of Catholic social teaching that sets our school of social service apart from other schools of social work. There is a richness of tradition in CUA NCSSS where “service to others” is embedded in its mission and goals, and permeates every major initiative in our community of faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

We encourage you to set high professional and ethical standards and take advantage of the talents and experience of the National Catholic School of Social Service faculty and staff, its alumni association, and the entire University. My colleagues and I promise to provide you with the tools of research, and the wisdom of our experience, as you stretch your mind and immerse yourself into the social work profession. We will encourage you, guide you, and remind you of our abiding belief in your ability to impact social policy, to serve as agents of change, and to create new opportunities to enhance the practice of social work. Let us work together for a successful year where each of you will reach your highest potential and our profession will reap the efforts of your work. All the best as you work to achieve your goals this academic year and beyond! Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need support!

http://website.cswe.org/0art/JoAnn.gif

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**Academic Calendar: Fall (First) Semester 2025**

**Semester Dates: August 25, 2025 – December 13, 2025**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Thursday, April 3 | Registration for Fall Semester 2025 begins (use Cardinal Students) |
| Friday, July 25 | Last day for Summer 2025 graduation candidates to submit online diploma application (use Cardinal Students)    Final date to deposit theses and dissertations for August graduation |
| Thursday, August 21 | New student orientation begins |
| Saturday, August 23 | Degree conferral for students completing degree requirements in Summer 2025 semester |
| Monday, August 25 | Opening of classes |
| Thursday, August 28 | Mass of the Holy Spirit. University Mass, 12:10 p.m.; No classes held between 11:50 a.m. and 2:10 p.m. |
| Monday, September 1 | Labor Day (Holiday: No classes). |
| Friday, September 5 | Last day to register or add regular session courses, including comprehensive exams and internships (use Cardinal Students)\*    Last day to drop a regular session course without record (use Cardinal Students)\* |
| Wednesday, September 10 | Class of 2029 Convocation, 9:30 a.m. |
| Monday, October 6 – Friday, October 10 | Faculty submit interim grades for undergraduates in Cardinal Students |
| Friday, October 10 | Midterm    Last day to resolve grades of Incomplete from the Spring 2025 and Summer 2025 semesters    Last day to change to audit (must have dean’s permission) |
| Monday, October 13 | Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples’ Day (Holiday: No classes) |
| Tuesday, October 14 | Spring 2026 class schedule released in Cardinal Students    Enrollment appointments assigned for Spring 2026    Pre-registration advising begins |
| Tuesday, October 21 | Administrative Monday: Classes follow a Monday schedule this day; Tuesday classes do not meet |
| Saturday, November 1 | All Saints’ Day |
| Tuesday, November 4 | Registration for Spring Semester 2026 begins (use Cardinal Students)    Election Day |
| Friday, November 7 | Last day to withdraw from regular session classes with a “W” grade (use Cardinal Students)\*    Last day to request an academic leave for the semester |
| Friday, November 14 | Last day to request pass/fail option (undergraduates only; must have dean's permission) |
| Wednesday, November 26 | Thanksgiving Recess begins |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Monday, December 1 | Classes resume |
| Friday, December 5 | Last day for Fall 2025 graduation candidates to submit diploma application in Cardinal Students    Final date to deposit theses and dissertations for January 2026 graduation |
| Saturday, December 6 | Last day of classes |
| Sunday, December 7 – Monday, December 8 | Reading Period |
| Monday, December 8 | Patronal Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Holiday & Reading Day) |
| Friday, December 12 | Mid-Year Commencement Exercises  (Note: Degrees are not officially conferred for Fall semester gradutes until Saturday, January 10) |
| Tuesday, December 9 –  Saturday, December 13 | Final Examination Period |
| Tuesday, December 16 | All final grades due by 3:00 p.m. |
| Saturday, January 10, 2026 | Degree conferral date for Fall 2025 graduates |

\*Courses offered in dynamically dated sessions (those which do not extend the full length of the semester) may have earlier or later deadlines, as listed via the Enrollment Deadlines hyperlink on the class listing in Cardinal Students.

****

**Academic Calendar: Spring (Second) Semester 2026 Semester Dates: January 12, 2026 – May 9, 2026**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Tuesday, November 4, 2025 | Registration for Spring Semester 2026 begins (use Cardinal Students) |
| Saturday, January 10 | Degree conferral for students completing degree requirements in Fall 2025 semester |
| Monday, January 12 | Opening of classes |
| Monday, January 19 | Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Day (Holiday: No classes) |
| Friday, January 23 | Last day to register or add regular session courses, including comprehensive exams and internships (use Cardinal Students)\*    Last day to drop a regular session course without record (use Cardinal Students)\*    March for Life; No classes between 11:00 a.m. and 3:10 p.m.\*\* |
| Wednesday, January 28 | Patronal Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas University Mass, 12:10 p.m.; No classes held between 11:50 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. |
| Tuesday, February 10 | Administrative Monday: Classes follow a Monday schedule this day; Tuesday classes do not meet |
| Wednesday, February 18 | Ash Wednesday |
| Monday, February 23 – Friday, February 27 | Faculty submit interim grades for undergraduates in Cardinal Students |
| Friday, February 27 | Midterm    Last day to resolve grades of Incomplete from the Fall 2025 semester    Last day to change to audit (must have dean’s permission) |
| Friday, March 6 | Last day for Spring 2026 graduation candidates to submit diploma application (use Cardinal Students) |
| Monday, March 9 | Spring Recess begins |
| Monday, March 16 | Classes resume    Registration for Summer Sessions 2026 begins (use Cardinal Students) |
| Thursday, March 19 | Fall 2026 class schedule released in Cardinal Students    Enrollment appointments assigned for Fall 2026    Pre-registration advising begins |
| Wednesday, April 1 | Last day to withdraw from regular session classes with a “W” grade (use Cardinal Students)\*    Last day to request an academic leave for the semester |
| Thursday, April 2 | Easter Recess begins    Holy Thursday |
| Friday, April 3 | Good Friday |
| Sunday, April 5 | Easter Sunday |
| Monday, April 6 | Easter Monday |
| Tuesday, April 7 | Classes resume |
| Wednesday, April 8 | Last day to request pass/fail option (undergraduates only; must have dean’s permission) |
| Thursday, April 9 | Registration for Fall Semester 2026 begins (use Cardinal Students) |
| Friday, April 10 | Founders Day |
| Wednesday, April 15 | University Research Day; Undergraduate/Graduate classes cancelled, Law classes cancelled through 3:30 p.m.\*\* |
| Friday, May 1 | Final date to deposit theses and dissertations for Spring 2026 graduation |
| Saturday, May 2 | Last day of classes |
| Sunday, May 3 – Monday, May 4 | Reading Period |
| Tuesday, May 5 – Saturday, May 9 | Final examination period |
| Monday, May 11 | Grades for graduating students due by noon |
| Tuesday, May 12 | All other grades due by 3:00 p.m. |
| Friday, May 15 | Baccalaureate Mass |
| Saturday, May 16 | Commencement exercises    Degree conferral for undergraduate and graduate students completing degree requirements in Spring 2026 semester |
| Friday, May 22 | Law School Commencement    Degree conferral for law students completing degree requirements in Spring 2026 semester |
| Monday, May 11 –  Saturday, August 15 | Summer Sessions |
| Friday, July 31 | Last day for Summer 2026 graduation candidates to submit diploma application (use Cardinal Students)    Final date to deposit theses and dissertations for August graduation |
| Saturday, August 29 | Degree conferral for students completing degree requirements in Summer 2026 semester |

\*Courses offered in dynamically dated sessions (those which do not extend the full length of the semester) may have earlier or later deadlines, as listed via the Enrollment Deadlines hyperlink on the class listing in Cardinal Students

\*\*Date is currently an estimate based on the event date in prior years

NCSSS ONLINE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

2025-2026

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Term** | **Course Begins:** | **University Academic Holidays** | **Add/Drop**  **Deadline; Drop Deadline for 100% Refund** | **Withdrawal**  **Deadline for**  **80% Refund** | **Withdrawal**  **Deadline for**  **50% Refund\*** | **Withdrawal Deadline**  **for W Grade** | **Course Ends:** |
| **Fall I 2025** (8 weeks) | Monday August 25 | Labor Day, September 1  Columbus Day, October 13 | Saturday, August 30 | Wednesday,  September 3 | Sunday, September 7 | Wednesday,  October 1 | Saturday,  October 18 |
| **Fall II 2025**  (8 weeks) | Monday, October 20 | Thanksgiving Recess, November 26-30  Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8 | Saturday,  October 25 | Wednesday, October 29 | Sunday, November 2 | Wednesday November 26 | Saturday  December 13 |
| **Fall 2025**  (16 weeks) | Monday,  August 25 | Labor Day, September 1  Columbus Day, October 13  Thanksgiving Recess, November 26-30  Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8 | Friday, September 5 | Saturday,  September 13 | Saturday,  September 20 | Friday, November 7 | Saturday,  December 13 |

**Spring 2026 Online Calendar To Be Distributed By The MSW Program Chair**

**Dr. Roslynn Scott-Adams email: scottr@cua.edu**

**Mission of the Catholic University of America and National Catholic School of Service**

As the national university of the Catholic Church in the United States, founded and sponsored by the bishops of the country with the approval of the Holy See, The Catholic University of America is committed to being a comprehensive Catholic and American institution of higher learning, faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ as handed on by the Church. Dedicated to advancing the dialogue between faith and reason, The Catholic University of America seeks to discover and impart the truth through excellence in teaching and research, all in service to the Church, the nation and the world. (Approved by the Board of Trustees, December 12, 2006)

The Catholic University of America is a community of scholars, both faculty and students, set apart to discover, preserve, and impart the truth in all its forms, with particular reference to the needs and opportunities of the nation. As a university, it is essentially a free and autonomous center of study and an agency serving the needs of human society. It welcomes the collaboration of all scholars of good will who, through the process of study and reflection, contribute to these aims in an atmosphere of academic competence where freedom is fostered and where the only constraint upon truth is truth itself.

Further elaboration of the university’s mission is found at <http://www.cua.edu/about-cua/mission-statement.cfm>

**NCSSS Mission**

Derived from the mission of The Catholic University of America and that of the social work profession, the mission of the National Catholic School of Social Service is to educate students from diverse faiths and cultures who in their professional endeavors will embody the values of social justice, service, and scholarship. This mission is grounded in the justice and charity generalist practice of Catholic social teachings and the tradition of a modern university that welcomes all forms of human inquiry. (Approved by the NCSSS Faculty, 2010)

**NCSSS Goals**

1. To advance knowledge, values, and competencies through the development, application, and dissemination of theory and research relevant to the social work profession.
2. To serve and empower vulnerable, oppressed, and impoverished people and communities.
3. To promote social and economic justice and individual and societal well-being in the context of The Catholic University of America, social work profession, and the needs of the local, national, and global community.

**MISSION OF THE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

The mission of the MSW program at The National Catholic School of Social Service (NCSSS) at The Catholic University of America is to prepare specialized social work practitioners who promote individual and societal well-being as agents of change, using a person-in-environment approach through a curriculum that meets the evolving demands of practice.  Rooted in Catholic Social Teaching and social work values, we emphasize the importance of human relationships.  We are committed to educating students of diverse faiths and cultures, who will be effective and competent promoters of human rights, as well as social, environmental, and economic justice locally and globally. Students will learn to identify and challenge the underlying structures and mechanisms of oppression and marginalization in order to create change. NCSSS equips students with the skills to practice with integrity and cultural humility. Students in the program integrate theory, practice, and research through the understanding that scientific inquiry informs our work with all client systems

**MSW Program Goals**:

Located in the nation’s capital, the NCSSS MSW Program strives to fulfill this mission through a student-centered faculty approach that focuses on providing personalized interaction and mentorship. Our program seeks to prepare the next generation of innovative, person-centered social work leaders who:

1. Develop and demonstrate a commitment to the values and ethical principles of the social work profession as well as to the tenets of Catholic Social Teaching.
2. Pursue social, economic, and environmental justice in local, national, and international communities, and in all practice settings.
3. Foster a commitment to diversity and cultural humility by engaging in anti-oppressive practices and amplifying the voices of people who are marginalized and oppressed.
4. Attend to the spiritual, religious, mindful, and contemplative needs of people in their environments.
5. Demonstrate critical thinking throughout their careers in the use and creation of interventions that are theoretically based, research-informed, and culturally responsive while working in policy arenas and with communities, organizations, groups, and individuals. (Approved by the MSW Program Committee, February 8, 2018)

**COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION’S COMPETENCIES**

In accordance with the Council on Social Work Education, the following social work competencies will also be achieved by the student through the completion of the MSW Program:

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior
2. Engage diversity and difference in practice
3. Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice
4. Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice
5. Engage in policy practice
6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

(Council on Social Work Education, 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, <https://www.cswe.org/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS>)

**MSW CURRICULUM ~ On Campus Program**

The MSW curriculum consists of generalist practice knowledge (thirty credits) and specialized practice knowledge (thirty credits). In the specialized practice year, we educate two types of specialized practice social work practitioners:

(1) social workers engaged in *Clinical Practice*, who are eligible to be licensed clinical social workers in various direct practice settings.

(2) social workers engaged in *Community, Administration, and Policy Practice*, who are prepared for careers in community organization and development, administration of human service programs, and policy analysis and advocacy.

Students may take selected courses from either concentration as electives to expand their knowledge base, thus creating their own individualized program of studies.

MSW students may complete the 60-credit MSW program within a minimum of two years and a maximum of five years. During the graduate program, students complete 12 credits of field placement (two placements over four semesters) and 48 credits of coursework.

Full-time students complete the 60-credit MSW program in two academic years, taking 15 credits per semester.

All*planned part-time students* usually take at least 6 hours of academic credit during the fall and spring per semester. Planned part-time students may take up to 9 hours of academic credit per semester.

All *full-time students* must have completed or be concurrently registered for *SSS 570, 571, 581, and 605*when registering for *SSS 673*; similarly, they must have completed or be concurrently registered for *SSS, 572, 582, 591, and 606* whenregistering for *SSS 674*.

Part-time students may have to take course(s) during summer sessions to graduate in four years, depending on whether 6 or 9 credit hours have been taken during fall and spring semesters. While we make every effort to offer many courses during late afternoon and evening hours, it is imperative that students understand that they will not be able to complete the entire MSW curriculum only during evening hours. Part-time students generally complete the MSW program within 4 years.

\*\*\*\* On-campus summer school courses are offered online asynchronously when CUA's minimum enrollment numbers for a course are not met.

**Generalist Practice Curriculum**

*Social Welfare Policy and Services I and II (581, 582*) present the historical and contemporary context for understanding social work practice. Students learn the political and organizational processes that are used to influence policy as well as develop skill in policy analysis and policy advocacy. With a focus on affecting policy change for vulnerable and stigmatized populations, issues of power and oppression are considered. *Generalist practices of Multilevel Social Work: Critically Integrating Practice, Theory, and Research (591*) helps students develop tools to understand and critically evaluate research evidence and practice theory to inform ethical and culturally responsive practice with clients at multiple levels. Upon completion of this course, students will begin to build a better understanding of how to critically apply theory, research, and experiential knowledge (of practitioners and clients) into an integrated approach to practice.

*Human Behavior and Social Environment (571)* utilizes an ecological perspective to examine the theoretical frameworks that explain the bio-psycho-social-spiritual aspects of human development as well as theories of family, organization, and community health and well-being. *Human Development and Psychopathology (572*), uses a “life course perspective” to introduce students to major milestones of human development and complexities often faced across the lifespan, from conception through late adulthood and death. This course also introduces students to mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders that may emerge across the lifespan, along with a critical look at the conceptualization of such pathologies. A course in *Diversity in a Multicultural Society (570)* examines the history of diversity and discrimination, enhancing self-awareness and sensitivity for using cultural humility in social work practice. The generalist model of social work practice is introduced through the *two Generalist Social Work Practice courses (605 – Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups, and 606 – Social Work Practice with Groups, Organizations and Communities) as well as an integrating seminar (673/4).* Supplementing supervised practice in the field, these seminars provide the opportunity for practicing skills through role play, case and project presentation, and seminar discussion. The seminar instructor serves as the liaison between the school and the field agency, maintaining and enhancing the educational theory and practice link.

**Specialized Practice Curriculum**

Upon completion of the generalist practice Curriculum, MSW students choose specialized practice coursework to prepare for Clinical practice or Community, Administration, and Policy Practice (CAPP).

Clinical practice concentrators study theory and practice courses with C*hildren and Adolescents* (808, 808A) or *Adults and Older Adults* (806, 807). These courses include assessment and intervention using multiple psychological and learning theories as well as family systems theories. These methods courses are further supported by specialized practice year elective courses such as *Motivational Interviewing* (544), *Attachment Theory and Neurobiology* (653A), *Social Work Response to* *Trauma* (655), *Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment of Mental Illness* (656), *Sexual Abuse and Exploitation* (656C), *Child Protection: Law and Policy* (657), *On Being Mortal: Death and Dying in Modern Culture* (662), and *Substance Abuse Disorders* (663). Rounding out the specialized practice year are courses in *Research* (758, 759) and *Ethics (740)* to reinforce the empirical and value bases of clinical social work. All of the described elective courses are not offered each semester.

Community, Administration and Policy Practice (CAPP) concentrators complete two theory courses, *Social Justice: Theory and Practice and Leadership for Change in Macro Settings (846 and 847)*. CAPP students also take *Ethics (740)*, Research 1 and 2 (758 and 759). CAPP students are also required to take 9 electives. The electives are chosen based on the electives offered during the year.

NCSSS offers concentrators the unique opportunity to expand their knowledge base by enrolling in courses from the other concentration as electives, creating a dual focus for their education that encompasses micro, mezzo, and macro practice theory and practice.

In both concentrations, specialized practice year students enroll in *Field Instruction and Integrative Seminar I and II* (871, 872), where they learn within a small group of peers. As with the generalist practice seminars, the seminar instructor serves as the field liaison between the school and the field agency, maintaining and enhancing the educational theory and practice link.

**MSW CURRICULUM ~ Online Program**

The MSW online curriculum mirrors the on-campus curriculum in that it is comprised of generalist practice knowledge (30 credits) and specialized practice knowledge (30 credits).

The MSW online program differs in that it is solely a *Clinical Practice* concentration. The program trains social workers who are eligible to be licensed clinical social workers in various direct practice settings.

To meet graduation requirements, online students take courses in a predetermined sequence designed to meet all degree requirements. There is one choice of elective in the final semester where students can choose between SSS 655D Social Work Response to Trauma or SSS 656D Social Work Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment of Mental Illness.

MSW online students may complete the 60-credit MSW program within a minimum of 4 semesters for the full-time program and a maximum of 10 semesters for the part-time program.

Regardless of the particular program, students complete 12 credits of field placement, which includes a generalist practice year and a specialized practice year field seminar class.

As with the on-campus program, all *full-time students* must have completed or be concurrently registered for *SSS 570D, 581D, 571D, and 605D* when registering for *SSS 673D*; similarly, they must have completed or be concurrently registered for *SSS 582D, 572D, 590D, and 606D* when registering for *SSS 674D.*

**Generalist Practice Curriculum**

In general, the online generalist practice year courses mirror the content in the on-campus curriculum. The exception to this is that students in the online program take *SSS 590D* in place of *SSS 591.* Online courses are numbered similarly to on-campus courses but are denoted by the letter *D* following the course number.

*Social Work Research (590D*) provides, through lecture, the scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge for and evaluating practice against the ethical standards for scientific inquiry.

**Specialized Practice Curriculum**

Upon completion of the generalist practice curriculum, MSW online students transition to their advanced practice year, focusing on clinical practice. Clinical concentration involves two theory and practice courses with individuals at various points in the life cycle. *SSS 805D* focuses on clinical work with children and adolescents. *SSS 802D* focuses on clinical practice with adults. Students also complete a course on working with families - *SSS 822D.* These practice courses are further supported by several specialized practice theory courses, including *Psychodynamic (723D)* and *Cognitive/Behavioral (724D). Evaluation of Social Work Practice (756D)* and *Ethics (740D)* reinforce the empirical and values bases of clinical social work. The specialized practice clinical year is rounded out by the choice of one of two electives as students choose between *SSS 655D Social Work Response to Trauma* or *SSS 656D Social Work Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment of Mental Illness.*

All course selections for both programs are to be *approved by your academic advisor* to confirm that prerequisite courses have been completed and all required courses for the concentration have been fulfilled to meet the requirements for the Master of Social Work degree.

**TRANSFERS BETWEEN ON-CAMPUS AND ONLINE PROGRAMS**

Students who apply to transfer between the on-campus and the online programs will be granted provisional acceptance, pending receipt of final grades for the semester or term. Final approval is given to students in good standing in their current program by the MSW Program Chair.

**MSW ON CAMPUS CURRICULUM** **AT A GLANCE**

**GENERALIST PRACTICE CURRICULUM**

|  |
| --- |
| 570 *Diversity in a Multicultural Society* ***(3 credits****)*  571 *Human Behavior and the Social Environment I* ***(3 credits)***  572 *Human Development and Psychopathology (****3 credits)***  *581 Social Welfare Policy and Services I* ***(3 credits)***  *582 Social Welfare Policy and Services II* ***(3 credits****)*  *591* Found. of Multilevel Social Work: Practice, Theory, and Research ***(3 credits****)*  *605 Generalist Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups* ***(3 credits)***  *606 Generalist Practice with Groups, Communities and Organizations* ***(3 credits)***  *673/674 Generalist Practice Field Education and Seminar I & II* ***(3 credits ea.)*** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Full-Time Program** | |
| Fall Semester | Spring Semester |
| 605  570  571  581  673 | 606  572  591  582  674 |

**Part-Time Program Plan 1 \***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Fall 1 | Spring 1 | Fall 2 | Spring 2 |
| 570  571  581 | 572  591  582 | 605  673 | 606  674 |

**Part-Time Program Plan 2 \***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Spring 1 | Summer | Fall 1\* | Spring 2\* |
| 570  571 | 581 session 1  582 session 2 | 605  673  572 | 606  674  591 |

**Part-Time Program Plan 3**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Fall 1 | Spring 1 | Summer | Fall 2 | Spring 2 |
| 570  571 | 572  591 | 581 session 1  582 session 2 | 605  673 | 606  674 |

**SPECIALIZED PRACTICE YEAR CURRICULUM**

Incoming *Advanced Standing students* must choose from specialized practice year coursework aligned with their area of concentration, having completed all MSW generalist practice requirements.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Clinical Concentration** | |
| Clinical Theory and Practice I and II Select Adult or Youth Track (2 semesters) | SSS 806/807: Clinical SW with Adults and Older Adults SSS 808/808A: Clinical SW with Children and Adolescents |
| SSS 758, 759 | Research I and II (2 semesters) |
| SSS 740 | Ethical Issues in Contemporary Social Work |
| SSS 871, 872 | specialized practice Field Instruction and Integrative Seminar I & II |
| 9 semester hours | ***Select 9 credits of electives courses*** |
| **Community, Administration, and Policy Practice (CAPP) Concentration** | |
| CAPP Theory and Practice I and II  (2 semesters) | SSS 846 Social Justice: Theory and Practice (Fall)  SSS 946 Theories of Social Justice (Spring) |
| SSS 758, 759 | Research I and II (2 semesters) |
| SSS 740 | Ethical Issues in Contemporary Social Work |
| SSS 871, 872 | specialized practice Field Instruction & Integrative Seminar I & II |
| 9 semester hours | ***Select 9 credits of electives courses*** |
| **Elective Courses** | |
| Fall semester, 3 credit courses | SSS 655 Social Work Response to Trauma\*  SSS 656 Assessment, Diagnosis & Treatment of Mental Illness SSS 656C Sexual Abuse and Exploitation \* (online asynchronous course)  SSS 657 Child Protection: Law and Policy\*  SSS 835 Community Organizing  SSS 886 Issues in International Social Development |
| Spring semester, 3 credit courses | SSS 662 On Being Mortal: Death & Dying in Modern Culture  SSS 832 Management of Non-Profit Organizations  SSS 946 Theories of Social Justice |
| Spring semester, 1.5 credit courses | SSS 544 Motivational Interviewing  SSS 653 Attachment Theory and Neurobiology  SSS 663 Substance Abuse Disorders  SSS 550 Environmental Justice |

Students completing these three courses (\*SSS 655, \*SSS 656C, and \*SSS 657) may be eligible to receive a certificate in Child Protection and Safe Environment. For more information about the certification program, visit:

<https://ncsss.catholic.edu/academics/certificates/index.html>

**Please note: The same electives are not guaranteed each year.**

**MSW ON CAMPUS GENERALIST PRACTICE YEAR ACADEMIC ADVISING FORMS**

**DATE OF ADVISING SESSION** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**ADVISOR** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **ENROLLMENT STATUS**: FT PT

**PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **E-MAIL**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**FIELD PLACEMENT** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | SEMESTER | YEAR |
| SSS 570 DIVERSITY IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY |  |  |
| SSS 571 HUMAN BEHAVIOR & SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT I |  |  |
| SSS 572 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT & PSYCHOPATHOLOGY |  |  |
| SSS 581 SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY & SERVICES I |  |  |
| SSS 582 SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY & SERVICES II |  |  |
| SSS 591 MULTILEVEL SOCIAL WORK |  |  |
| SSS 605 GENERALIST S. W. PRACTICE <IND, FAM, GRPS |  |  |
| SSS 606 GENERALIST S. W. PRACTICE <GRPS, COMM, ORGS |  |  |
| SSS 673 generalist practice SEMINAR AND FIELD EDUCATION I |  |  |
| SSS 674 generalist practice SEMINAR AND FIELD EDUCATION II |  |  |

**ADVISEMENT NOTES**:

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STUDENT’S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ADVISOR’S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**MSW ON CAMPUS CLINICAL CONCENTRATION ACADEMIC ADVISING FORMS**

**DATE OF ADVISING SESSION** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**ADVISOR** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **ENROLLMENT STATUS**: FT PT

**PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **E-MAIL ADDRESS**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**FIELD PLACEMENT** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PLACE THE YEAR OR X MARK IN THE SEMESTER COLUMN THAT YOU ARE PLANNING TO TAKE A COURSE**

**GRAYED OUT SPACES INDICATE COURSE NOT TAUGHT DURING THAT SEMESTER**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PRACTICE THEORY COURSES – CHOOSE ONE TRACK** | **FALL** | **SPRING** | **SUMMER** |
| **TRACK ONE** | | | |
| SSS 806 Clinical Social Work with Adults and Older Adults I **(REQUIRED)** |  |  |  |
| SSS 807 Clinical Social Work with Adults and Older Adults II **(REQUIRED** |  |  |  |
| **TRACK TWO** | | | |
| SSS 808 Clinical Social Work with Children and Adolescents I **(REQUIRED)** |  |  |  |
| SSS 808A Clinical Social Work with Children and Adolescents II **(REQUIRED)** |  |  |  |
|  | | | |
| SSS 758 Research 1 **(REQUIRED)** |  |  | TBD |
| SSS 759 Research 2 **(REQUIRED)** |  |  | TBD |
|  | | | |
| 740 ETHICAL ISSUES in CONTEMPORARY SW **(REQUIRED)** |  |  |  |
|  | | | |
| 871 specialized practice SEMINAR & FIELD EDUCATION I **(REQUIRED)** |  |  |  |
| 872 specialized practice SEMINAR & FIELD EDUCATION II **(REQUIRED)** |  |  |  |
| **See next page**  **ELECTIVES (9 credits required)** | | | |
| * In the Fall semester, most students will take one 3 credit elective * In the Spring, most students will take four 1.5 credit,   or a combination of 1.5 and 3 credit electives   * Some students will take electives in summer school | List Electives Here: | | |
| * Clinical Concentrators may take electives from the CAPP concentration   to build a unique program with an expanded knowledge base |
| * Students can take courses within the consortium (Prior approval by the Academic Advisor is required) [Consortium Registration Link](https://enrollment-services.catholic.edu/register/consortium/index.html#Register.) |
| * Students can take courses across CUA’s departments and schools   (Prior approval by the Academic Advisor is required) |

STUDENT’S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ADVISOR’S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**MSW ON CAMPUS COMMUNITY, ADMINISTRATION, AND POLICY PRACTICE CONCENTRATION ACADEMIC ADVISING FORMS**

**DATE OF ADVISING SESSION** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**ADVISOR** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **ENROLLMENT STATUS**: FT PT

**PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **E-MAIL ADDRESS**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**FIELD PLACEMENT** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PLACE THE YEAR OR AN X MARK**

**IN THE SEMESTER COLUMN THAT YOU ARE PLANNING TO TAKE A COURSE**

**GRAYED OUT SPACES INDICATE COURSE NOT TAUGHT DURING THAT SEMESTER**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CAPP THEORY AND PRACTICE COURSES** | **FALL** | **SPRING** | **SUMMER** |
| SSS 846 Social Justice: Theory and Practice **(REQUIRED)** |  |  |  |
| SSS 847 Leadership for Change in Macro Social Work Settings **(REQUIRED)** |  |  |  |
|  | | | |
| **CAPP SPECIALIZATION ELECTIVE COURSES** |  |  |  |
| SSS 835 Community Organization |  |  |  |
| SSS 832 Management of Non-Profit Management |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| SSS 758 Research 1 **(REQUIRED)** |  |  | TBD |
| SSS 759 Research 2 **(REQUIRED)** |  |  | TBD |
|  | | | |
| 740 ETHICAL ISSUES in CONTEMPORARY SW **(REQUIRED)** |  |  |  |
|  | | | |
| 871 specialized practice SEMINAR & FIELD EDUCATION I **(REQUIRED)** |  |  |  |
| 872 specialized practice SEMINAR & FIELD EDUCATION II **(REQUIRED)** |  |  |  |
| **See next page**  **ELECTIVES (9 credits required)** | | | |
| * In the Fall semester, most students will take one 3 credit elective * In the Spring, most students will take four 1.5 credit,   or a combination of 1.5 and 3 credit electives   * Some students will take electives in summer school | List Electives Here: | | |
| * CAPP Concentrators may take electives from the Clinical concentration   to build a unique program with an expanded knowledge base |
| * Students can take courses within the consortium (Prior approval by the Academic Advisor is required) [Consortium Registration Link](https://enrollment-services.catholic.edu/register/consortium/index.html#Register.) |
| * Students can take courses across CUA’s departments and schools   (Prior approval by the Academic Advisor is required) |

STUDENT’S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ADVISOR’S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***National Catholic School of Social Service***

**MSW Online Asynchronous Part-Time Academic Plan**

* Enrolled in 2 classes per semester. Each semester has two 8-week sessions (Session 1 & Session 2) for 10 semesters.
* Field practicums and integrative seminars run the full 16 weeks of the semester.
* Students should take courses in the sequence outlined unless an alternate plan is reviewed by the student’s academic advisor and approved by the Director of Online Programs.

**Generalist Practice Curriculum**

**First semester**

SSS 570D Diversity in a Multicultural Society (session 1)

SSS 571D Human Behavior and the Social Environment I (session 2)

**Second semester**

SSS 572D Human Development and Psychopathology (session 1)

SSS 581D Social Welfare Policy and Services I (session 2)

**Third semester**

SSS 590D Social Work Research Methods (session 1)

SSS 582D Social Welfare Policy and Services II (session 2)

**Fourth semester**

SSS 605D Generalist Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups (session 1)

SSS 673D generalist practice Field Education and Integrative Seminar I (sessions 1 and 2)

**Fifth semester**

SSS 606D Generalist Practice with Groups, Communities & Organizations (session 2)

SSS 674D generalist practice Field Education and Integrative Seminar II (sessions 1 and 2)

**Specialized Practice Clinical Concentration**

**Sixth semester**

SSS 740D Ethical Issues in Contemporary Social Work (session 1)

SSS 756D Evaluation of Social Work Practice (session 2)

**Seventh semester**

SSS 723D Psychodynamic Theory and Social Functioning (session 1)

SSS 802D Clinical Social Work with Adults (session 2)

**Eighth semester**

SSS 724D Cognitive-Behavioral Theory and Social functioning (session 1)

SSS 805D Clinical Social Work with Children and Adolescents (session 2)

**Ninth semester**

SSS 822D Clinical Social Work with Families: Strengths-based Model (session 1)

SSS 871D Clinical Field Instruction and Integrative Seminar I (sessions 1 and 2)

**Tenth Semester**

SSS 656D Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental Illnesses

**or** SSS 655D Social Work Response to Trauma (session 2, students choose one)

SSS 872D Clinical Field Instruction and Integrative Seminar II (sessions 1 and 2)

**MSW Online Accelerated Academic Plan**

* The accelerated academic plan allows students to enroll in three classes each semester for the first two semesters in the generalist practice and specialized practice years of the curriculum. In the second two semesters of the generalist practice and specialized practice years of the curriculum, students will enroll in two classes each semester to focus on their field education internships and practice courses.
* Enrolled in two to three classes per semester. Each semester has two 8-week sessions for 8 semesters
* Field practicums and integrative seminars run the full 16 weeks of the semester.
* Students should take courses in the sequence outlined unless an alternate plan is reviewed by the student’s academic advisor and approved by the Director of Online Programs.

**Generalist Practice Curriculum**

**First semester**

SSS 570D Diversity in a Multicultural Society (session 1)

SSS 571D Human Behavior and the Social Environment I (session 2)

SSS 581D Social Welfare Policy and Services I (session 2)

**Second semester**

SSS 572D Human Development and Psychopathology (session 1)

SSS 590D Social Work Research Methods (session 1)

SSS 582D Social Welfare Policy and Services II (session 2)

**Third semester**

SSS 605D Generalist Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups (session 1)

SSS 673D generalist practice Field Education and Integrative Seminar I (sessions 1 and 2)

**Fourth semester**

SSS 606D Generalist Practice with Groups, Communities & Organizations (session 2)

SSS 674D generalist practice Field Education and Integrative Seminar II (sessions 1 and 2)

**Specialized Practice Clinical Concentration**

**Fifth semester**

SSS 740D Ethical Issues in Contemporary Social Work (session 1)

SSS 802D Clinical Social Work with Adults (session 2)

SSS 756D Evaluation of Social Work Practice (session 2)

**Sixth semester**

SSS 723D Psychodynamic Theory and Social Functioning (session 1)

SSS 724D Cognitive-Behavioral Theory and Social functioning (session 1)

SSS 805D Clinical Social Work with Children and Adolescents (session 2)

**Seventh semester**

SSS 822D Clinical Social Work with Families: Strengths-based Model (session 1)

SSS 871D Clinical Field Instruction and Integrative Seminar I (sessions 1 and 2)

**Eighth Semester**

SSS 656D Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental Illnesses

**or** SSS 655D Social Work Response to Trauma (session 2, students choose one)

SSS 872D Clinical Field Instruction and Integrative Seminar II (sessions 1 and 2)

**MSW Online Full-Time Academic Plan**

* Enrolled in 3 classes per session. Each semester has two 8-week sessions for 4 semesters
* Field practicums and integrative seminars run the full 16 weeks of the semester.
* Students should take courses in the sequence outlined unless an alternate plan is reviewed by the student’s academic advisor and approved by the Director of Online Programs.

**Generalist Practice Curriculum**

**First semester**

SSS 570D Diversity in a Multicultural Society (session 1)

SSS 605D Generalist Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups (session 1)

SSS 571D Human Behavior and the Social Environment I (session 2)

SSS 581D Social Welfare Policy and Services I (session 2)

SSS 673D generalist practice Field Education and Integrative Seminar I (sessions 1 and 2)

**Second semester**

SSS 572D Human Development and Psychopathology (session 1)

SSS 582D Social Welfare Policy and Services II (session 1)

SSS 606D Generalist Practice with Groups, Communities & Organizations (session 2)

SSS 590D Social Work Research Methods (session 2)   
SSS 674D generalist practice Field Education and Integrative Seminar II (sessions 1 and 2)

**Specialized Practice Curriculum- Clinical Concentration**

**Third Semester**

SSS 723D Psychodynamic Theory and Social Functioning (session 1)

SSS 740D Ethical Issues in Contemporary Social Work (session 1)

SSS 756D Evaluation of Social Work Practice (session 2)

SSS 802D Clinical Social Work with Adults (session 2)

SSS 871D Clinical Field Instruction and Integrative Seminar I (sessions 1 and 2)

**Fourth semester**

SSS 724D Cognitive-Behavioral Theory and Social functioning (session 1)

SSS 822D Clinical Social Work with Families: Strengths-based Model (session 1)

SSS 656D Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental Illnesses

**or** SSS 655D Social Work Response to Trauma (session 2, students choose one)

SSS 805D Clinical Social Work with Children and Adolescents (session 2)

SSS 872D Clinical Field Instruction and Integrative Seminar II (sessions 1 and 2)

**MSW Online Academic Advisement Form**

Upon entering the program, online students will be assigned an academic advisor who will provide an online advisement sheet via Google Drive. This electronic form will contain the most current advisement and program plan information. When a student starts a program the columns on the right will be filled in with the year and semester they are to take that class. If there are changes to the program, they will be changed on the form. The student will e-sign the form (type their name on the line that says student signature). Students are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor prior to each semester and update their tracking sheet as needed.

**MSW ONLINE ACADEMIC ADVISING**

**Name: ID:   
Advisor Plan Enrollment:  PT \_\_\_ ACC \_\_\_ FT  \_\_\_   
Phone:  Email:**

**GENERALIST PRACTICE CURRICULUM**

**Place the year/session of the semester in which the course will be taken. All classes are 3 credits**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Fall** | **Spring** | **Summer** |
| **SSS 570D Diversity in A Multicultural Society (session 1)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 571D Human Behavior & Social Environment I (session 2)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 572D Human Development & Psychopathology (session 1)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 581D Social Welfare Policy & Services I (session 2)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 582D Social Welfare Policy & Services II (session 2)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 590D Social Work Research (session 1)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 605D Generalist SW Practice w/ Individuals, Families and Groups (session 1)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 673D generalist practice Seminar and Field Education I (session 1&2)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 606D Generalist SW Practice w/ Groups, Communities, and Organizations (session 2)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 674D generalist practice Seminar and Field Education II (session 1&2)** |  |  |  |

**MSW ONLINE ACADEMIC ADVISING**

**Name: ID:   
Advisor Plan Enrollment:  PT \_\_\_ ACC \_\_\_ FT  \_\_\_   
Phone:  Email:**

**SPECIALIZED PRACTICE CURRICULUM ~ CLINICAL CONCENTRATION**

**Place the year of the semester in which the course will be taken. All classes are 3 credits**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **FALL** | **SPRING** | **SUMMER** |
| **SSS 740D Ethical issues in Contemporary Social Work (session 1)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 756D Practice Evaluation (session 2)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 723D Psychodynamic Theory & Social Functioning (session 1)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 802D Clinical Social Work with Adults (session 2)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 724D Cognitive Behavioral Theory (session 1)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 805D Clinical Social Work with Children and Adolescents (session 2)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 822D Clinical SW With Families (session 1)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 871D specialized practice Seminar & Field Education I (session 1&2)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 656D Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental Illness**  **Or**  **SSS 655D Social Work Response to Trauma**  **(session 2)** |  |  |  |
| **SSS 872D specialized practice Seminar & Field Education II (session 1&2)** |  |  |  |
| **Scholarly Paper Requirement (submission information will be sent)** |  |  |  |

**ADVISEMENT NOTES**:

**Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**MSW COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR ON-CAMPUS AND ONLINE PROGRAMS 2025 – 2026**

**Courses with D-designations are taught in the online program only.**

**According to CUA policy, courses may be cancelled due to low enrollment.**

**SSS 544 Motivational Interviewing (1.5) -** The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the spirit, tasks, processes, and principles of motivational interviewing. Students will understand the philosophy and perspective of the intervention and demonstrate proficiency with its techniques and skills.

**SSS 550 Environmental Justice (1.5) -** This survey course introduces students and practitioners to environmental social work. Anchored in the profession’s mission and values, the course explores current environmental crises using both distributive and restorative justice lenses. We consider ethical, psychological, technological, spiritual, and policy-based dimensions of current environmental crises and the disproportionate harmful impacts on marginalized people and places. Emphasis is placed on identifying multi-solving, restorative justice action steps for individuals, organizations, and communities seeking ways to cultivate eco-social health, mental health, and well-being.

**SSS 570 and SSS 570D Diversity in a Multicultural Society (3) -** Utilizing a strengths perspective, this course examines the resilience of populations-at-risk, particularly people of color, persons with disabilities, and gays and lesbians. It focuses on diversity in a global environment, including issues of discrimination, institutional racism, and economic deprivation. It intends to enhance/develop self-awareness and sensitivity for a culturally competent social work practice.

**SSS 571 and SSS 571D Human Behavior and the Social Environment (3) -** Utilizing an ecological and systems perspective, this course examines the bio-psycho-social-spiritual human development across the life cycle. Normal development with a framework for the micro, mezzo, and macro theories will be examined. Developing theories of strength and resilience, the impact of economic forces at the micro and macro levels will be emphasized.

**SSS 572 and SSS 572D Human Development and Psychopathology (3) –** Utilizing a “life course perspective” to focus on human growth and development, this course critically analyzes pathological human behavior. It integrates and compares normal development with pathology and places an emphasis on how multiple dimensions of person and environment are influenced by time to produce unique life journeys. As in SSS 571, strength and resilience, all forms of diversity and oppression, and the impact of social and economic forces are emphasized as salient influences on life course trajectories and pathology. *Pre-requisites: 571.*

**SSS 581 and SSS 581D Social Welfare Policy and Services I (3) –** Presents the historical and contemporary context for understanding social work practice and policy responses to poverty in the United States. Students learn the values and concepts important to an understanding of social policies and services within the context of historical and contemporary perspectives.

**SSS 582 and SSS 582D Social Welfare Policy and Services II (3) -** Teaches students how to analyze social policy, to understand the legislative process, and to develop and implement advocacy strategies to effect social policy change. The course is focused on affecting policy change with and for vulnerable and stigmatized populations and issues of power and oppression are considered throughout the semester. *Pre-requisites: 581.*

**SSS 590D Social Work Research (3) -** Provides a basic understanding of the research process and methods used by social scientists. Students learn to develop a systematic approach to practice problems, to formulate specific research questions, and to select and interpret appropriate statistical techniques.

**SSS 591 Generalist Practices of Multilevel Social Work:**

**Critically Integrating Practice, Theory, and Research (3) -**This course provides an integrative approach to theory, research, and practice for generalist practice year students. Focusing on social justice and anti-racism perspectives, multiple ways of knowing, and the Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) process model, the course will help students develop tools to understand and critically evaluate research evidence and theory to inform ethical and culturally responsive practice with clients at multiple levels.

*Prerequisite: SSS 570*

**SSS 605 and SSS 605D Generalist Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, & Groups (3)** - General lecture and class exercises provide the conceptual preparation for application of the generalist perspective to culturally competent social work practice with individuals, families, and treatment groups. Theory based models that follow generic social work processes provide the focus with individuals; models that integrate treatment approaches with family life cycle inform work with families; and generic group dynamics with treatment groups. *Prerequisites or Corequisites: 571, 572, 581; Corequisite: 673*

**SSS 606 and SSS 606D Generalist Social Work Practice**

**with Groups, Organizations, and Communities (3)** - General lecture and class exercises emphasize the social work methods of intervening with task groups, organizations, and communities for the purpose of social change. The focus of the course presents theories of groups, organizations and communities and offers skills and tools for social workers to be effective working with citizens, community groups, boards of directors, committees and task forces. A number of “hands-on” problem-solving experiences will be part of the course.  *Prerequisites or Corequisites: 571, 572, 581, 582, 570, 591, 605; co-requisite: 674*

**SSS 653: Attachment Theory and Neurobiology: Implications for Social Work Practice and Policy (1.5)** Provides an overview of attachment theory based on contemporary neurobiological research. Attachment-informed models of practice and the policy implications of attachment research are examined, with emphasis on the prevention of relational and behavioral disorders in individuals, families, and groups. Special focus is given to the role of secure parenting, the consequences of child maltreatment, and pathology shaped by disordered attachments in children, adults, and couples. The course emphasizes the importance of attachment and right-brain affect regulatory functioning as basic to healthy development across the lifespan. *Prerequisite: generalist practice Year curriculum*

**SSS 655 and 655D Social Work Response to Trauma: Policy and Practice Perspectives (3)** – Provides an overview of the experiences of trauma and the current social work interventions on micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Course content covers the range of theoretical, policy and practice issues involving a wide range of traumatic experiences such as war, sexual violence, child abuse and neglect, intimate partner violence, and elder abuse. Open to all students, this course is one of four courses for students to receive the Certificate in Child Protection and Safe Environment.

**SSS 656 and 656D Social Work Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental Illness (3) -** The purpose of the course is to provide the student with an opportunity to further develop core social work competencies in the areas of assessing, diagnosing, and treating many of the pervasive, chronic and persistent mental illnesses impacting many people who seek social work services. *Prerequisite for On-Campus: generalist practice Year curriculum*

**SSS 656C Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (3) -** This course will focus on the underlying psychological and pastoral dynamics of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Within the course, students will explore these dynamics for those who experience sexual abuse and exploitation, those who commit these offenses, and the role that organizational leadership plays in perpetuating a culture where abuse can take place. The course will introduce students to the research on best practices regarding prevention, intervention, and healing. Students will also explore and discuss the context within which abuse, and exploitation occur, including families, the Catholic Church, and other institutions in the United States and abroad. Open to all students, this course is one of four courses for students to receive the Certificate in Child Protection and Safe Environment. It is offered only online as an asynchronistic course.

**SSS 657 Child Protection: Law and Policy (3) -** This is a jointly offered course through the NCSSS and Columbus School of Law. Students not pursuing the certificate can and do also take individual courses. This course explores the issues of child abuse and exploitation from a legal and policy perspective. The course offers an overview of the criminal and civil legal systems and the roles child abuse professionals play in litigation as witnesses, sources of evidence, investigations, and treatment sources. It will explore the realities of the litigation process and what it requires of children and other stakeholders. Open to all students, this course also serves as one of four courses to earn the Child Protection Certificate. It is offered only online as an asynchronistic course.

**SSS 658 Capstone** **(3)** -The Capstone course is the fourth and final course in the Certificate in Child Protection and Safe Environment. It is designed to assist the student in applying what has been learned in coursework to a specific setting, and more deeply explore the research and scholarly writing in one discrete area of concern. The student is expected to critically review pertinent published literature and apply this knowledge to an issue or problem appropriate for creating safe environments and preventing abuse of children and vulnerable adults. The course culminates in a final project to be used in professional and/or academic settings. It is offered only online as an asynchronistic course. Prerequisite: SSS 655, 656C, 657

**SSS 662 On Being Mortal: Death & Dying in Modern Culture (3) -** Confronting death may cause professionals discomfort in ways that they have not been trained to identify. The purpose of this course is to examine death and grief phenomenologically, and cross-culturally, through knowledge development and self-exploration. It particularly considers the fear of death and the effect of confronting one’s mortality as a professional caregiver. *Prerequisite: generalist practice year curriculum*.

**SSS 663 Substance Abuse Disorders (1.5) -** Presents different models of therapeutic intervention and modalities of treatment, covering processes from early identification through recovery and relapse prevention. Included are the impact on spouse, young children, and adult children. *Prerequisite: Concurrent enrollment in generalist practice Field Placement*

**SSS 673/674 and SSS 673D/674D generalist practice Field Instruction and Seminar I and II (3, 3) -** Students are placed in field agencies under the supervision of qualified field instructors where, consistent with a generalist practice model, they provide services to clients, including work with the systems that impact service delivery. Concurrent with the practicum, and drawing from the co-requisite Generalist Practice courses, the seminar provides an opportunity for students to present cases, improve assessment and problem-solving techniques, and apply theory-based concepts to their field experience. *Prerequisites or Corequisites: 570, 571, 572, 581, 582, 590/591; co-requisite: 605/606.*

**SSS 723D Psychodynamic Theory and Social Functioning (3) -**Provides a theoretical framework for normal personality development, as well as for pathological formation of ego defenses and their influence on social functioning. The course traces the evolution of ego theory from its founding mothers and fathers to the more contemporary theorists. *Prerequisites: 571, 572.*

**SSS 724D Cognitive Behavioral Theory and Social Functioning (3) -** Tracing the historical development of both behavioral and cognitive theories to their convergence into contemporary cognitive-behavioral theory and therapy, the course seeks to integrate concepts from both with the ecological perspective of human behavior and social functioning. It intends to enhance the repertoire of the beginning social work practitioner with techniques from cognitive and behavioral approaches. *Prerequisites: 570, 571, 572.*

**SSS 740 and SSS 740D Ethical Issues in Contemporary Social Work (3) -** Drawing from philosophical and professional ethics, helps students develop skill in reflective and critical analysis of ethical dilemmas in social work practice. Considers purposes and limitations of codes of ethics. Presents a model for ethical decision making as a framework to consider issues such as self-determination and social responsibility, confidentiality and social control, life and death issues, societal responsiveness to the poor and disadvantaged and the privatization of welfare, organizational and professional values, and social justice and resource distribution. *Prerequisites: generalist practice year curriculum.*

**SSS 756D Evaluation of Social Work Practice (3) -** Introduces students to the basic theoretical and methodological concepts of practice evaluation. Topics include quantitative and qualitative assessment models, clinical measurement, single subject designs, clinical group designs, case studies, and statistical techniques.*Prerequisites: generalist practice year curriculum.*

**SSS 758 and 759 Application of Scientific Knowledge to Social Work I & II (3 & 3) -** The purpose of these courses is to immerse students in the application of scientific knowledge using traditional quantitative and qualitative research methods. The goal is for students to gain knowledge and appreciation on how the entire scientific method of the research process generates relevant knowledge for the social work profession, and, in turn, also helps students to become accountable and effective social work professionals. The students’ critical thinking is fostered by developing the knowledge and skills required to understand and evaluate various stages of the research process used for developing a scientific study, including how to build a meaningful area of inquiry for research, develop ethically and culturally sensitive research questions and hypotheses, measure variables with valid and reliable tools, collect or apply data with appropriate ethical consent procedures, select study participants, and construct research designs relevant to the proposed research inquiry. Through writing a research proposal in the first semester, students will apply their knowledge to a real-world situation. Data analytic methods as well as practice and program evaluation will be covered in the second semester. *Prerequisite: generalist practice year curriculum.*

**SSS 802D Clinical Social Work with Adults (3) -** Building on the first-year theoretical framework of ecological systems, the purpose of this course is to prepare the student for specialized practice clinical practice with individuals in diverse populations. Practice skills are primarily rooted in the explanatory and change concepts of psychodynamic theory as applicable within a multicultural context. *Prerequisites: generalist practice year curriculum.*

**SSS 805D Clinical Social Work with Children and Adolescents (3) -** *Online only-* Prepares students for practice with the young child through the developmental stages of adolescence to young adulthood and deepens the understanding of developmental theories and concepts as applied to children and adolescents. Psychosocial, cognitive, behavioral, psychodynamic, and humanistic theories are applied to the assessment and treatment of children and adolescents.

**SSS 806 and 807 Clinical Social Work with Adults and Older Adults: Theory and Practice I & II (3 & 3)** Building on the first-year theory and practice courses, the purpose of these courses is to prepare students for specialized clinical practice with adults and older adults in various settings with diverse populations. The practice skills emphasized in this course are rooted in the explanatory concepts of psychodynamic, cognitive, behavioral, and family theories, which are critiqued and applied within a multicultural context. The intervention skills students are taught are based on a strengths perspective, along with the explanatory theories described previously. Students will learn contemporary applications of psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, and family models of practice, as well as clinical case management skills. Students will also learn to integrate the latest findings in mindfulness, neurobiology, and chemistry into their social work practices.

*Prerequisite: generalist practice year curriculum.*

**SSS 808 and 808A Clinical Social Work with Children and Adolescents: Theory & Practice I & II (3 & 3)**

Building on the generalist practice Year theory and practice courses, the purpose of these courses is to prepare students for specialized practice clinical practice with children and adolescents in various settings with diverse populations. The practice skills emphasized in this course are rooted in the explanatory concepts of psychodynamic, cognitive, behavioral, and family system theories, which are critiqued and applied within a multicultural context. The intervention skills students are taught are based on a strengths perspective, along with the explanatory theories described previously. Students will learn contemporary applications of psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, and family models of practice in addition to learning about clinical case management skills. Students will also learn to integrate the latest findings in mindfulness, neurobiology, and chemistry into their social work practices. *Prerequisite: generalist practice year curriculum.*

**SSS 822D Clinical Social Work with Families (3) -** This course introduces students to assessment and treatment of clients through a family systems perspective with an emphasis on family resilience and supporting motivation for growth and change. The course introduces students to some of the major traditional perspectives in family assessment and treatment through the works of Bowen, Minuchin, and Haley. Through lecture, experiential exercises and work with case material, students will learn to apply theoretical concepts to promote change in thinking and interactional patterns as well as to mobilize environmental support.

**SSS 871/872 & 871D/872D specialized practice Field Instruction/Integrative Seminar, Clinical I & II (3, 3) -** Students are placed in field agencies which provide them with supervised practice experience consistent with their chosen concentration. Concurrent with the practicum, the seminar, sectioned by concentration, prepares students to integrate skills learned in academic courses with practice in the field. It provides opportunities for the sharing of student cases and/or projects. The seminar instructor directs the graduation assignment in which students implement the principles of practice or program evaluation. *Prerequisites: On-Campus Students ~ generalist practice year curriculum, Corequisite: Clinical or CAPP concentration courses. Prerequisite or Corequisite: Online Students, 756D.*

**SSS 832 Management of Non-profit Organizations: A case study approach (3) -** Presents management theories and the various functions of management. Emphasis is placed on management as a social work method and on the conceptual, human, and technical skills needed to manage agencies in a manner consistent with social work values and ethics. *Prerequisite: generalist practice year curriculum.*

**SSS 886 International Social Development (3) -** This course addresses three interrelated themes relevant to current international realities: 1) globalization and its social, economic, political, cultural, and environmental consequences for human rights and well-being; 2) social policy and social development as strategies of sustainable change; and 3) the need for understanding of and sensitivity to socio-cultural-national differences, which are critical for effective practice overseas or in our own internationalized communities. *Prerequisites: generalist practice year curriculum.*

**SSS 846/946 Theories of Social Justice (3)** - This MSW and doctoral course analyzes, compares, and critiques a range of philosophical and religious generalist, practical, and emerging social justice theories, including utilitarianism, egalitarianism, libertarianism, as well as feminist (dependency/capabilities), communitarian, postmodern, and perspectives. Restorative justice is also addressed. Open to MSW students with permission of the instructor.

*Prerequisites: generalist practice year curriculum.*

Master students may take courses offered in the doctoral program in the specialized practice Year with the permission of the instructor and MSW Program Chair. Work with your academic advisor to discuss these options.

**MSW DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

The Master of Social Work degree is conferred upon students who have:

1. Satisfactorily completed sixty credit hours in accordance with the curriculum requirements as specified by the NCSSS faculty. Some students, who have received a BSW degree from a CSWE-accredited school of social work within 5 years of application to NCSSS, may meet the requirements with fewer than sixty credit hours by being awarded up to thirty specialized practice standing credits. Transfer credits may be accepted in accordance with the school’s policy.
2. Fulfilled the University Writing Requirement by submitting two scholarly papers that have been completed and graded. These two papers are from the SSS 740, Ethics, and SSS 758, Research I, which are required assignments in specialized practice year concentration courses. In the Online MSW Program, an alternate paper may be submitted because 758 is not offered in the Online Program. The student will work with their advisor to determine which paper will be submitted.

## The University Writing Requirement

**Scholarly Papers:** Graduating students must submit to the MSW Program Chair two scholarly papers from SSS 740 and SSS 758 that have been graded to fulfill the University Writing Requirements. The submission deadline is prior to the reading period of the semester the student plans to graduate. You will receive an email with a link to the submission form in your final semester with detailed instructions on how to submit the papers electronically. No physical paper will be accepted.

All papers that are submitted should have earned a grade of B (83%) or higher. All papers are to be submitted without faculty comments.

Scholarly papers are to meet the following criteria:

* Scholarly papers are to be written according to the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for parts of a manuscript; formal writing style; organization and headings; margins, spacing, and font; reference citations in text; figures and appendices; and a reference list.
* Papers are a minimum of 12 pages of text, exclusive of the title page, references, and tables, with a minimum of 12 references.
* The instructions and content of the scholarly paper are provided by the course instructor. All scholarly papers should conclude, when appropriate, with implications for future knowledge development in specified areas of professional social work.
* Regardless of the content, a scholarly paper is based upon – and must formally reference – a substantial, systematic library search of the literature. The majority of references should be from recent, peer-reviewed social work and related journals. Secondary references may include books and book chapters, technical and research reports, proceedings of meetings, doctoral dissertations, audiovisual media, and electronic media.

**FIELD EDUCATION**

Field instruction is a collaborative endeavor between the school and school staff, agency and agency staff, and students. The School, through its Office of Field Education, assumes responsibility for field work being educationally directed, coordinated and monitored. Responsibility for the Field Education Program requires broad involvement with the agency, field instructor, Integrative Seminar, instructor/Field Liaison, academic adviser and course instructors. Field education is a three-way commitment between the School, the agency and the student. There are mutual responsibilities and expectations for each person. These are discussed in detail in the school's *Field Education Manual*, published annually and provided to students (see below for access to the manuals).

* Students complete **two** different field placements over two academic years during the MSW Program. Students are in placement 14 hours/week during the generalist practice year, and 16 hours/week during the specialized practice year. Most On-campus students are assigned to agencies on Wednesdays and Thursdays, with an optional day on Friday as needed. Online students’ placement days vary per placement. Students work directly with the agency assigned based on the available placement days and times.
* Students in the on-campus program are placed in field agencies located in Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia. Students in the online program are placed in agencies based on their location.
* Field instruction is a challenging part of the MSW Program because of the internship hours required. Students are strongly encouraged to begin planning for their internships upon admission to the program. They are encouraged to seek guidance from the Office of Field Education.
* A limited number of *flex-time* field placements are available. These are placements outside of the traditional ⅞ hour day during normal operating business hours for many agencies. Although the Office of Field Education cannot guarantee the availability of *flex-time* *placements*, it will work with students to find an appropriate placement.

***In addition, students can submit proposals for review and approval to complete their field education requirements at their place of employment. There is an opportunity to complete a Work Residency Proposal or an Employment Based Proposal. Please see the Field Education Manual for details regarding these proposals.***

**Field Hours**

The number of hours (per year) required for Field Instruction are as follows:

generalist practice Year MSWs 420

specialized practice Year MSWs 480

**Total - 900**

**Grading**

* The student receives a grade of Pass or Fail each semester for the 3-credit *Field Instruction/Integrative Seminar*. The final grade is based on Field Instruction (60%) and Seminar work (40%). Grade assignment is in accordance with the University grading system found in the *CUA Student Handbook.* Students must receive a grade of ‘C’ or above in Seminar **and** in Field in order to progress to the next semester of Field Instruction.
* The grade for Field Instruction (which makes up 60% of the grade received by the student) is based on the *Final Evaluation* submitted by the field instructor. The final grade is assigned by the Integrative Seminar instructor, based both on Seminar work and on the evaluation submitted by the field instructor.

**Insurance Coverage**

NCSSS has mandatory professional liability coverage for all students in field placement settings. The carrier for the policy is the Chicago Insurance Company. The policy provides $1,000,000 for each claim and $3,000,000 aggregate. Students assigned to field instruction are required to purchase this coverage in September for the period covering the entire academic year. The coverage is restricted to school-related, agency-based activities involving field instruction.

**Field Leave Policy**

*• Sick leave:* Students are allowed one day per semester for sick leave. Any time beyond that has to be made up. For students suffering extended illnesses, make-up arrangements need to be negotiated with the student, the agency, and the Office of Field Instruction.

*• University closure:* Students are not required to attend field on days the University is closed. However, if a student is scheduled to be in field during these days, their Field Instructor must be made aware in advance, and a plan for making up the hours should be developed.

*• Other absences:* Except for allowable holidays and the two days of sick leave (per year), all absences from field instruction must be made up. This includes time lost due to tardiness, as punctuality and attendance are required. In an emergency, students are expected to notify the agency of their absence. *Any adjustments to weekly Field Schedule should always be discussed with Field Instructors for discussion and approval.*

*• Winter Break leave:* **The field calendar has been developed assuming that students will take leave from their agency during the winter break. Students are required to discuss this break with their Field Instructors at the beginning of the semester to discuss a plan for client coverage during that break. Students who are behind in hours may use the winter break to catch up on hours.**

* *Fall semester exams on field days:* It is possible that the University will schedule exams for NCSSS students on field days. In this case, **exams take priority**. Otherwise, students are expected to attend the field placement.

For further information, please consult the Office of Field Education and/or Field Manual.

* NCSSS Field Education Manual - link TBD

# STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Confidentiality is a central value of our profession.

All students are required to adhere to our NCSSS confidentiality agreement, which is seen below.

Please complete the Google form by *Friday, September 5, 2025*  and return to Ms. Terri Miller [millert@cua.edu](mailto:millert@cua.edu)

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1jq7Je13OwdPuTWV6qE464QK7PdO4iDds_-1Y2ZhF6o4/edit?ts=60aea0be>

This Student Confidentiality Agreement is put forth to protect the privacy of clients, colleagues, and agencies with whom the student works in the context of their social work employment and/or field placement.

This agreement demonstrates my understanding that my presentation of any “practice materials” \* in classes, supervisory sessions, case conferences, seminars and other educational settings within the NCSSS BSW or MSW programs are for **professional learning purposes only** and are subject to strict professional standards of confidentiality. These same standards of confidentiality also extend to various forms of written communication and peer consultation.

Adherence to these standards means that I agree to refrain from communicating beyond the classroom setting about practice material that I or other students may have presented in class. I will also refrain from using social media outlets (blogs, twitter, Facebook, etc.) or email to discuss my practice setting, program responsibilities and projects with individuals who are not in teaching or supervision roles directly related to the situation.

When writing about situations in my practice, I understand it is my responsibility to protect the identity of individuals or organizations by changing any identifying information, or relevant case-specific content.

I understand that in an internship setting, I must follow agency policies and procedures, as well as the NASW Code of Ethics. I understand that violation of this confidentiality agreement violates the NASW Code of Ethics and the policy of NCSSS and is therefore grounds for dismissal from the program.

\*Please note: the term “practice materials” includes, but is not limited to, materials related to clients, administrative issues, budgets, grants, or personnel dynamics at the student’s place of employment and/or field placement site.

**ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

#### Academic Advising Policy

Faculty advising provides students with the opportunity to consult and interact with faculty outside the classroom, and to discuss any matters of interest or concern. All students are assigned a faculty adviser upon enrollment in the NCSSS. The faculty adviser is responsible for:

* Advising students in planning the program of study, including approving course registration each semester. • Addressing concerns students may have about their educational program, academic activities, or particular problems impacting the academic curriculum.
* Supporting all aspects of the student's professional development, including ethical professional behavior, and informing the student when s/he violates academic standing policy.
* Referring students to appropriate campus resources.

#### Academic Advising Procedures:

Upon entering the program, students are assigned an academic advisor. An email message is sent to the student introducing them to their new academic advisor and providing them with their advisor’s contact information. The students are encouraged to meet with their advisor as soon as possible. In addition, the advisor is copied on the email and responds to the message, welcoming the student and requesting to meet with them.

During the initial meeting, the academic plan is discussed as well as other issues raised by the student. The advisor documents the academic plan on an advising tracking sheet. A note is written in the EAB Navigate platform implemented by the Provost Office and the Center for Academic and Career Success. The advising tracking sheet is stored in the EAB Navigate platform as well. The document is made visible to the student and the advisor. Each time the student and advisor meet, the tracking sheet and notes are updated in the EAB Navigate platform advising system.

#### Professional Advising Policy

The MSW program must make resources available that provide students with professional advising. The resources must assist students with career counseling, social work licensing preparation, employment resources, and field education supports.

#### Professional Advising Procedure

The information is made available to all students primarily through the MSW newsletter and through the Master’s Student Association (MSA).

Students are also provided with professional advising by advisors and faculty members when initiated by students. In addition, students work directly with field liaisons who provide them with professional advising. All field liaisons have a minimum of 2 years post masters experience.

**CLASSIFICATION OF STUDENTS**

MSW Graduate students are classified as follows:

1. *Regular Status*. A student admitted with a Baccalaureate degree who will pursue a full 60-credit hour program and is unconditionally approved for graduate study enrollment

2. *Conditional Status*. A student admitted with probationary status due to application concerns, such as an undergraduate GPA of less than 3.0. Students with conditional status must maintain a GPA of 3.0 (B) and earn no more than one grade of 'C' for a period encompassing the entire 30-semester-hour generalist practice year curriculum for both full- and part-time students. Falling below any of these standards is considered grounds for dismissal by the dean.

1. *Specialized Practice Standing Status*. A student admitted with specialized practice standing status has:

* A Bachelor’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program (received within 5 years of enrollment in the MSW program)
* A cumulative average of 3.5 or above in all the social work courses in the undergraduate program
* A cumulative average of 3.2 or above in all courses applied toward the Baccalaureate degree
* A grade of B or higher in each social work course to be accepted for the MSW program requirements
* A recommendation from the chair of the undergraduate program, explicitly supporting admission directly into the specialized practice year of the MSW program
* Satisfactory completion of an undergraduate generalist practicum experience that is comparable to that expected in the NCSSS generalist practice practicum, as evidenced in the final field evaluation
* **Incoming Advanced Standing Students are required to participate in two Advanced Standing Cohort meetings scheduled by the MSW Program Chair before beginning the MSW program. The students must also participate in a Writing Workshop organized by the MSW Program Chair before beginning the MSW program. They are advised to review the content in the SSS 689: Essential Foundations for Advanced Graduate Level Social Work Education course page before starting the program. The SSS 689 course page is a review of generalist practice course content to help students prepare for the Advanced Standing Program.**

1. *Transfer Status.* A student who transfers to NCSSS from another CSWE-accredited MSW program. NCSSS may transfer up to 30 credit hours of equivalent coursework and field instruction (taken within 5 years of enrollment at NCSSS) in which grades of “B’ or above are earned. A minimum of thirty (30) credits must be completed in the MSW Program at NCSSS to earn a graduate degree from CUA
2. *MSW/JD Dual Degree Program.* Students are admitted to both NCSSS and the Columbus School of Law. They are able to earn both the MSW and the JD, usually within four years, including summer school. Students enrolled in the joint degree program must complete a minimum of 123 credits (rather than the 144 required if the two degrees are taken separately). This means that 21 credits are shared between the two programs. The curriculum for the first year in each program is fixed: thirty credits are required for the generalist practice year in social work, while twenty-nine are required for the first-year law program. Up to nine law credits may be recognized by NCSSS as credit toward the MSW degree, with the approval of the NCSSS faculty adviser. NCSSS and Law School faculty Members both serve as advisors of the joint degree program.

**Written and Oral Communication**

Students and faculty are to ensure that their written and oral communication are free of bias and respectful of the persons being described. For unbiased communication, students and faculty are to use person-first language that does not imply ethnic, racial, sexual, or other kinds of discrimination, stereotyping, or bias. Recognizing that we engage in career-long learning, students are encouraged to consult faculty members and/or peers when they want to make sure that their language is free of bias or stereotyping. Resources that students can utilize are:

* National Association of Social Workers (n.d.). Tools for authors: Usage guidelines for writing about people. In *Writing for the NASW press: Information for authors*. Retrieved from: <https://nasw.novalibra.com/content/1422>
* American Psychological Association (2020). General principles for reducing bias. *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed., Chapter 5). Washington, DC: Author.

Retrieved from: <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language>

**FORMAL PAPERS AND WRITING ASSISTANCE**

Formal papers must be prepared in accordance with a recognized academic writing style. The American Psychological Association (APA) is the professional organization of social scientists. **Students are required to use the** **APA format** to be consistent with social work education and the social work profession. The *APA 7 Manual* is available in Mullen Library and in the CUA bookstore.

Students may seek assistance with writing scholarly papers using the *APA 7* format at the **CUA Writing Center***,*a free service administered by the CUA English Department, providing CUA students with one-on-one tutoring. Computers in the Writing Center are available for student writing. For an appointment with a consultant, go to <http://english.cua.edu/wc3/>; the Center is in Mullen Library.

**PLAGIARISM**

With access to so many online resources, plagiarism is becoming a growing problem in academic programs. To help students understand plagiarism and to avoid common pitfalls associated with it, students are required to take a Writing Workshop. The workshop will include information on both *APA 7* and plagiarism. Students are required to take a plagiarism quiz to demonstrate their knowledge of the subject matter.

Students will download a copy of their quiz score and keep it for their personal records. Students must receive a score of 80% or higher to pass the quiz. If students receive a score lower than 80%, they are to make an appointment with the Writing Center for additional review of the material before retaking the quiz. The quiz is to be successfully completed and uploaded by September 16, 2024. *Online Students will have a varied deadline based on their enrollment semester.*

It is important to understand what counts as plagiarism because it is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program by the Dean.

**COPYRIGHT LAWS**

The federal Copyright Law (Title 17, United States Code, Section 101 and following) requires all members of the University community, including faculty, academic appointees, staff, students, and volunteers to respect the proprietary rights of owners of copyrights and to refrain from actions that constitute an infringement of copyright or other proprietary rights. Members of the University community are expected to familiarize themselves with these guidelines and to comply conscientiously with their requirements. See:

<https://policies.catholic.edu/faculty-staff/intellectualproperty/copyright.html>

**GRADING POLICY**

Approved by the Academic Senate, beginning September 1990 for all students except students in the School of Law, the following grading system will be in effect:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Grade | Rating | Numerical Equivalent |
| A  A-  B+  B  B-  C  F  P  I  W  F\* | Excellent  Satisfactory  Passing but Marginal  Failure  Passing  Incomplete  Withdrawal  Administrative Failure | 4.00 (95-100)  3.70 (90- 94)  3.30 (87-89)  3.00 (83-86)  2.70 (80-82)  2.00 (70-79)   1. (<70)   0.00 |

A grade of C indicates marginal progress toward the degree. Master's students are expected to maintain a minimum of a B (3.0 G.P.A.) to remain in school and to graduate. A Review Committee shall be called by the chair of the M.S.W. program upon a student's receipt of two grades of C or one grade of F or other evidence of unsatisfactory or marginal work, including multiple grades of Incomplete for a semester. The receipt of more than two grades of C or below, more than one F or termination from a second field placement during a student’s academic program is grounds for dismissal by the Dean.

By resolution of the Academic Senate, grade point averages will be calculated for all graduate students entering the university in the 1996 fall semester or after. Only grades earned in courses at and above the 500 level will be calculated.

**GRADES OF INCOMPLETE**

A provisional report of “I” (Incomplete) may be given to a student who, for legitimate reasons (e.g., serious illness of self or family; death of a family member, spouse, significant other; personal crisis - determined valid at the discretion of the professor); or has not completed the requirements of a course, provided that work already completed is of passing quality. When there are no assignments due until the end of a course, an “I” may be granted at the discretion of the professor based on attendance and active participation. In order for a student to receive an “I”, an *Incomplete Approval Form* must be completed and signed by the student and the instructor for both the on campus and online programs and submitted to the M.S.W. Program Administrative Assistant, Ms. Terri Miller, [millert@cua.edu](mailto:millert@cua.edu).

The provisional report must be removed before the midterm date specified in the academic calendar for the succeeding term, whether or not the student is registered. In any case in which the provisional report is not replaced by a passing grade before the midterm of the succeeding term, the grade of “F” (Failure) will be recorded, except when, in advance of the midterm date, because of extraordinary circumstances, the student's request for an extension of the period allowed is approved by the Dean. This grade is included in the total number of failures for the semester in which it is recorded.

• The definition of 'extraordinary circumstances' must meet the same criteria as outlined for 'legitimate reasons' above.

• If a student has not resolved a grade of “I” by mid-semester of the succeeding term, s/he will not be permitted to register for an upcoming semester.

• Incompletes may be issued for summer sessions but are generally discouraged.

• There is no difference between *Readings and Research* courses and other courses when defining criteria for issuing a grade of “Incomplete.”

**REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

**Cardinal Station**

**Registration:** <http://cardinalstation.cua.edu>

All students use Cardinal Station (CUA’s computer platform) to register for courses. Every student will receive a login ID and password from Technology Services, as well as materials on how to register. It is the student’s responsibility to verify class enrollment; this can easily be done through the Cardinal Station system. Students are responsible for setting up appointments with their academic advisor prior to registration.**Students are responsible for registering correctly, after consultation with their faculty adviser.** Students may learn their grades at the end of each semester through the Cardinal Station system.

**Add/Drop Procedures**

**Any change in course registration must be approved by the student’s academic advisor.** Adding and dropping of courses can be processed through the Cardinal Station system, prior to the last day of registration. After the last day of registration, students must complete an ADD/DROP form. Further information is available from *CUA Class Schedule and Enrollment Services*.

**Continuous Enrollment/ Leave of Absence/ Withdrawal**

Continuous enrollment is required of all students enrolled in programs leading to degrees unless an authorized leave of absence has been granted. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment or to obtain an official leave of absence is considered to be evidence that the student has withdrawn from the university.

Students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment at NCSSS, i.e., they must either be registered for courses or have been granted a formal leave of absence. Leaves are granted for a limited period for reasons of unusual duress, e.g., illness of a student or family member, or sudden change in financial status. Any student wishing to take a leave of absence or to withdraw from the university must submit a request online at [**https://go.cua.edu/gradstudies**](https://go.cua.edu/gradstudies). The period of leave of absence is not counted as part of the time allowed for the completion of residence or other degree requirements. However, incomplete grades must be resolved in accordance with the academic calendar, whether a student is registered for the current semester or not. Students may view definitions of the types of academic leave available at: <https://graduate-studies.catholic.edu/faq/pausing.html>.

If the withdrawal occurs during a semester in which the student is enrolled in a course, the student should request a term withdrawal (current semester only) or a permanent withdrawal using the online form at <https://go.cua.edu/gradstudies/>. If circumstances prevent doing this, the notice to the academic dean should explain the situation. Photo ID cards should be returned to the Office of the Registrar and dining hall cards to the Office of Housing and Residential Services. If a refund is to be made, the student should report to the Office of Enrollment Services. For further detail about this procedure, see the current CUA *Schedule of Classes.*

**TUITION REFUND SCHEDULE ON CAMPUS STUDENTS**

For **exact dates,** see the 2025-2026 on-campus academic calendar in the MSW Handbook

The effective date of the reduction of charges is the date classes are dropped via Cardinal Station. Refunds are calculated on total amounts billed, not on amounts already paid, and are paid in accordance with the criteria which follow. Tuition charges are refunded in full during the first week of the fall semester. Thereafter, they are funded as follows:

**100%** by the end of the add/drop period; **80%** by the end of the third week of classes; **0%** after the end of the third week

of class classes. No refunds are given after the third week of classes.

The application fee and tuition deposit are non-refundable. The activities fee, University Services fee, and medical insurance fee are refundable only during the first week of classes. CUA has a student payment plan. Please note that payments must be up to date in order to register for an upcoming semester. Students may charge their tuition and fees, using either MasterCard or VISA. For further information, call the Office of Enrollment Services at 202-319-5300.

**TUITION REFUND SCHEDULE ONLINE STUDENTS**

For **exact dates** see the 2025-2026 online academic calendar in the MSW Handbook

**100%** by the end of the **5th** day after classes start (11:59 pm EST)

**This is the \*Add/Drop Deadline\***

*Classes dropped after this deadline will receive a grade of W and less than 100% refund*

**80%** by the end of the **9th** day after classes start (11:59 pm)

**50%** by the end of the **2nd week** after classes start (11:59 pm

\**only if completely withdrawing from the university*

**0%** after the end of the third week of classes

**NO REFUNDS GIVEN AFTER THE 0% DEADLINE HAS PASSED (online only)**

The application fee and tuition deposit are non-refundable. The activities fee, University Services fee, and medical insurance fee are refundable only during the first week. CUA has a student payment plan. Please note that payments must be up to date in order to register for an upcoming semester. Students may charge their tuition and fees, using either MasterCard or VISA. For information, call the Office of Enrollment Services at 202-319-5300.

**ON CAMPUS STUDENT COURSE LOAD**

Full-time graduate students usually take 15 credits per semester. A student course load in excess of 15 credits requires the approval of the chair of the Master's program. Part-time students must take at least six (6) credits per semester, and they may take up to 9 credits.

A part-time student eligible and wishing to change his/her status to full-time needs the permission of his/her adviser. A part-time student first becomes eligible to change his/her status after completing the generalist practice curriculum (usually two academic years).

**ONLINE STUDENT COURSE LOAD**

Online students pay per credit hour. Full time is considered 12 credits and above. Part-time is considered 9 credits or less. A part-time student eligible and wishing to change his/her status to full-time needs the permission of his/her adviser as well as the MSW Program Director. Online program progression is a standard plan and deviation from the plan is only allowed with explicit approval. Changes to any current program should be made at a semester break or transition (i.e. not mid-semester).

**TRANSFER OF ELECTIVE CREDIT**

Under special circumstances and with approval of the Master's chair, students may transfer up to six semester hours of elective credit from other Council on Social Work Education-(CSWE) accredited graduate programs. No academic credit is given for life or previous work experience, as specified by the CSWE *Educational Policy Statement* (see Appendix). Transfer of course credits may not be applied toward satisfaction of the minimum residency requirements. A minimum of thirty (30) credits must be completed in the MSW Program at NCSSS in order to earn a graduate degree from The Catholic University of America.

Transfer courses must meet the following criteria:

• Be at the graduate level from a regionally accredited institution.

• Student earned a grade of 'B' or above.

• Taken within five years of entrance into the MSW program.

• Does not duplicate content in NCSSS generalist practice or specialized practice required courses.

• Deemed appropriate to the student's program by the Master's chair.

At the time that students declare their specialized practice year concentration, they must write to the chair, submitting a rationale showing that the course is appropriate to their concentration, and submitting a copy of the course description or course outline for approval. If not submitted with the original admissions application, an official transcript from the institution must be submitted as well.

**UNIVERSITY GRIEVANCE POLICIES**

***Discrimination and Harassment:*** No person will be denied employment, admission, or educational opportunity, or otherwise be discriminated against or harassed in the University’s programs or activities on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, personal appearance, family responsibilities, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, status as a veteran, or any other basis protected by applicable federal, state, or local laws or University policy. Nothing in this policy shall require The Catholic University of America to act in a manner contrary to the beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church and the University's mission as the national university of the Catholic Church in the United States or to diminish its rights as a religious organization.

The University will conduct prompt, thorough, and objective investigations into all reported instances of discrimination or harassment prohibited by its [Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](https://policies.catholic.edu/faculty-staff/employment/eeo/affirmact.html). Individuals who report or experience prohibited discrimination or harassment shall be informed of and encouraged to use all appropriate University, law enforcement, and community resources. Individuals accused of discrimination or harassment shall be informed of and encouraged to use all appropriate University and community resources and shall receive due process in accordance with the law and University policies and procedures.

The University’s [Non-Retaliation Policy](https://policies.catholic.edu/governance/nonretaliation.html) prohibits actual or threatened retaliation or any act of intimidation to prevent or obstruct the reporting of discrimination or harassment or participation in proceedings related to discrimination or harassment. Reports of retaliation will be promptly investigated and may result in disciplinary action regardless of the outcome of the underlying complaint of discrimination or harassment. For complete information on this policy go to: <https://policies.catholic.edu/faculty-staff/employment/eeo/affirmact.html>.

The Title IX website at <https://title9.catholic.edu/index.html> contains links to all of our policies, frequently asked questions, and a very detailed section on how to obtain help.

**STUDENT RIGHTS UNDER**

**THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

The university supports the integration of students with disabilities into the general student population and is committed to making its programs accessible to all qualified individuals. Students with disabilities are required to meet the same academic standards as other students at the university. Accommodations and modifications are provided to assure equal access for students who are academically and otherwise qualified.

To comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), the university has established an Office of Disability Support Services that assists students who have a learning, physical, and/or other disability. Students with disabilities who wish accommodation or other services must contact the Director of Disability Support Services and submit documentation of the disability in order to be eligible for services. It is through voluntary self-identification that CUA can support the needs of those students with learning and other disabilities. Requests for service must be initiated by the student, as federal regulation makes it illegal to transfer diagnostic or other information regarding a student’s disability without written authorization from that student.

All information shared with the Office of Disability Support Services is confidential and used only, when necessary, for the provision of special services. The documentation must be a recent evaluation from a qualified specialist, establishing the nature of the disability, including the basis for the diagnosis and the dates of testing; and, establishing the current need for an accommodation and containing suggestions from the specialist of the accommodation most appropriate for offsetting the effects of the disability. <https://www.catholic.edu/resources/disability-support/index.html>

### **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students, faculty, administrators and staff share accountability for accomplishing the goals of our school and programs. We, therefore, strive to build a community in which we have reciprocal responsibilities and expectations.

*Quality Education*

Students have the right to regular and professional instruction that should include effective teaching. Students have the responsibility to attend scheduled classes and commit time and effort to address the learning challenges provided in the classroom setting.

*Assessment*

Students have the right to faculty feedback and clarity in grading, which should be clearly outlined in course syllabi and identified standards of achievement. Students are responsible for academic honesty, meeting course deadlines and assessing effectiveness of instructors.

Our university grievance policies include procedures for Discrimination and Harrassment, F Grade Grievance, Incidents of Bias, Discrimination, and Incivility, and the NCSSS Review committee, that can address any grievance experienced by the student or initiated by a faculty member in response to academic or behavioral concerns. These policies and procedures are outlined in the MSW Student Handbook.

### Student Involvement in Hiring Social Work Faculty

When faculty positions become available, social work students participate in the hiring process. Candidates for full-time positions are often asked to meet with students from all programs (BSW, MSW and PhD); students then provide feedback to the search committee about each candidate. Following the interview process, the search committee makes a recommendation about the candidate to the administration for consideration.

This same process has been utilized over the years when hiring a Dean for the school. During the Dean search, students from the undergraduate and graduate programs are chosen to be members of the search committee and provide continuous feedback during the hiring process.

### Student Membership in Curriculum Committees

Curriculum committees review and monitor the curriculum in each area of the program for compliance with accreditation standards and consistency with program mission and goals. MSW student representatives are chosen for the NCSSS Faculty Committee, the MSW Program Committee, and the Field Advisory Committee. The first two committees meet at least monthly to address curriculum and policy issues impacting the MSW program. The Field Advisory Committee meets once per semester.

### Research and Teaching Assistants

Students in the MSW program have opportunities to work as research assistants with the BSW, MSW and PhD faculty. Our MSW research assistants have the opportunity to be selected to work with faculty in our two research centers: The Center for the Promotion of Health, Mental Health, and Wellbeing, and the Center for the Advancement of Children, Youth, and Families. Students may also support projects and events planned through the Center for Family Peace.

### **ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS**

***Academic Requirements:*** The National Catholic School of Social Service (NCSSS) affirms its right to require its students to meet accepted academic requirements that consist of scholastic and behavioral components. Consistent with Catholic Social Teaching and social work values, NCSSS respects the worth and value of all persons regardless of age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin, disability, or diversity of opinion. Students’ behavior should reflect the core values of the social work profession - service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. Standards for professional performance require that students adhere to ethical standards as outlined in the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and the requirements stated below.

***Scholastic Requirements****:* As required by CUA policy, an NCSSS MSW student who is involved in unethical practices in connection with any work required for a course or field instruction will receive a grade of F (Failure) for the course. Further penalties may be imposed in accordance with specific circumstances. For example, it is strictly prohibited, as an unethical practice, to submit as one’s own work, including term papers, research, or professional papers or theses in which material provided by a professional research agency or by other persons is utilized. A graduate student who employs such assistance or other unethical practice in the research or writing of assignments shall be liable to expulsion from the university upon proper hearing by the school and dean.

**In the Master of Social Work Program, a grade of C indicates marginal progress toward the degree. Master’s students are expected to maintain a minimum of B (3.0 G.P.A) to remain in school and to graduate. A Review Committee shall be called upon a student’s receipt of two grades of C, one grade of F, or other evidence of unsatisfactory or marginal work. The receipt of more than two grades of C or below, more than one F, or termination from a 2nd field placement during their academic program is grounds for dismissal by the Dean.**

### **ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

#### NCSSS Review Committee

Students in the MSW program may encounter educational difficulties, have difficulty meeting academic requirements, have exceptional academic or personal problems, or require special attention. To ensure that these needs are met without compromising the school’s integrity or treating the student unfairly, an orderly procedure has been established. When the student or relevant faculty feels that any of these problems may have arisen, a Review Committee may be called. However, the review committee must be called by the on campus program chair upon a student’s receipt of two grades of C, or one grade of F, or other evidence of unsatisfactory or marginal work. The committee provides a formal procedure to deal constructively with the problems. Problems may range from poor academic performance, possible unsuitability for the profession or continued education in the profession, or a student’s belief that she or he has been treated unfairly.

The review committee is convened and chaired by the MSW Program Chair or co chaired with the Director of Field Education. A request to have such a committee convened may be made by the student, the student’s advisor, or by any one of the student’s instructors. The chair notifies the student and other participants in writing of the date and time of the meeting and invites them to attend. Participants at the review committee shall be only the student, the student’s academic advisor, instructors, representatives of the Office of Field Instruction (when appropriate), and, if the student desires, either one representative from the NCSSS student government, or another member of the NCSSS student body selected by the student. Students who have an identified disability may request the presence of a representative from the Office of Disability Support Services, and international students may request the presence of a representative from the Office of International Student and Scholar Services at the Center for Global Education.

Typically, the review committee is presented with the concerns and gives each participant**,** including the student, an opportunity to describe the problem and potential resolution. The student may submit written materials from any source for consideration by the committee, if they are pertinent to the proceeding. The chair may request the presence of the author of the materials to better assist their decision.

Based on the exchange at the meeting, the committee makes a recommendation to help the student successfully complete the program. If a student believes he or she has a disability that has affected his or her ability to participate in the program, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the Office of Disability Support Services. No accommodations can be made for a disability without the involvement of this office. The review committee recommends to the Dean a plan to assist the student. If the committee reaches a finding that is not unanimous, a statement of majority and minority findings is written. In some situations, a review committee may recommend that a student be dismissed from the program. In any case, the student may appeal to the Dean the review committee’s recommendation. In all cases, the final decision is made by the Dean.

#### NCSSS Academic Performance Termination Policy

Prior to a student being dismissed from the MSW program, a Student Review is called by the MSW program chair. Once a student review is held, the review committee makes recommendations. The recommendations are sent to the Dean. The final decision regarding a student dismissal is made by the Dean. The Dean notifies the student of the decision in writing within 5 business days of receiving recommendations from the review committee.

In the Master of Social Work Program, a grade of C indicates marginal progress toward the degree. Master’s students are expected to maintain a minimum of B (3.0 G.P.A) to remain in school and to graduate. A Review Committee shall be called upon a student’s receipt of two grades of C, one grade of F, or other evidence of unsatisfactory or marginal work. The receipt of more than two grades of C or below, more than one F, or termination from a 2nd field placement during their academic program is grounds for dismissal by the Dean.

#### Termination Policy Procedures:

#### Student Termination Appeal Procedure:

A student may appeal the termination decision made by the dean by submitting a written appeal to the dean within 5 business days of receiving the dean’s decision. The dean will respond to the appeal within 5 business days.

**Grade Appeal Procedure**

**F Grade Grievance Procedure: There is also an established university grievance procedure https://policies.catholic.edu/students/academicundergrad/gradesprocedures.html to be used by students who wish to contest a failing grade. A student may challenge a grade of ‘F’ received in a course. Such a challenge may be considered only when the student alleges that the grade reflects other than appropriate academic criteria, that is, achievement of scholastic and behavioral requirements. NCSSS, like every School of the University, has a standing committee on grades, which is made up of three faculty members and two students (at NCSSS, one Masters and one Doctoral student). The committee members are proposed by the Dean and approved by a combined vote of the Faculty and the student representatives to the faculty meetings. One of the faculty members on the committee shall be named chair by the Dean.**

### **PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS**

**Ethical Conduct and Professional Behaviors Policy**

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) has a Code of Ethics to guide professional behavior of social workers. This Code of Ethics is binding for all students at NCSSS. Failure to adhere to the Code in the student role is grounds for disciplinary action or dismissal from the program. A copy of the NASW Code of Ethics is included in the appendix of this Handbook. Each student is expected to obtain an updated copy of the Code of Ethics from NASW for future reference. The National Association of Social Workers is located at 750 First Street, NE, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20002; phone number: 202-408-8600; website: [www.naswdc.org.](http://www.naswdc.org/)

Students should refer to the *CUA Community Standards Guide for further information at https://deanofstudents.catholic.edu/conduct/community-standards-guide.html*

***Behavioral Requirements****:* MSW students at NCSSS are expected to maintain accepted standards of professional conduct and personal integrity in the classroom, in the field placement, and in the university setting. Students should:

* Attend classes and field internships regularly and contribute positively to the classroom/ field agency culture.
* Recognize and avoid behavior that jeopardizes the learning/teaching environment of other students or the instructor.
* Demonstrate competence in planning academic and field-related activities and in following through on those plans.
* Reasonably respond to and respect others' reactions to one's comments or actions in the classroom and in field setting.
* Use an appropriate level of class time and instructor's time and attention in and out of class.
* Use an appropriate level of supervisory time and field instructor's time and attention.
* Behave in a manner that is consistent with the ethical principles of the social work profession.
* Show an appropriate level of professional judgment, being careful not to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.

Students whose professional judgment and performance are hampered in any way are expected to immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating field internship, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others. Students who are unable to meet any of the academic requirements may be subject to the review committee process.

**PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

#### Termination Based on Professional Performance Policy

MSW students are required to maintain acceptable standards of professional conduct and personal integrity in the classroom, in the field placement, and in the university setting. Violations of the NASW Code of Ethics, acceptable standards of professional conduct or integrity are grounds for dismissal from the MSW program. The decision to terminate a student from the program is based on the severity of the violation. The severity of the violation is determined by the student review committee.

#### Termination Based on Professional Performance Policy Procedures:

Prior to a student being dismissed from the MSW program, a Student Review is called by the MSW program chair. Once a student review is held, the review committee makes recommendations. The recommendations are sent to the Dean. The final decision regarding a student dismissal is made by the Dean. The Dean notifies the student of the decision in writing within 5 business days of receiving recommendations from the review committee.

#### Student Termination Appeal Procedure:

A student may appeal the termination decision made by the dean by submitting a written appeal to the dean within 5 business days of receiving the dean’s decision. The dean will respond to the appeal within 5 business days.

**GRADUATION INFORMATION**

At the time of registration for students’ final semester, they fill out a **diploma card online**. (Please confirm Cardinal Station documents the correct semester for your graduation). This card places her/him on the graduation list, indicating the name exactly as it is to appear on the diploma. At commencement exercises, the university awards a diploma to each student who has fulfilled all requirements and upon whom a degree is, therefore, conferred. Subsequent requests for issuance of replacement diplomas will be honored only upon submission by the student of a notarized statement that the original has been lost, stolen, or destroyed and upon payment of the required fee.

Students graduate in January, May and August when they complete degree requirements in the fall, summer, and spring. However, the university holds commencement exercises in May. Students graduating the previous August and January are welcome to participate in the *following*May commencement exercises*.* **Students may not participate in graduation exercises prior to satisfactory completion of all program requirements.**

**NON-DEGREE STUDENTS**

Students who are not enrolled as degree candidates, or those accepted to begin the MSW program at a later date, may take up to 9 credits as non-degree students. The school reserves the right to reduce the number of credit hours allowed for budgetary or other reasons. Non-degree students may register for one course per semester when space is available after degree candidates have registered for an upcoming semester. Non-degree students must discuss their course selection with the MSW Chair prior to registering each semester.

The National Catholic School of Social Service permits non-degree students in the fall and spring semesters. Non-degree students are those who wish to take a course to determine whether professional social work education is a good match for a student’s personal and professional career goals.

Enrollment in a course as a non-degree student does not guarantee admissions to either the MSW programs. Course offerings for non-degree students are limited and are on a space available basis after registration for enrolled, matriculating students is completed.

Non-degree students are allowed to take one course per semester for a total of 3 courses or 9 credit hours. Courses successfully completed are transferred to a student’s MSW transcript if a student applies and is accepted for degree-seeking status.

The Office of Admissions advises non degree students on course selection, availability and sequence of courses. Students who are interested in applying for non-degree status must submit the CUA Non-Degree Status Student Application, a $60.00 non-refundable fee, a resume, and an official transcript from all schools they have attended. Once

reviewed and the deposit is paid and with guidance from their advisor, the student can register for the specified courses.

A student receiving a grade of C in their non-degree course may not be allowed to take additional coursework. In addition, the student may not qualify for degree seeking admissions.

Non-degree students must receive a letter of recommendation from at least one of their NCSSS instructors as part of their application and acceptance to the degree seeking program.

**MASTERS STUDENT ASSOCIATION**

The Masters Student Association, an entirely student-run organization, is the official connection between the MSW student body and NCSSS’s professors and administration. A member of MSA represents the MSW students at Faculty meetings and on the MSW curriculum program committee. MSA students also serve as representatives at the Graduate Student Association meetings. Members may be called on to serve on Student Review Committees or on the NCSSS F-grade committee. The Chair of the MSW program serves in an advisory capacity. MSA activities may include an orientation for new students, social events, brown-bag lunches with faculty, class service projects, and involvement in the graduation celebration.

**NCSSS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

The purpose of the Association is to coordinate the activities of the members in furthering the interests of NCSSS by promoting professional programs; networking and social activities; leading and participating in student recruitment initiatives; encouraging closer relationships among the alumni, the student body, and the faculty of the school; and fundraising initiatives. Any person who has graduated from the BSW, MSW, or PhD programs of NCSSS of The Catholic University of America and is considered in good standing with the University is qualified to be a member of the Association. For more information, check the website at:

<http://ncsss.cua.edu/alumni/>

**FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

###### Federal Loans

To be considered for all loans and need-based scholarships, students must complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (*FAFSA*). Students must complete the *FAFSA* for **each year of study**. Although there is no deadline for filing this application, we suggest you complete it as soon as possible. Please note: all loans must be coordinated with other sources of aid, such as scholarships and assistantships. The amount of money you receive from these sources affects your loan eligibility. For further information contact the CUA Office of Student Financial Assistance at 202-319-5307 or cua-finaid@cua.edu.

###### NCSSS Scholarships

Students requesting consideration for scholarships available through NCSSS should submit an application (available from NCSSS Office of Admissions, and our NCSSS home page (NCSSS.CUA.EDU) and statement to the NCSSS Office of Admissions no later than **May 1**. The statement should outline the student's financial need, merit, and area of social work interest.

**Students requesting scholarships are expected to have filed the FAFSA with the Office of Student Financial Assistance, because scholarships are awarded based on need as well as merit.** Students are awarded NCSSS scholarships for one academic year only. Students may reapply for scholarship consideration in subsequent academic years provided they are in good academic standing (minimum GPA of 3.0). **It is up to students to verify with the Office of Student Financial Assistance that all necessary FAFSA paperwork has been received in that office by May 1, if students have applied for NCSSS scholarships and/or work-study.** Due to university requirements regarding undergraduate GPA and test scores, conditionally admitted students are not eligible for scholarship funding.

For further information on NCSSS grants and university scholarships, contact the MSW Program Chair at 202-319-4388.

# CUA Scholarships

CUA scholarships are primarily awarded to incoming students based on merit. Students retain the scholarship during their enrollment at NCSSS provided they remain in good academic standing (minimum GPA of 3.0). Available to full and part-time students.

###### Federal Work Study Program (FWS)

The National Catholic School of Social Service awards Community Service Federal Work Study stipends annually, through the federal work-study program. Federal and university regulations require that MSW students: (1) have financial need as determined by their FAFSA; (2) be placed in non-profit agencies, (3) involved in duties other than lobbying or partisan political activities, and (4) not receiving a stipend from their field agency. Field agencies make absolutely no financial contribution to the student in the federal program.

**TUITION/ENROLLMENT SERVICES**

**Father O’Connell Hall**

**202-319-5300**

No student is considered registered until registration is completed and an approved financial settlement has been validated by the Office of the Treasurer (202-319-5606). Tuition and fees may be paid by cash, check (with ID), or credit card (American Express, Discover, or MasterCard). CUA also offers a tuition payment plan. All fees, including those for tuition, board, and room are subject to change.

A student who fails to comply with financial obligations as specified is subject to suspension from classes. A transcript record will not be released for a student whose account is not paid in full nor may a diploma be issued. A late payment fee will be assessed if students register after the regular registration period, *regardless of the reason for the delay*. Students may contact the Office of Enrollment Services (202-319-5300) for information on tuition and fees.