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**Loma Linda University**  
**Doctor of Social Work**  
**Student Handbook**  
**2025-2026**

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**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK and SOCIAL ECOLOGY  
SCHOOL OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY**

**STUDENT CONTRACT**

Upon admission to the Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program, students must read and sign the following contract, indicating that they have read and understand the DSW Program policies as well as the University and School of Behavioral Health policies.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to the following terms:

1. I have read and understand the University, School of Behavioral Health and DSW Program policies, and agree to adhere to the same in all my University-Program activities and interactions with University faculty, staff, peers and other members of the University community;
2. To continue my professional development through continuous self-assessment of my academic and related professional performance;
3. To continue my professional development through regular faculty assessment of my academic and related professional performance;
4. To give my faculty advisor permission to discuss my progress in the DSW program with the DSW Program Director, Department Chairperson, and SBH Dean if needed to support my successful completion of the DSW Program.

Further, I understand that although I am admitted to the DSW Program, my continued enrollment in the program is contingent upon my academic and professional performance. If the program's Doctoral Committee does not deem my academic and related professional performance satisfactory, the DSW Program Committee has the right and responsibility to request reassessment of my suitability for the program.

I understand that the Social Work & Social Ecology through the DSW Program faculty, in turn, will provide academic instruction and professional advising as outlined by the University standards for graduate doctoral education to assist with the academic learning and related professional performance development process. Further, I understand that circumstances will undoubtedly require that the policies, procedures, rules, and benefits described in this Handbook change from time to time as the University, School or Program deem necessary or appropriate.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***TO BE RETURNED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK & SOCIAL ECOLOGY***

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# MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR

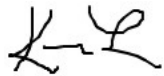
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*Welcome to the DSW Program at Loma Linda University. This handbook is designed to support you as you embark on an advanced journey of scholarship, leadership, and clinical innovation. As you deepen your professional identity and contribute meaningfully to the field, we are committed to walking alongside you—providing guidance, fostering connection, and championing your growth.*

*The faculty look forward to working with you to insure a successful academic experience.*



*Beverly J. Buckles, DSW, MSW*  
Chairperson



*Kimberly Freeman, PhD, MSW*  
Program Director

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# ABOUT LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY

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Loma Linda University is a Seventh-day Adventist educational, health-science institution located in the Inland Empire of southern California. The University is part of the Seventh-day Adventist system of higher education. The Schools of Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, Religion, and Behavioral Health offer professional curricula. Loma Linda University is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). Professional programs are approved by their respective accrediting organizations where professional accreditation exists.

As implied by its motto, "TO MAKE MAN WHOLE," the University affirms the following tenets as central to its view of education: (a) God is the creator and sustainer of the universe; (b) Mankind's fullest development entails a growing understanding of the individual in relation to both God and society and; (c) The quest for truth and professional expertise in an environment permeated by religious values, benefits the individual and society by advancing the ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist church. As such, the mission of Loma Linda University is to further the healing and teaching ministry of Jesus Christ "TO MAKE MAN WHOLE" by: (1) *Educating* ethical and proficient Christian health professionals and scholars through instruction, example, and the pursuit of truth; (2) *Expanding* human knowledge and its application to health and disease through basic and applied research in the biological and behavioral sciences; and (3) *Providing* comprehensive, competent, and compassionate health care for the whole person through faculty, students, and alumni.

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## SCHOOL OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OVERVIEW

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The Department of Social Work & Social Ecology operates under the administrative structure of the University's School of Behavioral Health. The School of Behavioral Health is grounded in a deep commitment to the University's mission to further the teaching and healing ministries of Jesus Christ, which produces wholeness within transformed lives. Transformation is viewed as a lifelong journey of faith and learning underpinned by a bio-psycho-social-spiritual perspective, which assumes that wholeness is achieved when all subsystems affecting human needs are understood and in balance. This pursuit seeks to understand and promote healthy minds, communities, social systems, and human relationships that enable individuals to experience resiliency and live meaningful lives. Such wholeness manifests itself in a life of service to humanity and to God.

In the School of Behavioral Health, these purposes are achieved through academic programs—including research, clinical practice, and global learning experiences—that engage faculty and students in the highest levels of scholarship, professionalism, and the quest for wholeness. Because these pursuits are served by knowledge, graduate students are obliged to achieve both broad and detailed mastery of their fields of study and participate with the faculty in the process

by which knowledge is created and applied. The end result is firm adherence to the global traditions of Loma Linda University through scholarly and practice pursuits that aim to strengthen the effectiveness of behavioral health practice and research to improve the quality of life for individuals and communities around the world.

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## FACULTY AND STAFF DIRECTORY

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Research Area: Behavioral Health Policies and Services, International Trauma and Disaster Response, Geriatric Services, Diffusion of Innovation.



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DSW Program Director  
Professor of Social Work and  
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Research Area: Child Mental Health; Assessment; Childhood Trauma; Adolescent Self-Harm; Community Based Wellness



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Research Area: Psychosocial Needs of Populations Affected by Political Violence; Help-seeking; Stigma; Prejudice, Racial & Religious Discrimination; Immigrant and Refugee Health; Acculturation; Adjustment; Identity; Resilienc





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Research Area: Mental Health; Culturally Grounded Interventions; Program Development and Evaluation; Community-Based Research



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Research Area: Workforce development in human services particularly with vulnerable populations



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Professor of Social Work and  
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Research Area: Research Design and Analyses/ Mixed methods Research; Translational Research; Community Involved & Community Based Research; Health Disparities; Evaluation Research



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Research Area: Critical Theories Including: Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality; Community Based Research; SW Practices for the Underserved; Social Work Education Curriculum Design; Qualitative Methods



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Research Area: Mental Health; Trauma; Practice  
with Latino/Latina; Social Work Education and  
Gatekeeping

## ADJUNCT FACULTY

Veronica Kelley, MSW, DSW  
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## STAFF

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Master's Program Assistant  
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Grants  
MSW Practicum Assistance  
Federal Work Study

## Office Hours:

8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday  
8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Friday (online only)  
Faculty Office Hours as Posted.

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# DSW PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Doctor of Social Work (D.S.W.) program is to prepare experienced MSW-level social workers to become scholar-practitioners who lead clinical innovation and promote equitable, inclusive care through practices that honor human dignity and challenge discrimination in all forms. Grounded in the core values of the social work profession, the program emphasizes applied scholarship, teaching, and leadership that respond to the needs of diverse populations and evolving global clinical practice.

## CORE EXPERTISE AND SKILLS DEVELOPED IN THE PROGRAM

1. Advance practice through innovative approaches;
2. Use and critically evaluate research and knowledge;
3. Engage in scientific inquiry that reflects doctoral-level scholarship;
4. Develop and disseminate practice-relevant, research-informed knowledge through a variety of channels, such as teaching, scholarship, professional presentations, mentoring, and administration;
5. Provide leadership in social work practice and/or education; and
6. Develop and maintain substantive expertise in one or more areas of social work practice.

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# ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES

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## NON-DISCRIMINATION IN ADMISSIONS

As representatives of the University, the School of Behavioral Health, Department of Social Work and Social Ecology, and the DSW Program, have expectations of students, faculty and staff in the areas of conduct and behavior while they are on campus or involved in Program, Department, and School or University activities. Following University policies, the School, Department, and Program is committed to equal education and employment opportunities for individuals of all races; and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of veteran status, handicap, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, or national origin in its educational or admissions policies, financial affairs, employment, student life and services, or in any of its programs. The enrollment of students in School programs is not conditioned on their political or sexual orientation; in these areas the School's policy is directed toward conduct or disruptive behavior, not orientation. In support of this position, we expect our students, faculty, and staff to demonstrate unwavering respect for the diversity of others and interact with integrity, never forgetting the standards that guide professional actions. Further, we expect all programs through their faculty to develop competent, compassionate, ethical professionals who possess the

knowledge, skills and values necessary for a life dedicated to service to all those in need regardless of their lifestyles.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

As applicants prepare their application the Program Director encourages and welcomes discussions, in person, telephone, or Zoom conference calls to provide additional information clarifications and explorations of career goals. A full description of admissions requirements and procedures can be found in the University Catalog or on the Loma Linda University Department of Social Work and Social Ecology website at <https://behavioralhealth.llu.edu/academics/social-work-and-social-ecology/doctor-social-work-dsw-online>

## **ADMISSIONS CRITERIA**

Applicants must meet Loma Linda University and School of Behavioral Health admissions requirements; and give evidence of academic ability, professional comportment, and mature judgment. The DSW curriculum represents advanced study over and above the M.S.W. degree. Admission is based on an integrated evaluation of the following criteria:

- M.S.W. (or equivalent e.g., M.S.S.W.) from a program that is accredited by the CSWE
- U.S. Citizenship
- A minimum of four-years professional social work experience post receipt of the M.S.W. degree
- A minimum M.S.W. G.P.A. of 3.3
- License to practice clinical social work is preferred
- Structured essay
- Personal statement
- Structured Zoom interview, including a brief writing sample completed during the session
- Three letters of recommendation (academic and/or professional)

## **ADMISSIONS DECISION-MAKING**

Admission to the Doctor of Social Work program is based on a wholistic review of each applicant's academic record, professional experience, written materials, interview performance, and overall fit with the program's mission. Applicants must meet the admission standards of both Loma Linda University and the School of Behavioral Health. The DSW Program Admissions Committee evaluates each application to determine the applicant's readiness for doctoral-level study, with particular attention to the candidate's academic ability, professional comportment, and mature judgment.

The decision-making process includes:

- Verification of minimum eligibility criteria (e.g., M.S.W. degree, GPA, post-M.S.W. professional experience)
- Evaluation of submitted written materials, including the structured essay and personal statement
- Assessment of fit through a structured Zoom interview, which includes a timed writing sample
- Review of recommendation letters from academic and professional sources
- Determination of research and professional alignment with program offerings and faculty expertise

Final admissions decisions are made by the School of Behavioral Health Admissions Office, based on the DSW Program Admissions Committee's recommendation and in compliance with university-wide admissions standards and nondiscrimination policies.

## ADMISSION CLASSIFICATIONS

**Regular Status:** Given to applicants when all of the following conditions are met: a) their scholarship [GPA] meet the stated admissions requirements of the School of Behavioral Health, b) they are deemed suitable for pursuit of doctoral education, c) there is a match in research interest between the student and a faculty member, and d) their admissions documentation is complete and meets the admission requirements.

**Deferred Status:** Given to applicants whose scholarship or experience does not reach the standards established for acceptance but for whom graduate work may be possible with additional evidence of academic preparation, and/or scholastic consistency; and/or whose admissions documentation is incomplete at the time of notification of the application review.

In these cases where an admissions decision has not been made and is deferred to a later time, the School of Behavioral Health Admissions office provides deferred applicants in writing a list of the additional requirements that must be met before a decision can be reached.

**Denied Status:** Given when an applicant receives an admission's score below the minimum required for acceptance into the program.

**Non-Degree Status:** Not applicable to the DSW program.

## NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE

The Department's Program Admissions Committee evaluates each applicant's qualifications, professional fit, and interview performance to make a recommendation for admission. The School of Behavioral Health Admissions Office conducts a final review to ensure compliance with program policies and institutional standards. The Dean's Office also verifies that admissions decisions align with institutional nondiscrimination policies and equity principles.

Once the review process is complete, applicants receive formal admission notifications through the School of Behavioral Health electronic admission's system. Accepted applicants are required to acknowledge in writing their intentions to enroll in the program. This final step helps to assure that registration documents are in order when the student begins courses.

## **TRANSFER CREDITS POLICY**

There is no advanced standing in the DSW program. No academic credit is given for life experience, continuing education units and/or previous work experience for any part for the DSW Program.

## **DEFERRED ENROLLMENT**

The maximum deferment allowable is one year. Applicants accepted into the program requesting to defer their enrollment should notify the Program Director as to the duration of their deferment request. It is up to the discretion of the Doctoral Committee to grant deferment requests and outline the conditions for future entry into the program. As such, individuals will be required to meet the entrance criteria effective at the time of future enrollment. Supplementary documents may also be required. Copies of the deferment request and Doctoral Committee's decision are sent to the School of Behavioral Health Admissions Office. A student who is admitted but does not register for the first term and does not respond to correspondence from the Department and/or School of Behavioral Health will have their records transferred to inactive status and must reapply to the program should they choose to be reconsidered for admission at a later date. Records are maintained as inactive for two years from the date of application by the School of Behavioral Health.

## **RE-ENTRANCE POLICY**

A student who discontinues their studies in the DSW Program must comply with University policies regarding re-entrance. As such, the University requires that they meet the entrance requirements effective at the time of re-entrance, unless a leave of absence was previously granted. Fees may be required for re-entrance applications. Supplementary documents may also be required.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

The DSW program is not approved to admit international students.

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# DSW PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

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## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The 79-unit curriculum of the DSW Program provides a combination of academic and research experiences essential for doctoral studies. Students must maintain a program grade point average of 3.0 (or a letter grade of B on a 4.0 scale) and meet the core expertise and skills outlined by the program. The minimum acceptable grade for required courses is a B (3.0). Courses with grades falling below the standards must be repeated. Students are financially responsible for the cost of repeating courses where grades obtained do not meet these minimum standards. A listing of DSW courses is provided below.

Theory, Analytical Analysis, and Social Justice		
SWCL 610	Diversity Theory and Global Perspectives	3
SWCL 615	Comparative Social Work History and Practice, Evidenced-Based Practice and Social Justice	4
SWCL 658	Advanced Policy Analysis and Research	3
Clinical Interventions		
SWCL 630	Clinical Interventions and Design	3
SWCL 650	Neuroscience, Resiliency and Trauma-Focused Global Practice	3
Clinical Leadership, Management and Program development		
SWCL 670	Clinical Leadership I	3
SWCL 680	Clinical Leadership II	3
SWCL 626	Program Design, Evaluation, and Monitoring	4
Academic Leadership and Practice		
SWCL 604A	Integrative Seminar: Academic Practice	1
SWCL 604B	Integrative Seminar: Academic Practice	1
SWCL 604C	Integrative Seminar: Academic Practice	1
Spirituality, Ethics, and Whole Person Care		
RELE 524	Bioethics and Society	3
REL R 540	Wholeness and Health	3
RELT 557	Theology of Human Suffering	3
Research		

SWCL 601	Fundamental Statistics	3
SWCL 602	Applied Statistics	3
SWCL 654	Research Methods I	4
SWCL 655	Research Methods II	4
SWCL 660	Implementation Science	3
Applied Doctoral project		
SWCL 689	Applied Project Conceptualization	2
SWCL 690	Applied Project I	2
SWCL 691	Applied Project II	2
SWCL 692	Applied Project III	2
SWCL 693	DSW Project I	4
SWCL 694	DSW Project II	4
SWCL 695	DSW Project III	4
SWCL 696	DSW Project IV	4
Total		79

## NON-COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The Doctor of Social Work degree is awarded upon completion of all required course work and the following non-course requirements:

- An Oral defense of the Applied DSW Project Proposal
- An Oral defense of the completed Applied DSW Project
- A Professional Conference Presentation
- Submission to the Program and School of Behavioral Health the final approved copy of the Applied DSW Project document/s.
- Advancement to Candidacy (Form A)- Due after successfully completing Applied Project Proposal Defense
- Graduation Petition- Due to University Records two terms before graduation.
- Statement of Completion of Requirements for Degree (Form D)- Due at the end of the term of degree completion



## APPLIED DSW PROJECT

The Doctor of Social Work (DSW) degree culminates in the completion of an Applied DSW Project that demonstrates scholarly rigor and relevance to clinical practice. The project is supported through a sequence of courses beginning in year one and continuing through the final quarter. Students are assigned a faculty chair in year one and select a second committee member in consultation with their Chair in year two to guide the project through its development, implementation, and defense. For detailed expectations, refer to the Applied DSW Project Guide available in [TEAMS](#).

### Project Development Timeline

#### *Year 1: Conceptualization*

Spring (SWCL 689): Students are assigned a chair and complete a concept paper outlining the scope and intent of the project.

#### *Year 2: Proposal Development*

Fall (SWCL 690): Complete literature review and develop theoretical or conceptual framework.

Winter (SWCL 691): Write methodology section and introduction with project objectives.

Spring (SWCL 692): Complete and successfully defend the proposal and submit to IRB, if required.

Note: Projects requiring full-board IRB review are not permitted.

#### *Year 3: Project Implementation and Defense*

Summer (SWCL 693): Begin data collection.

Fall (SWCL 694): Continue data collection and begin data analysis.

Winter (SWCL 695): Complete findings, conclusions, implications for practice, ADEI integration, and dissemination plan.

Spring (SWCL 696): Finalize and publicly defend the project.

### Project Proposal Defense and Advancement to Candidacy

The proposal defense of Applied DSW Project occurs at the end of the second year in the program and is scheduled by the student's project chair when the chair and committee believe that the student's successful defense is likely. The proposal defense is not public and is only attended by the student and their committee. The successful completion of the defense of the project proposal constitutes the final step toward **Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy**. Advancement to Candidacy (Form A) forms must be completed and submitted through your student workflow. **If you have not defended your DSW Applied Project, please submit Form A after**

**you have defended.** This form is located in your Student Portal under Forms. See Appendix A for form deadlines.

It is highly recommended that following the defense, students submit their manuscript to the School of Behavioral Health Records Office for a formatting review check. This ensures that the formatting is correct and prevents delays at the end of spring quarter when timelines are inflexible. Formatting guidelines can be found in TEAMS.

### **Institutional Review Board**

Without exception, any research project involving human research participants conducted by a student or faculty member under the auspices of the Department of Social Work & Social Ecology, School of Behavioral Health and Loma Linda University, must have documented approval from the IRB (or have been officially designated as Exempt from IRB review by the IRB) before data collection begins. The IRB functions to ensure that all research conducted within the institution meets the guidelines mandated in the Belmont Report (The National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979) for the ethical treatment of human subjects in scientific research. In addition to an evaluation of the ethical concerns and scientific merit of a particular study provided by the IRB, significant legal consequences could follow for the individuals involved, the department and the institution if research with human participants is conducted without IRB approval. Information on human research at LLU including the IRB protocol forms may be found on the University Intranet at <http://research.llu.edu>. Students will submit their IRB application forms and protocols to the Social Work & Social Ecology Department IRB subcommittee - headed by Dr. Alemi - for review prior to submission to the University IRB. **Doctoral committee and IRB approvals must be secured before data collection or processing of archival data can begin.**

### **Applied DSW Project Defense Guidelines**

A public defense of the DSW Applied Project is required, serving as a scholarly discourse between the candidate and their Applied DSW Project committee. This defense demonstrates the candidate's successful completion of a publishable scholarly work and mastery of their chosen subject and methodology.

#### **Preparation and Submission:**

- The candidate must submit a copy of their final draft to their chair, committee, and the DSW Program Director at least 45 days before the end of the spring term. This timeline allows for review, edits, and compliance with the two-week public notice requirement for the oral defense.

#### **Scheduling:**

- The student's committee chair, in consultation with the full project committee, is responsible for scheduling the Applied DSW Project Defense. The chair and committee

must first determine that the student is ready to proceed based on the likelihood of success.

- Students do not set the defense date. Attempts to pressure the chair or committee to schedule the defense prematurely due to personal reasons, such as wanting to participate in a specific graduation ceremony or pre-arranged travel plans, are inappropriate and will not be tolerated.

### **Defense Approval:**

- Once the oral defense is approved, the student must work with the DSW Program Director's office to:
  1. Provide an abstract (not exceeding 250 words) summarizing the project.
  2. Verify that a copy of the final draft is available for review through the DSW Program Director's office.
  3. Confirm the date, time, and location of the defense.
- The DSW Program Director's office will develop and disseminate the official announcement of the oral defense.
- The defense announcement must be published at least two weeks before the scheduled date. Faculty, students, and members of the collaborative professional social work community are invited to attend.

### **Defense Proceedings:**

1. Introduction: The Applied DSW Project chair introduces the committee members and describes the defense process.
2. Student Presentation: The student presents an overview of their project, including objectives, purpose, significant literature, methodology, findings/outcomes, and implications for practice and education. This presentation includes a PowerPoint and is generally 30 minutes.
3. Audience Questions: Following the presentation, the audience may ask questions. This discussion may extend beyond the student's specific topic to related areas of scientific knowledge and relevance to practice and education.
4. Committee Questions: After the audience is dismissed, the chair and committee ask additional questions.

5. **Deliberation:** The student is dismissed while the committee deliberates. They decide if the defense has been successful and if any revisions are needed before final approval. This decision is confidential and conducted in a closed session.
6. **Decision Notification:** The student is invited back into the room, and the chair reports the defense outcome. If revisions are required, a specific timeline for completion is provided both verbally and in writing.
7. **Approval Notification:** The chair notifies the School of Behavioral Health Office of the Dean of the student's pass/fail status to support their participation in the next graduation ceremony.
8. **Final Approval:** Only after all revisions are approved and formatting requirements are met does the student receive final written confirmation that their Applied DSW Project is complete. The signature page is then signed by the chair and committee members, and the chair notifies the School of Behavioral Health Office of the Dean of the candidate's completion.

These guidelines ensure a rigorous and fair process for the defense of the Applied DSW Project, maintaining the high standards of scholarly work at Loma Linda University.

### **Preparing the Final Applied Project Manuscript**

The handbook and guidelines for the doctoral project formatting are available in the Department's [TEAMS](#) folder.

Students must follow the required formatting guidelines and submit the final committee approved manuscript to the School of Behavioral Health Records Office for review and final formatting approval. This should occur after the defense and following any additional post-defense edits are complete. See the submission deadlines in Appendix B. Following the final formatting approval, the student must submit the final copy of the DSW Applied Project to the School of Behavioral Health and work with the department to receive up to two free bound copies of their project (there is a fee for additional copies).

Form D must accompany the final copies of the DSW Applied Project manuscript and should be signed by the student's committee once all edits are complete (see Appendix A for deadlines). Form D is located in your [Student Portal](#) under [Forms](#).

### **PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATION**

As part of the requirements for the Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program, candidates are required to present their DSW proposal or findings at a professional conference. This requirement is designed to ensure that candidates engage with the broader professional community, disseminate their research, and receive feedback from peers and experts in the field. Students will work with their Chair on the submission process. The chosen conference must be

recognized by the student's project committee and can be presented online or in-person. Suitable types of conferences include but are not limited to:

National and International Social Work Conferences:

- National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Annual Conference
- Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting
- International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) World Conference

Specialized Social Work Conferences:

- Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Annual Conference
- American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting
- National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEH CY) Conference
- National Conference on Ending Homelessness by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH)

Regional and State Social Work Conferences:

- State-level NASW chapter conferences
- Regional social work education conferences
- Local conferences organized by social work schools or agencies

This requirement ensures that DSW candidates gain valuable experience in presenting their research to a professional audience, receive constructive feedback, and contribute to the advancement of the social work profession.

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## ORIENTATION AND REGISTRATION

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### PROGRAM ORIENTATION

All students are **required** to attend the new student orientation provided prior to beginning coursework in the DSW Program. This orientation includes an introduction to the Program, School, and University. The orientation for the School and University may be attended in person or provided to online students through a recorded presentation.

### ADVISEMENT

#### Academic Advisement

Upon admission to the DSW Program, each student is assigned an Academic Advisor, typically the Program Director. The Academic Advisor supports the student's overall academic progression throughout the program. Responsibilities include helping students understand curriculum requirements, monitoring academic standing, and assisting with course planning, registration issues, and degree completion tracking.

Students should maintain regular contact with their Academic Advisor to ensure they are on track and meeting all program expectations and deadlines.

### **Faculty Mentorship**

At the end of the first year, each student will be assigned a DSW Applied Project Chair who will serve as their faculty mentor for the remainder of the program. The Chair plays a critical role in guiding the student through the development and completion of the Applied DSW Project, including the proposal, Institutional Review Board (IRB) process, project implementation, and final manuscript.

This mentorship relationship also provides professional support and individualized feedback, helping students grow as clinical leaders and applied scholars.

## **REGISTRATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Registration (General)**

The curriculum for the DSW is a structured three-year program. All students must register on the dates designated in the University calendar. [Registration Dates | Loma Linda University \(llu.edu\)](https://www.llu.edu/registration-dates) Late fees are assessed if registration is not completed on the designated dates. Students may not attend class without being registered. **Registration is not complete until financial arrangements have been cleared with Student Finance and a completed registration form filed with the Office of University Records.** Students may not register once the last day to add a course is past. In rare exceptions where there are extenuating circumstances students who miss the last day to register may petition to the Dean of the School and Office of University Records to be considered for late registration. Additional late fees apply.

Note: Students having problems with registration (i.e. inability to clear academic holds or add/drop needed courses) should immediately report these problems to the DSW program director.

### **Continuous Academic Residence**

University policy provides that students are required to meet the matriculation requirements of the particular degree program in which they are enrolled. In the DSW Program, matriculation is defined as continuous registration beginning with the first quarter of enrollment through advancement to candidacy to the awarding of the degree. The program's policy of continuous registration also incorporates summer quarters for all students as a means of dispersing the course load across the calendar year. This requirement of continuous registration is supported by University policies for graduate study. This requirement does not preclude, however, the provision of arrangements to accommodate special circumstances.

## Registration (Records)

DSW students are enrolled in block registration, meaning students are automatically registered each quarter for the courses required in the established curriculum plan. Despite this, each student is responsible for checking their registration to ensure that each class is correct and follows the course schedule outlined by their program. Students are also responsible for accurately tracking their advancement through the program. University Records and the School of Behavioral Health, through the DSW program, provide transcript audits and degree check sheets for all students. If an error is found, it is the responsibility of the student to immediately notify the DSW Program Director and promptly respond to any program requests to correct registration inaccuracies. Students who do not ensure their registration is accurate and their degree plan is on track may incur additional costs and experience delays in graduation.

All students should regularly check LLU OnTrack to monitor degree progress and are strongly encouraged to use faculty advisement to support their academic planning.

## Add/Drop

DSW students who decide they need to alter their registration need to first consult with the DSW Program Director. It is not recommended that DSW student add courses beyond the curriculum plan developed for all students. Please contact Doreen Flores at [doflores@llu.edu](mailto:doflores@llu.edu) to assist with this process.

## INCOMPLETE GRADES

In the School of Behavioral Health, an incomplete is given only in cases of documented emergencies where the student has completed 80% of the course requirements including 80% of class attendance. A **Petition To Receive Incomplete Grade** form must be initiated online by the student and approved by both the Department Chairperson and the Dean of the School of Behavioral Health. Additional documentation may be required for approval of the form; such documentation can be submitted to Doreen Flores at [doflores@llu.edu](mailto:doflores@llu.edu) prior to the last day of finals week. Incompletes must be made up no later than the beginning of the regular examination week scheduled for the following term.

Instructions for initiating the form online include:

- a. Go to: <http://myllu.llu.edu/index.php>, login using your LLU student login credentials and then locate the form on the University Portal's main page, under the Portal titled "Student Forms."
- b. Submit the form by engaging in the electronic process. Direct questions about the electronic form process to Doreen Flores at [doflores@llu.edu](mailto:doflores@llu.edu) or Winetta Oloo at [woloo@llu.edu](mailto:woloo@llu.edu).

## LEAVE AND STUDY STATUS

### Leave of Absence

Withdrawal from the Program for a quarter or longer must be preceded by a written request for leave of absence. This request is submitted to the Doctoral Committee indicating the reason and the length of time needed to be out of the program. One year is the maximum leave time granted. Requests of this nature require the final approval of the Dean of the School of Behavioral Health. The Leave of Absence form is available in Banner under the forms menu.

### **Extramural Study**

Students need to understand that the DSW courses are taken through the Department of Social Work and Social Ecology online. University policy does not allow students to be enrolled in more than one program simultaneously unless programs have been structured as dual degree programs. Students are also not permitted to enroll in classes or degree programs in other universities without the written approval of the Dean.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

### **Voluntary Withdrawal**

Formal withdrawal begins with the Department of Social Work & Social Ecology, followed by the School of Behavioral Health's Office of Records, and finally at the Office of University Records. A standardized form is provided for this purpose. The form for processing a program withdrawal is available on Banner under the forms menu.

### **Administrative Withdrawal**

Students who fail to arrange for a leave of absence may be administratively withdrawn from their program and the School of Behavioral Health after two quarters of registration inactivity. Students who have been administratively withdrawn from their program and the School of Behavioral Health are required to reapply for admission and are subject to the requirements in effect at the time of readmission.

## **GRADUATION ATTENDANCE**

Candidates for graduation degrees taken on the Loma Linda campus are expected to attend graduation events and to receive their diplomas in person. Consent for a degree to be conferred in absentia is contingent on the recommendation of the Dean to the President, with final approval granted by the President. To graduate in absentia the following form needs to be completed.

Absentia Form:

<https://webvpn.llu.edu/dana/home/launch.cgi?url=https://sharepoint.llu.edu/sites/otp/Lists/Graduation%20in%20Absentia/NewForm.aspx>



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# GRADE REQUIREMENTS AND SCHOLASTIC STANDING

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## GRADE REQUIREMENTS/SCHOLASTIC STANDING

Graduate students are expected to maintain consistently high levels of performance. The required minimum grade average in the DSW Program is a B on all work for the doctoral degree. The Department and School receive grade reports indicating the academic standing of all students in order to determine the eligibility of students for advancement.

The following values are assigned for calculation of the grade point average per unit of enrollment:

A	4.0	93-100%	C	2.0	73-76%
A-	3.7	90-92%	C-	1.7	70-72%
B+	3.3	87-89%	D+	1.3	67-69%
B	3.0	83-86%	D	1.0	63-66%
B-	2.7	80-82%	F	0.0	<63%
C+	2.3	77-79%			

The student who believes that there has been an unjust grade for an assignment or course, may file a grade appeal as outlined in the STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE found in the LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY STUDENT HANDBOOK and in the UNIVERSITY CATALOG.

The next set of designations is used to identify student status. These designations are not used to indicate credit:

AU	Audit
I	Incomplete
S	Satisfactory (Used in Pass-fail Courses, Does Not Affect GPA)
U	Unsatisfactory (Does Not Affect GPA)
W	Withdraw (Given from Two Weeks before Final Examinations Begin)

**Audit:** Not applicable to the courses in the DSW Program.

## REPEATING A COURSE

A student needing to improve his/her grade once grades have been posted for a course must repeat the course. When repeating a course, the student must attend class and laboratory sessions

as ordinarily required and take all regularly scheduled examinations. The amount of tuition paid for repeated courses is determined by the school. Both the original and the repeat grades will appear on the student's permanent record, but only the repeat grade is computed in the GPA and included in the total units earned. **A student may repeat a course only once, and no more than two courses may be repeated within the program curriculum.**

### **TIME LIMIT**

The program is intended to be a three-year program but defers to the School of Behavioral Health policy, which allows a total of seven years from admission to the conferring of the doctoral degree. Some consideration may be given to a short extension of time if recommended by the Program, and in the Dean's opinion, such is merited. Requests for extension of degree completion needs to be submitted on the Extension of Degree Completion Time form located in Banner under the forms menu.

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## **STUDENT CONDUCT AND GENERAL POLICIES**

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### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

(See LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY STUDENT HANDBOOK for University policies)

### **REPORTING DISRUPTIVE OR DISHONEST BEHAVIOR**

It is not always possible for instructors to be aware of everything that occurs in their classrooms. If disruptive or dishonest behavior is observed, students are requested to report the behavior to the instructor or the DSW Program Director. While anonymity will be preserved for the reporting party when the issue is addressed, it is necessary for such reports to include the identity of the reporting student.

### **ASSIGNMENT STANDARDS**

One of the goals of the DSW Program is to prepare students for leadership roles. This preparation includes learning task management. As such, assignments must be neat, well written, and unless otherwise instructed, assignments should be word processed or typewritten and double-spaced following the American Psychological Association 7<sup>th</sup> edition (APA) standards. All assignments are to be turned in at the required deadline.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

School of Behavioral Health (SBH) programs are programs of professional preparation and students are expected to attend all class sessions; failure to do so will negatively impact the student's ability to continue in the course. SBH's position regarding attendance reflects the need

for students to actively participate in class activities aimed at integrating course specific content as well as integration of knowledge from a range of courses. The SBH faculty believe this cannot be accomplished through independent study alone.

*Attendance Requirements for In-Person Main Campus Courses*

SBH students are required to attend 80% of all scheduled in-person classes to receive a passing course grade. Courses designated for Main Campus instruction cannot be attended online.

*Attendance Requirements for Hybrid and Synchronous Online Courses*

Students enrolled in a hybrid or synchronous online course must attend 80% of all weekly in-class or online sessions and engage with weekly module activities to be eligible to receive a passing course grade.

*Attendance Requirements for Asynchronous Online Courses*

SBH students enrolled in asynchronous courses must demonstrate regular engagement with the weekly module activities and are not permitted to have more than two 7-day periods (from the first day of the module week) without engagement with the module. Engagement is defined as reviewing module resources, interacting with peers by responding to discussion/assignment prompts and communicating with the instructor.

Students who do not complete the attendance requirements as stated above (regardless of class format) will be advised to withdraw from the course, and in cases of non-communication with the instructor and program director, will receive a failing grade with subsequent notification to the Loma Linda University Financial Aid Representative.

The stated allowances for class absences are to be used for illness, personal emergencies, jury duty, or work responsibilities. Appropriate documentation should be provided. Students should give special attention to scheduling personal appointments at times that do not conflict with their responsibilities regarding class attendance.

For all courses, students are required to be seated in the classroom (in-person or virtual classrooms) and ready to participate by the class-time listed in the university online course schedule or the welcome page of their Canvas classroom. Early departures, class tardiness, multitasking, frequent and/or extended breaks, and having your camera off without faculty approval (for synchronous online classes) are documented and factored into the course grade, potentially resulting in an unsatisfactory or failing grade.

Instructors record didactic synchronous online sessions or meetings related to a course using digital technology (e.g., Zoom, Panopto). These recorded class sessions or meetings may be made available to students within the class through the Learning Management System and shall not be posted or shared beyond the students registered for the course and course instructors, unless otherwise approved. Students shall not record meetings held on digital platforms (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Panopto), without expressed written permission from the instructor or meeting leader.

## **CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION**

Classroom participation in the professional environment of the DSW Program requires active and cooperative learning. Therefore, students' classroom participation will be evaluated by the following criteria:

- evidence that they have reflected upon, and integrated material learned via readings, class, and their professional experience;
- the degree to which their communication is clear, concise, and relevant to the issue under discussion;
- professional collegial behavior, as exhibited by:
  - joining class at the designated time;
  - avoiding distractions/interruptions, e.g. side conversation/chats, audible cell phones/beepers;
  - collaborating to maintain focus by avoiding monopolizing; tangential comments, etc.; and
  - respectful dialogue that honors the right of individuals to hold and express different viewpoints. In this way, all students will collaborate to create a safe and enriching learning environment.
- active participation and engagement with the professor and peers including but not limited to classroom learning activities, practice labs, and course assignments.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (ACCOMMODATIONS)**

The University, School and the DSW Program support the integration of all qualified individuals into the DSW Program and are committed to full compliance with all laws regarding equal opportunity for all students with a disability. At LLU, students, faculty, deans or dean's designee, department chairpersons, and the Advisory Committee on Students with Disabilities all play a joint role in ensuring equal access to campus facilities and programs.

For the DSW Program, the SBH Dean's office is responsible for evaluating and maintaining all disability records for students with disabilities. The Dean's office arranges for determining eligibility for services and based on an evaluation, provides verification of the disability which the student may use to acquire needed accommodation for specific courses.

Students are required to request services or accommodations through the SBH Dean's office where documentation of a disability is required. All information regarding a disability is considered confidential. Students are responsible for making arrangements for accommodations by providing his or her instructors with a letter from the Dean's office requesting the approved accommodations. Faculty are responsible for implementing accommodations as outlined in the Dean's letter.

If you are an individual with a disability and need to make a request for reasonable accommodation to fully participate in this class, please contact Dr. Winetta Oloo, Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, at [woloo@llu.edu](mailto:woloo@llu.edu) in the School of Behavioral Health Dean's Office. Please see the full Disability Accommodation Policy which is available in the LLU Student Handbook (beginning on page 47): <http://www.llu.edu/assets/central/handbook/documents/Student-Handbook.pdf>

## **GUIDELINES FOR AI USE**

The DSW faculty recognize that AI tools, like ChatGPT, are becoming a go-to for exploring, brainstorming, and writing about topics of interest. However, there are still some gray areas surrounding AI apps, including where AI draws its information from and whether citations used in AI are accurate. Given the high priority our DSW faculty, School of Behavioral Health, and the University all place on academic integrity, our department does not consider AI-generated information to be a trustworthy source for course assignments.

Below is the current DSW directive for the use of AI in coursework:

- *Appropriate use of AI tools includes exploring or brainstorming topics related to course assignments, considering the initial framework or structure of an assignment, and editing.*
- *Inappropriate use of AI includes using AI-generated information as a primary source for course assignments or copying and pasting AI-generated text into an assignment.*
- *As always, students are required to appropriately paraphrase and cite any sources utilized in assignments.*

The School of Behavioral Health deans and faculty are actively considering the ramifications of AI use in academic programs and enacting policy on student use of AI-generated content in coursework. Once a policy is created, it will be included in this document and course syllabi.

## **FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION**

Although it is the responsibility of students to plan for the financing of their academic program, the Office of Financial Aid assists in the process by assessing students' eligibility for financial assistance. Whereas, the majority of financial aid is in the form of loans, grants, or work opportunities, the Office of Financial Aid also manages and distributes a limited number of scholarships for eligible students. Staff are available to counsel students on the most appropriate and available resources to meet individual needs. Students are urged to contact the office early to maximize their eligibility and comply with application deadlines. (See also the LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY STUDENT HANDBOOK for information about financial assistance and student finances).

The University's Office of Diversity provides scholarship and loan programs designed to support individuals with demonstrated need. To learn more about these programs visit our [SBH scholarship webpage](#). Students accepted into the DSW degree program are eligible for and are

also encouraged to apply for the CSWE minority fellowships.

See <https://www.cswe.org/Centers-Initiatives/Minority-Fellowship-Program/MFP-Doctoral-Students.aspx> for information.

## **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

As an SBH faculty member, we need to emphasize the importance of submitting assignments on time. However, we understand that there may be circumstances where a student needs to submit their work late. In such cases, the following policies apply:

- **Late Assignment Submission:** Assignments submitted after the due date will not be accepted if they are more than two weeks late. This policy ensures that students submit their work in a timely manner and allows for efficient grading and feedback processes. If a late assignment is accepted, it may result in a deduction of up to 10% from the total score. This penalty encourages students to submit their work on time while still providing an opportunity for those who face genuine difficulties.
- **Time-Dependent and/or Sequenced Assignments:** For assignments that are time-dependent or sequenced, the professor has the discretion to not accept late submissions. This is because these assignments often build upon previous work or require timely participation, making it challenging to incorporate late submissions without disrupting the learning process.
- **Online Discussion Posts, Reading Quizzes, and Knowledge Checks:** Late submissions are not allowed for online discussion posts, reading quizzes, or knowledge checks. These activities are designed to foster timely engagement and assess understanding in a dynamic learning environment. However, if a discussion post is designated as a larger course assignment, it may fall under the 10% deduction rule for late submissions. Your instructor will notify you if this is the case.

A time-limited extension for up to two weeks, without a late assignment penalty, will be considered for extenuating circumstances. Time-limited extension requests need to be submitted to the instructor for approval with a copy of the request sent to the Program Director. Documentation should be provided as appropriate. After two weeks the assignment will not be accepted. Students who cannot meet the requirements of the two week time-limited extension, need to review with their instructor and Program Director whether they should withdraw from the course or meet the University's criteria for an Incomplete (I).

Unless an Incomplete (I) has been approved, all assignments must be submitted by the last Friday of the quarter at 2:00pm (PST).

## **STUDENT FILES**

Student files are confidential. Students needing to view their file for any reason should make their requests to the Department Chairperson or DSW Program Director. Student files are electronically maintained.

## **TUITION AND FEES**

Students can consult the University Student Handbook or contact the Office of Student Finance (909) 558-1000 (x 44520) for the current University tuition and fee schedule. *(Fees are subject to change and may not include all special charges.)*

## **UNIVERSITY STUDENT SERVICES, PROGRAMS, AND POLICIES**

The University Office of Student Affairs has prepared a Student Handbook, which provides students with a wealth of facts about the University, including its programs to promote balance in student life, student resources and services, as well as detailed information concerning University policies and academic processes. Included in this document is the criteria for academic and professional performance. The University Student Handbook, which also includes the School of Behavioral Health Student Handbook is available online at <https://one.lluh.org/vip/apps/university-desktop> under Policies and Handbooks.

## **VETERANS**

Students eligible to have veteran's benefits should seek information from the Office of University Records.

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# **MECHANISMS FOR STUDENT INPUT AND PARTICIPATION IN THE CURRICULUM**

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The DSW Program fosters a wholistic learning environment that integrates academic excellence, student engagement, and leadership development. Students have multiple opportunities to contribute to program enhancements through structured mechanisms such as surveys and course evaluations, curriculum committees, and faculty search processes. Open forums, direct faculty engagement, and student led initiatives create an inclusive space for dialogue, mentorship, and professional growth. These combined efforts ensure that students are active participants in shaping their educational experience, program culture, and the broader social work community.

## **SOLICITATION OF STUDENT FEEDBACK**

The program actively gathers student perspectives through structured mechanisms such as surveys, course evaluations, and an exit interview process for all graduating students. These tools allow students to provide candid feedback on their educational experience, the program climate, and areas for improvement. Insights from these assessments are systematically reviewed by faculty and administration to guide programmatic enhancements and ensure that student voices contribute to shaping the learning environment and continuous quality improvement.

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATION IN COMMITTEES**

The DSW Program includes student representation in open DSW Doctoral meetings, allowing students to participate in discussions on: (a) curriculum modifications; (b) incorporating diverse perspectives and anti-oppressive frameworks; and (c) suggestions on student needs and support. By engaging in these discussions, students' lived experiences, professional goals, and diverse perspectives actively influence the DSW program.

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATION ON FACULTY SEARCH COMMITTEES**

To promote inclusive hiring practices, the DSW Program provides opportunities for students to participate in faculty ad hoc search committees. Student representatives may: (a) participate in faculty interviews; (b) provide feedback on teaching demonstrations and research presentations; and (c) advocate for faculty hires that reflect the program's commitment to academic excellence. By engaging students in faculty recruitment, the program ensures that student perspectives contribute to the selection of educators who align with the program's mission and values.

## **PROGRAM FORUM**

The Program Forum is a structured opportunity for students to engage directly with the Department Chairperson, Executive Associate Chairperson, and/or DSW Program Director on a quarterly basis, excluding summer and regular school vacations. These forums provide a designated space for students to present and discuss issues, needs, and concerns related to their academic and field experiences. Announcements regarding upcoming forums are formally communicated through student information boards and LLU email.

## **DIRECT FACULTY ENGAGEMENT**

Students are encouraged to engage directly with faculty and program leadership on an individual or collective basis. By providing multiple, flexible pathways for student input, the DSW Program upholds its commitment to equitable and inclusive engagement.

## **STUDENT-LED ACADEMIC SUPPORT INITIATIVES**

Students have the opportunity to establish peer mentoring programs, academic support initiatives, study groups, and wholeness activities that contribute to student success within the curriculum. Through faculty collaboration, students can help design supplementary workshops, tutoring programs, and study materials that support student learning outcomes.



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# ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE POLICIES

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## OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

1. To develop objective criteria for assessing students' academic and professional performance during the completion of degree programs in the School of Behavioral Health.
2. To create a procedure that will allow for the timely and positive intervention with students identified as experiencing problems which interfere with their progress through their degree programs.
3. To determine whether students have demonstrated the required level of achievement in academic and professional performance to interact positively within multiple systems on behalf of present and future consumers.

## CRITERIA FOR ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE

Graduate students are expected to maintain consistently high levels of achievement in two areas: (a) academic performance in courses and professional practica/internships; and (b) professional performance in University related interactions with faculty, staff, peers, and practicum/internship personnel and clients/consumers. Performance in each of these areas is evaluated quarterly. Evaluation criteria for each of these areas are delineated below:

**Academic Performance (Please note that the practicum/internship performance criteria only applies to programs that have a required practicum/internship experience.)**

1. Evaluation of students' academic performance in courses is based upon criteria as stated in course syllabi. Grading for courses follows the University's established criteria for calculation of grades (see also Grade Requirements).
2. Professional practicum/internship performance is also evaluated quarterly following the guidelines outlined by each program in their respective practicum/internship manuals/handbooks. Grading for professional practica/internships make use of the following designations:

S      Satisfactory (used in pass-fail courses, does not affect GPA)

U      Unsatisfactory (does not affect GPA)

Although these designations do not have an effect in calculating a GPA, a grade of "S" is considered by the University equivalent to a grade of B (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) or higher.

Graduate students are expected to maintain a grade point average of 3.0 (B) in their course work and professional practicum/internship performance and to pass all courses with a B or better (see course repeat policy). Course and professional practicum/internship requirements that are identified as needing to be repeated to improve a student's academic standing must be registered and paid for as new course registrations. Tuition and fee rates for repeated requirements are paid at the rate in effect at the time (quarter) repeated and not at the rate paid for the original registration. University policy does not allow a program or faculty member to identify supplemental assignments or learning activities to address unacceptable performance and then submit a grade change for a failed course or professional practicum/internship experience.

**Professional Performance (Please note that the practicum/internship performance criteria only applies to programs that have a required practicum/internship experience.)**

Students' advancement in their degree program may be delayed or terminated for failure to meet established professional performance criteria. The policies and practices in this area have been established and are adhered to in order to protect the rights of students, the well-being of clients/consumers, the reputation of practicum/internship sites, and the integrity of the degree program and the profession. The following categories and subsequent lists of professional performance criteria represent reasons for delay in a student's program advancement or full dismissal from an academic program in the School of Behavioral Health. This is not, however, an exhaustive delineation. (See Disciplinary Actions.)

**1. ADHERENCE TO PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

Graduate students in the School of Behavioral Health are required to conduct themselves according to the Code of Ethics for their distinct profession. Violation of any part of their profession's Code of Ethics will be reason for disciplinary action and possible dismissal from their specific program. In general, violations include, but not limited to the following behaviors:

- a. Misconduct that involves clients/consumers on or off campus or conduct that is potentially dangerous to current or future clients/consumers.
- b. Misconduct on or off campus directed toward other University students, faculty, or staff.
- c. Legal or illegal behavior that violates the mission, processes, or academic or business functions of the University and or the student's degree program.
- d. Forced or coerced sexual behavior.
- e. Sexual activity with clients/consumers (or relatives or friends of clients/consumers) including, but not limited to, sexual comments, dating, kissing, fondling, or sexual intercourse.
- f. Physical actions directed at clients/consumers, students, faculty, or staff, such as hitting, spanking, or slapping.
- g. Physical or emotional threats directed toward clients/consumers, students, faculty, or staff.
- h. The acceptance of gifts or money from clients/consumers that are not considered standard payment for services received on behalf of the practicum agency. Students shall not ask for or expect gifts from clients/consumers.
- i. Illegal or unethical behavior that limits or takes away clients'/consumers' rights or results in financial, material, or emotional loss for clients/consumers or gain for students.

j. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.

## 2. INCOMPATIBILITY WITH INHERENT PROFESSIONAL VALUES UNDERPINNING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Students may be dismissed from their program of study if they demonstrate a persistent pattern of incompatibility, inability or unwillingness to change concerning the core values, ethics and an overall pattern of being un-teachable. This pattern may be demonstrated by:

- a. Demonstrated resistance to learning and incorporating professional values, ethics, knowledge, and skills (including refusal to participate in or failure to complete laboratory or learning experiences).
- b. The presence of subjective, punitive or demoralizing actions toward others that stem from lack of openness to the differential life circumstances of others or an externalized personal ideology.
- c. An inability to develop tolerance for human differences.
- d. Failure to accept and respect human diversity as measured through repeated incapacity to form collegial and/or therapeutic relationships with individuals who have membership in one or more special populations, the repeated use of pejorative labeling, and/or the direct violation of the human rights of another.

*Note: Professional behavioral health education includes acceptance and integration of the core values of each specific profession. The faculty's observations of students' interactions and assignments may raise questions as to whether students' values and attitudes are compatible with their profession. This does not mean, however, that there is no place for dissent or disagreement in the discourse of graduate professional education. It does mean that students must reflect upon and integrate the principles implicit in the value system of professional behavioral health practice and their specific profession. Students will be encouraged to decide whether the identified conflict/s can be resolved in favor of openness to other experiences and views. In cases where the challenges cannot be resolved and are serious enough to result in a compromising the rights and services of clients/consumers, and work with peers, supervisors, or faculty, students will be recommended for dismissal from their degree program.*

## 3. CLASSROOM BEHAVIORS

Students who demonstrate a basic incompatibility with and/or inability to perform professionally in their program's classroom or online requirements (including laboratory or other in-class required learning activities) will be dismissed from their program. Students demonstrate an overall pattern of incompatibility with and/or inability to perform academically and professionally for reasons including but not limited to the following:

- a. Inability to follow instructions as demonstrated by being consistently late in meeting academic deadlines and/or failing to complete requirements.
- b. Being consistently late and/or absent from required classes, and/or pattern of leaving class before or during required classroom or laboratory activities or experiences.
- c. A pattern of not readily or actively participating (passive participation) in required classroom or laboratory activities or experiences.

- d. Failure to respect others' opinions in classroom discussions as demonstrated by rude comments, verbal abuse, and the pejorative labeling or name calling of others. (See LLU Student Handbook with regard to respect for the opinions of others.)

#### 4. PROFESSIONAL PRACTICUM/INTERNSHIP ISSUES

Students who demonstrate a basic incompatibility with and/or inability to perform their program's professional practicum/internship requirements, will be dismissed from the program. Students can demonstrate this overall pattern of incompatibility with, and/or inability for reasons including, but not limited to the following:

- a. Students who fail three placement interviews.
- b. Students show unwillingness to participate in the practicum/internship placement process as demonstrated by turning down three placement sites within a given academic year.
- c. Students demonstrate repeated inability to engage with the field practicum/internship learning process by requesting unwarranted/unfounded practicum/internship reassignment within a given academic year.
- d. The standards of competency delineated by the program are not met.
- e. Noncompliance with or demonstration of an inadequate level of knowledge and/or skill outlined in the corrective actions provided by their program's practicum/internship committee and/or academic standards committee.
- f. Persistent failure to appear at the designated practicum/internship site at the prescribed time and/or days without prior approval.
- g. Consistent failure to meet agency deadlines.
- h. Failure to complete agency assignments.
- i. Violation of agency policy and procedures.
- j. Violation of the professional Code of Ethics of their specific profession.
- k. Violation of LLU student policies regarding personal and academic conduct (see LLU Student Handbook).
- l. Violation of professional performance standards of their program and the School of Behavioral Health.
- m. Personal issues which significantly impact students' ability to meet agency or client/consumer obligations or needs.
- n. Falsification of client/consumer records or fraudulent billing.
- o. Violation of HIPPA requirements.

#### 5. INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIORS

Students who demonstrate behaviors which deem them as incompatible with professional values, ethics or behaviors, or are unable to complete classroom and/or professional practicum/internship requirements regarding interpersonal competence, they may be dismissed from their specific program and the University. Students demonstrate an overall pattern of incompatibility with and/or inability through, but not limited to the following:

- a. Demonstrated inability to establish and maintain positive and constructive interpersonal relationships including therapeutic and professional use of self, appropriate assertiveness, and conflict resolution.
- b. Demonstrated emotional instability and/or immaturity as evidenced by repeated difficulties in forming professional relationships with faculty, University personnel,

agency staff and peers (including, but not limited to, inability to engage in cooperative teamwork, physical or verbal abuse, acts of relational impropriety, and/or criminal violation of the personal and/or property rights of others).

- c. Demonstrated behavior that shows symptoms of sufficient dysfunction or personal distress such as to compromise the worker/practitioner and client/consumer integrity, the therapeutic process, the learning of self or other students.
- d. Seriously inappropriate affect as demonstrated by extremely withdrawn personality style, persistent incongruent affective responses in the classroom and/or practicum/internship, volatile and inflammatory responses, and persistent angry and hostile mood.
- e. Personal problems of such magnitude that result in an inability to work effectively with clients/consumers, agency staff, peers, faculty, or University personnel.
- f. Demonstrated deficits in effective verbal communication with clients/consumers, agency staff, peers, faculty, or University personnel.
- g. Demonstrated inability to participate in client/consumer assessment, goal setting, treatment intervention, and/or use of adjunctive resources.

#### 6. PROFESSIONAL DEMEANOR AND IMAGE

Students who demonstrate significant difficulties in forming a professional image that deems them as incompatible with or unable to fully interact in or complete their program's classroom and/or professional practicum/internship requirements, or to productively engage with future clients/consumers and colleagues, may be dismissed from their program and the University. Students demonstrate significant difficulties in forming a professional image through, but not limited to the following:

- a. Severe and persistent problems with personal hygiene which inhibit interactions with others that may stem from a severe lack of self-awareness, emotional instability, personal preferential style incongruence with minimum professional standards, and/or disregard for minimum public health standards.
- b. Severe and persistent disregard for University dress codes of a degree to be considered disruptive to the learning environment or run counter to the professional requirements of the University or their program.

#### 7. SUBSTANCE ABUSE ISSUES

(See LLU Student Handbook for University policies.)

#### 8. AREAS OF ZERO TOLERANCE\*

The following are considered areas of **zero** tolerance and will result in immediate dismissal from a program in SBH:

- a. Dual relationships with clients/consumers (whether voluntary, forced or coerced) including, but not limited to, personal friendships with clients/consumers; unauthorized transporting or contact with clients/consumers; relationships of a business or financial nature, sexual activity with clients/consumers including, but not limited to, kissing, fondling, or sexual intercourse.
- b. Verbal, emotional, or physical threat or intimidation directed toward clients/consumers, students, faculty, staff, or agency representatives.

- c. Physical actions directed at clients/consumers, students, faculty, or staff, such as hitting, spanking, or slapping.
- d. Potentially slanderous or libelous acts directed towards students, faculty, staff, University representatives or their designees (including contract instructors), and agency representatives.
- e. Illegal or unethical behavior that limits or adversely impacts on clients'/consumers' rights or results in financial, material, or emotional loss for clients/consumers or gain for students or others personally associated with the student.
- f. Concurrent illegal activities including, but not limited to, drug trafficking, persistent trouble with the law, possession of firearms (see LLU Student Handbook), fraud on admissions documents, sexual harassment, assault, inappropriate sexual conduct with clients/consumers, intentional intimidation of others, or violations of the personal rights of others.
- g. Failure to report concurrent charges or violations of the law that reflect significant gaps in judgement and disregard for public protection and safety (e.g., DUI, driving with a suspended license).
- h. Failure to disclose previous criminal convictions and charges (whether or not cleared from their criminal record) which make practicum/internship placement impossible.
- i. Gross self-interest as demonstrated by any disruptive or persistent uncooperative behavior which adversely impacts, compromises or results in disrupting the flow of care or services to clients/consumers, including but not limited to refusal to follow sanitation and safety procedures required by practicum/internship sites.
- j. Sexual harassment (see LLU Student Handbook).
- k. Taking any type of weapon onto campus or to the practicum/internship site.

\* See LLU STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR OTHER ZERO TOLERANCE POLICIES.

## **DISCIPLINARY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Academic Probation**

Each quarter, the SBH Office of Academic Records reviews the grade reports of all students in the school and notifies departments of those whose cumulative G.P.A. has fallen below the minimum 3.0. grade point average. Departments then work with each identified student to develop an academic plan to assist that student in raising their overall G.P.A. to the minimum standard. Departments are to provide the dean's office with a copy of each academic plan. The procedures that further support the designation of academic probation are as follows:

1. The first quarter that a student's G.P.A. falls below the minimum 3.0 G.P.A., the SBH Office of Academic Records sends the student a warning letter informing them of the drop below acceptable performance. A copy of the letter is sent to the student's department. The warning letter informs the student that they have one quarter to return (improve) their G.P.A. back to the minimum required 3.0; and if they fail to do so, they will be placed on academic probation the subsequent quarter.
2. Students who fail to raise their G.P.A. at the end of the one-quarter warning period, they will be placed on academic probation by the school's Office of Academic Records. The

student then receives a letter notifying them that they have been placed on academic probation, and that continuation of academic probation for two quarters may result in dismissal from the program. The letter also states that a repeated (nonconsecutive) pattern of below-standard performance may also result in program dismissal. A copy of the letter is sent to the student's department.

3. In the event that a student is placed on academic probation, the department is responsible for conducting an immediate academic review involving at least the department chair or program director and the student's advisor. A statement regarding the academic future of the student must be formulated by the department and signed by the student, with a copy given to the school's Office of Academic Records. The statement must clearly indicate all requirements, conditions, and criteria needed to remove the probationary status.
4. When the school's Office of Academic Records officially designates a student's status as probationary, a hold or limited registration authorization is placed on the student's registration if recommended by the program (i.e., the student may not register for any new courses) until grades from the previous quarter are posted and the student's academic history and satisfactory academic progress have been evaluated. Such registration holds are cleared only after the department verifies the following—as appropriate to the phase in the probationary process: a) that an academic plan has been developed with the student to address the challenges that resulted in academic probation; b) that the academic plan has been implemented; and c) that the student is making satisfactory progress to raise their G.P.A. to the minimum standard. The student is responsible for late registration fees that apply, unless other indicated by the department and/or the dean's office.

### **Professional Performance Probation**

When it is determined that a student demonstrates serious unacceptable behaviors or a pattern of behaviors or attitudes not in keeping with the values and ethics of the professional area of study and/or the University, they may be placed on professional performance probation (sometimes also referred to as clinical probation). Professional performance issues include, but are not limited to, substantial and/or unresolved behaviors that affect the student's ability to complete course and/or clinical requirements; or behaviors that seriously impact the student's interactions with faculty, staff, other students, University representatives, representatives of collaborating organizations and clinical training sites, and/or clients at clinical training sites. When any of these issues have been identified, the student will be placed on professional performance probation or will incur other sanctions as deemed appropriate, given the seriousness of the infraction and/or violation of University policies.

### **Academic and Professional Disciplinary Processes**

*Note: Not all phases of disciplinary action outlined may be applicable with all cases.*

When a student fails to observe the academic or professional performance requirements of the DSW program (and/or profession), the school, and/or the requirements and standards of the University; the following procedures apply:

1. **Advisement:** From time to time a program's academic standards committee is notified of academic or behavioral issues of students that may have negative consequences on their current or future performance. If the issue does not rise to the level of a warning, the committee may ask the faculty advisor to speak with the student/s in a timely manner. The faculty member should put a note in the student's file documenting that they have met with the student.
2. **Written Warning.** The student is provided with an official written warning when previous situations or problems advised about have not been resolved or are initially presented/exist that have the potential to jeopardize the academic or professional development, performance, and/or may impact the clients/consumers served by the student in their practicum experience. Based on the identified problem as defined by their program's academic standards committee and these policies, students are expected to submit a written response to their program's academic standards committee written warning, detailing how they plan to correct the problem. The SBH Dean's Office is to be provided with a copy of the written warning sent to the student and the student's response. A form is provided by the SBH Dean's Office for this purpose.
3. **Academic and/or Professional Performance Probation.** Not all academic and practicum/internship issues result in probation. However, students who have not attended to the self-imposed conditions of a written warning, or for whom a serious situation or problem is identified that has violated the SBH Academic and/or Professional Performance criteria, will be placed on academic and/or professional performance/clinical probation following a full review and investigation of all issues by the program's academic standards committee. In all cases, students are provided with an opportunity to provide a written explanation and also provided a copy of the SBH (University) grievance procedures. Students placed on probation may be continue to be enrolled in both course and practicum/internship experiences unless a reduced academic load and/ or removal from their practicum/internship is deemed a necessary due to the nature of the identified issue as outlined in the Corrective Action Plan.

When the department/program specific academic standards committee deems that probation is warranted, they first share the content of the recommendation with department leadership. Recommendations for probation are for a minimum of one quarter. Recommendations for probation proceed as follows:

- a. The department leadership forwards the program's committee recommendation on to the SBH Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs for formal action. Based upon a review of the department's recommendation, the dean's office may accept or recommend additional or alternative ameliorating conditions or steps. An accepted recommendation for academic and/or professional performance



probation by the dean's office is communicated to the student in writing and will include the timeline for reevaluation.

- b. Based on acceptance of the recommendation for probation, the department/program's academic standards committee convenes and develops a Corrective Action Plan. The time frame for the corrective plan will be determined based upon the nature of the situation. After receiving notification of the recommendation for academic and/or professional performance/clinical probation the student will be provided with a copy of the Corrective Action Plan (usually within three business weeks, excluding weekends, holidays, and unscheduled school closures), including the time frame for completion of the identified issues. Delays in processing Corrective Action Plans that result from the student's failure to communicate with their program add to the response time and may result in further corrective and/or administrative action by the program and school. A copy of the Corrective Action Plan is also provided to the SBH Dean's Office. The SBH Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs will meet with the student to assure that the student understands the Corrective Action Plan and is aware of their rights to grieve if they do not agree with the recommendation for probation.
- c. The Corrective Action Plan shall specifically state the concern(s), the action(s) to be undertaken by the student, and the date by which the student must demonstrate completion of and/or compliance with the plan. In the event that the plan is of a long-term nature, the student's progress is reviewed no less than one quarter following the date the Corrective Action Plan is to be executed and will continue to be reviewed quarterly until a statement of closure has been placed in the student's academic file.
- d. Prior to the timeline for reevaluation by the dean's office, the department/program is required to notify the dean's office in writing of the student's compliance with, need to continue, or failure to comply with the Corrective Action Plan. Based upon this updated information, the department/program is to provide the dean's office with a recommendation regarding the disposition of the probation, i.e., to remove, continue, require additional conditions, place on a leave of absence or move to dismissal.
- e. Depending on the nature of the academic and professional performance issues, the department/program's academic standards committee may recommend to the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs that the student's probationary status be continued for a second quarter if the student's progress toward amelioration of the identified concern(s) as outlined in the Corrective Action Plan is insufficient, and/or additional concerns have been identified. When this occurs, the department/program's academic standards committee must clearly communicate with the student in writing the reasons for their recommendation and once again assure that the student has been given an opportunity to provide additional explanation and has been informed of their right to grieve. If not already directly involved in the committee process, the department leadership must also be apprised of the committee's decision before the recommendation for

continuation of probation is forwarded to the Dean's office. A copy of the continuing or modified Corrective Action Plan is provided to the SBH Dean's Office for monitoring by the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs.

- f. Closure of a Corrective Action Plan is processed by the department/program's academic standards committee on or before the end date specified in the Corrective Action Plan form. The department/program's academic standards committee reviews the student's progress to determine whether or not the identified issue(s) has (have) been resolved. The committee's decision should first be shared with department leadership for confirmation or modification. The final written decision is then provided to the student on the designated section of the Corrective Action Plan form. A copy of the updated Corrective Action Plan form that articulates closure of the issues is placed in the student's academic file and provided to the SBH Dean's Office. Note: Students are not approved for graduation if they have unresolved concern(s) on file whether or not they have been placed on academic and/or professional performance probation.
4. **Suspension.** In some cases, students may be required to go on a mandatory Leave of Absence when progression in their program requires concurrent progress in course (including research) and clinical practice.
5. **Dismissal.** If the problem still remains unresolved or shows insufficient improvement to meet academic and/or professional standards and requirements, then the department/program committee may make a recommendation for dismissal to the department chair, who subsequently forwards this written recommendation directly to the Dean, with a copy to the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs.

## **Dismissal**

Students who violate the legal and/or ethical standards of professional practice cannot meet the objectives and outcomes of a Corrective Action Plan, evidence severity in the identified problem(s), or develop additional problems during a period of corrective action of a similar scope as those previously identified, can be dismissed from their degree program. When any or all of the above are evidenced, the program's academic standards committee recommends to department leadership that the student be immediately dismissed from the program. Department leadership reviews with the program's academic standards committee their recommendation and then subsequently forwards the recommendation to the Dean of the School for formal action. The Dean's Office will subsequently review the issue, adherence with policy, and if there is concurrence, the student will be notified in writing that they have been dismissed from the program and University (see LLU Student Handbook Grievance Procedure).

## **GRIEVANCE POLICIES**

### **Course Grade Grievances**

A student who believes that the final grade received in a course does not accurately represent their performance in the course may request a review of the grade assigned. A request for a grade review must occur within one quarter (i.e., the quarter immediately following) the assignment of the grade in question. (Note: The grade-grievance process is not applicable to the review of grades received on assignments prior to the assignment of a grade in the course.) The grade-review/-grievance process is as follows:

1. The student submits in writing to the course instructor a request for grade review, including the specific reason(s) for their belief that the grade in the specific course is not accurate. The instructor is to respond promptly to the student's request, including any necessary clarification of evaluation criteria and grade calculation.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the explanation(s) provided by the instructor, the student then submits in writing to the department chair, executive associate chair or associate chair (or department designee) a request for a grade review, including the specific reason(s) for their belief that the grade in the specific course is not accurate. The department chair, executive associate chair, or associate chair (or department designee) is to respond promptly to the student's request, which means they are responsible for investigating the claim(s).
3. If the student is not satisfied with the explanation(s) provided by the department chair, executive associate chair, or associate chair (or designee), the student then submits in writing to the dean a request for a grade review, including the specific reason(s) for their belief that the grade in the specific course is not accurate. The dean will respond by conducting an appropriate investigation, which may include appointing an ad hoc committee to assess the student's claim(s), and then make a final determination regarding the matter. In the event that an ad hoc committee is used, the committee provides its findings to the dean, which may include agreement or disagreement with the grade provided, or other determinations as appropriate.
4. The decision of the dean will be final and will be shared with the student in writing.

### **Disciplinary or Academic Grievance Procedure**

Students who feel that they have been incorrectly disciplined or have other academic complaints may grieve the actions of their program as outlined below:

1. Students must first submit a written request to initiate a review of any decision they wish to grieve.
  - i. If the student is grieving a decision made by the department's student affairs committee, the written request should first be directed to the chair of that committee.
  - ii. If the student is grieving a disciplinary or academic issue that was not made by the department's student affairs committee, the written request should be directed to the department leadership (chair, executive associate chair or associate chair).

In response, the department leadership is required to provide the student with a written response of the determination.

2. Students dissatisfied with the determination of the chair of the student affairs committee (1.i above) or department leadership (1.ii above) may appeal to the Dean of the SBH where the disciplinary issues will be further reviewed. This may require the student to meet with the Dean in person in order to clarify any needed information. If deemed necessary, the Dean will form a panel/committee to assist in the review process.
3. A written determination will be provided to the student once the process is complete.

### **Probation, Mandatory Leave, and Dismissal Grievance Procedure**

Students who wish to appeal a recommendation regarding academic and/or professional performance probation, a mandatory leave of absence, or dismissal from a program must follow the steps indicated below. (The grievance process described below does not apply to decisions regarding admissions and readmission.)

1. Students must first submit a written request to initiate a review of any decision they wish to grieve.
  - i. If the student is grieving a decision made by the department's student affairs committee, the written request should first be directed to the chair of that committee.
  - ii. If the student is grieving a disciplinary or academic issue that was not made by the department's student affairs committee, the written request should be directed to the department leadership (chair, executive associate chair or associate chair). In response, the department leadership is required to provide the student with a written response of the determination.
2. Students dissatisfied with the determination of the chair of the student affairs committee (1.i above) or department leadership (1.ii above) may appeal to the Dean of the SBH where the disciplinary issues will be further reviewed. This may require the student to meet with the Dean in person in order to clarify any needed information. The dean may choose to conduct the review or may convene an ad hoc faculty review committee. Ad hoc review committees are made up of at least three faculty members in the School or the University who have been identified as capable of impartiality regarding the situation under review. The student may make a presentation to the faculty review committee and may be accompanied by a faculty representative, but they may not be accompanied by family, friends, or legal counsel in the meeting room. The faculty ad hoc review committee then provides its findings to the dean, which may include agreement or disagreement with the original faculty decision(s); or the committee may make additional or alternative recommendations to the dean. A more detailed protocol that guides the committee process is provided by the dean.
3. A written determination will be provided to the student once the process is complete.

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## REFERENCES

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American Psychological Association. (1992). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct. *American Psychologist*, 47, 1597-1611.

The National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research. (1979). *The Belmont Report: ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research* (DHHS Publication, GPO 887-809). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

# APPENDIX A

## School of Behavioral Health Form Deadlines 2025-2027

Academic Variances (due before these dates): Spring/Summer=Oct 1; Fall=March 1;  
Winter=July 1

QUARTER	START/END TERM	SBH FORMS	SBH DEAN'S OFFICE BY NOON
<b>SUMMER 2025</b>	<b>6/23/25-9/5/25</b>	Form A/ATC	November 1, 2024
(202601)		Graduation Petition	November 1, 2024
		Form IIB/IIC	June 6, 2025
		Form D	August 29, 2025
<b>FALL 2025</b>	<b>9/22/25-12/12/25</b>	Form A/ATC	April 1, 2025
(202602)		Graduation Petition	April 1, 2025
		Form D	December 5, 2025
<b>WINTER 2026</b>	<b>1/5/26-3/20/26</b>	Form A/ATC	August 1, 2025
(202603)		Graduation Petition	August 1, 2025
		Form D	March 13, 2026
<b>SPRING 2026</b>	<b>3/30/26-6/12/26</b>	Form A/ATC	November 1, 2025
(202604)		Graduation Petition	November 1, 2025
		Form IIB/IIC	June 5, 2026
		Form D	June 5, 2026
<b>SUMMER 2026</b>	<b>6/22/26-9/4/2026</b>	Form A/ATC	November 1, 2025
(202701)		Graduation Petition	November 1, 2025
		Form IIB/IIC	June 5, 2026
		Form D	August 28, 2026
<b>FALL 2026</b>	<b>9/21/26-12/11/26</b>	Form A/ATC	April 1, 2026
(202702)		Graduation Petition	April 1, 2026
		Form D	December 4, 2026
<b>WINTER 2027</b>	<b>1/4/27-3/19/27</b>	Form A/ATC	August 3, 2026
(202703)		Graduation Petition	August 3, 2026
		Form D	March 12, 2027
<b>SPRING 2027</b>	<b>3/29/27-6/11/27</b>	Form A/ATC	November 2, 2026
(202704)		Graduation Petition	November 2, 2026
		Form D	June 4, 2027

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## APPENDIX B

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### SBH Project Due Dates

Quarter	Final Draft Due
Summer 2025	August 18, 2025
Fall 2025	November 24, 2025
Winter 2026	March 2, 2026
Spring 2026	May 5, 2026
Summer 2026	August 17, 2026
Fall 2026	November 23, 2026
Winter 2027	March 3, 2027