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**UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH FLORIDA**  
A PREEMINENT RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

# School of Social Work

## BSW Program Student Handbook

School of Social Work, College of Behavior & Community Sciences, University of South Florida

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The BSW Student Handbook provides information to students about the School of Social Work and the BSW Program policies and requirements. Please be aware that you are ultimately responsible for your education, meeting graduation requirements, and assuring that you comply with University, Undergraduate Studies, College of Behavioral and Community Sciences, and School of Social Work regulations, policies, and procedures. Please refer to the USF Undergraduate Catalog for additional information about admissions requirements, academic policies, and graduation requirements.

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## INTRODUCTION

**Congratulations on your admission to the USF School of Social Work BSW program!** The BSW Student Handbook was created to offer you information about the undergraduate social work program, school and program policies and procedures, and student rights and responsibilities. We hope it will be both helpful and useful for you as you continue through the program.

### **School of Social Work Mission Statement**

The mission of the University of South Florida, School of Social Work, is to prepare graduates to achieve excellence as professionals and leaders in social work practice, research, and education. Our focus is to develop generalist social workers at the bachelor's level, clinical social workers at the master's level and social work scholars at the doctoral level and to encourage students to embrace social work knowledge, ethics, skills, and values. Beginning in our own diverse region, and extending nationally and globally, we are committed to graduating students who reflect the School's commitment to promoting social and economic justice, human rights, human dignity, scientific inquiry, and sustainable human and community well-being for all.

### **Please make yourself familiar with the School of Social Work Website:**

<http://www.usf.edu/cbcs/social-work/>

The School of Social work webpage has important information you will need as you go through the program. The **BSW Field Manual, which is your guide to the field placement process and other important information about your field placement experience**, can also be located there.

#### **I. BSW PROGRAM**

The primary objective of the BSW degree is the preparation of the graduate for beginning level professional practice as a social work generalist. In preparing the BSW graduate for beginning professional practice, the curriculum provides the student with an opportunity to develop a knowledge base and skill base as a “generalist” practitioner. Through both classroom instruction and a field experience, the student will develop an understanding of various methods of intervention and skills in their application to a variety of client systems and an understanding of the dynamics of human behavior in individual, group, and organizational contexts and the influences of the socio-cultural environment upon those behaviors. The student will also learn about the development of social welfare systems and institutions and the social, economic, and political processes affecting policy development and program implementation. The student will also develop an understanding of the utilization of basic social research skills, particularly as they relate to the process of problem-solving, planning, and evaluation. The BSW program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

**A. Curriculum Overview: Social Work Core Courses for Completion of the BSW Program**

Social Work Foundation Courses

SOW 3203 Introduction to Social Work 3  
3 credits

First Semester

SOW 3101 Human Behavior & the Social Environment I 3  
SOW 4522 Multi-Cultural America in a Global Society 3  
SOW 4341 Multi Meth. of Social Work I: Micro Practice 3  
SOW 3401 Research and Statistics 3  
SOW 3210 The American Social Welfare System 3  
15 credits

Second Semester

SOW 3102 Human Behavior & the Social Environment II 3  
SOW 4233 Social Welfare: Policy & Program 3  
SOW 4343 Multi Meth. of Social Work II: Macro Practice 3  
SOW 4315 Case Management 3  
SOW 4414 Data Management 2  
14 credits

Final Semester

SOW 4510C Integrative Seminar & Field Placement 9  
\*SOW 4602 Social Work Practice in Mental Health and Health Care 3  
12 credits

Total Credits 41 credits

\* May be replaced by Education Abroad if approved by the School of Social Work (discuss with advisor). \*

(For Course Descriptions: Course Inventory <https://www.systemacademics.usf.edu/course-inventory/> )

**B. Field Instruction**

1. Students enter the field in the third semester of the BSW program, as part of SOW 4510C. Students receive information about the field application and interview process in the second semester. The field placement requirement is a minimum of 460 hours. Students should plan to spend approximately 32 hours per week for 15 weeks, Monday through Thursday, in their field placement. Students are in classes on Friday. The field placement is supervised by a School of Social Work approved field instructor who serves as the agency-based faculty representative. Along with the field placement component of SOW 4510C, students are concurrently enrolled in the field

seminar class, which is designed to connect learning in the field with learning in the classroom. For more information about field program policies and procedures, refer to the School of Social Work Field Manual, which is available on the School's website.

**C. Integrative Paper**

As part of SOW 4510C in the final semester, students will complete a major paper in the BSW program. This Integrative Paper demonstrates the students' abilities to integrate the full curriculum with the actual field experience. Saving all syllabi, and textbooks if possible, from BSW coursework, is essential for successful completion of this paper.

**D. School of Social Work BSW Program Committee**

The BSW Committee is composed of faculty who teach in the BSW program and the BSW advisor. Student representatives, elected by their respective cohorts, also attend the BSW Committee meetings. The Committee is responsible for all policy and procedural matters related to the BSW Program including curriculum, research, and administration. These responsibilities include review of the program to assure program quality and outcomes and action on all matters of policy and procedure regarding the BSW Program.

**II. ACADEMIC POLICIES**

**A. Progression in Program**

In order to proceed from Fall to Spring or from Spring to Fall semesters, a student must maintain a minimum 2.75 GPA in the Social Work (SOW) Major courses, complete required courses for the semester, and receive grades of "C" or higher in all courses ("C-" is considered failing). A student may not proceed to field placement unless all of these standards are met. No exceptions will be made.

**B. Mid Semester Review**

It is the policy of the School of Social Work to support students who are having difficulties. If a faculty member is concerned about a student's progress in the BSW program, the faculty member may choose to submit a mid-semester report identifying the problem and the attempts to resolve it. If a mid-semester report has been submitted, the student will be informed of this. Following the submission of the report to the advisor, the student may be contacted to attend a meeting.

**C. Individual Course Withdrawal**

Withdrawal from any one course will disrupt progress in the BSW major. Students should contact the BSW Advisor concerning any decisions related to class withdrawals.

**D. Course Repeats- Dismissal Policy**

If a student withdraws or fails a course in the BSW Program (C- or lower) the student may retake the course one time. If that effort results in a failure the student will be dismissed from the BSW Program. In this situation see the BSW Advisor for a redirection to a different major.

Withdrawal from or failing SOW 4510C, or dismissal from a field placement, will not automatically allow the student to retake SOW 4510C. Special permission from the BSW Chair is required to register again for SOW 4510C under these circumstances. These are the only circumstances that SOW 4510C may be repeated. If permission is given to retake SOW 4510C, the 460-hour field placement must be completed within the single semester for which the permission is given. A split field placement is not an option if the student has withdrawn from or failed SOW 4510C or been dismissed from a field placement.

**E. Request for Incomplete ("I") Grade**

An Incomplete is only assigned when all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- a) The student has completed a majority of the work for the course.
- b) The student is achieving a passing grade.
- c) The student is not able to finish the course because of a compelling reason beyond his/her grade.
- d) The student requests an Incomplete and communicates the reason for this request.
- e) For SOW 4510C, an Incomplete grade request is only granted in particular circumstances and must be approved by the BSW Field Coordinator and BSW Program Chair, in addition to the Seminar Instructor.

Guidelines for Incomplete:

- a) The "I" contract is created by the instructor and the student. The time limit for removing the "I" is to be set by the instructor of the course, but is not to exceed an additional two academic semesters (see USF undergraduate catalog <http://ugs.usf.edu/catalogs.php>).
- b) The contract will include the assignments and dates by which the assignments are to be completed. It will also require student and instructor signatures with date (s) signed.

- c) The contract will include the assignments and dates by which the assignments are to be completed. It will also require student and Instructor signatures with date (s) signed.

**F. School Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to be on time and prepared to participate when class begins as well as be present throughout the entire class meeting. Classroom exercises, discussions, role-plays, guest speakers, and other in-class experiential exercises are essential for a student's professional learning and continued development of self-awareness. This form of learning cannot be "made up" once missed. Accordingly, attendance is required at all class meetings. Excused absences are limited to the following instances: documented illness, death in the immediate family or other documented crisis, military duty, jury duty, religious holidays (consistent with University Policy, 10-045), court-imposed legal obligations other than jury duty, and special requirements of other courses (must be documented by the faculty member of record). A student is considered absent if he/she arrives more than 30 minutes late to class, leaves 30 minutes or more early, or does not come to class. Students are allowed to miss two classes (for classes that meet twice weekly) or one class (for classes that meet only once per week) without penalty. After that, 5% off of the total grade may be deducted for each missed class, at the faculty member's discretion.

**G. Program Withdrawal**

Students are expected to make any necessary arrangements for responsible withdrawal from classes and field placement. It is the student's responsibility to contact the School and/or agency to determine the specific steps necessary to address the needs of all parties (i.e. termination of client/worker relationships, paperwork, etc.). The following procedure is to be utilized:

- a) Notify class instructors and agency field instructor in a timely manner
- b) Notify BSW Committee Chair and Field Coordinator by email
- c) Schedule an appointment with your BSW Advisor

**H. Transfer Credits**

Equivalent pre-requisite courses may be completed at community colleges or other universities. A review of student transfer credits will be completed during the student's initial appointment with a BSW advisor. The student must provide a copy of the syllabus for the transfer course. The BSW Chair and one member of the faculty who has taught the class for which transfer credits are being sought will review the syllabus submitted by the student. The purpose of the review is to determine the extent to which the course covers the required social work competencies. The final decision to accept transfer credits rests with the Chair of the BSW program.

In instances where a student is granted transfer credits but the number of credits earned by the student is less than the number of credits required by the BSW program curriculum, the student, in consultation with the BSW Chair, will arrange an independent study. The BSW program does not accept life experience or work experience in place of required social work courses, including field practicum.

### **III. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND STUDENT CONDUCT**

#### **A. University Policy on Academic Honesty and Integrity**

Members of the University Community support high standards of individual conduct and human relations. Responsibility for one's own conduct and respect for the rights of others are essential conditions for academic and personal freedom within the University. USF reserves the right to deny admission or refuse enrollment to students whose actions are contrary to the purposes of the University or impair the welfare or freedom of other members of the University community. Disciplinary procedures are followed when a student fails to exercise responsibility in an acceptable manner or commits an offense as outlined in the Student Conduct Code." Refer to the USF 6.0021, Student Code of Conduct, at: <http://regulationspolicies.usf.edu/regulations/pdfs/regulation-usf6.0021.pdf> (*USF Undergraduate Catalog*).

The USF System Policy on Academic Integrity of Students (see <http://regulationspolicies.usf.edu/regulations/pdfs/regulation-usf3.027.pdf>) states that "academic integrity is the foundation of the University of South Florida's (USF System) commitment to the academic honesty and personal integrity of its University Community. Academic integrity is grounded in certain fundamental values, which include honesty, respect, and fairness. Broadly defined, academic honesty is the completion of all academic endeavors and claims of scholarly knowledge as representative of one's own efforts. Knowledge and maintenance of the academic standards of honesty and integrity as set forth by the University are the responsibility of the entire academic community, including the instructional faculty, staff and students." See USF Undergraduate Catalog for examples of academic integrity violations.

#### **B. School of Social Work Expectations for Professional Behavior**

1. BSW students are expected to exhibit professional behavior in both academic and field placement settings and to conduct themselves with responsibility,

honesty, and integrity. Professional behavior includes agreeing to abide by University, Undergraduate, and School of Social Work policies regarding:

- a) Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty
  - b) Problem and Conflict Resolution and Academic Grievance Procedures
  - c) The Student Code of Conduct and the NASW Code of Ethics
2. Students sign the BSW Student Accountability Form prior to beginning program coursework. By signing, students agree to abide by the above-described policies.

### **C. Program Dismissal**

Entrance into the BSW Program does not guarantee graduation from the program. Students must maintain the required GPA, complete their field hours, and pass their field evaluations. Failure to exhibit responsible professional behavior as determined by the School may result in dismissal from the program. The following situations may result in dismissal:

- a) Behavior that is inconsistent with the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers:  
<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>
- b) Behavior or performance, or lack thereof, which raises questions from the faculty or field instructor about the student's suitability for professional social work (see Field Manual on School website)
- c) Plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty or disruption.
- d) Dismissal from Field Placement

In order to detect and reduce possible plagiarism, BSW courses use plagiarism software for student submission of assignments, papers, quizzes, etc.

A BSW student who is dismissed from the BSW program will be notified in writing of the decision. The student will be provided with information on the reason for the program dismissal as well as information on their rights and process to grieve the decision.

### **D. Problem & Conflict Resolution & Academic Grievance Procedures (Refer to Appendix II)**

## IV. ACADEMIC RESOURCES

### A. Student Advising

It is highly recommended that students schedule an advising session at least one time per semester with the BSW Advisor. These appointments are scheduled through Archivum:

<https://usf.appiancloud.com/suite/sites/archivum/page/archivum/report/daQEig> in 30-minute slots. The sessions may be done either by telephone or in the office. The advisor is also available by email at [aweisz@usf.edu](mailto:aweisz@usf.edu).

### B. Writing & Research Resources

1. APA Style - Resources to Help You Become APA Proficient
  - a. APA webpage - <http://www.apastyle.org/>
  - b. USF Library resources - <http://www.lib.usf.edu/fmhi/instructional-videos/>
  - c. Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) - <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
2. Preventing Plagiarism - Tips and Strategies to Help You Avoid Plagiarism in Writing
  - a. Use USF resources - <http://www.lib.usf.edu/guides/avoiding-plagiarism/> or request a research consultation with a librarian.
  - b. In most cases, USF plagiarism software is linked to course assignments in Canvas. Learn about software - [http://turnitin.com/en\\_us](http://turnitin.com/en_us)
3. The Writing Studio: located in the main library, offers students pre-scheduled one-on-one consultations. To schedule an appointment <http://www.usf.edu/undergrad/academic-success-center/writing-studio/appointments-2.aspx> or 813-974-8293.
4. SmartThinking: offers live, online tutoring in many areas, including writing and English for Speakers of Other Languages. Access resources at: <https://www.usf.edu/undergrad/academic-success-center/>
5. USF Library: The USF Library provides many sources that can assist you with your research. For more information on the USF Library visit <https://www.lib.usf.edu/>

### C. Electronic Communication

All students must obtain a USF Net ID that allows access to MyUSF, Canvas (USF Academic Portal), your Email account, and USF Computer labs. The BSW student listserv is a primary source of communication regarding program business and provides students with up-to-date information regarding school matters and employment opportunities. All communication from the school will be sent to

students' USF issued e-mail address. Students are required to check their USF e-mail account on a regular basis, including during the summer and school breaks.

#### **D. Students with Disabilities Services**

The School of Social Work is committed to working toward the elimination of any potential barrier to the education of a student accepted and enrolled in academic course work provided by this School. The faculty of the School follow the policies and procedures outlined by the University and articulated by the University's Office of Students with Disabilities Services (SDS). *Students in need of academic accommodations for a disability may consult with Students with Disabilities Services to arrange appropriate accommodations.* Students must inform any instructor as soon as the student has been registered with the Disability Services (SDS) office.

The Office of Students with Disabilities Services makes the final determination as to the type of need and the type of assistance that can be rendered for students with disabilities. The process of applying for services is described in detail on the SDS website [www.sds.usf.edu](http://www.sds.usf.edu).

### **V. STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **A. Social Work Society**

The Social Work Society (SWS), housed within the USF School of Social Work, is a student organization open to all undergraduate and graduate students at the university. The primary aims of the society are twofold: first, to promote positive socialization among students interested in issues of social justice and positive social change; and, second, to raise funds and engage in service activities that address human needs and social justice concerns both on campus and within communities locally, regionally, and nationally.

#### **B. BSW Class Representative**

Every Fall and Spring semester, when a new cohort is admitted, there is an opportunity for a student to be elected as class representative to the BSW Committee. The Class Representative serves as a liaison between classmates and the BSW Committee for the purpose of providing a means to enhance communication between both parties. The Class Representative is elected by students, via in-class voting, to serve for the duration of their three-semester BSW Program (**see Appendix I: BSW Class Representative**).

#### **C. BRIDGE Healthcare Clinic**

The BRIDGE Healthcare Clinic is a student-run free clinic which involves a collaboration of USF students studying medicine, pharmacy, physical

therapy, public health, and social work. It provides routine medical care for uninsured adults in the University Area Community.

#### **D. LEAD (Legislative Education and Advocacy Days)**

Students are encouraged to participate in the National Association of Social Workers – Florida annual Legislative Education and Advocacy Days (LEAD) in Tallahassee, which typically take place during the spring semester. The State Capitol educational activity enables social work students to apply macro practice skills learned in the classroom to the real life macro environment of the state legislature and executive branch of government. By learning from policy experts about state legislative and budget issues that affect social workers and the clients they serve, and having an opportunity to talk to elected officials about these issues, students gain confidence and competence in the macro practice area.

1. Prior to LEAD, students attend a basic legislative training session held on campus.
2. A school-sponsored bus to the State Capitol is provided and students are offered a group rate to stay overnight in a Tallahassee motel.
3. Training is continued in Tallahassee, provided by NASW experts and others who provide students with everything needed to feel comfortable visiting legislators and getting around the State Capitol complex.

#### **E. Phi Alpha Honor Society-Delta Sigma Chapter**

Phi Alpha honors social work students who have attained excellence of scholarship and distinction of achievement as students of social work. The mission of Phi Alpha is to recognize and promote scholastic achievement among social work students and faculty at USF, to promote fellowship among students of social work, and to further the goals and values of the social work profession in our community and nationally.

1. **Eligibility:** A grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 overall on a 4.0 scale (includes all coursework including undergraduate coursework taken at other colleges/universities and a 3.25 in social work courses. Eligibility is determined at the beginning of the student's last semester. Eligible students receive their letter of invitation to join the chapter at this time. (Any students who believe they meet eligibility requirements, but do not receive an invitation to join the chapter, should check with the School of Social Work's Academic Program Specialist).
2. **Membership Dues:** A one-time life membership fee of \$30 includes a certificate of membership from the national office (for additional information see USF School of Social Work website). A Phi Alpha sash may be purchased through USF to wear at the commencement ceremonies.

## **F. Research Opportunities with the School of Social Work Faculty**

Faculty in the School of Social Work are involved in a variety of research areas that may provide opportunities for students to assist and gain research skills and experience. These projects are typically grant-funded and designed to find solutions to help people in need and address social problems. Information about faculty research can be found at <https://www.usf.edu/cbcs/social-work/research/>. Students should contact individual professors for more information about specific projects of interest.

## **G. USF School of Social Work Alumni Association**

1. The School of Social Work Alumni Association, as part of the USF Alumni Association, is active in maintaining ties with BSW and MSW social work graduates. The Alumni Association collaborates with the Tampa Bay Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers to sponsor events and recognize the achievements of social workers in the community.
2. Students are encouraged to join the alumni Association immediately upon graduation by visiting the School of Social Work website and following the directions for alumni membership.

## **H. National Association of Social Workers (NASW)**

1. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the National Association of Social Workers – Florida Chapter (NASW-FL) promote and advocate for the social work profession nationally and at the state level. The Tampa Bay Unit, one of 18 local NASW-FL Units in the state, offers opportunities for networking, continuing education, and community events.
2. Student members receive full benefits of association membership at about a 75 percent savings. Benefits include membership at the federal, state, and local level; receiving national and state-level publications; access to job listings and affordable malpractice insurance, as well as journals, videos, workshops and policy statements on issues social workers care about. There are also numerous opportunities to meet other social workers and to access leadership development as a NASW Student representative, committee member, or volunteer at the unit, state, or national level.

## **Appendix I: BSW Class Representative**

**University of South Florida  
School of Social Work  
BSW Program**

**CLASS REPRESENTATIVE  
*Position Guidelines***

Responsibilities include:

1. Acts as the spokesperson and represents classmates in all BSW program related matters.
2. Attends all BSW Program Committee meetings (in person or, when necessary and if feasible, remotely, i.e., by telephone, proxy, or other method).
3. The Class Representative must be knowledgeable about the problem resolution process and operational structure in the School of Social Work.
4. The class representative's discussion items should be emailed to the BSW Chairperson one week prior to the BSW meeting. The Chairperson will include these items on the agenda of the BSW Program Committee meetings.
5. The Program Specialist will email the dates and times of the BSW Committee meetings to the class representatives who will be responsible for sharing this information with classmates.
6. The Class Representative solicits input from classmates and represents them at meetings by asking for information and presenting issues that are current and relevant to their cohort.
7. The Class Representative insures that all issues brought to the attention of the BSW Program Committee are appropriate. Appropriate issues to bring to the BSW Program Committee meeting include (but are not limited to) macro-related issues regarding program guidelines and/or suggestions for improving current program guidelines.
8. The Class Representative ensures that personal issues involving individual classes and/or professors are addressed directly with the specific parties involved per the Problem Resolution Solving Process.
9. The Class Representative reports the proceedings of the BSW Program Committee in written form (e.g., by email) first to the BSW Chairperson. After review for accuracy, it is returned to the Representative who then distributes it to the cohort in a timely manner. Class time is not to be used for this purpose.
10. The Class Representative actively promotes and adheres to the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers. Professionalism is expected at all times while on campus and while performing class representative duties. Respect, openness, a non-judgmental attitude, and non-critical interactions are essential.

## Appendix II: Problem & Conflict Resolution & Academic Grievance Procedures

### University of South Florida School of Social Work

#### PROBLEM & CONFLICT RESOLUTION & ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE

The faculty of the School of Social Work is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning. In order to sustain this creative environment, faculty, students, and staff are encouraged to conduct themselves in a professional manner when resolving general problems or conflicts that may occur in the course of classroom learning, field education, and professional interchange. The School of Social Work is committed to resolving issues at the earliest possible point. In order to achieve a fair and equitable resolution of general student or faculty concerns, complaints or disagreements about issues which affect any area of student academic performance or the classroom/field setting, the student, faculty member and/or field instructor shall make reasonable effort to resolve his or her grievance with the concern or problem. For academic grievances that are not resolved and include a reference to a violation of a specific USF Policy, or an academic decision that was applied differently to the grievant than other students, students are to follow with the Academic Grievance Procedure provided in USF Policy 10-002: <http://regulationspolicies.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-10-002.pdf>

#### General Guidelines:

- It is important to note that if an instructor or supervisor deems that a student's behavior or academic performance creates a safety or disruption risk, the instructor or supervisor may take immediate action and remove the student from a classroom or field placement.
- Unless directed otherwise by an instructor or supervisor, students with concerns must continue to meet the directives and participation requirements of a class or field placement and must complete all assignments in a timely fashion. Failure to fully participate and complete assignments may result in a failure or dismissal.

Student Code of Conduct <http://regulationspolicies.usf.edu/regulations/pdfs/regulation-usf6.0021.pdf>

Office of Students Rights & Responsibilities (Honor Code) <http://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/student-rights-responsibilities/about-us/honorcode.aspx>

*Approved by Faculty August 19, 2016*