



**AUBURN UNIVERSITY  
AT MONTGOMERY**

**Auburn University at Montgomery**

**Bachelor of Social Work Program  
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Spring 2025**

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Dear Social Work Major:

The faculty and staff in the Social Work Program are proud that you have chosen social work as your major.

Auburn University at Montgomery's Social Work Program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education who accredits social work programs nationwide. In order to maintain accreditation, social work programs and schools must meet all of the standards set forth by CSWE.

You may declare the pre-social work major at any time. As a sophomore, you must formally apply and gain admission to the program in order to proceed to the upper level classes (SOWK 3000 and higher). All pre-social work majors and social work majors are encouraged to join the Student Social Work Association.

This student handbook was prepared as a guide to obtaining your Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) from Auburn University at Montgomery. The handbook is by no means a replacement for the on-going one-to-one advising process with your departmental faculty advisor or university central advisor. The information here provides a framework through which you may structure your educational process. This handbook should be used in conjunction with the Auburn University at Montgomery Student Handbook (<https://www.aum.edu/aum-student-handbook/>).

We hope this handbook will be useful for you and if there are any questions concerning its contents, please make an appointment with your faculty advisor.

Sincerely,

*Susan T. Cashwell, Ph.D., LMSW*

Dr. Susan Cashwell, LMSW  
Associate Professor and BSW Program Director  
Auburn University at Montgomery

Updated: 08/2024

## Section I: Introduction

### Social Work as a Profession

Since its inception, the social work profession has concerned itself with helping people who are experiencing social problems to find ways of living more satisfying and productive lives. Social workers focus on social and economic justice in order to create a more just society locally, nationally, and globally. Social workers interface with an array of diverse populations in their attempt to achieve this goal. They serve people in the welfare system, health and mental health agencies, schools, corrections facilities and in the courts, substance abuse programs, community action agencies, and religious organizations. Social workers are engaged in tasks ranging from counseling individuals to cope with emotional and special problems to the broad-based efforts of planning, administration, legislation, and social reform.

The Auburn University at Montgomery's Social Work Program seeks to train students in the "generalist" practice model for beginning professional social work practice. This model teaches the student to work with a variety of system levels to enhance individuals, families, groups, organizations, and community functioning. The flexibility and broad knowledge base afforded to our students allows them to apply various methods and interventive techniques, to identify situations requiring the attention of those with advanced specialized knowledge and skills, to make appropriate referrals, and to evaluate the effectiveness of one's efforts.

The Auburn University at Montgomery's (AUM) Program prepares students in accordance with the profession's purpose and values.

*"The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social, racial, economic, and environmental justice; the creation of conditions that facilitate the realization of human rights; the elimination of poverty; and the enhancement of life for all people, locally and globally." (CSWE 2022 EPAS, pg. 14)*

*"Service, social justice, the dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, integrity, competence, human rights, and scientific inquiry are among the core values of social work. These values, along with an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective, underpin the explicit and implicit curriculum and frame the profession's commitment to respect all people and the quest for social, racial, economic, and environmental justice." (CSWE 2022 EPAS, pg. 14)*

The AUM's Social Work Baccalaureate Program has adopted the Council on Social Work Education's generalist social work practice definition as follows:

*“Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice.”*  
(CSWE 2022 EPAS, pg. 17)

The need for beginning-level generalist social work practitioners is evident in the Bureau of Labor’s projections that employment in the social work field is predicted to grow faster than average from 2022-2032. Competition for jobs is expected in cities as well as rural areas, where there is currently a vast need for social workers. The Alabama Department of Human Resources has been, and continues to be, the largest employer of social workers in the state. However, social workers who specialize in the aging population or rural areas will be in high demand due to the aging Baby Boomer population. Employment in local agencies is also expected to grow in response to the aging population and their needs of public welfare, family services, and adult protective services. An increase is also predicted for social workers who work in mental health, schools, substance abuse, and medical settings. In Alabama, to obtain employment as a Social Worker, one must possess a Bachelor or a Master of Social Work degree plus licensure.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the professional organization of social workers in the US, with members in 56 chapters throughout the United States and in the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Europe. NASW’s primary functions include professional development, establishing professional standards of social work practice, advancing sound social policies, and membership services. Membership in NASW is open to all social work students and practitioners. More information can be found at <http://www.socialworkers.org>.

### **The Social Work Program at Auburn University at Montgomery**

The Social Work Program is located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Liberal Arts Building in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work within the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

The Social Work Program curriculum integrates with the university core classes, which provide students with a broad liberal arts educational background. The Social Work foundation is also built upon the ethical principles of the Social Work profession. These ethical principles are based on the core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence

([www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org)).

The Bachelor of Social Work at Auburn University at Montgomery is a wise choice for the student committed to the advancement of human welfare and social justice. Whatever the social work field of special interest, the prospective social work student must be both intellectually able and committed to the ethics and purpose of the profession as set forth in the *Code of Ethics* of the National Association of Social Workers ([www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org)).

## **Program Mission Statement/Goals and Educational Competencies**

### ***Mission Statement***

AUM's BSW program, grounded in a liberal arts perspective, educates social workers to be ethical and competent practitioners who intervene and advocate for social, environmental, and economic justice across all system levels (individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities) utilizing a generalist perspective within a person-in-environment context. The program promotes a commitment to professional ethics and values, critical thinking, professionalism, lifelong learning, evidence-based practice, strengths-based perspective, justice, and service. The program is committed to culturally-responsive practice, social change, and the advancement of individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and society in order to create a more equitable society locally, nationally, and globally.

### ***Program Goals***

The goals of Auburn University at Montgomery's Social Work Program reflect the university's strong commitment to teaching, research and outreach. The goals that serve as an organizing framework are to prepare students to be:

1. Ethical and culturally-responsive generalist-level social workers who work with vulnerable and diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
2. Advocates for social, environmental, and economic justice to advance well-being in an ever-evolving global and technological environment.
3. Lifelong learners who utilize critical thinking, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, and research to inform practice and policy.
4. Social workers who support the mission and purpose of social work.

The AUM's Social Work curriculum prepares its graduates for generalist practice through mastery of core competencies and associated practice behaviors (as identified by the Council on Social Work Education). These competencies (identified below) are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills. Students must demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

### ***Educational Competencies and Practice Behaviors***

The Council on Social Work Education identifies 9 general competences and 20 practice behaviors for generalist level social workers

(<https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/bb5d8afe-7680-42dc-a332-a6e6103f4998/2022-EPAS.pdf>).

**Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.** Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant policies, laws, and regulations that may affect practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand that ethics are informed by principles of human rights and apply them toward realizing social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in their practice. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision making and apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize and manage personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. Social workers understand how their evolving worldview, personal experiences, and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally, understanding that self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Social workers use rights-based, antiracist, and anti-oppressive lenses to understand and critique the profession's history, mission, roles, and responsibilities and recognize historical and current contexts of oppression in shaping institutions and social work. Social workers understand the role of other professionals when engaged in interprofessional practice. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure relevant and effective practice. Social workers understand digital technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Social workers:

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context;
- demonstrate professional behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.



## **Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice.**

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights. Social workers are knowledgeable about the global intersecting and ongoing injustices throughout history that result in oppression and racism, including social work's role and response. Social workers critically evaluate the distribution of power and privilege in society in order to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice by reducing inequities and ensuring dignity and respect for all. Social workers advocate for and engage in strategies to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social resources, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Social workers:

- advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

## **Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) Practice.**

Social workers understand how racism and oppression shape human experiences and how these two constructs influence practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels and in policy and research. Social workers understand the pervasive impact of White supremacy and privilege and use their knowledge, awareness, and skills to engage in anti-racist practice. Social workers understand how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of factors including but not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that this intersectionality means that a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Social workers understand the societal and historical roots of social and racial injustices and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. Social workers understand cultural humility and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, racial, technological, and cultural exclusions, may create privilege and power resulting in systemic oppression.

Social workers:

- demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and
- demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

#### **Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice.**

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and building knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions pertaining to practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills regarding qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and they interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable to a variety of clients and constituencies. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from interprofessional and diverse research methods, approaches, and sources.

Social workers:

- apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and
- identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

#### **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice.**

Social workers identify social policy at the local, state, federal, and global level that affects wellbeing, human rights and justice, service delivery, and access to social services. Social workers recognize the historical, social, racial, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Social workers understand and critique the history and current structures of social policies and services and the role of policy in service delivery through rights-based, anti-oppressive,

and anti-racist lenses. Social workers influence policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation within their practice settings with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers actively engage in and advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive policy practice to effect change in those settings.

Social workers:

- use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

### **Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.**

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, and privilege as well as their personal values and personal experiences may affect their ability to engage effectively with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers use the principles of interprofessional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Social workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

### **Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.**

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in culturally responsive assessment with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Assessment involves a collaborative process of defining presenting challenges and identifying strengths with individuals, families,

groups, organizations, and communities to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and use interprofessional collaboration in this process. Social workers are self-reflective and understand how bias, power, privilege, and their personal values and experiences may affect their assessment and decision making.

Social workers:

- apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and
- demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

### **Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.**

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice. Social workers understand theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and other interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and they critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in selecting culturally responsive interventions with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions and participate in interprofessional collaboration to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers facilitate effective transitions and endings.

Social workers:

- engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and
- incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

### **Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.**

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to increase practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in evaluating outcomes.

Social workers understand theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

- select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and
- critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

### **Social Work Program Policy on Diversity**

Auburn University at Montgomery's Bachelor of Social Work Program embraces an enriched and enhanced intellectual community where diversity is celebrated. We uphold our commitment to identify, challenge, and work to abolish all forms of discrimination and oppression. We affirm our commitment to teaching and practice that shows empathy, justice, and equality to all people, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, faith, or sexual orientation. Through our teaching, service, and scholarship, we endeavor to confront oppressive and unjust forces. As a team of practitioners, faculty, staff, and administrators, we are united in the pursuit to end biases and empower our students towards this goal.

### **Social Work Program Values Statement on Non-Discrimination**

As stated in the National Association of Social Workers *Code of Ethics* and consistent with Auburn University at Montgomery's diversity goals, as outlined in the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan. We, the administration, faculty, staff, and social work program:

- Affirm that social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, economic status, or mental or physical ability.
- Are committed to teach, encourage, and promote an appreciation for and understanding of diversity in the Social Work Program at Auburn University at Montgomery and within our profession, and our community. Social workers should continually obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression.

### **Professional Licensure**

In the state of Alabama, social work licensing law requires that anyone employed as a "social worker" must have been tested and licensed by the state. It is possible only for persons having a social work degree from an accredited program to obtain such a license. The application for licensure can be obtained by calling the Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners at 334-242-5860.

## Graduate Study in Social Work

Students interested in advanced study may attend graduate school to obtain a master's degree in Social Work (MSW). Such training expands job opportunities and allows one the chance to specialize in various practice modalities, therefore, increasing the likelihood of employment in supervisory or managerial levels with substantially higher salary.

Typically, MSW programs are two full years in duration; however, many graduate schools offer "advanced standing programs" to BSW graduates with degrees from CSWE accredited programs and with exceptional grade point averages. Completion of an advanced standing program typically takes only one calendar year as compared to two academic years for a traditional program.

## Section II: Academic Guidelines

### The Social Work Curriculum

The Social Work Curriculum requirements account for 63 credit hours of the 122 total credit hours required for graduation.

Students are urged to pay special attention to the time constraints in signing up for the fieldwork course as well as the course sequencing as some courses are taught only once per year. It is important that students work with your Central Advisor or Faculty Advisory to stay on track in course sequencing. It is advisable that the major be declared prior to one's junior year. This may be done at any time by scheduling an appointment with the student's advisor. Students are required to complete courses in a specific order as indicated below.

Please note that in addition to declaring Pre-Social Work as a major, a student must be formally admitted to the program prior to enrolling in SOWK 3200. The Methods courses (SOWK 3200, 3500, and 4100) must be taken sequentially.

### Course Sequencing

Revised: August 2023

Freshman			
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
UNIV 1000 University Success	3	ENGL 1020 English Composition II	3
Biology with Lab <sup>6</sup>	4	Core Literature <sup>2</sup>	3
ENGL 1010 English Composition I	3	PSYC 1000 Intro to Psychology (Area IV)	3
Core Fine Art <sup>1</sup>	3	Core Mathematics <sup>5</sup> (MATH 1100)	3
SOWK 1000 Intro to Social Work	3	SOCI 2000 Intro to Sociology (Area IV)	3
	<b>16</b>		<b>15</b>

Sophomore			
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
COMM 2212 (Core Humanities)	3	Core History <sup>7</sup>	3
ANTH 2110 Cultural Anthro. (Area IV)	3	Core Literature <sup>2</sup>	3
POLS 1020 American Politics	3	Physical Science with Lab	4
SOWK 2220 Hist. of Social Welfare	3	SOWK 2000 Ethics for Social Workers	3
General Elective	3	PSYC 2780 Human Growth/Develop.	3
	<b>15</b>		<b>16</b>
Junior			
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
SOWK 3000 Div. and Soc. Justice	3	SOWK 3110 Human Behavior II	3
SOWK 3100 Human Behavior I	3	SOWK 3500 Social Work Groups <sup>10</sup>	3
SOWK 3720 Drugs/Alcohol Society	3	SOWK 3600 Social Welfare Policy	3
SOWK 3200 SW Individuals/Fam. <sup>10</sup>	3	SOWK 3700 Professional Dev. <sup>10</sup>	3
General Elective	3	SOWK/SOCI Elective	3
	<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>
Senior			
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
SOWK 4000 Social Work Advoc./Human Rights	3	SOWK 4914 Field Practicum <sup>10</sup>	9
SOWK 4020 Methods of So. Work Res. <sup>10</sup>	3	SOWK 4910 Field Practicum Seminar <sup>10</sup>	3
SOWK 4100 SW Orgs./Communities <sup>10</sup>	3	SOWK/SOCI Elective	3
SOWK 4420 SW & Mental Health	3		
General Elective	3		
	<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>TOTAL Credit Hours Required 122 with a GPA of 2.0 or higher.</b>			

<http://www.aum.edu/academics/core-curriculum>

(1) MUSI 2110, THEA 2040, VISU 1000, 2030, 2040, 2600, or other state-approved core Fine Arts course.

(2) ENGL 2530, ENGL 2540, ENGL 2570, ENGL 2580, ENGL 2600, ENGL 2610, or other state-approved Literature course.

(3) COMM 1010, 2212, ENGL 2530, 2540, 2570, 2580, 2600, 2610, FREN 1010, 1020, 2010, 2020, GERM 1010, 1020, 2010, 2020, INTL 2600, 2610, MUSI 2110, PHIL 2000, 2010, 2100, RELI 2010, SPAN 1010, 1020, 2010, 2020, THEA 2040, VISU 1000, 2030, 2040, 2600 or other state-approved core Humanities course

(4) A two-course sequence of Literature (see 2) or History (see 7) must be taken.

(5) MATH 1100, 1120, 1150, 1610, 1620, 2630, 2660 or other state-approved core Mathematics course.

(6) BIOL 1000/1001, 1010/1011, 1020/1021, 1050/1051, CHEM 1100/1101, 1200/1201, PHYS 2100/2101, 2200/2201, PSCI 1100/1101, 1400/1401, 1500/1501 or other state-approved core Science course.

(7) HIST 1010, 1020, HIST 1060, HIST 1070, 2010, 2020, or other state-approved core History course.

(8) ANTH 2110, ECON 1000, 2010, 2020, GEOG 2050, 2150, HIST 1010, 1020, 1060, 1070, 2010, 2020, ~~INTL 2050, 2110, 2150~~, JUST 1270, POLS 1020, 1200, PSYC 1000, SOCI 2000, 2010 or other state-approved core Social Science course.

(9) A minimum of 18 credit hours must be taken at AUM.

(10) Requires admission to the major

## Advising

### Academic Advising

**Policies:** Students admitted to AUM as Pre-Social Work majors are assigned to our dedicated department advisor in Central Advising. Central advisors normally advise students for their first 58 hours, at which time students are transferred to a college

specific advisor. However, in the case of social work, students will remain with Central Advising until the time they are admitted as a social work major and assigned to a college level advisor for further advising.

**Procedures:** The student is assigned an advisor until the student is admitted into the social work program. At that point, the BSW Program Director notifies the central advisor so the student can be transferred to the college level advisor.

### ***Professional Advising***

**Policies:** All professional advising is completed by social work faculty.

**Procedures:** At the time a student enrolls in the university and receives a central advisor, the BSW Program Director is notified. The BSW Program Director contacts the student via email to discuss professional advising. The BSW Program Director provides professional advising until the student is admitted into the program then the faculty advisor provides professional advising for the student. The faculty advisor is assigned at the student's admission to the major. The student is notified via email and USPS of their advisor. Students are required to meet with their professional advisor at least one in each semester.

### **Field Instruction**

A vital part of the social work curriculum is the fieldwork educational component. As part of field preparation, students will receive orientation to field and complete the necessary application documents during SOWK 3700. Field Practicum - SOWK 4314 (9 credit hours) will be taken during their last semester. This course requires students to be enrolled in Field Practicum Seminar - SOWK 4910 (3 credit hours) concurrently.

The fieldwork component is designed to give the student the opportunity to familiarize themselves with a given community agency and the role of the social work practitioner within the agency, to observe and practice skills learned in the classroom, and to develop, implement, and evaluate a set of competency-based practice behaviors.

The undergraduate BSW field placements emphasize generalist social work practice. Generalist practice is broadly defined and the boundaries for practice are usually determined by the identified client need, the mission and function of the agency, and level of training and skill of the student. The generalist social worker is expected to honor the values and ethics of the profession that convey respect for the dignity and worth of all clients and others with whom they interact. Skills expected include the ability to communicate empathy and genuineness when listening and interviewing. Ultimately, the student will be ready for employment as a beginning level generalist practitioner. Students will have an idea of the practice arena that they prefer at the completion of the field work experience.

The purpose of these processes is to encourage students to think and grow with respect to their interest in social work and to provide opportunities for faculty to assess the readiness of students to effectively practice.



**SOWK 4914** Field Practicum, the final field placement, is undertaken during the student's final semester in school and can only be arranged after the following criteria are met: obtain a grade of "C+" or better in all SOWK 2000-level courses and above and have an overall GPA of 2.5 in all Social Work courses. Student may not have any incompletes or outstanding needs on their Student Improvement Plan before entering field. Students must complete 400 hours during the semester, which is an estimated 27 hours a week for 15 weeks. Placements will be within a one-hour drive of Montgomery. Students may request to live at home and commute to the weekly integrative seminar if they live outside of the one-hour radius. Such arrangements will only be considered following careful assessment of the student's maturity, readiness to undertake fieldwork, motivation and commitment, sense of responsibility, and upon availability of a suitable placement. Out-of-area placements are within the purview of the Field Director. During the social work practice sequence, all students will engage in several self-assessments, which will assist the Field Director in determining the final field placement site.

**SOWK 4910** Students concurrently take Field Practicum Seminar in the same semester as Field Practicum. Seminar provides a forum to discuss practice-related issues and the integration of social work knowledge, skills, and values and ethics. Further it emphasizes the importance of the evaluating one's own practice, and integrates foundation content with field experience, with an emphasis on generalist practice.

The senior field practicum (SOWK 4914) is evaluated on a pass/fail basis. Students must make a grade of 77% or higher to pass. They must have a 3 out of 5 on each of the competencies on their final evaluation. The seminar (SOWK 4910) is graded. In rare cases, students will be allowed to re-take the fieldwork component to obtain a satisfactory grade. Students must be fully accepted into the Social Work Program and met all academic requirements prior to entering their final field placement (SOWK 4914) and must satisfactorily pass this placement in order to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work degree.

Life experiences and/or previous work experience cannot substitute for the field placement courses. While these experiences often prove to be instrumental in the student's choice of social work as a career and can enhance the student's education, they will not be able to count towards course credit.

## **Student Activities**

### ***Student Social Work Association (aka the Social Work Club)***

The Student Government Association charters the Student Social Work Association. The purpose of the organization is to associate ourselves as a cohort of undergraduate students interested in the professional of social work in order to promote the continued professional growth and development of each student. Belonging to and participating in the organization assists students in creating a deeper understanding of, and

appreciation for, the profession of social work. We connect in order to participate in activities that advance the profession of social work and promote social justice in the university community, the program, and greater community. Officers are elected annually and meetings are held at least two times per semester. The club hosts guest speakers from local agencies of interest to majors, as well as undertakes various service projects. Membership is open to all students, no matter their major.

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

Students are strongly encouraged to join the professional organization, the National Association of Social Workers. The NASW provides excellent networking and consulting opportunities. Policy advocacy and legislation that effects social workers are two services that the NASW provide for the profession. The NASW is the official professional organization for social workers. Applications are available online at <https://www.socialworkers.org/join>. In addition, local NASW representative can be found online at this website. The NASW may be reached at 1-800-638-8799. Students join at a discount rate and membership includes the following benefits:

- A subscription to *Social Work — The Journal of the National Association of Social Workers*.
- A subscription to *NASW News* reporting on issues of interest from NASW, state chapters, and on national and state political concern.
- Eligibility to purchase professional liability, health, life and other type of insurance for social workers.
- Notification of annual NASW conferences at the state, regional, and national levels
- A transitional period after graduation at reduced dues.
- Students are encouraged to participate in the Alabama Chapter of NASW ([alabama.naswal@socialworkers.org](mailto:alabama.naswal@socialworkers.org)). A representative to this chapter may be selected from current BSW students.

### **Support Services**

#### ***Center for Disability Services (CDS)***

Services for students with documented disabilities or those desiring evaluation are coordinated from the Center of Disability Services. For more information, visit <http://www.aum.edu/center-for-disability-services>, email [cds@aum.edu](mailto:cds@aum.edu) or call 334-244-3631.

#### ***Counseling & Health Promotion Services (CHPS)***

CHPS provides free and confidential help with any difficulties that students might be facing and is committed to supporting students' mental health and well-being. Counselors are available to assist students with concerns related to college stressors and challenges, anxiety, crisis intervention and prevention, prevention and intervention of suicidal ideation, LGBTQ+ related issues and concerns, domestic and dating violence, alcohol and substance abuse, sexual abuse, eating disorders, and a several other concerns. CHPS is located in 316 Taylor Center. For more information, visit <https://www.aum.edu/current-students/counseling-and-mental-health-services/>, email [counselingcenter@aum.edu](mailto:counselingcenter@aum.edu), or call 334-244-3469.

### ***Office of Inclusion and Diversity***

Auburn University at Montgomery (AUM) believes all people are unique and should be treated with respect and dignity. We recognize the diversity of individuals and their experiences, ideas, beliefs and cultures. AUM not only recognizes and values one's individuality but commits to cultivating an environment which fosters respect and dignity for all. In alignment with the AUM strategic plan and the university's core values, AUM promotes and embraces diversity in key areas to include, but not be limited to, race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, genetic information, economic status, or disability. For more information, visit <http://www.aum.edu/campus-life/student-affairs/diversity-and-inclusion> or contact [jsimps20@aum.edu](mailto:jsimps20@aum.edu)

### ***Warhawk Academic Success Center (WASC)***

WASC is a free one-stop shop for all student academic supports needs. Services they provide include tutoring, advising and developing of individuals plans for student access, financial counseling to help make AUM more affordable, and instructional support. WASC, including their Learning Center, is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Ida Belle Young Library Tower. The Instructional Support Lab is located in 202-203 Goodwyn Hall. For more information, visit <https://www.aum.edu/academics/academic-support/warhawk-academic-success-center/>, email [WASC@aum.edu](mailto:WASC@aum.edu), or call 334-244-3230.

### ***Career Development***

The AUM Career Development Center's mission is to educate, empower, and create opportunities for AUM students and alumni to achieve individual professional success. Our staff assist students through a proven process to assess and explore career options. As students move through their collegiate years, the CDC assists in developing and articulating their knowledge, skills, and competencies to stand out from their peers and prove their professional value as they look to their future beyond AUM. We build relationships with faculty, employers, and other members of the AUM community to create internships and other experiential opportunities, jobs for working students, and career opportunities for students and alumni ready to enter their chosen field. For more information, visit <https://www.aum.edu/career-resources/>.

## **Section III: Auburn University at Montgomery Social Work Program Policies and Processes**

### **Admissions Policy and Guidelines**

The process of becoming a professional social worker begins by formally declaring your major with an advisor at Central Advising. Once you have done so, you will be classified as a Pre-Social Work student.

Once you have declared a Pre-Social Work major, you may take all social work classes except SOWK 3200 (Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families), SOWK 3500

(Social Work Practice with Groups), SOWK 3600 (Social Welfare Policy), SOWK 3700 (Professional Development), SOWK 4020 (Methods of Social Work Research), SOWK 4100 (Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities), SOWK 4914 (Field Practicum), and SOWK 4910 (Field Practicum Seminar), which require a student to be fully admitted into the program prior to enrollment in the classes. Note, courses must be completed in a sequential manner as specified in the course sequencing in the academic session presented earlier in this handbook.

Students usually apply for the program during their last semester of the sophomore year. Admission to the program usually occurs during the first semester of the junior year. If you are a freshman or a sophomore and know from the outset that you wish to be a social work major, please see the Bachelor of Social Work Program Director as soon as possible. You need not be a Social Work major to take most lower level Social Work classes.

The admissions process is designed to result in an educational atmosphere most conducive to the development of professional social work practitioners. The intention is to ensure inclusion of students who not only have potential for academic achievement but who also exhibit behaviors and attitudes congruent with the values commonly upheld by the profession.

The program is committed to the promotion of diversity in its student population with regard to age, class, color, culture, ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation, and has special concern with the recruitment and admission of students who expand this diversity.

We encourage students with disabilities to consider Social Work as a major and urge them to utilize the Center for Disability Services. This office, in conjunction with the Social Work Program, can work to establish accommodations for students both in class and in fieldwork settings. They are located at 147 Taylor Center or can be reached by phone at 334-244-3631 or [cds@aum.edu](mailto:cds@aum.edu). Their website can be found at: <http://www.aum.edu/center-for-disability-services>.

Students' potential for social work practice, stability, serious interest, and willingness to engage in ongoing assessment of one's appropriateness for the profession, will be examined at the time of the admissions process. The Social Work Program faculty reserve the right to deny admission or to counsel students out of the program at any time if they do not meet the aforementioned criteria as well as the requirements below. The following courses are required and must be completed with a grade of C or better prior to admission:

- |             |                                 |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| • SOWK 1000 | Introduction to Social Work     |
| • SOCI 2000 | Introduction to Sociology       |
| • PSYC 1000 | General Introductory Psychology |
| • ANTH 2110 | Cultural Anthropology           |

- BIOL 1000 or 1010      Intro to Biology or Cellular/Molecular Basis
- PSYC 2780              Human Growth and Development
- POLS 1020              American Politics

The following courses are required and must be completed with a C+ or better prior to admission:

- SOWK 2000              Ethics for Social Workers
- SOWK 2220              Social Welfare History

Once admitted to the program, you will be assigned a social work faculty advisor who will help you plan your course schedule, discuss career choices, and discuss involvement in the social work club. It is of the utmost importance that you maintain regular contact with your faculty advisor in order to graduate within four years. We recommend visiting your advisor at least once per semester.

### ***Application Process***

#### ***Complete Application Packet***

- Complete On-line Program Application.
- Submit the following items to the Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work Office (LA 331):
  1. Obtain at least one letter of recommendation from someone you believe knows you well. This may include professors, social workers, work supervisors, or social service agency personnel. Note, AUM social work faculty (full-time or adjunct) cannot write your recommendation letter for admission into the program.
  2. Current transcript (unofficial).
  3. Resume.
  4. Written Professional Essay (see directions below).
  5. Social Work Standards Form.

#### ***Professional Essay Instructions***

Write an original 3 to 4-page double-spaced typed essay that addresses the following:

- Discuss the reasons you believe social work is an appropriate career choice for you given your personal values, life experiences, and ability to contribute to the profession.
- Discuss your history of helping others, or personal events that have contributed to your growth in awareness, sensitivity and understanding of diversity with regard to race, age, gender, lifestyle, class, culture, political ideology, immigration status, sexual orientation and gender identity, spirituality, or physical or intellectual ability.
- Discuss your personal values as they relate to the profession of social work values. Please review NASW Code of Ethics thoroughly. If there is a conflict with the profession's values, discuss how you will resolve those conflicts.
- Discuss your strengths and areas of growth as it relates to becoming a social work professional.

This essay should not be a paper from a previous class.

Applications are due bi-annually. Student apply between September 15<sup>th</sup> and September 30<sup>th</sup> for spring admission. For fall admissions, the application period is February 14<sup>th</sup> and February 28<sup>th</sup>. Applications are usually processed within six weeks of submission. The student is notified in writing via USPS of admissions decisions within one week of the decision.

The possible decisions are as follows:

#### Acceptance

Full admission to the program will allow the student to take all SOWK courses including Methods (SOWK 3200, SOWK 3400) and Field Placement (SOWK 4300, SOWK 4310). Generally, students will receive notification via USPS within two weeks of the decision.

#### Denial

A statement giving the reasons for the proposed denial will be mailed to the student via USPS within two weeks of the decision. Students will be given an opportunity to reapply. Students whose applications are denied will be given the opportunity to reapply unless they have been previously terminated from the program. In such cases, students must receive prior approval for reapplication.

#### Conditional Acceptance

Conditional acceptance allows a student admission to the program contingent upon the satisfactory completion of one or more admissions' requirement. Conditions for moving from conditional to full admission will be specified in writing via USPS to the student. Students conditionally accepted may enroll in any social work courses except Methods (SOWK 3200, SOWK 3400) and Field Placement (SOWK 4300, SOWK 4310) prior to obtaining full admission status.

Students considering earning a degree in social work who have been charged with or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony or have an indicated Child Abuse and Neglect finding by DHR should be aware of the following:

- Agencies and organizations that provide field instruction placements for social work students *may* require a criminal background check prior to agreeing to provide field instruction.
- Agencies employing social workers *may* also require criminal background checks prior to hiring employees.
- Alabama and most other states licensure laws for social workers inquire about whether the applicant has been charged with or convicted of a misdemeanor or a felony prior to allowing the applicant to sit for the licensure examination.
- A conviction does not mean you cannot be a social worker or be licensed. The

type of offense and evidence of rehabilitation are considered by most licensing boards.

All social work applicants are expected to read the BSW Student Handbook and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) *Code of Ethics*. Applicants will then be asked to sign a statement that they have read, are aware of the contents of, have been given a chance to ask questions, and will abide by the documents. The statement will be kept in students' files.

### **Transfer Policy**

Transfer of all non-social work courses is determined by the AUM Registrar's Office.

"Students who have completed post-secondary work in the United States may be eligible to receive transfer credit toward their AUM baccalaureate degree if that institution was regionally accredited -as recognized by the U.S. Department of Education- when the coursework was completed."

(<https://www.aum.edu/admissions/domestic-transfer-test-credits/>). Students may transfer up to 64 credited hours from a community college and an unlimited number from a 4-year institution which meets the regionally accredited criteria. The registrar's office transfers any grades of D or better.

Transfer of upper level social work courses, with a grade of C+ or higher, will only be accepted from CSWE-accredited schools after review by the BSW Program Director. The course must have been completed within 5 years of the student's request for transfer. Students transferring social work courses should talk with their social work advisor to determine the possibility of transferring courses. The BSW Program Director will review all social work transfer courses to ensure they are from CSWE-accredited schools. Students should submit request for social work transfer credit no later than the first semester after admission into the program. All requests for social work course transfers must be made in writing, and must include the syllabi for requested course(s), to the BSW Program Director who will make a determination within 10 business days of request. The student will be notified of the transfer status by USPS.

### **Life Experience Policy**

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

### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

No otherwise-qualified student shall, on the basis of ability, be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the Social Work Program. A student with a disability may be protected by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and be eligible for a reasonable accommodation(s) that will provide an equal opportunity to meet the academic criteria related to professional behavior and scholastic performance.

Any otherwise qualified student with a protected disability who requests a reasonable

accommodation(s) must notify the Center for Disability Services, located in 147 Taylor Center. To contact CDS, call 334-244-3631 or email cds@aum.edu. The Social Work Program, in close consultation with the Center for Disability Services, will review academic performance criteria in light of individual student circumstances to determine appropriate accommodation.

### **Student Input into the Social Work Program**

Students have several ways in which they provide input into the social work program.

1. *Faculty Search* - One student will serve on the social work faculty search committees. They will participate and provide feedback throughout the entire process. In addition, students will be able to provide feedback to the search committee on each candidate who has an on-site interview.
2. *Community Advisory Board* - Two students will serve on the Community Advisory Board that provides feedback on the program in general, as well as field opportunities and experiences.
3. *End of Semester Course Evaluations* - At the end of each course, students complete a course evaluation. Students are encouraged to provide comments about the course as it relates to the curriculum plan.
4. *Field Placement Evaluation* – At the end of a student's field place, they complete an evaluation of the field and the field sight.

### **Section IV: Policies and Procedures for Review of Student Performance**

Social work is a professional practice that has different expectations of students than do non-professional programs. Social workers traditionally serve vulnerable and/or disadvantaged populations. Social work programs have a responsibility to protect consumers and to ensure that their students are competent to begin practice and meet professional ethical standards. The Policies and Procedures for Review of Student Performance are linked to the student's ability to become effective social work professionals and are provided so that students and faculty can be clear about the expectations and procedures to address academic performance, professional behavior, and ethical conduct. Students are expected to exhibit behaviors that follow Auburn University at Montgomery's Social Work Program's policies, Auburn University at Montgomery's policies and standards, the NASW *Code of Ethics*, and professional ethical standards in the classroom, field placement, and community.

### **Evaluating Student's Academic Performance**

#### ***Policies***

Students' academic performance is monitored throughout the degree program. Students are required to maintain a "C+" or higher in all 2000 level and higher social work courses and an overall GPA of 2.25. Students who fail to maintain this expectation can be terminated from the program. Further, a semester GPA of 2.7 is required once a student is admitted into the major.



## ***Evaluation Criteria***

### **GPA**

- 1) Indicators of success.
  - C or higher in all pre-requisite courses.
  - C+ or higher in all social work 2000 level and above courses.
  - Achieve a 2.7 GPA each semester.
- 2) Indicators of concern.
  - Incomplete in more than one course.
  - Achieving grade below C+ in a social work course.
  - A GPA below 2.7 GPA each semester.
  - Earning a D in any social work course.

## ***Procedures***

The following guidelines are provided so that students and faculty can be clear about the procedures to address academic performance, professional behavior, and ethical conduct. When a student exhibits behavior that is not consistent with Auburn University at Montgomery's Social Work Program policies and standards, Auburn University at Montgomery's policies and standards, and/or the *NASW Code of Ethics* in the classroom, field placement, and/or community, faculty will initiate the following procedures:

**Step 1:** When a faculty member has identified that a student demonstrates at least one area of concern, he or she will meet with the student. During this meeting, the student and faculty member will develop a Student Performance Improvement Plan to address the concern(s). This action plan will include a description of the behaviors/concerns, goals for improvement, specific tasks for achieving goals, and time limit for accomplishing the change. The student, faculty member, and BSW Program Director will receive a copy of the plan. The faculty member will meet with the student periodically to review his or her progress.

**Step 2:** If the student has not made significant progress within the time allotted or continues to demonstrate indicators of concern, the faculty member will submit a brief written statement to the BSW Program Director regarding the issues, concerns, and a recommendation regarding the student. The faculty member should inform the student that she or he is proceeding with this step in the review process and send a copy of the letter with guidelines for the review process.

**Step 3:** The BSW Program Director will call a meeting within seven days of receiving the statement. The student is informed, in writing, of the time and date of the meeting. In addition, the student will be given the name(s) of any witnesses and faculty members who will be attending, and the specific issues that are to be addressed. This notice will also inform the student that they may

provide evidence or witnesses regarding the area of concern.

**Step 4:** The BSW Program Director, faculty, and student will meet at the designated date and time when issues and concerns are presented. The student is given the opportunity to present his or her own response and produce oral testimony or written statements of witnesses. The student may present other supportive documentation.

**Step 5:** The BSW Program Director will decide on the action to be taking. The recommendations from the group include:

- a. Dismissal of the original plan.
- b. Continuation of the original plan.
- c. Revision of the original plan.
- d. Termination from the program

If either b or c is recommended, the BSW Program Director will set up another date with the student to review the student's progress.

**Step 6:** If the student again fails to complete the revised plan or abide by the plan or the student's academic behavior is such that she or he would be unable to satisfactory perform as a social worker, the BSW Program Director has the authority to:

- a. Recommend to the faculty member in whose course the student is enrolled that a failing grade be given to the student for the course.
- b. Institute a probationary period for the student with specific tasks, goals and timelines.
- c. Suspend the student from the Social Work Program for a period of up to one year.
- d. Terminate the student from the Social Work Program.

If the decision is made to suspend or to terminate the student from the Social Work Program, the student has the right to appeal.

**Step 7:** The student is informed of the decision in writing via USPS within three days of the meeting.

**Step 8:** A copy of the decision is placed in the student's file.

## **Evaluating Student's Professional Performance**

### ***Policies***

Students' professional performance is monitored throughout their program of study. These include the following areas: accountability, conduct, confidentiality, professional value, ethics and integrity, competence, and diversity and social justice. Students who do not maintain performance standards can be terminated from the program.

## Evaluation Criteria:

### 1. Accountability.

#### 1) Indicators of success.

- Attends class and field internships, punctual and prepared.
- Abides by class attendance policies.
- Actively participates in group activities and assignments.
- Meets deadlines for advisement, registration, applications, etc.
- Demonstrates the ability to follow university and agency protocols, policies, and professional standards.
- Manages special needs in a timely manner.
- Responds in a timely manner to all forms of communications such as emails or phone calls.

#### 2) Indicators of concern

- Multiple absences from class or field placement.
- Multiple late attendance marks.
- Under prepared for course work.
- Late or incomplete assignments.
- Failure to adhere to practicum agency, university, or professional standards and policies.
- Repeated requests for extensions on assignments, exams, or applications.
- Failure to respond to professional communication.

### 2. Conduct

#### 1) Indicators of success.

- Treats all people (including peers, instructors, and office staff) with dignity and respect.
- Practices positive, constructive, respectful, and professional communications skills with peers and instructor (i.e. body language, empathy, active listening).
- Respects various and diverse opinions.
- Provides and manages feedback constructively.
- Uses open, non-judgmental, and person-first language.
- Demonstrates a willingness to understand diversity in people including age, class, race, color, ethnicity, gender, sex, culture, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and other forms of diversity.
- Adheres to the NASW *Code of Ethics*.
- Supports the concept of self-determination.
- Abides by established laws unless those laws are in direct opposition to the NASW *Code of Ethics*.

- Appropriate uses of self-disclosure.
- Maintains appropriate boundaries.
- Demonstrates ability to examine personal values and their fit with the social work professions expectations.
- Ability to develop and grow in reconciling differences between personal and professional values.
- Increase personal awareness and understand the impact of one's own behavior.
- Ability to form positive working relationships with peers, faculty, staff, supervisors, and clients.
- Ability to resolve one's personal issues that might impair professional performance.
- Manages stress with appropriate methods of coping.

## 2) Indicators of concern

- Creates class disruptions, including, but not limited to, creating conflict, disrupting and monopolizing class.
- Consistently late for class or field placement.
- Using derogatory language or demeaning remarks
- Discriminating behaviors.
- Unwillingness to develop an understanding of diversity.
- Academic misconduct.
- Relates interpersonally in a manner that is disrespectful, manipulative, discriminatory, disruptive and/or immature.
- Unable or unwilling to work through unresolved personal issues, including the control of emotional reactions.
- Demonstrates behavior consistent with impairment as a result of alcohol or drugs.
- Demonstrates emotional problems that interfere with one's ability to work effectively with clients, faculty, supervisors, staff, or peers.
- Verbal or physical threats to clients, faculty, supervisors, staff, or peers.
- Makes impaired judgement, or poor decision-making, or problem-solving skills.
- Fails to seek appropriate professional help for physical, emotional, or cognitive functions that impeded professional behavior.
- Demonstrates a negative attitude or lack of enthusiasm toward the social work program, the profession, or field placement.
- Unable to form effective relationships with clients, faculty, supervisors, staff, or peers.

### 3. Confidentiality

#### 1) Indicators of success

- Treats all information from a peer or an instructor as confidential.
- Uses judgment in self-disclosing information of a very personal nature in the classroom. For example, class time should not be used as therapy or treatment.
- Never use the name of clients or other identifying information in personal or class communications.

#### 2) Indicators of concern

- Shares information about faculty, staff, peers, agency staff or clients inappropriately.
- Shares information disclosed in class or field settings with individuals external to the learning environment.
- Demonstrates poor judgement in self-disclosure.
- Violates client confidentiality in the classroom or other setting.

### 4. Professional Values, Ethics, and Integrity

#### 1) Indicators of success

- Performs professional activity conforming with the values and ethics of the profession.
- Demonstrates and applies judgement that models the NASW *Code of Ethics*.
- Practices honesty with self, peers, staff and instructors.
- Learns and applies the rules of citing other's work properly.
- Does own work.
- Avoids conflict of interest.
- Adheres to human subject research guidelines
- Manages dual relationships

#### 2) Indicators of concern

- Violates the NASW *Code of Ethics*.
- Violates the AUM Code of Conduct or the policies and procedures in the BSW Student Handbook.
- Engaging in lying, cheating, or plagiarism on academic or professional documents.
- Falsification of documentation.
- Current involvement in a felony.
- Positive test results from a drug screen.
- Failure to disclose the inability to pass criminal background check or child abuse background.
- Submitting course work that has been previously submitted, is inaccurately cited, or is not one's own work.
- Engages in conflict(s) of interest within the university setting,

- including field practicum placements.
- Violating agency placement policies.

## 5. Competence

### 1) Indicators of success

- Demonstrates required competencies found in the CSWE Educational Policy Statement.
- Demonstrates the ability to utilize information to make informed and relevant decisions.
- Demonstrates the ability to critically apply the bio-psycho-social components that effect individuals, groups, families, and communities.
- Demonstrates the ability to use critical thinking skills.
- Demonstrates the use of evidence-based practice at all three levels of practice (micro, mezzo, and macro).
- Demonstrates effective oral and written communication.

### 2) Indicators of concern

- Fails to actively participate in the attainment of the expected social work practice competencies as found in the CSWE Educational Policy Statement.
- Fails to meet requirements of course or field work due to failure to balance personal and academic responsibilities.
- Demonstrates an inability to work with the framework of supervision, including course instructor, field liaison, or field supervisor.
- Demonstrates impairment as described in section 4.05 of the *NASW Code of Ethics*.
- Demonstrates an inability to effectively communicate, including both oral and/or written communication.

## 6. Diversity and Social Justice

### 1) Indicators of success

- Demonstrates an openness to people, ideas, and creeds that are not familiar.
- Demonstrates a capacity and willingness to work with diverse client populations.
- Communication is free of racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, stereotyping, and ethnocentrism.
- Demonstrates activities that promote sensitivity to, knowledge about, and appreciation of culture diversity.
- Demonstrates a commitment to social and economic justice for all populations.
- Demonstrates an understanding of how institutional and personal oppression impedes the experience of social justice for

individual, groups, and communities.

- Demonstrates a commitment to empowering populations, enhancing social justice, and societal well-being.

2) Indicators of concern

- Demonstrates an unwillingness to work with or gain a greater understanding of diverse populations.
- Demonstrates the use of stereotypes, judgmental attitudes, or prejudices.
- Demonstrates an unwillingness to accept and work with different cultures.
- Demonstrates an unwillingness to understand the impact of oppression on individuals, groups, and communities.

### ***Procedures***

The following guidelines are provided so that students and faculty can be clear about the procedures to address academic performance, professional behavior, and ethical conduct. When a student exhibits behavior that is not consistent with Auburn University at Montgomery's Social Work Program policies and standards, Auburn University at Montgomery's policies and standards, and/or the NASW *Code of Ethics* in the classroom, field placement, and/or community, faculty will initiate the following procedures:

**Step 1:** When a faculty member has identified that a student demonstrates at least one area of concern, he or she will meet with the student. During this meeting, the student and faculty member will develop a Student Performance Improvement Plan to address the concern(s). This action plan will include a description of the behaviors/concerns, goals for improvement, specific tasks for achieving goals, and time limit for accomplishing the change. The student, faculty member, and BSW Program Director will receive a copy of the plan. The faculty member will meet with the student periodically to review his or her progress.

**Step 2:** If the student has not made significant progress within the time allotted or continues to demonstrate indicators of concern, the faculty member will submit a brief written statement to the BSW Program Director regarding the issues, concerns, and a recommendation regarding the student. The faculty member should inform the student that she or he is proceeding with this step in the review process and send a copy of the letter with guidelines for the review process.

**Step 3:** The BSW Program Director will call a meeting within seven days of receiving the statement. The student is informed, in writing, of the time and date of the meeting. In addition, the student will be given the name(s) of any witnesses and faculty members who will be attending, and the specific issues that are to be addressed. This notice will also inform the student that they may provide evidence or witnesses regarding the area of concern

**Step 4:** The BSW Program Director, faculty, and student will meet at the designated date and time when issues and concerns are presented. The student is given the opportunity to present his or her own response and produce oral testimony or written statements of witnesses. The student may present other supportive documentation.

**Step 5:** The BSW Program Director will decide on the action to be taken. The recommendations from the group include:

- a. Dismissal of the original plan.
- b. Continuation of the original plan.
- c. Revision of the original plan.
- d. Termination from the program.

If either b or c is recommended, the BSW Program Director will set up another date with the student to review the student's progress.

**Step 6:** If the student again fails to complete the revised plan or abide by the plan or the student's academic behavior is such that she or he would be unable to satisfactorily perform as a social worker, the BSW Program Director has the authority to:

- a. Recommend to the faculty member in whose course the student is enrolled that a failing grade be given to the student for the course.
- b. Institute a probationary period for the student with specific tasks, goals and timelines.
- c. Suspend the student from the Social Work Program for a period of up to one year.
- d. Terminate the student from the Social Work Program.

If the decision is made to suspend or terminate the student from the Social Work Program, the student has the right to appeal.

**Step 7:** The student is informed of the decision in writing via USPS within three days of the meeting.

**Step 8:** A copy of the decision is placed in the student's file.

### **Appeals Process**

A student can appeal any decision with a written statement to the Department Chair within ten days of the letter of notification from the Program. The statement must specify reasons for disagreement with the decision and the rationale for considering a different decision. The Department Chair will review the decision and the student's written statement. The Department Chair will investigate the situation. The Department Chair will make a decision within 10 days of the student's appeal. If the student believes the decision was made in error, a written statement of appeal may be submitted to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS). The Dean of CLASS will review the situation. The Dean will decide within 10 days of the student's letter of



appeal. The decision of the Dean is final.

### **University Academic Grievance Policy**

If at any time a student in the Social Work Program has a concern regarding advising, academic performance, faculty behavior, or the outcome of the Faculty Review Process (see Appeals Process above), they should first seek to resolve the grievance with the faculty member or administrator involved. If these discussions are not satisfactory, the complaint would be taken to the next highest level pursuant to the AUM Student Academic Grievance Policy published in the Student Handbook. Students may at any time apprise the BSW Program Director or the Department Chair of the problem for added support. Students should refer to the Student Handbook for the Student Academic Grievance Policy (<http://online.fliphtml5.com/qgze/lmpu/#p=75>).

## **Section V: Rights and Responsibilities of Social Work Students**

The expectations of a professional education program with a commitment to service to individuals, groups, families, organizations, communities, and society places additional demands on students. The Auburn University at Montgomery's Social Work program is seeking accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education that ensures students their education meets national standards for professional social work practice. Students are responsible for pursuing excellence in their social work practice. Listed below are some of the rights and responsibilities of undergraduate students.

Students have the right to participate in academic and student affairs policy making. They have the right to:

- **Participate in Student Government at University Level**  
Students can participate in the student government at the university level. General Elections are held every spring for Senate and Executive Council Positions. Presidential Executive Cabinet members are interviewed by the Executive Council and then appointed by the President. (<https://www.aum.edu/student-affairs/student-government-association>)
- **Participate in Social Work Faculty Hiring process**  
Students participate in the social work faculty hiring process in two ways. First, a member of the Student Social Work Organization serves on the search committee. Second, all social work students will be invited to attend a presentation by faculty candidates. Those who attend will provide feedback to the search committee.

- **Participate in Social Work Association**  
Within university policy, students have the right to organize in clubs. The social work student body can participate in the Student Social Work Association.
- **Participate in Community Advisory Board**  
Students can participate in the Community Advisory Board. The social work students via the student organization will identify students to serve on the board.

### **Procedures Specifying Students' Rights to Participate in Academic and Student Affairs Policymaking:**

Students may participate in the AUM Student Government Association. General Elections are held every spring for Senate and Executive Council Positions. Presidential Executive Cabinet members are interviewed by the Executive Council and then appointed by the President.

Students may participate in the hiring process of social work faculty. One member of the student body will serve on the search committee for social work faculty. This student is usually the president of the Student Social Work Organization; however, they may appoint another student. In addition, faculty candidates will present to the student body. Feedback will be gathered from students participating in the presentation.

Students may have representation on the Community Advisory Board. Students will elect two students to serve on the Community Advisory Board. This selection will take place during the fall semester for 1 annual year.

### **Policies Specifying Students' Responsibilities to Participate in Academic and Student Affairs Policymaking:**

As active members of the student body, students have a responsibility to participate in academic and student affairs policymaking.

They are responsible for:

- Select representation by electing a President for the Student Social Work Organization.
- Select representation by electing two students to serve on the Community Advisory Board.
- Participate in the hiring of social work faculty.

## **Procedures Specifying Students' Responsibilities to Participate in Academic and Student Affairs Policymaking:**

Students are made aware of their responsibilities via the student handbook. Students will elect individuals to serve on Community Advisory Board and other committees as developed.

### **Student Rights**

Students in the Auburn University at Montgomery's Social Work Program have the right to:

1. Academic freedom, which includes the right within the academic program to examine, study, and write about controversial issues that relate to a program of study, and to discuss or present these issues as they relate to course content and context.
2. Freedom from harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, ethnicity, age, marital status, sexual orientation, class, religion, disability, political affiliation or any other qualification or characteristic that could prove discriminatory.
3. Freedom from arbitrary or capricious evaluation and grading.
4. Due process when appealing or grieving a grade, disciplinary action, or negative student personnel decision.
5. A comprehensive syllabus that details course content, objectives, policies, grading criteria, and assignments within the first week of classes.
6. Timely feedback on assignments and exams.
7. Reasonable access to advisors and instructors outside of class.
8. Confidentiality as detailed in course syllabi and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
9. Advising and an opportunity to improve when academic performance or behavior places their status in the Social Work Program in jeopardy (the student is responsible for monitoring his or her own grade point average to assure retention).
10. Freedom to organize when following the policies established by Auburn University at Montgomery.
11. Reasonable accommodation of documented disabilities.
12. Input into the evaluation of the Program, courses, and instructors.
13. Input into Program policies.
14. Input in the hiring of social work faculty.

### **Student Responsibilities**

Students in the Auburn University at Montgomery's Social Work Program have the following responsibilities:

1. To deal responsibly and maturely with controversial issues related to course content drawing on sound research and documented sources.
2. To realistically assess their fit with the social work profession, taking into consideration the ability to practice within the value base, standards, and ethics of the profession.
3. To respect the rights and dignity of classmates, faculty, agency personnel, and service recipients, and to model civility toward these persons as individuals and

groups.

4. To demonstrate cultural humility with diverse populations.
5. To responsibly and ethically address disagreements, conflicts, complaints, or grievances informally with the appropriate persons before initiating a formal procedure.
6. To carefully read and familiarize themselves with program and course policies, handouts, and syllabi.
7. To meet the requirements of the major and of each course.
8. To arrive to class prepared and on time, to attend regularly, and to contribute positively to the class environment and to the learning of self and others.
9. To practice timeliness of attendance in class and the field, on submission of work, and completion of field education assignments.
10. To follow through on commitments to the Program, classmates, personnel, and service recipients in the field.
11. To take responsibility for their own learning, identifying their own learning needs and taking steps to meet them, responsibly addressing concerns with instructors if problems or issues arise, and monitoring one's own progress seeking remediation when necessary.
12. To conscientiously follow the NASW *Code of Ethics*, classroom and field confidentiality policies, and to observe academic honesty in keeping with the Auburn University at Montgomery's Honor Code.
13. To make responsible efforts to contact instructors when they cannot be reached immediately, making appropriate use of e-mail, voicemail, and messages.
14. To use mechanisms such as evaluation of the work of fellow students and student rating of courses responsibly, observing honesty and objectivity, and providing constructive feedback.
15. To give appropriate advance notice when special accommodations are requested for any reason.
16. To actively participate in the evaluation of the Program, courses, and instructors.
17. To actively participate in hiring of social work faculty.
18. To actively participate in determining and revising Program policies.
19. To maintain their Auburn University at Montgomery's e-mail account and to check their e-mail and Canvas course websites on a daily basis. Faculty use Canvas and e-mail as a primary method of communication for course material and students are expected to take responsibility for using both of these forms of technology on a regular basis.

## Section VI: Faculty and Staff

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## **Section VII: Social Work Courses and Descriptions**

### **SOWK 1000 Introduction to Social Work (3)**

**Prerequisite: None**

Examines key concepts, ethics, and theories, of social work practice. Further examines areas of specialization within social work.

### **SOWK 2000 Ethics for Social Workers (3)**

**Prerequisite: SOWK 1000**

Students examine personal values, as well as societal values, and analyzes their interaction and interrelationship with the social work professional values. Analysis of the professions Code of Ethics and its relationship to professional social work.

### **SOWK 2220 History of Social Welfare (3)**

**Prerequisite: SOWK 1000**

Philosophical, historical, and current perspectives of social needs and the development of social welfare responses in the United States. It includes an examination of social welfare programs, policies, and issues, situated within broader economic, political, and social contexts.

### **SOWK 2970 Special Topics in Social Work I (3)**

Examines topics from a social work perspective. Topics announced prior to the beginning of each semester. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 hours of credit.

### **SOWK 3000 Diversity and Social Justice (3)**

**Prerequisite: SOWK 2000, ANTH 2110**

Multicultural social work practice and the importance of cultural humility. Students assess their own level of self-awareness and ability to engage in critical thinking on the issues of diversity and social justice, as well as advocate on behalf of others, particularly vulnerable populations.

### **SOWK 3100 Human Behavior and the Social Environment I (3)**

**Prerequisites: BIOL 1001 or 1010, SOCI 2000, PSYC 1000, SOWK 2000, PSYC 2760**

Focuses on stages of human development from conception to death. Examines frameworks, theories, and research addressing culturally sensitive understanding of human development and behavior in the context of individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations.

### **SOWK 3110 Human Behavior and the Social Environment II (3)**

**Prerequisite: SOWK 3100**

Examines group, community, and organizational dynamics in the context of human development, diversity, and social justice. Theories and major concepts concerning communities, organizations, and groups are examined with an emphasis on the interaction between the macro and mezzo environment, human behavior, and generalist social work practice.

**SOWK 3200 Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families (3)**

**Prerequisites:** Admission to Social Work Program; SOWK 1000, SOWK 2000, SOWK 3000, SOWK 3100

Development of generalist practice skills with a focus on direct services to individuals and families within a person-in-environment context.

**SOWK 3300 Death and Dying**

**Prerequisite:** ANTH 2110, SOCI 2000, or SOWK 1000

Examines cultural practices and ideas associated with death, including the dying process, rituals associated with grief and mourning, caring for the deceased, ways of remembering the dead, and methods for studying the dead. Also included are the varied conceptions of death, the dying process, dying as a sociocultural process, and the death industry.

**SOWK 3500 Social Work Practice with Groups**

**Prerequisite:** SOWK 3200

Students continue to develop generalist practice skills with a focus on direct services to and with groups within the person-in-environment context.

**SOWK 3600 Social Welfare Policy (3)**

**Prerequisites:** Admission to Social Work Program; SOWK 2220, POLS 1020

An overview of social policy with a focus on specific social issues and multiple diverse populations. Students will analyze current U.S. social welfare policy including development, implementation, and outcomes advocacy which inform social work practice.

**SOWK 3700 Professional Development (3)**

**Prerequisites:** SOWK 2000 and SOWK 3200

Students learn professional behavior of social workers, including self-care, oral and written communication, power skills, and basic knowledge, skills, and laws relevant to social work practice.

**SOWK 3720 Alcohol, Drugs and Society (3)**

**Prerequisites:** SOWK 1000

The course is designed to help students develop an understanding of the use and abuse alcohol and drugs from a sociological perspective.

### **SOWK 3970 Special Topics in Social Work II (3)**

Examines topics from a social work perspective. Topics announced prior to the beginning of each semester. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 hours of credit.

### **SOWK 4000 Social Work Human Rights and Advocacy (3)**

**Prerequisite: SOWK 3000**

Focus is on the knowledge, skills and critical thinking needed to engage in advocacy in support of human rights and justice. Human rights documents; theories of human needs, rights and obligations; and, strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers are applied to ensure that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Cultural and intellectual humility is practiced to embrace diverse ways of knowing and being.

### **SOWK 4020 Methods of Social Work Research (3)**

**Prerequisites: Admission to Social Work Program**

An overview of research methods while building a foundation of knowledge, skills, and ethics required for scientific inquiry. Knowledge, skills, and ethics inform evidence-based practice. This course includes multiple designs in quantitative and qualitative methods, single-system designs to monitor practice, and program evaluation.

### **SOWK 4100 Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities (3)**

**Prerequisites: SOWK 1000, SOWK 2000, SOWK 3000, SOWK 3100**

Students develop generalist practice skills with a focus on organizations and communities within the person-in-environment context.

### **SOWK 4410 Social Work with Military Populations (3)**

**Prerequisite: SOWK 1000**

Understand the culture, structure, and context of the military. Provide an overview of practice with military members, veterans, their families, and their communities.

### **SOWK 4420 Social Work and Mental Health (3)**

**Prerequisite: SOWK 1000**

Students will gain an overview of the role of social work in mental health including prevention, intervention, advocacy, and policy.

### **SOWK 4430 Gerontological Social Work (3)**



**Prerequisite: SOWK 1000**

Provide an overview of practice with older adults through a bio-psycho-social approach including assessment, interventions, and policies/program related to aging.

**SOWK 4440 Global Child Advocacy (3)**

**Prerequisite: SOWK 1000**

Prepares students to recognize child advocacy issues around the world. Multidisciplinary approaches to advocacy in different countries throughout the world will be presented and discussed.

**SOWK 4450 Child Welfare and Maltreatment (3)**

**Prerequisite: SOWK 1000**

This elective is designed to familiarize students with the field of child welfare, its history, current policy and practice issues, the diversity of family's structure and context, with a focus on the various forms of child maltreatment and best practices for response.

**SOWK 4460 Social Work Practice with Teens (3)**

**Prerequisite: SOWK 1000**

This course will examine an understanding of social work practice with adolescents by focusing on their strengths and needs, based upon ecological and strengths frameworks. Students will also explore legal and ethical issues related to adolescents.

**SOWK 4470 Forensic Social Work (3)**

**Prerequisite: Junior Standing**

Familiarize students with the practice issues related to work with clients within the criminal justice system and legal systems, focusing on theory, practice, intervention and advocacy with diverse forensic populations.

**SOWK 4500 Social Work Practice and Family Violence (3)**

**Prerequisite: SOWK 1000**

Examines family violence; suggests strategies for social work intervention with violent families, including those involving child abuse and neglect, spouse abuse, and elder abuse. Issue viewed from dual perspectives of societal concerns and social work interventions, including policies and programs.

**SOWK 4900 Independent Study in Social Work (1 – 3)**

Independent readings and/or research in selected areas of social work.

**SOWK 4910 Field Practicum Seminar (3)**

**Prerequisites: All required core and BSW program requirements.**

Taught concurrently with SOWK 4914. Provides forum to discuss practice-related issues and the integration of social work knowledge, skills, and values and ethics; emphasizes the importance of the evaluating one's own practice; integrates foundation content with field experience, with emphasis on generalist practice.

**SOWK 4914 Field Practicum (9)**

**Prerequisites: All required core and BSW program requirements. The student must have at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA. Co-requisite: SOWK 4310.**

Agency-based learning experiences that allow the students to develop generalist practitioner skills for social work practice with diverse individuals, families, small groups, organizations and communities. Requires a minimum of 400 hours of supervised practice in a community agency.

## Appendix A. Student Performance Improvement Plan

**Student Name:**

**Meeting Date:**

Behavior/Concerns	Goals	Specific Tasks/Objectives	Timeframe for Completion

You must meet with your professional advisor \_\_\_\_\_, on the following dates and times:

Successful completion of the plan will result in continuation in the Program in \_\_\_\_\_ (semester). Failure to comply within the specified time frame will result in the removal from the social work program and will require you to change your major.

**Student Signature:**

**Date:**

**Faculty Signature:**

**Date:**

\*The student, faculty member, and Social Work Program Director should each receive a copy of this plan.

\*\* The program director will meet with the student periodically to review his or her progress.