



# **BSW Student Handbook 2025-2026**

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This handbook is a guide for students. This is not a contract and does not supersede university and trustee regulations. This handbook may be changed at any time by the School of Social Work.



Dear BSW Student:

Greetings! On behalf of the School of Social Work, I want to welcome you to the road to a rewarding profession – Social Work. The faculty and staff look forward to getting to know you as you take an active part in the program. You can expect engaging classes, professional mentorship, and an encouraging environment. Our goal is to provide you with a quality, participatory education in a safe and accepting Christian atmosphere where you can develop your skills, take initiative, and hone your passions for lifelong career success.

Service is our mission and a value we deeply cherish. Social work is a strong profession rooted in a distinguished history of care and service to those in need. What makes this profession so amazing is that you can choose the path you take when it comes to serving those seeking aid. As you read this letter, take a moment to imagine and think of what you wish to do with your Social Work degree.

\*Don't rush – I'll wait. Now get to imagining! \*

Can you see yourself as a medical social worker employed in a hospital or a clinician providing therapy in various locations? How about establishing social service programs locally or internationally? Perhaps working as substance use counselor or a school social worker? What about being an advocate for a population you see needs that extra voice? Maybe you are unsure or have a small idea that has not been formulated. This is all just scratching the surface of what you can do with your future social work degree. We are here to help you tap into the possibilities!

You have chosen a profession where often there is much work, but where the satisfaction is real and life-impacting. By the time you graduate, you will have incorporated the knowledge, skills, and values that will enable you to begin generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Welcome! I wish you a worthwhile and stimulating experience here. We are glad you made it!

Sincerely,

**Lunelle Bertresse, MSW - BSW Program Director**  
Southern School of Social Work, BSW Program

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Welcome to the School of Social Work. In choosing to be a social work major, you will have the privilege of working with people and being a change agent in their lives. Every year you will

be given new and exciting challenges to strengthen your practice skills which will prepare you for your field practicum experience. I look forward to working with you each step of the way. God bless you. We are excited to have you join our program.

**Candy Dolcy**, MSW - Director of Field Education  
Southern School of Social Work, BSW Program

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The office staff of the School of Social Work has been carefully selected to provide you with friendly, courteous assistance. We try to have the answers to your questions, to provide a laugh or offer a word of prayer, to save you steps to Wright Hall for the "correct" form you need, to take your messages for faculty, to make sure that your grades are correctly recorded, and to always be ready to share a smile or some candy from the candy jar. We look forward to getting to know you and to assisting you in whatever way we can.

**Michelle Clinton**, Office Manager  
School of Social Work

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# OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

## THE INSTITUTION

Southern Adventist University is a co-educational institution established by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, offering doctoral, master's, baccalaureate, associate degrees, and one-year certificates. Its purpose is to provide Biblical, liberal arts, professional, pre-professional, vocational, adult studies, and special programs in a Christian setting.

Southern Adventist University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and by the Seventh-day Adventist Board of Regents. It is also a member of the Association of American Colleges, the American Council on Education, the Tennessee College Association, and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. Many of the departments of the university are also accredited by various organizations.

The academic program consists of 75 baccalaureate degree majors. Students may pursue programs of study leading to the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Music, and Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degrees. There are also masters and associate degrees offered, as well as various pre-professional curricula available to qualify for admission to a professional school.

## SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

The Southern Adventist University BSW social work program has been in existence since the 1980s. It is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). There are currently eight, full-time MSW or Doctorate-level prepared faculty appointed to the social work program.

The goals of the social work program are directly related to the mission statement of Southern Adventist University as both entities declare and practice commitment to Christ, intellectual and personal development, professional development and commitment, and service to the church and the community.

## EDUCATIONAL COMPETENCIES

The social work program offers students an opportunity to gain basic social work knowledge, values, and practice skills in a liberal arts educational setting. The goal is to prepare students for entry-level generalist baccalaureate practice, for graduate education, and for service to the church and to the broader community. The social work curriculum is built on a liberal arts foundation intended to broaden and enrich the student.

## **COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

Support for the Southern Adventist University social work program is evident nationally and locally. At the national level, the program has received encouragement from the Adventist Church to help with the professionalization of regional Adventist Community Service centers.

Locally, support for the program is evident by the 30+ agencies that have agreed to provide field placement opportunities for our BSW candidates. These cooperating agencies are centered in north Georgia and two Tennessee counties of the greater Chattanooga area. Their continued willingness to work with Southern's students reflects support for the program.

Furthermore, the local Adventist Community Service center has extended encouragement and support by providing employment opportunities to graduates of the social work program.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **PURPOSE OF SOCIAL WORK**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) describes the purpose of social work as follows:

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 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, pg. 14)

### **WHAT DO SOCIAL WORKERS DO?**

According to the NASW, social workers can be defined as:

“Social work is a profession for those with a strong desire to help improve people’s lives. Social workers assist people by helping them cope with issues in their everyday lives, deal with their relationships, and solve personal and family problems... Social workers help individuals, families, and groups restore or enhance their capacity for social functioning, and work to create societal conditions that support communities in need. Social workers help people of all backgrounds address their own needs through psychosocial services and advocacy. Social workers help people overcome some of life’s most difficult challenges: poverty, discrimination, abuse, addiction, physical illness, divorce, loss, unemployment, educational problems, disability, and mental illness. They help prevent crises and counsel individuals, families, and communities to cope more effectively with the stresses of everyday life (NASW, 2023).”

## FIELDS OF PRACTICE

BSW graduates are prepared to work effectively with individuals, families, small groups, communities, and organizations in a variety of settings. Graduates are employed in both public and private settings. They provide both direct and indirect services to individuals, families, and groups, and are often involved in organizational planning and management. Some of the settings in which they may be employed include:

- Advocacy Programs
- Aging Services
- Children and Youth Services
- Child and Adult Day Care Centers
- Churches
- Community Action Agencies
- Community Crisis Centers
- Correctional Facilities
- Criminal Justice Agencies
- Disabilities
- Domestic Violence Programs
- Employee Assistance Programs
- Head Start Programs
- Home Care Agencies
- Homeless Shelters
- Hospices
- Hospitals/Clinics
- Legal Services Agencies
- Mental Health Services
- Neighborhood Coalition Programs
- Nursing Homes
- Public Health Agencies
- Residential Treatment Programs
- Schools
- Substance Abuse Programs
- Training/Vocational Centers
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Voluntary Associations

## WHAT IS A BSW?

Southern's social work program offers students a Bachelor of Social Work degree (a major in social work) as professional preparation for social work employment. On the undergraduate level, social work prepares you for beginning professional social work practice. Based on a broad liberal arts foundation, the social work major is a combination of academic and experiential courses leading to the bachelor's degree in social work - BSW. Recognition is given by employers to students holding a BSW from an accredited program and advanced standing is offered by many MSW programs (for more information see: <https://www.cswe.org/About-CSWE/FAQs/Student-Questions>). The social work program at Southern was fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education in October 1998. In 2017, the program went through the process of Reaffirmation of Accreditation with the Council on Social Work Education and was granted reaffirmation with the full eight-year cycle.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is an organization that was created by a group of social work professionals who were concerned that institutions of higher education which trained social workers adhere to standards of excellence. The major purpose of CSWE is to develop standards for the education of social work practitioners, and monitor and assure that the standards are upheld

Through academic courses the student is given the tools needed to help people and systems resolve their problems. The student is prepared to work in a wide variety of settings, population groups, and problem areas. The student will have his or her assumptions about helping people challenged as he or she is invited to evaluate the many causes of social problems and commit him or herself to work to increase social and economic justice for all people.



Through the field placement program student will be able to test personally their developing helping skills. In the field the student will also confront many of the professional value issues discussed in the classroom. When the student completes their undergraduate degree requirements with a major in social work, he or she will be ready to assume full responsibility for entry level professional employment.

## **PROGRAM DESIGN**

### **MISSION OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

The mission of Southern Adventist University's Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program is to prepare students for generalist, evidence-based social work practice, focused on service and excellence, which ethically integrates faith & learning within a Seventh-day Adventist Christian educational environment. We build and uphold the knowledge, values, ethics, and theoretical frameworks of the social work profession to promote quality of life; celebrate differences of and empower individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, especially for those who are disproportionately disadvantaged. Students will be tasked with a call to become agents of change who positively, and skillfully, impact local, national, and global communities.

### **PROGRAM COMPETENCIES**

In accordance with the Council on Social Work Education, the Social Work BSW program has established the following core competencies for its graduates:

1. *Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.*
2. *Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial Economic, And Environmental Justice.*
3. *Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) In Practice.*
4. *Engage In Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice.*
5. *Engage In Policy Practice.*
6. *Engage With Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.*
7. *Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.*
8. *Intervene With Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.*
9. *Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.*

## **CURRICULUM DESIGN**

### ***The BSW curriculum offers:***

- A strong foundation in liberal arts.
- An understanding of human behavior and the effects of systems on individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- An understanding of human diversity and our multicultural society.
- An understanding of the political processes and social forces that shape our society.
- Knowledge related to the process through which social work knowledge is developed and refined.

- A strong foundation in social work values and ethics and Judeo-Christian values.
- Preparation related to the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to work with systems of all sizes in solving problems in living.
- Use of structured lab and fieldwork experiences in the Practice class sequence which provides students with “hands-on” experiences prior to the actual field experience.
- Knowledge of and application of applied research skills in field settings.
- A supervised field experience in which knowledge, skills, and values are applied to real life situations.

## **BSW DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Major—B.S.W., Social Work (46 hours)**

#### **Required Courses**

SOCW 211 Introduction to Social Work (3)  
 SOCW 212 Social Welfare as an Institution (3)  
 SOCW 213 Interviewing Skills (3)  
 SOCW 309 Social Work Practice with Individuals (3)  
 SOCW 322 Human Behavior and the Social Environment I (W) (4)  
 SOCW 323 Human Behavior and the Social Environment II (W) (4)  
 SOCW 321 Social Work Practice with Families and Groups (3)  
 SOCW 391 Junior Field Practicum I-3 hours (1 hour required)  
 SOCW 413 Networking and Career Development (1)  
 SOCW 421 Senior Portfolio Seminar (1)  
 SOCW 428 Social Work Practicum I (Serv-2) (3)  
 SOCW 429 Social Work Practicum II (Serv-2) (3)  
 SOCW 434 Social Welfare Issues and Policies (3)  
 SOCW 441 Integrative Seminar I (1)  
 SOCW 442 Integrative Seminar II (1)  
 SOCW 455 Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities (3)  
 SOCW 498 Research Methods I (3)  
 SOCW 499 Research Methods II (3)

#### **Required Cognates**

BIOL 103 Principles of Biology (IN-7) (3)  
 MATH 215 Statistics (IN-4) (3)  
 SOCI 125 Introduction to Sociology (IN-8) (3)  
 BUAD 128 Personal Finance OR ECON 213 Survey of Economics (IN-9) (3)  
 PSYC 122 General Psychology OR PSYC 128 Developmental Psychology (IN-8) (3)

#### **Required Electives**

SOCW 230 Multicultural Relations (3)

#### **Choose 3 credits from the following Electives:**

SOCW 150 Cultural Anthropology (3)  
 SOCW 466 Racism and Oppression (3)

### **Strongly Recommended Electives**

SOCW 250/ 450 Death and Dying (3)

SOCW 405 Sexual Abuse Awareness and Prevention (1-3 hours)

SOCW 465 Topics in Social Work (1-3 hours)

SOCI 465 Topics in Sociology (1-3 hours)

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS**

*Since the BSW is a professional degree, the School of Social Work intentionally works with students to foster and develop appropriate, professional behaviors. Therefore, not only are students expected to perform academically but they are also expected to demonstrate a progression of growth in professionalism. Some of these anticipated professional behaviors are:*

### Professionalism Evidence

- Professional Appearance/Self-care
- Healthy coping skills/outlets
- Appropriate dress

### Professional Relationship

- Embraces diversity
- Maintains balance & boundaries with professional and personal life
- Remains proactive in mediating any relational conflict

### Professional Performance

- Class attendance
- In-class participation (engagement)
- On-time behaviors (coursework and attendance)
- Self-starter/organized/follow through with commitments
- Identifies a need for further information and communicates the need appropriately
- Demonstrate professional communication skills
- Demonstrates academically honesty & professionally ethical behavior
- Develop a plan of action in response to feedback

### Professional Attitudes

- Assume responsibility for one's own actions
- Demonstrates flexibility & adaptability
- Demonstrates a positive attitude and motivation towards
- Learning (from peers, colleagues, instructors)
- Assumes a non-judgmental attitude

## **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

In our role as gatekeepers of the social work professions, the BSW Leadership Team reserves the right to discuss with the student any statements and/or violations that are not consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics standards and principles. This may include discussions about safe ethical practices with client systems and alignment with the profession's goals. Furthermore, the team also reserves the right to discuss academic criteria and performance that may be of concern and call for plans of actions.

## **BSW PORTFOLIO CAPSTONE**

The BSW program utilizes a portfolio process as a capstone for all graduating BSW seniors. This portfolio process entails the creation of a comprehensive online portfolio that includes the nine CSWE core competencies and products that exemplify the student's ability to demonstrate these core competencies. Additionally, students will complete a portfolio presentation (portfolio defense) towards the end of their senior year. These elements are required for the proper completion of the BSW program. Students will be prepped with further details on this capstone project during their junior and senior years. Students will be granted access to swpro.org during where the BSW Portfolio Capstone Student manual is located.

## **SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK POLICIES**

The following policies have been developed by Southern Adventist University and the BSW program faculty to ensure effective communication and enhance understanding of academic benchmarks for our students. These policies are also designed to encourage and deepen professionalism, an essential competency for excellence in social work practice.

Students who are admitted to the social work program are considered adequately mature to realize the importance of accepting personal responsibility for their learning and professional behavior.

Transportation for volunteer and practicum experiences is not provided by the program. Students will be expected to provide their own transportation and make arrangements to share this expense with fellow students participating in the same experiences.

The social work program reserves the right to deny admission to and to remove students from the social work program who have an unresolved felony on record in any state and who have records of misconduct, legal and otherwise, that would jeopardize their professional performance.

The social work program reserves the right to revise, add, and withdraw policies and/or courses as necessary to ensure a quality social work program.

## **School Of Social Work Policies (statement listed in the Syllabi)**

*The following policies have been developed by Southern Adventist University and the BSW program faculty to ensure effective communication and enhance understanding of academic benchmarks for our students. These policies are also designed to encourage and deepen professionalism, an essential competency for excellence in social work practice.*

## **Syllabus Policy**

The professor reserves the right to alter assignments and/or contents of this syllabus. Students will be given appropriate notice of any changes.

## **eClass**

The University uses eClass to manage course access. You can access the website by going to: <https://eclass.e.southern.edu/> or through your Southern MyAccess Account (<https://myaccess.southern.edu/>). Students are expected to check their eClass regularly and upload their assignments to the website according to the professor's instructions. You will also have access to your current grades in the course. We encourage you to regularly check your gradebook to have a clear and confident understanding of your progress.

If you have any questions, notice any discrepancies, or are having trouble accessing eClass, please reach out to the Professor via email as soon as possible.

Other resources available on the eClass home page include:

- Library Resources
- Online Learning Resources and Tutorials
- Professional Development

eClass Help Desk: Email [eclasshelp@southern.edu](mailto:eclasshelp@southern.edu) or call 423-236-2086  
System Requirements Info Page: <https://www.southern.edu/academics/online-campus/untitled.html>

## **Communication Methods**

Your professors will keep in touch with you via your Southern email account and through eClass announcements. If you wish to connect with your professor, visiting during Office Hours and email are the most efficient ways to do so unless otherwise instructed.

## Attendance and Participation

Promptness and dependability are part of professional life. Attending class ensures that students receive the learning components needed for academic success. If they are well, students are expected to attend class, on time. This policy is designed to encourage and reinforce professional and academic outcomes. Below are more details on how to navigate class participation.

1. Students are expected to regularly attend all of their classes. However, **please do not attend class, in-person, if you feel unwell**. If you are unwell, please **notify your professor immediately** (if possible, within 24 hours). Individual professors will inform students of their documentation expectations. The SoSW typically requires official documentation from a medical provider. Students who are absent due to extended medical leaves be **officially excused** from class by Academic Administration. Students must communicate with professors ahead of time (or as early as possible) to make the necessary arrangements to complete assignments.
2. **For all absences, students need to alert the professor to the situation, preferably prior to class.**
3. When absent, students will be expected to demonstrate engagement in the class via timely submission of course assignments, online attendance at any synchronous class meetings when possible, and/or review of material provided in e-class asynchronously. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of all missed class time. **Further, it is the student's responsibility to obtain make-up work and complete it within the timeline agreed upon by the student and professor.**
4. For each hour that a student misses unexcused class time exceeding the number of credit hours for the course, the student's final overall grade will be reduced by 5%. For example, in a 3-credit course, you may miss 3 hours of class time before your final overall grade is reduced. Missed class time can include but is not limited to arriving late, leaving early, or excessive leaving/returning to class outside of the designated break times.
5. Class attendance and participation are vital components for mastery of the content, demonstration of core skills, and development of professionalism. Therefore, you are urged to avoid missing classes, arriving late, leaving early, or excessively leaving and returning to class.
6. Two occurrences of arriving tardy to class equal one absence. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of all missed class time.
7. If you are attending via Zoom, your camera must be turned on. If you are having technical difficulties, please contact the professor immediately and the IT department for technical support so you can participate appropriately. Please refer to the Zoom Meeting Policy listed below for further details.

## Cell Phone/Computer Use Policy

The focus of the classroom environment is on creating an atmosphere of interactive learning and inquiry. For this reason, all cell phones must be turned OFF. If a phone rings, a student is sending or receiving text messages, or is utilizing media, the professor may request that the activity cease. The professor also reserves the right to request the student to either surrender the device or leave the classroom for the duration of the class period. Laptops may be used for writing class notes only by approval of the instructor.

## Dress Code

Students attending classes and events sponsored by the School of Social Work are to adhere to Southern's dress code. Students should refer to the current Southern Adventist University Student Handbook for further clarification.

## Health Guidelines

To maintain the safety of face-to-face classrooms, the university may implement safety measures for in-person classes. Students will be expected to refer to any University safety guidelines and information found here: <https://www.southern.edu/safety/index.html>. The School of Social Work upholds all health and safety guidelines outlined by Southern Adventist University and all students attending social work classes should plan on doing the same.

Students who feel ill are encouraged to contact the University Health Center or another health provider as soon as possible. Students may be asked to present documentation from a health provider to be excused for repeated absences from class due to illness. Students **must communicate** with their professor before any absence or within 24 hours from missed class meetings.

Students who miss required class, clinicals, or lab periods for illness will be provided accommodations that may include:

- synchronous live streaming
- asynchronous viewing of recordings
- other methods as deemed appropriate.

## Zoom Meeting Policy:

For courses that utilize Zoom for virtual (or hybrid) class meetings, please comply with the below Zoom etiquette guidelines.

- Log into Zoom using your **authenticated Zoom account** that Southern has provided to you. This permits your professor to know that you are a registered student and not an outside individual attending the class without permission.
- **Dress appropriately** for class.
- **Mute** your sound unless you are speaking.

- Turn your **video camera on during class time**. Your face should also be seen. This enables class interaction and engagement. *Please also remember that your camera is on and you should refrain from any activities that you would prefer the online world not see.* If you do need to use the restroom or other “video off” activity, simply mute your audio and turn off your camera until you return.
- **Avoid doing distracting activities** while in class. While you may be tuning in from the comforts of your home, you are still in an academic class and your behaviors on camera should support that level of professionalism.
- **Be aware of your surroundings.** Your professor and classmates can also see BEHIND you. Make sure that there is nothing in the background (traffic, other people, a pile of laundry) that may distract from the class. While it is not necessarily the best choice to attend class from your messy bedroom, it may be the only place you can find peace and quiet away from roommates or family members. If that is the case, you can employ a Virtual Background to hide what you do not want to be seen.
- Zoom class periods are like in-class experiences, but virtual. Thus, **please display professional, academic behaviors** just as you would in a live, in-person class.

## Zoom Policy for Special Circumstances

The experience of our courses is maximized when students attend in person. Due to the nature of the classes, which include interactive in-class activities and discussions that enhance learning experiences and facilitate the development of hard skills, in-person attendance is required. Unless otherwise noted, synchronous classes meet in person, and you are expected to attend classes in person.

In cases of specific emergencies or situations beyond a student’s control (e.g., a canceled flight), Zoom may be made available for special circumstances as determined by the professor, the School of Social Work, or the University. If you have an excused medical illness affirmed by academic administration, Zoom may be an available option, though it is not guaranteed, depending on the nature of the course activities. Requests for exceptions to this policy, such as for an extended medical leave, must go through the Academic Administration office, as outlined below.

Requests for accommodations or exemptions due to extended medical leaves (physical or mental) must be submitted to Academic Administration (AA) with official documentation from a doctor (or appropriate licensed practitioner/ provider) at least one week prior to the commencement of the requested extended leave. Students will still be expected to communicate with the course professor and the Dean of the School of Social Work **(via email)**.

*For a standard medical excuse, such as missing one or two classes, an official doctor's note will suffice. Students will still be responsible for making up classwork and catching up on content, as structured by the professor of the course. For any other extended period, this falls under the category of extended medical leave.*



## Coursework Policy (Submission Expectations & Late Work Policy)

A note to our students: The course assignments are foundational bricks to your learning objectives. It is important that each assignment be completed. The policies below serve as accountability and guidance, intended to help keep students on track with meeting learning objectives, receiving timely feedback from the professor, and developing professional habits.

- We expect a professional product, following the standards set for the assignments, to be submitted as published by the professor. Work turned in after the published deadline will be considered late and will receive 10% off from the achieved score. For each additional day the work is late, the achieved score will be reduced by 10% per day, up to seven days (70%).
- Exams are given at the time scheduled. In cases of a documented medical or other emergency reason, please communicate with the professor.
- **NO ASSIGNED WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED LATER THAN ONE WEEK AFTER ITS DUE DATE.** However, depending on the assignment and the professor's discretion, assignments (excluding exams) may be accepted after the deadline, but they will only be worth up to 30% of the assignment grade. This exception can be granted to students who remain in communication with the professor. However, please note that this is not a guaranteed exception.
- Should you encounter any extraordinary circumstances that hinder your academic progress, it is crucial to inform your professor promptly. Timely communication will allow us to provide the necessary support and accommodations (if available).

## Mid-Term/Final Examinations

Please note the date and time for all mid-term and final exams (final exam time is listed on the exam schedule given out by the Records Office). You will need to plan to take your exam(s) at the scheduled time. Please make your work and vacation plans accordingly. Academic Administration will grant approval for variance from the published exam schedule only in cases of a verified, serious illness, a death in the immediate family, or when students have three consecutive exams or four total exams in one day.

## Discussing a Given Grade

Standards and criteria by which an assignment will be graded are outlined during class, in the syllabus, and on eClass. It is possible for errors to be made by the professor or grading assistant. In a collaborative spirit, if you see a grade that you wish to discuss, please reach out to your professor via email. A meeting will be set to review the directions and the assignment submitted. After the meeting, you can expect one of two actions:

- The error made by the student will be made clear and the point deduction will remain with acceptance and understanding by the student.
- The professor will acknowledge the point deduction error and make the necessary adjustments.

The process for disputing a grade goes in the following order:

1. Connect with the Professor via email about the assignment, outlining specific concerns.
2. If the issue persists and a resolution has not been made, an appointment with the dean of the School of Social Work (Dr. Laura Racovita) can be made.
3. If steps 1 and 2 do not suffice and further action is needed, an appointment with the AVP for Academic Administration (Dr. Dione Felix) can be made.

## Academic Honesty

As an institution committed to the Christian values of honesty and integrity, each student is expected to take responsibility for all work they produce and to abide by the University's standards for academic integrity. Any work submitted in this course is expected to be the student's own original work. Being committed to Christian values and the highest educational standards, Southern Adventist University urges faculty and students to prayerfully and critically evaluate how and when we use generative AI and other emergent technologies. Using AI tools can short-circuit critical thinking and impede learning goals. Further, because it is based on the accumulated work of others, it can also pose ethical problems and violate standards of academic integrity. For that reason, it is the policy of Southern Adventist University that students use generative AI tools only after consultation with their instructor or when specifically invited to use it as part of an assignment. Inappropriate use may be penalized.

Because Southern Adventist University is dedicated to scholastic integrity, both students and faculty are required to maintain high, ethical Christian levels of honesty.

### Faculty Responsibilities:

1. Professors must explain clearly the requirements for assignments, examinations, and projects, such as "open book," "take home," or "peer collaboration."
2. Professors may assume "no collaboration" is the rule unless they state otherwise.

### Student Responsibilities:

1. Students assume responsibility to avoid plagiarism by learning the proper procedures for acknowledging borrowed wording, information, or ideas. Otherwise, students might innocently misrepresent others' material as their own.
2. Students unfamiliar with procedures for citing sources should confer with their professors.
3. Students are to assume that all coursework is "no collaboration" unless stated otherwise by the professor.

Please refer to the *BSW Student Handbook* for more information regarding the School of Social Work's procedures for addressing academic honesty concerns.

## **Responsible Practices For the Use Of AI In Academic Writing**

AI has become a part of everyday life, from using spellcheck to our phone AI assistants, such as Siri & Alexa. We recognize the use of AI as a potentially helpful tool in academic settings. The School of Social Work is committed to preparing you to use technology, resourcefully and ethically. Generally speaking, the use of AI in class should be used under the following conditions for each assignment:

1. Explicit Professor Permission
  - a. The professor will explicitly state how and when to use AI for specified course assignments or activities. The use of AI is up to each professor's discretion and after consultation (see *Academic Honesty, Artificial Intelligence (AI) Assistance* policies).
2. Following Specific Assignment Instructions
3. Proper Citation of the AI tool used
  - a. Students must cite any AI tools, services, software, etc. used in the creation of the work and keep track of how it was used.
  - b. Please see APA Style "How to Cite ChatGPT (and other AI)" article (link below)

Here are some quick guidelines to using AI, ethically. We encourage you to consider the professional fundamental values of honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility.

- Understand the term "Artificial Intelligence"
  - o According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2024), artificial intelligence ("AI") is defined as "the power of a machine to imitate intelligent human behavior". Examples of AI use in academia include (but are not limited to), tools that can translate, proofread, paraphrase, or summarize texts.
- Understand the term "plagiarism".
  - o According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2024), plagiarism is defined as "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (another's production) without crediting the source". Therefore, using AI to write your assignments in full or partially would be considered plagiarism.

- Cite your AI Usage: Be transparent.
  - o If it is not your idea, you must properly cite your resources or the origin.
  - o Be open the methods that you are using to organize your ideas or assist in your writing process.
- Be aware of the limitations of AI.
  - o AI is not responsible for giving accurate, or even current information. Be sure to complete your fact-checks using legitimate resources.
  - o Check for bias: Is the data representative? Is it inclusive? It is important to examine the data given and assess it.
  - o Note that the outputs of AI may not sound like you. You are still responsible for synthesizing the information and voicing it.
- Use AI to give feedback on an outline you've created or a paper you have written.
  - o It can be of help with proofreading, editing, and clarifying your writing.

The unethical use of AI in your assignments is subject to penalty. Penalties can include (but are not limited to) the resubmission of an assignment, point deduction, receiving of a failing grade, etc.

#### AI Use Resources

Gewaltig, Marc. O. (2024, June 20). *9 tips for using AI for academic writing (without cheating)*.

Thesify.ai. <https://www.thesify.ai/blog/9-tips-for-using-ai#:~:text=Be%20Transparent%20About%20AI%20Usage&text=Disclosing%20your%20use%20of%20AI,AI%20assistance%20in%20your%20assignments>.

McAdoo, Timothy. (2024, February 23). *How to Cite ChatGPT*. APA Style. <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

## **Social Media Guidelines**

Social media are powerful, rapidly evolving tools for communication, information gathering, teaching, networking, and learning. Please consider the guidelines offered below as you navigate personal and professional uses of social media.

- Please realize that while some faculty use social media in class and in their lives, not all do. Be respectful of this when requesting or contacting a specific faculty or staff member on social media.
- Before initiating any contact on social media platforms, be sure to consider that the faculty/staff/field instructor/task supervisor may have work/personal life boundaries, and they may not consider social media relationships to be appropriate. Just ask them.
- When posting content on social media keep in mind that anyone (from fellow students to professors to future employers) can see these materials now and after you graduate. Even the best privacy settings do not prevent someone from taking a screenshot of something you post.

## Writing Policy

Southern Adventist University subscribes to an academic software program, Turn-it-in, that checks for original work. The School of Social Work utilizes this program by requiring all major papers to be submitted to Turn-it-in. Should a student's work exceed a 25% similarity rating from Turn-it-in, it may be considered plagiarized. In addition to using Turn-it-in, students are expected to adhere to the American Psychological Association (APA) format and style of writing. For information on this writing style, go to McKee's library webpage for citation websites: <http://southern.libguides.com/content.php?pid=171976&sid=1447751>.

Written assignments will be graded for APA

Standards that will comprise 5% of the overall assignment point value. Please refer to the *BSW handbook* for further clarification on APA grading.

## APA GRADING GUIDE AND RUBRIC

All direct quotations, paraphrases, empirical research findings, and other restatements of the research, scholarship, or creative work of others must be appropriately annotated using the standard bibliographic citation methods set out by the American Psychological Association in the most recent edition of the Publication Manual. The APA Manual serves as the guide for style and format of all papers submitted in the BSW program.

In order to have consistency in grading APA format within the social work program a rubric and grading formula have been developed by the BSW Leadership Team. Written assignments will be graded for APA format standards that will comprise 5% of the overall assignment point value.

APA Grading Rubric (5% of total assignment point value)*	
General APA format: font, margins, spacing, running header, page numbers	1%
Title Page (abstract if assigned)	1%
In-Text Citations** (format only)	1%
Reference Page	2%
Total: 5%	

\*While this rubric addresses formatting only, there is an expectation that APA writing style will be included in the overall paper evaluation/grading (i.e. grammar, punctuation, flow of thought, professional language, etc.).

\*\*This refers to the formatting of in-text citations only. Additional points may be subtracted related to the use of sources, properly citing sources throughout the paper and integration of sources within the writing assignment.

# CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

The criteria for student evaluation are found in the syllabi of all courses. A grade of “C” or better is required in all core social work (SOCW) classes. Students must maintain an overall GPA of 2.50 or higher to be admitted into the program and to remain in the program. In addition, students are placed on academic probation when specific criteria are not met. Termination from the social work program may follow if the student’s GPA and grades in the SOCW classes have not improved at the end of one semester.

## Grade Standards for Field Practicum:

Satisfactory performance of certain basic social work tasks will determine the student's readiness to assume entry-level positions within the social work profession. Evaluation of the skills and knowledge necessary to achieve this status will be determined by the student's field instructor in conjunction with the social work faculty. The specific evaluation criteria as well as a more detailed explanation of field practicum requirements and grounds for termination can be found in the **BSW Field Manual** which is located on the School of Social Work website.

## Classroom Criteria:

All criteria for grading are found in each course syllabi. Southern Adventist University does not have an institutional grading policy. Teachers use a variety of methods to evaluate student's performance. Grading options are as follows:

A	Superior	WF	Withdrew Failing
B	Above Average	AU	Audit
C	Average	I	Incomplete
D	Below Average	IP	In Progress
F	Failing	P	Pass
W	Withdrew from the class		

## INCOMPLETE GRADES

It is the policy of the social work program to grant a grade of “incomplete” only on a case-by-case basis. In the majority of cases, the student will receive the grade they earned in the class and then it is at the discretion of the instructor to develop a contract with the individual student to change the grade within a given timeframe. The grade "incomplete" may be granted to a student only if it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the normal time limits of the course. Illness or exceptional circumstances are the usual basis for consideration. To be considered for an incomplete, a student must initiate the conversation with their professor. If the professor grants the incomplete, then further details and deadlines will be established by the professor.

## **POLICY ON THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

The School of Social Work may develop and maintain several public web sites or accounts on social media sites that are used for personal and professional purposes. On these sites it is important to remember that there is no such thing as a truly "private" social media site or conversation. Search engines can turn up posts years after the publication date, comments can be forwarded or copied and information saved even if the post was deleted. All are legally liable for what is posted on personal or professional sites, at any time. Each poster can be held liable for commentary that is posted. Faculty, staff and students in the School of Social Work must be extremely careful that what is posted online will only reflect the highest of professional social work ethics and standards.

Faculty are encouraged to develop social media sites that could be directly linked to professional activities for a class, class networking and students are encouraged to network professionally using social media tools. Social networking is a powerful tool, used in the proper context, to foster learning and/or professional networking and communication.

While using social media, the staff/faculty in the School of Social Work must observe the following guidelines:

1. Use only the sites that provide proper privacy settings, separating your professional from your personal life.
2. If the social media that you are using does not have proper privacy settings then create separate accounts for your professional and personal life, and do not "friend" students using your personal social media accounts.
3. For professional and educational purposes, create special social hubs linked to your professional accounts.

### ***USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY WHILE AT FIELD PRACTICUM***

While at field practicum, students must refrain from checking their personal phones and devices for emails, phone calls, and text messages that are personal in nature and from conducting personal internet browsing from agency computers. Use of social media including text messaging, tweets, TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook-type postings should never reference information or events related to field placement. Work-related electronic documents that may be confidential in nature should not be downloaded or saved onto personal or home laptops, computers, or devices. Other precautions should be taken to protect the boundaries between personal and professional and to protect the safety and privacy of the client and agency as well as the privacy of the social work student.

## **ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

Admission to Southern Adventist University does not automatically enroll the student in the social work program. Declaration as a social work major is not equivalent of acceptance to the program. The final decision on acceptance and continuation in the program is made by the program's BSW leadership team (program director and additional faculty members). During the second semester of the sophomore year the student is to submit a formal application to the social work program. Application forms may be obtained from the School of Social Work website. The deadline for application is in the school calendar and student handbook. Students must adhere to application deadlines.

Minimum requirements for admission to the program are listed below:

1. Acceptance to Southern Adventist University.
2. Completion of the application form which includes submission of three references and a personal statement that encompasses autobiographical information and perspective on various social issues. The personal statement is primarily intended for the faculty to become familiar with the student in order to improve the quality of advisement. In addition, the statement provides a context of the student's motivation for a career in the social work profession and his or her understanding of the profession. The personal statement is used to gauge student writing abilities and provide early intervention if a student needs to improve his or her writing skills.
3. Submission of a current Program Evaluation (degree audit).
4. Having an overall grade point average of 2.50 or higher.
5. Having completed (with a grade of C or higher) **SOCW 211**: Introduction to Social Work, **SOCW 212**: Social Welfare as an Institution, and **SOCW 213**: Interviewing Skills. Having completed cognate courses **BIOL 103**: Principles of Biology, **PSYC 122**: General Psychology or **PSYC 128**: Developmental Psychology, and **SOCI 125**: Introduction to Sociology. Exceptions may be made for persons who do not meet introductory course and cognate requirements if they are strong candidates on the basis of other criteria.
6. Participation in social work sponsored activities (convocations, vespers, community service activities, etc.).
7. Having demonstrated mental and moral fitness, and ethical behavior as outlined by the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics. Further references may be required regarding character, attitude, and coping ability.
8. Students whose native language is not English must achieve at least 550 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).
9. Completion of a successful interview with the BSW leadership team may be required. The purpose of the interview is to clarify documentation and review any issues raised in the autobiography and essay.

The BSW leadership team reviews the application material, conducts the interview, and makes a decision concerning the application. Applicants are notified of the team's decision by a letter from the program director. An applicant denied admission to the social work program may appeal the denial decision in person and/or in writing to the BSW leadership team. If this



process is unsatisfactory to the student, the University appeals process described in this *Catalog* may be followed.

## **PROCESS FOR APPEAL**

If after a thorough review of the application the BSW leadership team decides not to admit a student into the program, the student has the option to appeal the decision. The applicant may appeal the denial decision in person and/or in writing to the BSW leadership team. If this process is unsatisfactory to the student, the university's academic grievance process described in the *SAU Catalog* may be followed.

## **REAPPLICATION**

In the event a student is not granted admission to the program, he or she may reapply the following semester.

## **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Students intending to major in social work who are attending other colleges or universities, or who are transferring from another major at Southern Adventist University, will be expected to apply for admission to the Social Work Program.

Those applying to the social work major after their sophomore year will be considered on a case by case basis. This may delay admission consideration until the following semester and may result in graduation taking more than four years.

The social work program seeks to maintain a heterogeneous student body by enrolling students who represent diverse backgrounds and cultural perspectives

## **TRANSFER CREDIT**

The policies and procedures for the transfer of curriculum courses are as follows:

1. Students who transfer to Southern will have general education credits reviewed and accepted by the Office of Records and Advisement according to university policies regarding transfer credit as outlined in the current *Undergraduate Catalog*. These policies also describe the acceptable use of proficiency exams, transfer of correspondence course credit, and the number of credits which must be taken in residence at Southern Adventist University.
2. The program accepts transfer credit for core curriculum courses only from accredited social work programs.
3. Proficiency exams are not accepted for social work core/cognate courses.

4. Credit will be granted for social work courses that are comparable to Southern's social work program courses and for which the student has earned a "C" grade or better.
5. Students who have transfer courses which may be acceptable substitutions for courses in the social work program may write a university petition which requests the equivalent course substitution. The petition must state the reason for the transfer and must include a copy of the course description from the previous school's catalog. The social work program BSW leadership team will review the proposed substitution on a student-by-student, course-by-course basis to determine the equivalency of the cognate course. In order to be accepted as a substitution, the course must be judged to have credits and content similar to that of the proposed course. The student will supply the committee, if requested, a copy of the course description and the course syllabus for detailed examination of course content and objectives. Courses that are accepted for transfer will have petitions approved and forwarded to the Records office for entry on the student's transcript.

## FIELD PRACTICUM

The social work field practicum is designed to provide students with a chance to put into practice the theories and skills they have learned in the classroom. The practice of social work is a combination of theory and interpersonal skills with field practicum a key component of the educational process. The focus of the field practicum is on the interactional process between student worker and client system(s) and use of specific interventions; students have the opportunity to connect the theory and knowledge with actual practice experience. This experience is essential to developing the entry level helping skills required of all undergraduate social work professionals. The nature of the field practicum is practice-oriented, builds on skills and theories learned in cognate social work classes, and involves direct contact and intervention with individuals, families, and groups. Only social work majors may take the field practicum and must have met the required prerequisites. The field practicum experience is six (6) credit hours (over the course of Fall and Winter semester, SOCW-428 & SOCW-429 which are taken concurrently with Integrative Seminar (SOCW 441 & SOCW 442).

## ADMISSION TO THE FIELD PRACTICUM

In the winter semester of the junior year, following the completion of most required prerequisite courses, students begin the application process for the social work field practicum, which is a requirement for graduation with a BSW degree. All students entering the field practicum must have a GPA of 2.50 or higher in all classes designated SOCW in order to be considered academically eligible for the field practicum. Since the primary purpose of social work education is to prepare students for entry-level social work positions, quality field placements are essential. The placements are designed to provide students with a chance to put into practice the theories and skills they have learned in the classroom. ***Students should refer to the current "BSW Field Manual" for more information on field practicum.***

All students applying to the Field Practicum must have completed these courses or have these courses completed by the end of the semester in which they apply.  
These courses are:

SOCW 211 – Introduction to Social Work  
SOCW 212 – Social Welfare as an Institution  
SOCW 213 – Interviewing Skills  
SOCW 413 – Networking and Career Development  
SOCW 322 – HBSE I (Human Behavior and the Social Environment I)  
SOCW 323 – HBSE II (Human Behavior and the Social Environment II)  
SOCW 309 – Social Work Practice with Individuals  
SOCW 321 – Social Work Practice with Families and Groups  
SOCW 391 – Junior Field Practicum

## **ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR LIFE AND WORK EXPERIENCE**

Field experience courses are required of every social work major and no academic credit is given for life experience or previous work experience. No courses in the professional foundation areas are waived because of previous employment.

## **ACADEMIC STANDING EXCEPTION PROTOCOL**

The School of Social Work is committed to academic excellence. As outlined in the undergraduate catalog, *“a grade of a C or better is required in all core social work (SOCW) classes. Social work majors must maintain an overall (otherwise known as, cumulative) GPA of 2.50 or higher to be admitted into the program and to remain in the program.”*

In the event that a social work major, who has been admitted into the Social Work program, earns a C- in a core social work course, the student may submit a petition to the School of Social Work, requesting that the earned grade be accepted. This process is limited to one approved petition per student. Once a student is granted an exception under this policy, any additional grade of C- will automatically result in a need to repeat the course. Please note that a grade lower than a C- does not qualify to be reviewed through this process. The petition process is as follows:

- I. The student submits a typed petition letter to the BSW Program Director that explains the circumstances that led to earning a grade of C- and outlines the rationale as to why an exception to the BSW academic policy should be granted. The petition letter must also specifically address the knowledge, skills, and values gained through the course and the learning outcomes that were achieved by the student.

2. The BSW leadership team will review the submitted petition letter and make a recommendation to the School of Social Work faculty who will decide whether to approve the requested exception to the BSW academic policy. The final decision of the faculty will be communicated to the student in writing.
  - a. If the exception is granted, the earned grade of C- for the course will be accepted and will not affect the student's academic standing in the BSW program. However, the impact of the C- grade on the student's overall GPA is not eliminated as a result of receiving an exception and the minimum GPA of 2.50 will still be required.
  - b. If the exception is NOT granted, the student will be required to retake the course and adjust academic plans accordingly.

## **CRITERIA FOR TERMINATION**

### **STUDENT RETENTION**

In order to remain in the social work program, the university's standards for retention must be met and sustained. Students must maintain a 2.5 cumulative overall grade point average. If the student receives a grade below a "C" in a core social work course, a review of the student's progress will be made by the social work faculty. The student may be asked to do additional work in the area or to repeat the course before continuing in the program.

Although a student's academic performance is satisfactory, it may become necessary, due to unsatisfactory professional performance, to advise a student to reconsider his or her preference for social work and to subsequently change the major. The basis for such a decision may be any of the following:

1. Failure in the field practicum is grounds for dismissal from the program, subject to review by the social work faculty.
2. A student's work may reflect personal problems which significantly and consistently prevent him or her from functioning effectively in a professional social work education program. For example, ineffective functioning may take the form of being chronically tardy or absent from field education, sleeping while at the field agency, or demonstrating any substance use/abuse-related behaviors in the field.
3. Failure to abide by the ethical code of the social work profession may result in terminating a student's enrollment in the program. For example, students are dismissed from the social work program for any physical or sexual abuse of clients, colleagues and/or classmates. Similarly, students who participate in any discriminatory behaviors in the classroom or field are subject to dismissal from the program.

The advisor is responsible for initiating a conference with a student as soon as there is evidence of persistent failure to meet the standards for retention, preferably in time to allow the student an adequate period to correct the deficiencies. The process can also be initiated by the student.

If, after conferences between student and faculty advisor and an appropriate length of time for correcting the problem has passed, the faculty member thinks the student should be advised not to major in social work, the following procedures will be initiated:

1. The advisor makes a recommendation in writing to the BSW leadership team that the student be asked to withdraw from the program. The student receives a copy of this recommendation.
2. The BSW leadership team and the faculty member initiating the withdrawal recommendation meet with the student to discuss the recommendation. If all parties concerned agree on the outcome, the procedure terminates. This step is followed up with a letter to the student, with a copy in the student's file, confirming the decision made concerning the outcome.
3. If the decision is unacceptable to the student, university academic grievance procedure may be pursued. This grievance procedure is outlined in the *SAU Catalog*.

## **ADVISEMENT**

The Records and Advisement Office assigns all incoming students an advisor according to the students' choice of major. This office, with periodic input from the University Advisement Committee, also provides ongoing orientation to faculty and students concerning the purpose for and the uses of academic advising.

During their first meeting together, the social work advisor and the advisee discuss the student's interest in, and aptitude for the social work profession. At that time, the student is given a general orientation to the program and is exposed to the various fields of service available in social work. The structure of the program and the curriculum are discussed and the student is informed on where to access the School of Social Work BSW Student Handbook.

Each student is encouraged to meet with his or her academic advisor as part of each semester's class registration. The advisor helps the student select classes. The goals of advisors include, but are not necessarily limited to:

1. Assisting students in assessing their aptitude and motivation for a career in social work.
2. Providing academic guidance in choosing courses.
3. Providing social work values and professionalism role modeling.
4. Empowering students to make academic and professional choices consistent with social work values and concerns.
5. Providing regular review of the students' educational performance.
6. Being available to discuss personal/academic concerns of students and to broker linkages between students and needed services.
7. Providing an arena where students may explore field practicum options for the purpose of finding the best educational opportunity/career goal fit.

8. Assisting students in their efforts to obtain employment upon graduation.
9. Providing information about graduate school opportunities and assisting students interested in pursuing this option.

## ADVISOR CREDENTIALS

All social work student advising is conducted by social work faculty members in the program. All faculty are knowledgeable concerning Southern Adventist University and the School of Social Work program policies and standards. All faculty keep regular office hours. All are available by appointment at other times to discuss and listen to both the academic and personal concerns of students.

## STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are notified of the School of Social Work BSW Student Handbook through their program orientation. In addition, all students have access to the program website which provides a link to the student handbook. Students are responsible for the information contained in the BSW Student Handbook. The Handbook enumerates the rights and responsibilities of the social work major. Other materials pertaining to the general rights and responsibilities of students can be obtained from the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Students are kept informed of current social work program information in the following ways:

1. E-mail messages sent to the Southern email addresses established for all social work majors
2. Class listserve
3. Program electronic bulletin board
4. Program website

## ORIENTATION

**Junior:** An orientation to the academic expectations of the junior year in the social work program will take place at the beginning of the fall semester. This orientation is mandatory for all juniors who are currently enrolled in 300 level SOCW classes. Notice of the date, time, and place of the orientation will be provided to students during the fall registration.

**Senior:** An orientation process with the senior cohort takes place in the fall. During the orientation students review the academic requirements for the senior year and discuss the socialization to the field education experience and future plans for employment or graduate school. This orientation is mandatory for all seniors who are planning on graduating at the end of the year. Notice of the date, time, and place of the orientation will be provided to students during the fall registration.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

The School of Social Work makes specific and continuous efforts to provide a learning context in which respect for all persons and understanding of diversity (including age, class, color, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation) are practiced. Social work education builds upon professional purposes and values; therefore, the program provides a learning environment that is nondiscriminatory and reflects the profession's fundamental tenets.

## **ACCULTURATION TO THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION**

Many activities take place during the school year which offer opportunities for social work students to experience and feel a part of the social work profession. These activities include attendance at Social Work Club assemblies, professional meetings, lectures by visiting speakers, and visits to social agencies and institutions.

Students are encouraged to participate in community activities, volunteering in local agencies, etc. Each student is expected, early in their educational experience, to take the initiative in reaching out in some volunteer capacity to some agency or project within the community. These experiences will provide part of the foundation for the capstone 400-hour field placement during the senior year. Participation in community activities can be done through the student individually working directly with community agencies, through the various programs sponsored by the Social Work Club, through the projects built into the various social work classes, and/or through working out arrangements with social work teachers for community activities suited to individual student interests and capacities.

Students are also encouraged to become members of professional organizations such as the National Association of Social Workers, the National Association of Black Social Workers, the National Association of Christian Social Workers, the International Association of Adventist Social Workers, and any others which may be of special interest.

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

At the beginning of each semester, the student will have access (in social work classes being taken) to a course syllabus which outlines the course of study, textbooks to be used, and course requirements. The course syllabus will also contain a written description of criteria by which the student will be evaluated, the grading scale, and other information pertaining to the assessment process for the overall course grade. The criteria will include the number of exams, any required papers, outside readings, class presentations, type of participation required, and a listing of appropriate dates and deadlines.

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

Students who experience problems or identify concerns related to the BSW program have several avenues for communicating these. For each of the following areas, the persons whom the student should contact are listed in order of priority.

### Student Contact Points:

1. Problems/concerns related to students' academic progress or completing the BSW program as outlined in the full-time or part-time program plans.
  - Academic advisor
  - BSW program director
2. Problems/concerns suggestions related to field practicum.
  - Field Instructor
  - Liaison
  - Field Education Director
3. Problems/concerns/suggestions related to a specific course and/or instructor.
  - Course instructor
  - BSW program director
4. Problems/concerns/suggestions related to BSW curriculum design (content area gaps or duplication, etc.)
  - BSW program director
5. Problems/concerns/suggestions related to student affairs policies and procedures (orientation, registration, advising, course scheduling)
  - BSW program director
  - Department Dean
  - Vice President of Academic Administrator

Students have representatives on the Southern Social Work Program advisory board. The representatives are the Social Work Club president and the Phi Alpha Club president. These representatives are invited to the advisory board meetings twice per year. At these designated meetings, the student representatives give direct input concerning student needs and perceptions, as well as have opportunity to provide curricular and program feedback.

The University's Student Association also provides a forum for identifying issues and making suggestions. The officers of the Student Association meet with the school's administration on a regular basis throughout the academic year.

Students also have the right and the opportunity to participate in the evaluation of their educational experience. The School of Social Work operationalizes this opportunity through a variety of mechanisms. Students have a chance to provide feedback to the program on the instruction they receive in every course. In addition, evaluation forms are utilized to assess the quality of advising provided; the field liaison roles performed by faculty; and the field experience.



# CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROTOCOL

Conflicts are a normal part of life and solving conflict is important to the faculty in the School of Social Work. When a student experiences a situation that feels uncomfortable or unfair, it is important to practice healthy problem-solving techniques. The School of Social Work faculty developed the following protocols to guide students through the conflict resolution process. The following steps must be taken in the order given for the student's difficulty to be given the proper attention:

1. **Make an appointment and talk to the professor with whom the student is having a conflict.** A written plan of action should be developed outlining how the problem was solved with a copy to both parties. If the student feels the situation is resolved, the process ends at this point. If the student and the professor do not resolve the situation, proceed to step two.
2. **Both professor and student should sign the conflict resolution protocol and make an appointment to the next highest authority.** If the course is a social work class, then the situation will go to the social work program director. If the course is any other course, the professor and student should meet with the Dean of the School of Social Work. A written plan of action should be developed outlining how the problem was solved with copies to all parties. If after meeting with the social work program director, the situation is resolved through the plan of action, the process ends here. If the student, the professor, and the program director are unable to resolve the situation, proceed to step three.
3. **The student, professor, and social work program director should make an appointment with the Dean of the School of Social Work.** If after meeting with the Dean the situation is resolved through the plan of action the process ends here after documenting the outcome with a copy to all parties. If issue remains unresolved please refer to the University Conflict Resolution policy in student handbook.

## Step 1

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Step 2

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Step 3

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
School of Social Work Dean Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

## SOCIAL WORK CLUB

The Southern Adventist University Social Work Club is organized for all majors and minors in the School of Social Work. The club provides an opportunity for socialization and association with others who have the same professional interests and goals. It also enhances academic and professional development of social work students. The club provides a mechanism through which students may have input into the social work program. The club is sponsored by the School of Social Work but is organized and operated by the students through yearly elections of officers and planned events throughout the academic year.

The club sponsors service projects and other activities for the social work student. These, and other social work program volunteer projects, provide pre-professional experiences that enhance the student's confidence and competence through actual hands-on experiences. These real life experiences also help students decide if social work is the profession for them. Some of the on-going projects include:

1. Club convocations provide opportunities 1-2 times per year for students to plan programs to address their interests. For example, students have planned programs focusing on the civil rights movement, involvement in service activities, and sexual assault. Besides being an educational opportunity, students share social time and networking during some convocations.
2. Activities that promote social work on campus and in the community. For example, students plan presentations for Social Work Month that promote social work as a profession.
3. Semester service projects such as assisting the Salvation Army with the "Chattanooga Street Store", assisting at the local Chambliss home for children, and partnering with other student organizations to provide community service experiences.
4. Fundraising for service projects. Fundraisers have included bake sales, raking leaves and other yardwork.

Majors are notified of club and program activities through e-mail list-serv messages, on-campus flyers, in-class announcements, and visual reminders displayed on the lobby's television.

## PHI ALPHA HONOR SOCIETY

### *Mu Chi Chapter*

The School of Social Work at Southern Adventist University is proud to offer its students the opportunity to become a member of Phi Alpha: A National Honor Society for social work students and graduates. The purpose of Phi Alpha is to provide a closer bond among students of social work and to promote humanitarian goals and ideals. Phi Alpha fosters high standards

of education for social workers and invites into membership those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work.

To become a member of the Phi Alpha honor Society, students must have:

1. Declared social work as a major
2. Achieved sophomore status
3. Completed nine semester hours of required social work courses
4. Achieved an overall grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
5. Achieved a 3.25 grade point average in required social work courses
6. Demonstrate commitment to promoting humanitarian goals and ideals.

Invitations to join the Phi Alpha Honors Society, Mu Chi chapter, and to attend the induction ceremony are sent out during the Winter semester.

Phi Alpha Mu Chi, our local chapter, organizes a minimum of one event per semester; current and prospective members are highly encouraged to attend. In addition, the Phi Alpha Mu Chi may join with the Social Work Club in planning social events for the social work student body.

## DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS

Each year the School of Social Work recognizes students who have demonstrated outstanding knowledge and leadership. The recipients of these awards are recommended by the department faculty; however, student input is welcomed. The awards given include:

- **Academic Excellence:** The Academic Excellence Award is given to a graduating BSW senior who demonstrates superior academic excellence. This is defined as performance of work recognized at a level, above and beyond the expected standard established...expected standard established by the School of Social Work (see BSW Student Handbook, *Criteria for Evaluation of Student Performance* for reference). The student should be in their senior year and be in the top 20% of their class.

This award may be given to more than one student who displays superior academic excellence, and it can be given together with any other award. Student(s) chosen for award will be nominated by the respected academic teams (i.e., BSW or MSW Teams) and voted by the School of Social Work faculty.

- **Leadership:** The departmental leadership award is given to the graduating senior who has shown leadership in class, the SW club, Phi Alpha club, and department-sponsored activities.
- **Social Work Major of the Year:** The social work major of the year award is given to a graduating senior who demonstrates academic achievement, reflects the values of the School of Social Work, participates in service activities, is an active member of the SW club, achieves the recognition of peers and professionals, and demonstrates support of staff and the department. This award is determined by faculty nomination with peer input.

- **Ed Lamb Community Service:** The Ed Lamb Community Service Award is given to a social work major in their freshman through junior year. They must have earned a grade-point average 2.5 or higher, and must have displayed extensive community service leadership (includes a monetary scholarship).
- **NASW (BSW Student of the Year):** The BSW Student of the Year award honors students who are enrolled in an accredited social work program in the State of Tennessee. Students must have reflected a positive influence on others, and must have displayed academic achievement.

# ACTIVITY VERIFICATION FORM

Students are required to complete community service activities in the BSW program. Upon completion of an activity, the student is to fill out the Activity Verification Form and have it signed by the supervising individual present. Students may choose to provide pictures or a short description of the event; however, story-like information should not be posted in the Service Activities page.

Each student is advised to upload these documents to his/her BSW Portfolio (see *BSW Portfolio Handbook* for more information). This process may be utilized to award a student with the Ed Lamb Community Service award. Additionally, the Service Activities page on the student's portfolio site will be used by prospective practicum sites, employers, professors, etc. If a student is actively participating in community service, it reflects positively on the student and their commitment to the values of the social work profession.

Date of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Time Spent on this Activity (in hours/minutes): \_\_\_\_\_ hrs \_\_\_\_\_ min(s)

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

Description of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_ Club Sponsored Activity (Community Service)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Church-affiliated Community Service  
\_\_\_\_\_ Southern-affiliated Community Service  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other

Please describe the activity:

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Please provide information regarding your role in this event and the activities you were involved in (be detailed):

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What social work skills and values did you use during this event?

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By signing below, I attest that I have attended and participated in the activity indicated.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Member Present

*Please note: It is the responsibility of the student to keep an original copy of this form and submit a copy to the appropriate location, source, or individual when required.*

## **National Association of Social Workers**

### **SUMMARY OF THE CODE OF ETHICS**

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

#### **Preamble**

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- Service
- Social Justice
- Dignity and Worth of The Person
- Importance of Human Relationships
- Integrity
- Competence

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

# CORE VALUES AND ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

The following broad ethical principles are based on social work's core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These principles set forth ideals to which all social workers should aspire.

**Value:** *Service*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.*

Social workers elevate service to others above self-interest. Social workers draw on their knowledge, values, and skills to help people in need and to address social problems. Social workers are encouraged to volunteer some portion of their professional skills with no expectation of significant financial return (pro bono service).

**Value:** *Social Justice*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers challenge social injustice.*

Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers' social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.

**Value:** *Dignity and Worth of the Person*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.*

Social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers promote clients' socially responsible self-determination. Social workers seek to enhance clients' capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs. Social workers are cognizant of their dual responsibility to clients and to the broader society. They seek to resolve conflicts between clients' interests and the broader society's interests in a socially responsible manner consistent with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards of the profession.

**Value:** *Importance of Human Relationships*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.*

Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.

**Value:** *Integrity*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.*

Social workers are continually aware of the profession's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

**Value:** *Competence*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.*

Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.

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Student Signature

Date



## PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

As students begin to develop their professional skills and identification, joining a professional organization provides opportunities for networking, continuing education, and exposure to the varied areas in social work.

Child Welfare League of America  
67 Irving Place  
New York, NY 10003

National Association of Social Workers  
PO Box 98272  
Washington D.C. 20077-4343

National Association of Black Social Workers  
1969 Madison Ave.  
New York, NY 10035

National Federation of Student Social Workers, Inc.  
P.O. Box 146  
Tempe, Arizona 85281

National Council on Family Relations  
3989 Central Avenue Northeast, Suite 550  
Minneapolis, MN 55421

North American Association of Christians in Social Work  
Box 90  
St. Davids, PA 10908

International Association of Adventist Social Workers  
P.O. Box 370  
Collegedale, Tennessee 37315

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Southern's Feed My Sheep Pantry: 423-236-2766 or [feedmysheep@southern.edu](mailto:feedmysheep@southern.edu)  
<https://www.southern.edu/academics/socialwork/feedmysheep/index.html>

Southern's McKee Library Website: <http://library.southern.edu/>

Council on Social Work Education: <http://cswe.org/>

North American Association of Christians in Social Work: <http://www.nacsw.org>

National Association of Social Workers: <http://www.socialworkers.org>

International Association of Adventist Social Workers: <http://iaasw.org/>

# University's Disability Services Statement

Website: <https://www.southern.edu/administration/student-success/disability/faq.html>

“Southern Adventist University values diversity and inclusion within its campus community and seeks to provide an affirming environment for all its students. Disability Support Services (DSS) facilitates equal access to Southern's learning community for students who have documented disabilities or suspected learning differences. DSS promotes student responsibility and self-advocacy and provides relevant information to faculty and staff with Christ-like support and compassion. You are an important part of the Southern family and we are here to support you in your success.”

# University's Diversity Inclusion Statement

Website: <https://www.southern.edu/connect/belonging/>

## ***Celebrating Belonging at Southern***

Southern Adventist University embraces the creation story of each individual as a unique treasure, carved in the very image of God. Because God established the eternal value of every soul, we covenant to actively work against barriers of division within the body of Christ. Our desire is to allow each student and employee the privilege of spiritual safety and social inclusion by living out our mission. Through intentional and sustained action, we focus our attention on addressing any internal challenges that limit our ability to demonstrate cultural humility on our university campus.

Southern Adventist University stands committed to modeling the love of Jesus in every interaction on our campus. We commit to holding each other and the institution accountable for ensuring that our campus climate is inclusive. As we celebrate our God-given gift of diversity at Southern, we also commit to protecting the value of every campus constituent made in the very image of God.

## **SAU POLICIES RELATED TO DIVERSITY**

Website: <https://www.southern.edu/connect/belonging/policies.html>

The following are excerpts from the Southern Adventist University Employee Handbook found in its entirety [here](#).

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (Section 2000)**

Southern Adventist University affirms that Christian principles are incompatible with various forms of discrimination that have divided modern societies. The university is committed to equal employment opportunities for all individuals. The university does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, veterans, or handicap/disability in its hiring and employment practices. The university also prohibits harassment and sexual misconduct in the workplace. The university does, however, exercise its constitutional and statutory rights as a religious organization and employer to prefer members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for employment. Full-time faculty and staff (salaried and hourly) are to be members in good and regular standing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The University Board may exempt individuals from this requirement in special teaching situations for which there are a limited number of Seventh-day Adventist faculty available for hire.

### **POSITION STATEMENT ON HUMAN RELATIONS**

Southern Adventist University subscribes to the Position Statement prepared by the North

American Division Curriculum Committee Task Force. The faculty and staff of Southern Adventist University commit themselves to the following principles on human relations and pledge themselves to strive to implement them in the conduct of their various offices and roles:

1. We accept the biblical affirmation that God has “made of one blood all nations” (Acts 17:26), and are thus committed to providing an atmosphere for learning which is devoid of prejudice, discrimination, and separation.
2. We are committed, so far as possible within the academic and financial resources of the university, to the recruitment and retention of students from different cultural and ethnic groups.
3. We affirm that the principle of recruitment and retention of faculty from different cultural and ethnic groups, so far as possible within the staffing needs of the university, is fundamental to providing positive role models among cultural and ethnic groups on campus and is salutary in providing positive instruction among such groups.
4. We are committed to providing a university atmosphere that promotes interaction among cultural and ethnic groups on campus. We are likewise committed to the sharing of Southern’s cultural climate through faculty, staff, and student interaction.
5. We are committed to the concept of multicultural education that being different does not connote superiority or inferiority and that we can all learn from one another.
6. We affirm that all faculty, staff, and students should hold a positive attitude toward cultural pluralism and that they should be encouraged to become actively involved in the planning, development, implementation, and improvement of the multicultural aspects of Southern’s programs in their respective areas of expertise and responsibilities.
7. Finally, we are committed to the biblical precept to love our neighbors as we love ourselves and are therefore committed to apply the Golden Rule as our ultimate guide in human relations.

### **CHRISTIAN STANDARDS AND CONDUCT**

All employees of Southern Adventist University are “God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works.” Therefore, all employees are expected to willingly and conscientiously uphold the high moral and Christian standards that the church represents and live in harmony with the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Employees of Southern Adventist University represent the church, as well as the university; consequently, their appearances, words, and actions reflect care and judgment. By the grace of

God, their lives are a reflection of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

1. Southern employees choose to talk “that which is good to the use of edifying” (Eph. 4:29); thus, they refrain from lewd talk and profanity and avoid being demeaning or derogatory.
2. Southern employees recognize that their bodies are “temples of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 6:19) and thus refrain from the use of tobacco in any form, intoxicating beverages, and/or illegal drugs.
3. As members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Southern employees recognize the importance of coming together with like-minded believers; therefore, they do not “forsake the assembling of themselves (Heb. 10:25) and attend church services on the seventh-day Sabbath and support their local churches with tithes and offerings (Lev. 27:30).
4. Southern employees believe “the Holy Scriptures are the supreme, authoritative, and the infallible revelation of [God’s] will” (“28 Fundamental Beliefs”) and accept the view of marriage as divinely established in The Garden of Eden, and defined as an exclusive union between one man and one woman. Therefore, employees comport themselves consistent with a Biblical sexual ethic, one in which sexual relationships occur only in a Biblical marriage context, and refrain from sexual acts of any kind outside of the Biblical marriage. It is also noted that Southern recognizes only those marriages that have occurred in a church or civil ceremony and for which a recorded marriage license has been issued.
5. Southern employees embrace the Biblical exhortation to mentor the next generation (Ps. 145:4); therefore, by both personal example and instruction, employees are to assist in the education of students regarding the application of Christian standards and conduct.

# Southern Adventist University's Title IX Policy

Website: [https://www.southern.edu/administration/student-development/title\\_ix/](https://www.southern.edu/administration/student-development/title_ix/)

*In compliance with Title IX of the U.S. Higher Education Amendments (1972), Southern does not discriminate on the basis of gender. In addition to gender equity in sports, Title IX prohibits sex-based discrimination in education. It addresses gender-based discrimination and sexual violence (whether student to student, student to employee, or employee to employee). Sexual violence includes attempted or completed rape or sexual assault, as well as sexual harassment, stalking, voyeurism, exhibitionism, verbal or physical sexuality-based threats or abuse, and intimate partner violence.*

## **SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY IS COMMITTED TO ABIDING BY THE FOLLOWING TITLE IX GUIDELINES:**

### *1) Appointment of Title IX Coordinator*

- *Title IX Coordinator*

### *2) Offer clear communication across campus about our policies related to sexual misconduct (see related policies below).*

### *3) Provide adequate and appropriate training to students and employees on sexual violence prevention, awareness, and how individuals should proceed if they experience or encounter a situation involving sexual misconduct.*

- [RAD Classes \(www.southern.edu/rad\)](http://www.southern.edu/rad)

### *4) Ensure that prompt and equitable grievance procedures for responding to reports of sexual discrimination are followed.*

## **Related Policies for Title IX**

- [Harassment of Employees and Students](#)
- [Sexual Harassment & Title IX Policy \(download pdf\)](#)
- Retaliation Policy

# **Links to University's Violence Prevention Policies & Resources**

## **Student Code of Conduct**

<https://www.southern.edu/handbook/undergraduate.html#/code-of-conduct>

## **Campus Safety & Responsible Employee Policies & Resources**

<https://www.southern.edu/administration/campus-safety/CSA-RE/>

This site includes: Procedures for How to Report, Online Reporting Form, as well as Rights for Victims, and definitions of various forms of violence.