

GENERAL DEGREE AND ACADEMIC STANDING

Course Numbering System

The numbers applied to each course indicate level, semester or trimester hours of credit and departmental codes. Selected courses numbered 4000-4V99 are open to both advanced undergraduates and graduate students. Courses numbered 5000 and above are limited to graduate students. Only doctoral candidates will be permitted to register for 6000-level courses. **Graduate credit will not be conferred for courses numbered below 4000 or for 4000-level courses which do not appear in the Garland School of Social Work MSW Catalog, Graduate School Catalog, or George W. Truett Theological Seminary Catalog.** The first digit in the number indicates the level. The second digit in the number indicates the value of graduate credit hours. Thus, "3" as a second digit indicates three credit hours. Some courses may be taken for varying credits, typically one to three credit hours. In such cases, instead of a digit for the second place in the course number, the letter "V" is used, and the varying amount of credit is indicated at the right of the course title. The last two digits are reserved for departmental use. Online students must register for classes in the trimester, and residential students must register for semester classes; no cross-registration is permitted (online students may not register for residential classes, and residential students may not register for online courses).

Course Load

The maximum number of credit hours for which a Social Work master's student may register in a given semester or trimester is eighteen. No more than nine semester hours of the MSW course may be taken for residential students in either of the two summer sessions.

Course Availability

Course availability and section instructor are subject to change at any point. Should you need to follow a different study plan, please consult your advisor and note that all study plans will be approved based on current schedules and course prerequisite guidelines.

Grading System & Policies

Grades assigned for GSSW graduate students are:

| Letter Grade | Grade Points |
|--------------|--------------|
| A | 4.00 |
| A- | 3.67 |
| B+ | 3.33 |
| B | 3.00 |
| B- | 2.67 |
| C+ | 2.33 |
| C | 2.00 |
| C- | 1.67 |
| D+ | 1.33 |
| D | 1.00 |
| D- | 0.67 |
| F | 0.0 |

Grade Requirements

Grades of C-, D, D-, or F will impact the grade point average (GPA) but will not apply toward the total number of hours required for degree completion. All courses in the MSW program must be completed with a grade of C or higher to meet the degree requirements; all designated practice and practicum courses must be completed with a grade of B or higher. If a grade of C-, D+, D, D- or F is made in a required course, the student must repeat the same course and receive a grade of C (or B for designated practice and practicum courses) or better to meet the degree requirements for graduation. Courses taken at Baylor may be repeated where the grade received is C or lower or in courses where a B is required and not met, as long as the student has not been terminated from the program. When a course is repeated, students' transcripts will reflect both grades, and both will be included in the overall grade point average. A student will have a maximum of two attempts at any one course; a class with a grade or a W notation counts as an attempt. Failing to meet the minimum benchmark in the second attempt at a course will result in dismissal from the program.

Please note: Internship seminar courses and the following practice skills courses require a grade of **B or higher** to meet the degree requirements (listed in order of degree plan): 5361, 5362, 5491, 5492, 5363, 5494, 5490, 5370, 5380, 5375, 5378. Students earning a B- or lower grade in one of these courses must repeat the course and earn a B or higher.

Incomplete

The grade of "I," incomplete, may be given at the discretion of the faculty member when unforeseen circumstances arise that prohibit students from completing assignments toward the end of the trimester/semester, typically after the withdrawal period has ended and when the completed portion of the course work is of passing quality. The faculty member will determine a new deadline for finishing the course requirements no later than the end of the following semester or trimester. If the work is not completed and a final grade is not submitted by that deadline, then the "I" will be changed to a grade of "F." It is the student's responsibility to complete the course requirements and see that the incomplete grade is removed from the record in the trimester or semester following the "I." Professors may request an extension (up to six months), or the grade automatically changes to "F." An extension must be initiated by the instructor and approved by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. A student may not graduate with an "I" incomplete on their transcript.

Please note a grade of "I" for any course that is a pre-requisite or co-requisite for subsequent courses may delay the student's course of study.

Social Work Graduate Grade Change Policy

The instructor of the class may initiate changes to grades and it must be approved by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Changes to grades may only be initiated by an instructor when the original grade resulted from an error or when the original grade was Incomplete. Changes resulting from an error may only be made within one calendar year of the original date that the grade was due and may not occur once the degree to which the course was applied has been conferred. Beyond changes to grades for those reasons, changes may occur when initiated by the Provost based on the finding of a violation of academic integrity or when a grade is successfully appealed through the appropriate process(es); the one-year time limit does not apply to these changes.

Academic Grade Forgiveness

An MSW student may request to have the first grade earned (not a W notation) from a repeated course excluded from the calculation of the grade point average (GPA) for a maximum of two courses during one's MSW degree, where the original grade earned was a C- or below. If a

student attempts a course a second time and Academic Forgiveness is applied, the grade earned the second time will be used to calculate the GPA. Grades for excluded courses (the original grade that becomes forgiven) will remain on the academic transcript but will not factor into the GPA. Excluded courses will be noted on the transcript by an "E" beside the grade. Once applied to a particular course, Academic Grade Forgiveness cannot be canceled or removed (this rule may not be appealed).

Course Repeat Policy

A student may repeat a course for which his or her highest earned grade is a C- or below. A student may also repeat a course for which they need to earn a higher grade to fulfill a course requirement for the MSW degree. Courses in which the student earned a grade of B or higher may not be repeated. A student will have a maximum of two attempts at any one course, where a class with a grade or a W notation counts as an attempt. Courses attempted at the Garland School of Social Work, which includes courses for which a student received a W notation, may not be repeated at another institution for transfer. All grades earned at the Garland School of Social Work will be calculated in the semester or trimester and cumulative grade point averages unless Academic Forgiveness is applied (see above policy). Failure to earn the required minimum grade for a course after two attempts will result in dismissal from the program.

Audit

A student may audit a course with the written permission of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Only lecture courses may be audited. Audit enrollment is subject to the instructor's willingness to have nonparticipating students.

Audited courses may not exclude a student seeking credit, may not be repeated later for credit, may not change status after the registration period, and are not considered part of the course load.

Policy on Course Waivers and Academic Credit

The program does not waive course requirements for the professional foundation areas or for internship courses. No academic credit is given for previous work or life experiences.

Time Limitation

The maximum time limit for the master's degree is five years from the time the student matriculates in the program. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will make exceptions to the five-year limit only after carefully reviewing the extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

Graduation Eligibility

To qualify for a master's degree, students must have a minimum overall grade point average of 3.0 and must complete the following requirements:

1. Satisfactory completion of the required credit hours.
2. Successful completion of internship requirements. See the Practicum Education Manual, which is downloadable from the Practicum Education (<https://socialwork.web.baylor.edu/current-students/practicum-education-current-students/>) website.
3. Successful presentation and defense of the Capstone project. Students must receive a grade of "B" or better in the final advanced practice and internship courses to be eligible for graduation.

4. Personal and professional conduct congruent with the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics, the State Licensing Board Code of Conduct, and with the rules and regulations established by Baylor University as outlined in *Baylor University Student Policies and Procedures*, including the Baylor University Honor System, General Expectations of Baylor Students, and other policies documented therein.

Filing for Graduation

Students file for graduation with the GSSW the semester or term before the degree is expected to be conferred. Students pursuing dual degree options must file for graduation in both programs or schools.

Posthumously Awarded Degrees

A student in their final year who has successfully completed 75% of the Standard Program degree requirement or who has completed 50% of the Advanced Standing degree requirement who is enrolled in good standing, making satisfactory academic progress, meeting all minimum grade point average requirements for their degree program, and dies before completing their degree may be awarded the degree posthumously upon the recommendation of the Garland School Dean and with the approval of the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Academic Standing & Continuation in the Program

Students are expected to earn an overall grade point average of 3.0 for each semester or trimester they are enrolled. Failure to earn this grade point average may result in dismissal from the program. Failure to earn a 3.0 grade point average in a student's final semester or trimester may result in not being permitted to graduate. Probation and dismissal policies related to GPA requirements are listed below. Dismissals related to course repeat policies are found in the Course Repeat Policy (p. 1) section of the catalog. Dismissals and probation related to professional standards can be found in the Grievance and Appeals Procedures (p. 4) section of the catalog.

Probation and Dismissals

Students who do not earn the required overall 3.0 grade point average may enroll in a subsequent semester on a probationary status at the discretion of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Students whose term GPA falls under 3.0 during their probationary term will be dismissed, regardless of the number of hours completed. Students whose term GPA and overall GPA are at or above 3.0 following their probationary term will be automatically removed from academic probation. Students who do not raise their overall GPA to 3.0 or higher after 9 hours of graduate-level coursework will be dismissed from the program. The graduate program is not required to hear student appeals of this decision. Students receiving financial assistance must maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0 to avoid loss of financial aid. Courses taken for elective credit may be included in the grade point average computation.

Professional Conduct

The Garland School of Social Work expects that all students will conduct themselves in a manner fitting their professional identity as Baylor University students and developing social work professionals. This includes personal conduct toward faculty, staff, peers, and colleagues on and off campus. Failure to display professional conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the graduate program.

Students should refer to the catalog's Academic and Professional Development section for further details.

Academic and Professional Development Evaluation and Committee Process

Decisions Related to Continuation/Discontinuation in the Social Work Program

In order to continue in their academic program, students must meet the academic and professional standards of the Program and the social work profession. Professional standards are incorporated into the Program as an academic matter. Compliance with academic and professional standards, including the NASW Code of Ethics, is subject to review in accordance with this evaluation process.

To identify and engage students needing support in meeting academic and professional standards, the GSSW has established the Academic and Professional Development (APD) Committee to assist the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in resolving academic and professional development concerns as needed. The ad hoc APD Committee Chair will be appointed by the dean or the dean's designee. The committee consists of the APD Chair, the student's mentor (if appropriate), and one other faculty member appointed by the APD Chair. If the APD Chair holds a potential adjudicative role in the appeals process, the Dean of the Garland School of Social Work will appoint another faculty member to serve as chair. If the mentor holds a potential adjudicative role in the appeals process, the APD Chair will appoint an interim mentor for the duration of the process. After the matter is resolved, the APD Chair will reassign the student to the student's previous mentor.

The functions of APD are to

1. facilitate student development in thinking critically, acting ethically, and practicing effectively within the established standards of social work practice;
2. protect potential clients and agencies from sub-standard and unethical practices;
3. evaluate students requiring support to meet academic and professional standards;
4. develop supportive strategies for achieving academic and/or professional standards whenever possible and
5. recommend to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and/or Dean of the Garland School of Social Work decisions regarding continuation in or termination from the Program.

The APD Committee does not assume a classroom or practicum faculty member's responsibility for critical evaluation and decision-making in assigning grades. All matters related to course grades are addressed through the Grading, Course Repeat, Continuation, and Probation and Dismissal policies specified in this catalog.

When problems occur that may be serious enough to necessitate judgments regarding continuation or termination from the Social Work Program, the APD Evaluation Process may be enacted. Criteria used to identify these problems include:

1. Behavior in violation of standards of social work practice established by social work values, the NASW Code of Ethics, the Texas Board of Social Worker Examiners Code of Ethics, and the Student Code of Conduct of the Garland School of Social Work.
2. Academic integrity violations include cheating, lying, plagiarism, falsifying process recordings, or any other form of client documentation.

3. Other university policy violations (i.e., Student Code of Conduct, Title IX Policy, Civil Rights Policy, etc).
4. Indication of an inability to effectively apply the profession's knowledge, ability, and skills.
5. Indication of an inability to develop the appropriate knowledge and interpersonal skills necessary for effective social work practice.

The APD Committee may request assessments by professionals outside the program as deemed necessary. Students are also subject to Baylor University's Honor Code, academic and discipline policies outlined in *Baylor University Student Policies and Procedures*, and the general degree requirements found in this catalog or *Baylor University Undergraduate Catalog*. Participation in the APD Committee process does not abridge the student's rights to use the University appeals process.

Academic and Professional Development Evaluation and Committee Procedures

The following procedures are to be followed in making referrals to the APD Committee and by all parties involved in the APD process:

1. Referrals to the APD Committee can be made only by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. In unusual situations, referrals may be made by the Dean of the Garland School of Social Work following the procedures set out for the Associate Dean.
2. When a Director of Practicum Education, Program Director, or faculty member identifies an issue that threatens the student's progress in the program, they will submit a letter to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the student, detailing the concern(s), the steps taken to date, and, if possible, suggesting potential remedies. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may make a referral to the APD Committee without a referral from a faculty member.
3. Within two weeks of receiving the letter from the Director of Practicum Education, Program Director, or faculty member, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will communicate in writing to the student and to the referring director/faculty member their decision to (1) determine no further action is required, (2) take action to resolve the issue, or (3) at any point refer the situation to the APD Committee. If the Associate Dean chooses to take action to resolve the issue, the next steps and expectations will be provided in writing to both the student and the referring director/faculty member. If the Associate Dean chooses to refer to the APD committee, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will submit a letter to the Dean of the Garland School of Social Work, with a copy to the student, detailing the concern(s) and any action she or he has taken on the situation. This letter should make clear the specific issue(s) the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs wishes the APD Committee to address, steps already taken, and possible remedies as the Associate Dean sees them. The original letter from the director/faculty member and any additional documentation should be included with this letter.
4. Within two weeks of receiving the referral, the dean or their designee will appoint the Chair of the Academic and Professional Development Committee, and the APD Chair will appoint members to the APD and call a committee meeting. At that time, the committee will hear the director/faculty member(s), the student, and anyone else they deem necessary. The committee may meet as often as needed, but a final decision should be made within two weeks or less from the first meeting date. The committee may request an extension of up to 15 days from the Dean of the Garland School of Social Work or their designee. The Dean of the Garland School of Social Work or their designee will assign appropriate staffing to the committee.

5. The APD Committee will use its professional judgment to recommend an appropriate course of action to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. This action may include (A) a developmental plan with input from the student, the faculty member(s), and other appropriate persons to resolve the issues within a specific time limit; (B) a referral to any other university committee for resolution; (C) a recommendation to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs that the student be terminated from the program. A copy of the APD Committee's decision will be sent to the student, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Dean of the Garland School of Social Work, and placed in the student's Garland School of Social Work file.
6. If the Associate Dean or APD Committee recommends a developmental plan, it shall include the consequences of failure to follow the plan. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs monitors the plan but may delegate this responsibility to the mentor or other director/faculty member. When the plan terms have been met, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will notify the APD Chair and the Dean of the Garland School of Social Work and place documentation in the student's folder. If the plan's terms are not met, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is responsible for imposing the agreed-upon consequences.
7. *Appeal to the Dean of the School.* If the situation is not resolved to the student's satisfaction within 30 days, or if the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or the findings of the Academic and Professional Development Committee, they may appeal to the Dean of the School (or to the Executive Vice President and Provost if the complaint is against the Dean). The student must provide the Dean with a written statement that details the circumstances giving rise to the complaint and a narrative of efforts to resolve the conflict with the faculty, Associate Dean, or the Director of Practicum Education. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will provide the Dean with a description of their views of the situation, including efforts to resolve the issue.
8. *Appeal to the Executive Vice President and Provost or his or her designee.* If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved by the Dean of the school, then the student shall have the right to appeal such matter to the Executive Vice President and Provost, who, after review, may refer such matter to the University academic appeals committee. (see University Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure (<https://risk.web.baylor.edu/public/documents/academic-appeals-policy-and-procedure/>) for details on the academic appeals committee).

Grievance and Appeal Procedures

Any student who believes a GSSW faculty member has treated them unfairly with respect to a course for which the student was registered may complain of such alleged unfair treatment involving students' academic work. This protocol is established for the application of the *University Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure* in the context of the Garland School of Social Work. This includes grades, assignments, practicum, and alleged violations of professional behavior. Please note: Matters related to alleged violations of the University Honor Code will be handled through the processes identified in the Baylor University Honor Code. Discrimination-related matters will be handled in coordination with the Equity, Civil Rights, and Title IX Office (<https://www.baylor.edu/equity/>) through the processes identified in the university's Title IX and Civil Rights policies.

Grade Appeal Process

Any student wishing to appeal an individual assignment or course grade must complete the following process. If the grade appeal is due to a grade that did not meet MSW program benchmarks, the student may not

register for subsequent courses until the final results of the appeal are determined. For example, if a student does not make a B in a practice course, they may not register for the next practice course until the appeal has been granted. No student may register for a class with a pending appeal where the course pending appeal is a prerequisite.

Appeal Procedures

1. *Conference with Faculty Member.* The student shall present the faculty member with a written statement that details the circumstances giving rise to the complaint. An effort should be made to resolve the matter with the faculty member.
2. *Appeal to the Director of Practicum Education.* If the situation involves a matter that pertains to practicum, the student may appeal to the director of the appropriate practicum program. A written statement detailing the circumstances giving rise to the complaint and a narrative of the effort to resolve the situation with the internship placement/internship course must be provided to the Director. If appropriate, the Internship faculty member will also provide the Director with a written description of her/his view of the situation, including efforts to resolve the issue. If the situation is not resolved to the student's satisfaction within 30 days, they may appeal to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
3. *Appeal to Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.* If the situation is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student may appeal to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. A written statement detailing the circumstances giving rise to the complaint and a narrative of the effort to resolve the situation with the faculty member must be provided to the Associate Dean. The faculty member will also provide the Associate Dean with a description of her/his view of the situation, including efforts to resolve the issue. If the faculty member involved in the complaint is the Associate Dean, the student may appeal directly to the Dean of the School. If the faculty member involved is the Dean, the student may appeal directly to the Provost of the University.
4. *Appeal to the Dean of the School.* If the situation is not resolved to the student's satisfaction within 30 days, or if the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or the findings of the Academic and Professional Development Committee, they may appeal to the Dean of the School (or to the Provost if the complaint is against the Dean). The student must provide the Dean with a written statement that details the circumstances giving rise to the complaint and a narrative of efforts to resolve the conflict with the faculty, Associate Dean, or the Director of Practicum Education. The Associate Dean will provide the Dean with a description of their views of the situation, including efforts to resolve the issue.
5. *Appeal to the Provost or his or her designee.* If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved by the Dean of the school, then the student shall have the right to appeal such matter to the Provost (or their designee), who will make a final determination. The Provost may refer such matters to the university academic appeals committee. (see University Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure (<https://risk.web.baylor.edu/public/documents/academic-appeals-policy-and-procedure/>) for details on the academic appeals committee).