Southern Connecticut State University

Department of Social Work

DSW Student Handbook

2024-2025

Program Information

Social Work Department
Lang House
101 Farnham Avenue
New Haven, CT 06515
(203) 392-6573
(203) 392-6559

Coordinator
Brianna V. Garrison, Ph.D., LCSW
Doctoral Program Coordinator & Assistant Professor
(203) 392-6552
garrisonb3@southernct.edu

Chair
Carmela Fusciello Smith, Ed.D., LCSW
Chairperson & Associate Professor
(203) 392-6576
smithc57@southernct.edu

Additional Contacts

Office of Graduate Admissions
GPSinfo@SouthernCT.edu
(203) 392-9670

Financial Aid & Scholarships
financialaid@southernct.edu
(203) 392-5222

**Center for Academic Success
and Accessibility Services**
casas@southernct.edu
(203) 392-6828

Registrar's Office
registrar@southernct.edu
(203) 392-5301

SCSU Bookstore
https://southern-ct.bncollege.com/
(203) 392-5270

IT Support Services
helpdesk@southernct.edu
(203) 392-5123

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

Southern Connecticut State University provides exemplary graduate and undergraduate education in the liberal arts and professional disciplines. As an intentionally diverse and comprehensive University, Southern is committed to academic excellence, access, social justice, and service for the public good.

The College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) values interdisciplinary education, practice-based learning, and community-based participatory research practices. CHHS academic programs are attentive to the workforce needs of our state and region, and partner extensively with agencies and organizations in New Haven neighborhoods and throughout the state of Connecticut to address local health priorities and achieve equity.

The Department of Social Work is housed within CHHS. Social work promotes the personal and social development of people in their communities based on the values of social, economic, and environmental justice; civil and human rights; democracy; and full access to educational, social, economic, and political participation. The Department of Social Work educates social workers as competent and compassionate agents of change who, guided by professional knowledge, skills, and values, are prepared to practice ethically and effectively with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities; to translate research into practice; and to provide leadership in the profession and in their communities.

The Department of Social Work offers programs that span the social work career trajectory, including the BSW program, which prepares social workers for generalist practice; the MSW program, which prepares social workers for specialized practice; and the DSW program, which prepare master's-level social workers for university teaching and leadership in organizational and academic settings.

The BSW and MSW programs are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). All three programs are also accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE).

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES AND POLICIES

Southern Connecticut State University, the School of Graduate and Professional Studies, and the Department of Social Work have developed various resources and policies that apply to social work education, including those listed below. For additional resources, policies, and student services, please refer to the *SCSU Student Handbook*, the College of Health and Human Services, and the search box on the Southern homepage.

Academic Honesty
The integrity of scholarship is the cornerstone of the academic and social structure of the University. It is the expressed policy of the University that every aspect of academic life shall be conducted in an absolutely and uncompromisingly honest manner. Plagiarism and other

academic misconduct may be grounds for a failing grade in a course and for dismissal from a practicum and from the social work program.

Academic Support Services

The Center for Academic Success and Accessibility Services (CASAS) provides academic support services, including tutoring and support with writing.

Accommodations for Disabilities

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Southern provides reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities on an individualized basis. The Center for Academic Success and Accessibility Services (CASAS) assists students with documented disabilities to determine appropriate accommodations. Before receiving accommodations in a class, students must schedule an appointment with CASAS and then meet with the instructor to plan or review approved accommodations.

Accommodations for Observance of Religious Holy Days

Students will be excused from class attendance or other requirements if the tenets of their religion forbid secular activity on the particular day or time of day of the class session. Students requesting a religious accommodation should consult with the instructor prior to the class session to arrange for the excused absence and make up missed work.

Assessment of Disabilities

Students who need documentation for accommodations or who are concerned about potential mental health issues, ADHD, or learning disabilities may receive low-cost psychological testing evaluations from the SCSU Psychological Assessment Office.

Believe Fund

The purpose of the Believe Fund is to provide emergency assistance to matriculated students in the College of Health and Human Services who are experiencing short-term, unanticipated financial hardship. The stipend is to be used for student financial assistance outside of the normal financial aid process. Please consult with your faculty advisor or program coordinator to assist in submitting a Believe Fund request.

Campus Map

Southern is located at 501 Crescent Street, New Haven, CT 06515. The Department of Social Work offices are located at Lang House, 101 Farnham Avenue (faculty offices, student lounge) and at Orlando House, 104 Farnham Avenue (offices of admissions, practicum education, and online learning). Social work students have classes in various buildings and enjoy the Buley Library, Adanti Student Center, and other facilities throughout campus.

Career and Professional Development

The Office of Career & Professional Development (OCPD) serves as the primary institutional conduit for career development services. As a comprehensive and centralized unit, the office provides timely, relevant, and useful programs and services to students, institutional stakeholders, external organizations, and community partners.

Childcare
The COMPASS Drop-in Childcare and Family Resource Center provides a reservable, short-term (maximum 3.5 hours per day) program for the children of Southern students and employees.

Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Southern is committed to identifying and addressing systemic barriers to equity, access, and success for all members of our community. We are also committed to constructive dialogues where we treat one another with dignity, respect, kindness, compassion, and civility as we share varying perspectives, with the goal of creating a culture of inclusion and belonging. The Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion seeks to advance Southern towards a social justice-oriented and anti-racist University.

Email
Southern will communicate you via your Southern email address. Please use your Southern email in writing to us and check it frequently. For assistance in accessing your email account, contact the Help Desk for support 27/7.

Grade Appeal
According to University policy, students may submit a Grade Appeal only in instances in which a palpable injustice can be claimed. A palpable injustice occurs when a faculty member has been demonstrably inconsistent and unfair to the student. Grade appeals can only be submitted in the semester after the grade is received. **The grade appeal procedure consists of three levels: 1)** discussion with the instructor; 2) mediation with the department chair; and 3) referral to the University Academic Standing Committee (UASC).

Graduate Student Affairs Committee (GSAC)
The Graduate Student Affairs Committee (GSAC) is comprised of students from the various programs within the School of Graduate and Professional Studies. All graduate students are welcome at meetings and are encouraged to participate. The Graduate Student Affairs Committee is dedicated to enhancing the experience of graduate students. Our goal is to promote individual academic endeavors, as well as collective cultural and social experiences at Southern. GSAC also acts as an advocacy group to better serve the needs of the graduate student body as a whole.

Identification Card
The multipurpose ID card (Hoot Loot) is the primary University identification card and is mandatory for all students. The Hoot Loot ID card functions as a library card and as a key to some buildings. The card also contains each student's unique eight-digit University identification number. Students may obtain the Southern Hoot Loot ID card by visiting the University Card Office, located in the Wintergreen Building.

Information Technology Help Desk
The SCSU Information Technology Department supports the campus community in the use of information and academic technologies, such as BannerWeb, e-mail accounts, library accounts, and classroom technologies. For assistance, please contact the Helpdesk for support 24/7 or email helpdesk@SouthernCT.edu or call (203) 392-5123.

Library Resources

The Buley Library has extensive resources for social work research, including online databases and access to materials through interlibrary loan. Students may contact Lisa Bier, the designated social sciences reference librarian, for individualized assistance with capstones and other projects: BierL1@SouthernCT.edu or 203-392-5131.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Your physical and mental health are critical to your learning and success. Southern has a comprehensive range of supports available to enhance your holistic wellbeing, including the Wellbeing Center, the Food Pantry, Counseling Services, Health Services, Recreation and Fitness, Alcohol and Drug Services and Recovery Services, and Violence Prevention, Victim Advocacy and Support (VPAS).

Nondiscrimination Policy

The Southern nondiscrimination policy specifies that Southern does not discriminate on the basis of age; ancestry; color; gender identity and expression; intellectual disability; learning disability; mental disorder; physical disability; marital status; national origin; race; religious creed; sex, including pregnancy; transgender status; sexual harassment and sexual assault; sexual orientation; veteran status; or any other status protected by federal or state laws.

Parking

To have a vehicle on campus, students, faculty, and staff must complete their vehicle registration and parking permit application.

Policy Statement on Pluralism

The Southern policy statement on pluralism forbids acts of violence or harassment reflecting bias or intolerance based on an individual's race, religious creed, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and ethnic or cultural origin. The University has procedures for investigating complaints of acts of intolerance brought by students or staff.

Name, Gender, and Pronouns

Students may change their legal name or they may submit a chosen first name, gender identity, and pronouns by visiting Southern's name, gender, and pronouns page. A chosen first name will replace a student's legal first name as it appears on class rosters, unofficial transcripts, degree evaluations, email profiles, and mail logs/guest sign ins. Upon request at the Card Office, a chosen first name can appear on the student's Hoot Loot ID card. Financial aid, bill statements, and official transcripts will continue to display a student's legal name.

Sexual Misconduct

Southern is concerned about the safety of all University community members. Sexual harassment and sexual violence (sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation) are not acceptable behaviors in our community and are violations of the law, University policies, and the Student Code of Conduct. Southern is committed to providing prevention education and support services to survivors and holding perpetrators accountable. Visit the Sexual Misconduct webpage for resources and policies related to sexual misconduct, including policies, reporting procedures, and students' rights.

Support and Resource Team
The Southern Support and Resource Team (SART) provides a collaborative, victim-centered team response to sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation). The mission of SART is to provide services that ensure a transition from victim to survivor for every individual whose life is impacted by sexual misconduct. The SART members can provide a survivor with many supportive options including counseling, medical attention, judicial services, advocacy, law enforcement, referrals, and general information regarding sexual violence.

Research Protection Program
Students who plan to involve human or animal subjects in their research must obtain approval or exemption in accordance with the SCSU Research Protection Program. Students who plan to involve human subjects in a research study (for example, in interviews, surveys, or observations) must obtain approval or exemption from the Institutional Review Board or IRB. In addition, students who plan research with human subjects may need to obtain approval in accordance with the policies of a particular agency or organization, as applicable.

Student Code of Conduct
The SCSU Student Code of Conduct presents a statement of students' rights and responsibilities established by the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education. It defines prohibited conduct, the disciplinary process for violations, and potential consequences for violations.

Time Limitation to Complete Program
All requirements for a graduate degree at Southern must be completed within a period of six years, which includes any leaves of absence. Graduate courses taken more than six years before the time of graduation will not count toward meeting degree requirements.

Undocumented Student Support Team
Southern is committed to a mission of social justice. That means we strive to ensure that all members of our community are treated with dignity, respect, kindness, compassion and civility. The Undocumented Student Support Team has three primary goals: 1) to identify and break down barriers faced by undocumented students and their families; 2) to engage and educate the community about the realities of being an immigrant in the United States; and 3) to advocate for policies that support our students on the campus, state, and national level.

University Police
The mission of the Southern Police Department is to provide exceptional police services in partnership with the Southern community, to protect and serve, to maintain a safe environment, to enhance the quality of life and learning, and to promote a culture of respect and trust. Students may request an on-campus walking escort service for their safety 24 hours a day.

Veterans Services
The Office for Veterans, Military, and Adult Learner Services provides counsel, academic advisement, GI Bill and Tuition Waiver Certifications, and liaison with state and federal agencies. You can obtain information about the GI Bill and laws that provide rehabilitation and educational assistance to disabled or war veterans and their dependents. You can also find out about medical entitlements, discharge upgrades, and other benefits available from the Veterans

Administration. The Veterans' Center offers a lively meeting place with computers and comfortable furniture where you can meet other students, study, socialize, or relax between classes. The Veterans' Center is in Engleman Hall, Room A014 and is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Withdrawals and Leaves of Absence
There are several paths available for students who need to step away from some or all of their studies. Please consult with your advisor in selecting the pathway that will work best for you.

Withdrawal from a Course
Students may drop a course within the first seven days of the semester, or they may withdraw from a full-semester course during the first 12 weeks of the semester. Such a withdrawal is recorded as a "W" on the transcript but does not impact the student's grade point average. Students may withdraw online through student BannerWeb services prior to the end of the withdrawal period. Before withdrawing from a course, students are encouraged to confer with their instructor and faculty adviser and with the Office of Financial Aid, if applicable.

Late Withdrawal from a Course
Students may be eligible to appeal if they have experienced Extraordinary Circumstances that impacted their ability to withdraw from a class by the deadline. If eligible, a Course Withdrawal Appeal may be submitted to your instructor no later than the last day of classes (i.e., the day prior to final exam week in fall/spring or the last day of the term in summer/winter).

Leave of Absence
Students who need to take time off from their studies with the intention of returning within 12 months must submit a Withdrawal/Leave of Absence form to the Registrar's Office. Students taking a leave of absence are strongly encouraged to meet with their faculty advisor, the Student Support and Evaluation Committee, and the financial aid office to discuss their plans for degree completion and to understand the impact of the leave of absence on their academic and financial statuses.

Withdrawal from the University
Students who need to step away from their studies without the intention of returning within 12 months may withdraw from the University by submitting a Withdrawal/Leave of Absence form. If withdrawing before the end of the semester, students should confer with their instructors, their faculty advisor, and/or the Student Support and Evaluation Committee to review their options for successful completion of the semester. Students who wish to resume their MSW program after having withdrawn from the University must apply for readmission to the School of Graduate and Professional Studies.

SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT POLICIES

In addition to the University resources and policies, the Social Work department has policies and procedures that apply particularly to social work education.

ADEI (Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Acceptance, and Belonging)

Higher education has not been equally accessible or attainable for all. Some students have been historically excluded and are currently challenged by societal oppression outside the classroom and by traditional norms, communication patterns, unwritten rules, and biased expectations inside the classroom. In social work classes, we try to decolonize social work education by deconstructing some privilege-dominant perspectives and practices and by studying some disenfranchised perspectives and practices. We strive for a willingness to learn through various approaches and to dismantle narratives that have silenced marginalized voices. Our commitment to anti-racism, diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and acceptance in the classroom is consistent with the principles, values, and standards of social work as defined by the NASW Code of Ethics (2021) and the CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (2022). It is a commitment that calls for your input, critical thinking, and respectful and brave dialogue. We understand decolonizing conversations may be difficult. Please enter the classroom environment in a manner that is self-aware, self-loving, and considerate of others. Your role in your classes is to remain present and respectful and to engage in the difficult conversations that support your growth, development, and leadership. Social justice is a directive of action, and it is on every one of us to do our part.

Advisors

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor, who serves as their academic navigator and guide throughout the DSW program. Consult your advisor when selecting your courses each semester, reviewing your degree evaluation, seeking academic support and other University services, and making academic and professional plans. Faculty advisors are most easily reached by email and will gladly meet with you in-person or online when you are preparing to register for courses and throughout the academic year.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Language that is generated by AI tools such as ChatGPT or other chatbots may be used in coursework or agency assignments only with the explicit permission of the course instructor, the practicum instructor, or the agency. AI-generated texts in assignments must be cited according to APA guidelines. In addition, students must carefully and critically review AI-generated materials to assure that they are accurate and free from bias. Unattributed use of AI language is considered a violation of academic integrity and professional standards and may be grounds for a failing grade in the course, dismissal from the practicum, and dismissal from the Social Work program.

Class Attendance

Attendance and participation in social work classes are required professional responsibilities. Students are expected to attend every class session, to arrive on time, and to remain for the full class. Students ordinarily must attend and participate in at least 80% of class sessions to earn a

passing grade in the class. In the case of a medical emergency, exigent circumstance, accommodation for a documented disability, or accommodation for religious observance, students are responsible for notifying the instructor of an anticipated absence before the class session and for arranging to make up work. Students must complete any makeup work that is assigned by the instructor in a timely fashion.

Students seeking reasonable accommodations for a documented disability must be registered with Center for Academic Success and Academic Services.

Class Participation

Class participation involves an engaged and collaborative learning process that requires consistent punctuality and attendance in all class sessions; preparation; respectful attention; cultural humility and demonstration of anti-racist, anti-oppressive principles; thoughtful contributions to class discussions; participation in exercises and activities; adherence to class norms and/or Netiquette; appropriate use of technology in the classroom; and demonstration of social work professional standards and behaviors within and beyond the class. Additional expectations for class participation may be defined in the class syllabus.

Class Participation Online

Class participation online involves the same engaged and collaborative learning process as class participation in person. In addition, students in online classes are expected to abide by the following guidelines, which will be considered in grades for attendance, class participation, and the total course grade:

- Online classes take place in a virtual classroom (Zoom or Teams), and appropriate classroom behavior is expected.
- Respect the start and end times of the class.
- Log into your class from a distraction-free, quiet environment. Under no circumstances should you join the class session if you are driving a vehicle.
- Display your full name and pronouns.
- Take care of your personal needs (appropriate dress, basic hygiene, eating, talking to others in your home, etc.) prior to entering the virtual classroom.
- Turn your camera or video on with your full face viewable; be sure your camera and room lighting allow others to see your full face.
- Mute and pause your video when you step away from the camera.
- Use the Zoom functions to communicate as needed (chat, raise your hand, answer yes/no, etc.).
- Communicate with your instructor if you will be late or if you lose your connection during class.
- Pay attention! Maintain eye contact with the speaker on the screen.
- It is strongly recommended that you use a computer during your online class. If you do not have a computer, the University might have resources to support you.

Confidentiality and Privacy of Class Sessions

Consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), **the Department of Social Work** respects the confidentiality of students' educational records and the privacy of their participation in class sessions. Students may not record a class or post discussions or images from class sessions without the explicit permission of the instructor and all other students in the

class. Violations of this policy will be considered a violation of the [NASW Code of Ethics](#) and of social work professional standards and behaviors and may result in failing the course and dismissal from the Social Work program.

HIPAA Privacy Rule
In accordance with the [HIPAA Privacy Rule](#), social work students must protect the privacy of clients' health information and remove any identifying information in process recordings, academic assignments, and class discussions.

Incomplete Grades
Students may request that an instructor allow a 30-day extension for completing course requirements, provided that the request is made before the end of the semester. Instructors ordinarily will consider an Incomplete grade only when the student has satisfactorily completed most course requirements and has less than 30% of coursework remaining. If the instructor grants the student's request for an extension, then the student and the instructor complete an Incomplete Grade Contract and a temporary Incomplete ("I") grade is recorded

DSW students with two or more Incomplete grades may be referred to the Student Support and Evaluation Committee (SEC) and advised to complete those courses before continuing in the MSW program. Students with two or more Incompletes that have extended beyond two semesters will be advised to take a [Leave of Absence](#) until the Incompletes have been resolved.

Prior Learning
The DSW program does not grant course credit or course waivers for life experience or previous work experience.

Doctor of Social Work (DSW) Program

Overview
The Doctor of Social Work (DSW) is a professional doctorate which prepares master's-level social workers to be leaders in critical thinking, practice, and research. DSW students enhance their practice expertise through evaluation and translational research. A self-designed externship of 240 hours expands students' experience in one of the following areas of focus:

1. University Teaching
2. Leadership and Management

The DSW program is an academically rigorous course of study. Students entering the program should be able to demonstrate knowledge of critical thinking, engage in reflective practices, exemplify their proficiency at conceptualizing and synthesizing knowledge, and adhere to APA formatting guidelines. Additionally, while the program is designed to accommodate working students, it is a significant time commitment, and students will need to adjust their schedules to accommodate the rigorous requirements to be successful in the program.

Admissions
Minimum Admissions Requirements
Successful applicants to the DSW program must meet the following minimal requirements:
- MSW from a CSWE-accredited Master of Social Work (MSW) program.
- A minimum of 3.00 grade point average for both undergraduate and graduate degrees.
- At least three (3) years of post-MSW social work practice experience.
- Demonstrated capacity for doctoral coursework and independent study.

Applications
Applicants for the DSW program are required to complete all admissions materials required by both the Office of Graduate Admissions and the Social Work Department. Applications to the Doctor of Social Work program must be submitted and completed by December 31st for admission the following summer. Any applications submitted after this date will be reviewed only if spaces remain for the upcoming year. Applicants to the DSW program apply to the School of Graduate Studies.

Application Requirements:
- Online Application to the School of Graduate and Professional Studies
- Transcripts from all institutions attended
- Curriculum Vitae or Résumé
- Recommendation forms from two (2) employers, teachers, or community, civic, or clinical/management leaders attesting to potential as a Doctoral Candidate.

- A 4-5-page, double-spaced essay addressing the following:
  1. Social work practice experience, including supervision, leadership, and/or teaching
  2. Most significant aspects of social work professional mission and values for one's practice
  3. Reasons for pursuing doctoral study, including influence of prior experience
  4. Professional goals and the desired impact of doctoral study on career trajectory
  5. Adhere to APA formatting standards.

This essay will also serve as a writing sample to demonstrate proficiency in professional writing.

Plan of Study

The DSW program is offered in a three-year, part-time format that allows students to pursue a doctorate while maintaining their employment. The plan of study consists of two courses per semester (summer, fall, and spring) over three calendar years, including an externship and capstone project in the second and third year. The program provides graduates with expertise to work in two main areas: university teaching and leadership in organizational and academic settings. For specific DSW degree requirements and course descriptions, please see the Graduate Catalogue.

DSW Program Sequence
By semester/year

Summer 1	Fall 1	Spring 1
800: Evidence-Informed Practice	**805**: Paradigms, Epistemology, and Heuristics in Social Work	**821**: Leading with Authenticity: The Use of Self in Higher Education and Leadership
831: Leadership and Management in Social Work	**820**: Emergent Models and Clinical Issues in Clinical Social Work Practice	**823**: Neuroscience and its Application for Social Work

DSW Program Sequence Continued
-By semester/year

Summer 2	Fall 2	Spring 2
803: Historical and Contemporary Analysis of Social Policy	**802:** Program Evaluation	**809**: Capstone Seminar I
833: Technical Skills in Social Work Administration	**806**: Education for Social Work	**824:** Education for Social Work II

Summer 3	Fall 3	Spring 3
801: Data and Analysis Dissemination	**807**: Externship I	**808**: Externship II
809: Capstone I	**810**: Capstone II	**810**: Capstone II

***Students MUST complete all incomplete grades prior to enrolling into the next semester courses.

Please see the Graduate Catalog, which describes the length of time that students have to complete the DSW program under the heading "Time Limit for Completion":
https://catalog.southernct.edu/graduate/degree-requirements.html

Course Learning Details

Learning occurs through synchronous class sessions, asynchronous online work, and a five-day residency at the end of June for all three years. Synchronous class sessions meet on Wednesday evenings for two hours between 6-9pm EDT. Summer courses are hybrid courses; each course meets on the first Wednesday of the summer session, with 1-2 additional zoom meetings in June and July. These courses also meet for three hours (9-12pm or 1-4pm) during the on-ground five-day residency. The remaining summer coursework occurs online.

Continuing Education Credits (CEC)
Each year, 15 CEC credits are provided for your summer residency courses. These will be provided through the Practicum Education Office.

Externship
DSW students engage in a mentored externship during the last year of the DSW program. They select an externship in one of two focus areas: (1) university teaching or (2) leadership in organizational and academic settings. The externship spans across two semesters, occurring in the fall (120 hours) and spring (120 hours) of the student's third year, for a total of 240 hours.

Key Externship Staff and Roles

- **Student:** Identifies specific mentors and placements, develops proposal identifying the type, topic, project and preliminary learning activities, and maintains a portfolio in which they keep a detailed account of their efforts to present a minimum of (2) times during the externship seminar.

- **DSW Coordinator(s)**: Approves externship placements and coordinates SCSU higher education placements.

- **Externship Seminar Instructor**: Students will take a seminar course connected to the externship during the fall (SWK 807) and Spring (SWK 808) during their third year in the program. The seminar faculty serves as a liaison between the student and mentor (if a mentor is assigned); ensures student learning activities are taking place; submits the grade for each course (pass/fail).

- **Externship Mentor**: Provides guidance for the student at the externship site, including consistent communication and feedback on learning activities; provides a final evaluation of student learning.

Externship roles and activities are described in more detail below.

Externship Types

- **University Teaching**: Students interested in an externship in university teaching will serve as student teachers at SCSU or co-teach/adjunct at either a state university or community college in the CSCU system or other college or university. Students will be required to work extensively with a faculty mentor in various course formats including face to face, hybrid, and online. Students will also learn through co-teaching and supervised teaching by focusing on activities such as creating a syllabus, learning modules and Blackboard content, a series of assignments and evaluation tools for a specific course or content area, and co-grading discussions and written assignments to develop a skillset of providing constructive feedback from a strengths-based perspective. All mentored teaching activities should have the goal of developing the student's teaching skillset from co-teacher to independent instructor. The student will have no less than two (2) supervised teaching opportunities in the fall semester and no less than four (4) in the spring semester. Student evaluations will also be collected and evaluative feedback from the mentor will be provided.

- **Leadership and Management:** Students interested in an externship in leadership in organizational and academic settings will seek out mentorship within an established agency. The mentor will be a CEO, CFO, Clinical Director or Project Director of a state agency or a private non-profit. The student will work with the organization mentor to

identify and complete a project within the specific agency. Projects could include creating assessment tools, conducting follow-up evaluation research to determine the impact of program interventions, or grant and report writing. Projects should be based on agency needs and benefit the agency while building the student's skillset.

Procedure and Deadlines

Externship placement opportunities aim to meet students' university teaching or leadership in organizational and academic settings goals. Students are encouraged to identify an externship site and mentor for consideration and include the mentor's resume or CV beginning in the Spring of their second year of study. Once they have identified a possible placement and mentor, the student completes the Externship Proposal Form to the DSW Coordinator in the Spring Semester their second year of study. Please note: There are limited numbers of SCSU Teaching externships; students are encouraged to explore other colleges and universities as an alternative plan.

If the student does not have a specific site or mentor and is interested in leadership and management, the student will meet with the Social Work Department's Director of Practicum Education. The student is responsible for scheduling and attending any and all interviews required by the prospective externship site. If the student is using their place of employment as their externship site, they must submit the Use of Employment as Externship Site form to the DSW Coordinator and Director of Practicum Education.

If the student, their mentor, and the site agree the placement is suitable, the DSW Coordinator sends a confirmation letter to the student and the organization. If the student and prospective mentor do not accept the placement, they may seek another opportunity. The Social Work Department seeks to finalize and approve all externship placements by July 1st before the Fall semester of the externship.

Any agency or external university externship onboarding requirements are the sole responsibility of the DSW student. The DSW coordinator and/or Director of Practicum Education cannot provide required vaccinations, fingerprinting, or background checks. The DSW coordinator and/or Director of Practicum Education can provide a community contact to conduct these additional requirements and only provide verification once receipt of the documents provided. The DSW Coordinator and/or Director of Practicum Education will need at least 60 days to process requests for verification letters.

The DSW Coordinator and the office of Practicum Education reserve the right to amend this process to add necessary elements to prepare DSW students for their externship.

Externship Placement Schedule/Attendance

Students must complete at least 240 hours for their externship, 120 hours per semester. Students

are expected to identify a schedule that allows for consistent engagement in externship activities (e.g., 8 hours/week x 30 weeks = 240 hours). Students and their mentors may create a flexible schedule of hours to match the project and learning taking place more closely.

Students are responsible for scheduling, completing, and documenting the required minimum hours for their externship. Students should review the calendar with their mentor at the beginning of each semester to schedule their hours and plan how to document completed hours.

Students are not typically required to attend their externship during organization or University holidays or during the University Spring vacation. Should the organization be open on days when the University is closed, students are expected at their site. During the winter intersession between fall and spring semesters, students may take up to two weeks' vacation from the externship. Students and their mentors determine the student's vacation schedule.

Students who must miss days from their externship due to illness, a death in the family, or other emergency are responsible for notifying their mentor. Students must arrange to meet the total number of required externship hours.

Place of Employment
Students who wish to use their place of employment as an externship site must apply to the DSW Coordinator for an employed externship placement. An employed placement may be approved for the student's externship on the condition that the work the student will be undertaking falls within one of the concentration areas (university teaching or leadership in organizational and academic settings) and is sufficiently different from their current role within the setting.

Employed externship placements may be approved for students employed with good standing within the DSW program. Students may not apply for employed placements who are probationary employees or who are subjects of disciplinary action by the agency. Employed externship placements must meet criteria for approval as an externship site, and externship mentors must meet criteria for approval, detailed below. The student's mentor must be different from the person who supervises the student's employment.

Externship assignments must be separate and distinct from the student's responsibilities as an employee. Evaluations must be consistent with academic standards and distinct from evaluations of employment responsibilities.

Compensation
Students may be compensated for their externship if the organization they are placed at is willing and can compensate them.

Background Checks

Students are encouraged to disclose any criminal history (felony or misdemeanor convictions) to assist the DSW Coordinator(s) and/or Practicum Education office in identifying appropriate externship placements. Students with criminal records may be admitted to the DSW Program; however, previous convictions may limit students' externship options. Some externship sites require prospective externs to be fingerprinted and to pass criminal and driving background checks, child welfare background checks, drug tests, and/or physical examinations. Any of these specific site requirements are the sole responsibility of the student. Of note, all students interested in University Teaching at Southern will be required to submit to a background check. To start the process, the student will complete the form entitled *Disclosure Regarding Background Information* and forward it, completed, to the university assistant.

Approval of Mentor

Externships entail applied work under the guidance of advanced professional mentors who will provide frequent and consistent guidance. Mentors are approved who:

1. Hold an accredited MSW degree or professional degree relevant to the externship type and topic, and,
2. Demonstrate expertise in leadership and management or higher education as evidenced by one or more of the following:
    a. at least three years of post-graduate experience
    b. relevant trainings and/or certifications
    c. relevant presentations and/or publications
    d. public recognition (awards, grants, etc.)

Responsibilities of Mentors

DSW student mentors collaborate with students in developing assignments, assessing learning, and evaluating practice. Responsibilities include:
1. Supporting the values and goals of social work education and the professional development of their students,
2. Providing orientation, access to resources, and supports for student safety,
3. Including the student in activities they can engage in together,
4. Planning opportunities for students to demonstrate required social work competencies,
5. Setting learning objectives and assess the student's progress in collaboration with the student.

Once the externship begins, the externship seminar instructor is the first point of contact for mentor and student questions and concerns. The mentor is encouraged to contact the externship seminar instructor whenever concerns arise. The DSW handbook policies will be followed for any concerns regarding the student's performance.

Externship Seminar Faculty

The externship seminar instructor is a full-time faculty member within SCSU's Department of Social Work.

Responsibilities of Externship Seminar Instructor(s)

Students in externships are simultaneously enrolled in SWK807 and SWK808 with their externship seminar instructor. The externship seminar instructor meets with the students to review externship learning activities and modes of instruction, identify learning outcomes, and ensure all educational requirements will be met. Mentors and students are welcome to call upon the externship seminar instructor with any questions or concerns. Additionally, the externship seminar instructor will check in with the student once per semester.

It is the responsibility of the externship seminar instructor to grade the two externship courses including students' performance at their externship. Students are graded on a pass/fail basis. Students must earn a passing grade to continue in or graduate from the DSW Program. If a student is not meeting their externship requirements, the instructor makes a referral to the Student Support and Evaluation Committee (SEC). At the end of the second semester, the externship seminar instructor will submit evaluations of mentors and organizations in service of strengthening the externship program.

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to demonstrate professional standards, including the essential abilities and attributes for social workers; academic standards, including requirements in the externship syllabi; and externship practice standards, including the social work competencies and behaviors as specified in the DSW Handbook.

Students' assignments vary according to their focus area and the site capacity. Each semester consists of 120 hours or 8 hours per week.

At the end of each semester, mentors will provide an evaluative summary of the students' progress. Students will maintain a portfolio in which they keep a detailed account of their efforts, which each student will present a minimum of (2) times and be submitted to their externship seminar instructor at the end of each semester. This portfolio could include summaries of achievements, supervisory processes, professional development activities, observations on staff meetings, etc.

1. Identify themselves as DSW externs in interactions with clients and colleagues.
2. Respect professional boundaries in electronic communications and social media, including refraining from personal use of cell phones.
3. Adhere to the Social Work Code of Ethics.

Student and Site Evaluation

At the end of each semester, mentors will give an evaluative summary of the students' progress regarding the competencies agreed upon by the student and externship seminar instructor. Students will maintain a portfolio in which they keep a detailed account of their efforts, which will be presented during the seminar and submitted to their externship seminar instructor at the end of each semester.

Privileges for Mentors

Library Privileges. Mentors are afforded full privileges to Buley Library, including access to collections in-person and online. To receive a library card, mentors should bring a valid picture identification to the University Card Office in the Wintergreen Office Building. The Card Office will issue a Hoot Loot ID Card, the University's multipurpose identification card, with an identification number that may be used for borrowing books in person and for online access to journals, databases, and other resources.

Professional Development Opportunities. Mentors are invited free of charge to various workshops and professional development events that are sponsored by the Department of Social Work and the College of Health and Human Services, including the annual Aavo Rakfeldt Memorial Lecture.

Externship Seminar Courses

Course Requirements. The externship seminar courses span across two semesters, occurring in the fall and spring of the student's third year. The seminar will meet seven (7) times each semester.

Modes of Instruction. Externships entail applied work under the guidance of advanced professional mentors who will provide consistent guidance and feedback.

Portfolio. A corpus of professional work in the area of the student's focus area that exemplifies the student's experience and expertise as well as outlining a path for future professional development.

Evaluation

Students are graded by their externship seminar instructor on a pass/fail basis. Students must earn a passing grade in order to continue in or graduate from the DSW Program. If a student is not meeting their externship requirements at any point in the semester, an SEC will be held. At the end of each semester, mentors will provide an evaluative summary of the students' progress regarding the particular competencies agreed upon by the student and faculty liaison and mentor.

Capstone

The capstone experience is the culminating academic event for students enrolled in the DSW program. The capstone advisor mentors the student through developing advanced expertise in university teaching and leadership in organizational and academic settings. The capstone is designed to model the process by which advanced practitioners develop, demonstrate, and communicate a coherent area of expertise that is grounded in practice wisdom and held to high standards of scientific evidence and academic rigor.

Key Capstone Staff and Roles

Capstone Seminar Advisor: The Capstone Seminar Advisor guides the student through the four capstone courses from the development of a project to completion. Close coordination with the student's capstone seminar advisor is essential to the development of a strong capstone. The capstone seminar courses allow opportunities for group processing, peer review, and consultation. The capstone seminar advisor is the main person the student works with on all aspects of the capstones and approves the timing of the 2_{nd} reader review. Due to the iterative nature of the process, candidates can expect to make several revisions prior to gaining approval of the proposal. The capstone seminar advisor also completes the course rubrics and submits the student's grade. Students are graded on a pass/fail basis.

2_{nd} Reader: The second reader is a full-time faculty member in the Social Work Department, who can provide additional subject matter expertise and consultation. The second reader reviews and provides feedback on the final draft of the proposal in SWK 809 and the final draft of the student's capstone in SWK 810 after the faculty advisor approves the document. The second reader will provide written feedback to the student and suggest additional edits to strengthen the document. The student's grade is only submitted after the 2nd reader has reviewed and provided feedback on both the proposal and capstone (SWK 809a and SWK 810b). Once completed, the second reader signs the capstone's title page document.

DSW Coordinator: The DSW Coordinator (in consultation with the Department Chairperson) will assign advisors and second readers. Further details on the selection process are detailed in this handbook.

Capstone Courses and Products

Capstone work occurs in four courses over four semesters, beginning in the Spring of Year 2 and concluding in the Spring of Year 3. Please note, students must complete all incomplete grades prior to enrolling in SWK 809, and they must complete each capstone course before proceeding onto the next course. A description of each course is as follows:

SWK 809 (A & B): Students identify a specific topic or area of study in consultation with their seminar advisor and then engage in a review of the literature about the topic. The course

culminates in a proposal, including a work plan for completing the project over the four semesters. The proposal is a document that includes: (1) a statement of the problem to be investigated and which capstone it falls under, (2) a description of the question(s) under investigation, significance and relevance of the topic and questions, (3) a brief commentary on the initial exploration of the literature, (4) a proposed methodology to conduct the inquiry, and (5) a draft timeline and work plan for completion of the capstone. The seminar instructor completes the rubric and assigns the student's grade (P/F).

Depending on the capstone choice, the work plan may require a needs assessment to secure buy-in (e.g., Program Development Capstone), a research methods design (Research Project Capstone), or a critical analysis of the literature (Theoretical or Conceptual Framework Development Capstone). The product for this course is dependent upon capstone choice and may include the methods section or the needs analysis in addition to a proposal.

In 809A, students submit the final capstone proposal to their capstone seminar advisor, who upon approving the document will forward it to the second reader for a thorough review. Once the second reader has reviewed the document, they will send the draft back to the capstone seminar advisor. The seminar advisor will take the second reader's suggestions into account and work with the student to address any remaining issues. Once the draft has been revised in satisfaction with the seminar advisor, the proposal will be approved by the seminar advisor and the student can progress to SWK 809B.

In the second semester of 809B, the student begins the products associated with the capstone's methods section. This may entail applying for IRB approval if human subjects are included, putting the procedure in place for conducting a needs assessment, or designing training modules. Students will not proceed to SWK 810 without a complete proposal and if required a complete and submitted IRB application.

SWK 810 (Taken twice for credit): In the first semester of 810, students actively implement their project, and may also evaluate (e.g., Program Development Capstone; Training Module Development) or analyze (Research Project Capstone) their findings; develop policy or a theory/conceptual framework; and solicit feedback from key stakeholders/experts (Policy Development Capstone; Theoretical or Conceptual Framework Development Framework).

In the second semester of 810, the student will finalize the capstone and accompanying product, submit to their second reader for additional feedback, and obtain signatures from the seminar advisor, second reader, and chair. Students must have a full capstone draft by February 1 to be eligible for May graduation. Students then either disseminate their product to at least one audience or create dissemination proposals for at least two audiences.

Students without a complete draft will enroll in SWK 811 to continue their capstone studies.

Capstone Types

There are five capstone choices available to students. See Table 2, below, for how the work for each capstone choice is parsed out across the four courses.

- Research Project with Primary or Secondary Data
- Program Development
- Training Module Development
- Policy Development
- Theoretical or Conceptual Framework Development

Table 2: Capstone Focus Choices

Capstone Course	Primary/ Secondary Data	Program	Training Module	Policy Development	Theoretical/ Conceptual
809a	Proposal and Work Plan	Proposal and Work Plan	Proposal and Work Plan	Proposal and Work Plan	Proposal and Work Plan
809b	Methodology	Needs Assessment and Buy-In	Needs Assessment and Buy-In	Policy Development or Analysis	Literature Review
810a	Implementation	Implementation and Evaluation	Implementation and Evaluation	Alternative Policy	Critical Analysis of the Literature
810b	Product and Dissemination	Product and Dissemination	Product and Dissemination	Product and Dissemination	Product and Dissemination

Expectancies about the Capstone

- The capstone proposal is the product for the first semester. Once completed, students continue to add to the capstone proposal (now referred to as the capstone) to consist of the following components: Introduction, Methodology, Results and Discussion.
- Students may also have a product to accompany the capstone; for example, a set of training modules, a white paper, or a manuscript intended to be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal.
- The capstone should have a cover page for the capstone seminar advisor, chair, and second reader to sign.
- Although the length may vary, capstones should not exceed 125 pages.
- Students will present their final capstone project at the School of Graduate and Professional Studies' Graduate Research Conference or similar forum.
- Submit a final signed copy of the completed capstone to the capstone seminar advisor as a graduation requirement.

Procedure and Deadlines

By October1st, students will submit the Capstone Information Survey via the Forms link sent to your email. The DSW Program Coordinator will review the surveys, meet with the Chair, and place students in capstone groups.

Approval of Capstone Advisor

All full-time faculty within the Department of Social Work are eligible to serve as a Capstone Advisor. The DSW Coordinator makes assignment recommendations to the Department Chairperson who has final approval of all capstone advisor assignments. Other faculty, including emeritus faculty and faculty outside of the department, will be considered by the DSW Coordinator, in consultation with the Chairperson, on a case-by-case basis.

Student Responsibilities

Over the four semesters students are enrolled in capstone courses, they will engage in building and disseminating their capstone project. Students are responsible for the following activities in pursuit of this goal:

- Selecting a topic which considers and seeks to address a "problem" relevant to our field
- Selecting a capstone choice (see Table 1).
- Crafting a capstone proposal.
- Securing Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Subjects approval (if necessary)—see the following section.
- Executing the capstone project.
- Drafting the capstone and submitting it for multiple reviews by the advisor and 2nd reader.
- Presenting final capstone project or disseminating through a report or publication.
- Submission of completed and signed capstone project.

Use of Human Subjects

The University requires moral and ethical behavior and integrity in all research performed by its faculty, students, and staff. The RPP is accountable for assuring conformity with both federal and University research protection policies and procedures. The following RPP divisions promote and maintain appropriate management and oversight of SCSU research activities according to federal codes and institutional requirements.

The Office of Research Integrity (ORI) advances and monitors the responsible conduct of research for all SCSU research projects. The office acts on substantive allegations of research misconduct and serves as the Office of the Research Integrity Officer (RIO).

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) safeguards the rights and welfare of human participants in research. Investigators engaging in human participant research must submit a project proposal which will be examined for requisite compliance and assigned a disposition. Recruitment of human participants for research cannot proceed without IRB approval or exemption.

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) is responsible for tending to the care and welfare of vertebrate animals used in research. Investigators engaging in vertebrate animal research must submit a project proposal which will be examined for requisite compliance

and assigned a disposition. Animal research may not be initiated without IACUC approval. For further information, please visit:

http://southernct.edu/academics/graduate/research/rpp/index.html

Copyright Permission and Attribution
If a student includes copyrighted material in one's capstone, the student is responsible for obtaining permission to use such material unless the student is the owner of the copyright or the material meets the "fair use" criteria. Guidance can be found in the relevant edition of the APA Manual. Stanford University's website also has useful fair use information:

http://fairuse.stanford.edu/overview/fair-use/

Graduation
It is the student's responsibility to initiate the necessary paperwork to apply for their degree. See the following links for more information:
- https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/graduation
- https://www.southernct.edu/grad

Academic Policies and Procedures
Educational Effectiveness
By the end of the program, DSW program graduates will be able to:

1. Administer effective practice services for diverse, underserved, and vulnerable populations;
2. Interpret and apply research to engage in evidenced informed best practices;
3. Design effective programs which positively impact individuals and/or communities;
4. Provide leadership and management capacity which will result in superior supervision, administration and innovative strategies to respond to new and unfolding problems;
5. Effectively communicate knowledge, ideas, and concepts in a wide variety of venues and constituencies within and outside of one's organization; and
6. Deliver best practices in education, training, and staff development.
7. Apply evidence-based best practices to enhance interventions.

Evaluation of Students
According to University policy, graduate education requires continuous evaluation of students. In the DSW Program, this evaluation includes professional standards (essential abilities and attributes) and academic standards. Students' continuation in the DSW Program is contingent upon positive faculty evaluation of their performance in relation to these standards.

Professional Standards: Essential Abilities and Attributes
The Department of Social Work identifies the following professional standards and behaviors as essential to students' professional development and to their development of social work

competencies and behaviors as required by CSWE (2022 EPAS). DSW students are expected to demonstrate professional standards and behaviors throughout the social work program, including in their interactions in classes, practicum education, and activities in the University and the wider community. Failure to demonstrate professional standards and behaviors may be considered grounds for failing a course, dismissal from a practicum, and/or dismissal from the DSW program.

1. **Professional and Ethical Commitment**
   Students' behavior must demonstrate their willingness and ability to uphold the principles values, and standards of the social work profession as specified by the *NASW Code of Ethics*.

2. **Diversity and Social Justice**
   Students' behavior must demonstrate their ability and willingness to appreciate, respect, and value human and cultural diversity in their communications and interactions with others.

3. **Professional Use of Self**
   Students' behavior must demonstrate their willingness and ability to examine how their values, attitudes, beliefs, biases, emotions, and past experiences may affect their thinking, behaviors, and professional interactions and to adjust behaviors that may be inconsistent with professional values, ethics, and goals.

4. **Empathy**
   Students' behavior must demonstrate their willingness and ability to seek knowledge and understanding of the experiences, perspectives, and values of others and to use such empathy as a basis for professional relationships.

5. **Communication Skills**
   Students' behavior must demonstrate their willingness and ability to communicate effectively and respectfully in professional interactions, whether in person or online, including the ability to express ideas and feelings clearly, to listen to others, and to be aware of the possible impact that personal communications on social media may have in a professional setting. Students must demonstrate sufficient oral and written English-language proficiency to perform successfully in the program.

6. **Interpersonal Skills**
   Students' behavior must demonstrate their ability and willingness to relate effectively in professional interactions, including behaviors that show compassion, altruism, integrity, and respect for and consideration of others.

7. **Time and Energy**
    Students' behavior must demonstrate their ability and willingness to devote the time and energy necessary to meet expectations of the MSW program, including class attendance, class participation, timely completion of assignments, and practicum responsibilities.

8. **Professional Demeanor**
    Students' behavior must demonstrate their ability and willingness to comport themselves as professionals, including their demonstration of punctuality, timeliness, responsiveness, reliability, and appropriate self-presentation in person, online, and in social media.

9. **Scope of Practice**
    Students' behavior must demonstrate their ability and willingness to practice within the scope of their developing competencies, including identifying themselves as social work students or interns, accurately assessing their level of professional competence, and using supervision and consultation to guide professional judgement and practice.

10. **Knowledge Base for Social Work Practice**
    Students' behavior must demonstrate their ability and willingness to seek, apply, and translate professional knowledge and to pursue continuous learning and professional development as students and throughout their social work careers.

Academic Standards

DSW students must satisfactorily complete the number of graduate credit hours required on their planned program with a cumulative grade point average of "B" (3.0) or higher each semester. Any student who falls below the required GPA will be referred to an SEC. For more information, please visit: http://catalog.southernct.edu/graduate/grades-standing.html

Academic Probation and Dismissal

The DSW Program follows the university policy adopted by the School of Graduate and Professional Studies: Students who earn below a 3.0 (B) grade point average **for two consecutive semesters** are automatically placed on probation. Any subsequent semester in which the student is still below a 3.0 (B) grade point average will result in dismissal from the School of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Students who are dismissed may apply for readmission to the DSW program after the lapse of one semester. To be readmitted, students must submit a new application and application fee as

well as a petition to the DSW Program Coordinators describing why they will be successful if readmitted. The DSW Program Coordinators will return the petition with reasons for disapproval or will forward it to the Social Work Department Chair and the Dean of Graduate Studies with a recommendation for approval/denial of readmission.

For further information, please visit: http://catalog.southernct.edu/graduate/grades-standing.html

Incomplete Grades

The DSW Program follows the university policy adopted by the School of Graduate and Professional Studies: A temporary grade of incomplete (I) is recorded when a student has a valid reason as determined by the instructor for not meeting a partial requirement in a course prior to the termination of the semester. The student requests incomplete status from the student's instructor. If granted, the incomplete must be removed not more than 30 days after the next semester begins. If the student does not complete the work, the grade becomes the Incomplete Final Grade stated in the Incomplete Grade Contract. **Students are not permitted to register for any capstone courses until they have completed all incomplete work.** Additionally, students should be aware that a grade of incomplete may impact financial aid. For further information, please visit: http://catalog.southernct.edu/graduate/grades-standing.html

Student Support and Evaluation Committee (SEC)

The Student Support and Evaluation Committee (SEC) is a social work department committee that supports and evaluates students' performance in relation to academic standards, practicum education standards, and professional standards and behaviors. The purposes of the SEC evaluation are two-fold: 1) to collaborate with the student in assessing the student's performance from a strengths-based perspective, including specifying goals, identifying barriers, locating supportive resources and services, and planning for successful completion of their degree; and 2) to recommend to the department chair whether and how the student may continue or continue conditionally in the social work program.

Referrals to the SEC

Students who appear to be having difficulty in meeting academic standards, practicum education standards, or professional standards may be referred to the chair of the SEC. Referrals may be made by the program coordinator, the practicum education director, or the department chair.

Referrals related to **academic standards** may be indicated when the student:
- Has not maintained a minimum GPA of 3.0.
- Has been placed on academic probation.
- Has requested or received two or more Incomplete grades (I) in a semester or one or more extended Incomplete grade (I+).
- Has other indications of difficulty in meeting academic standards.

Referrals related to **practicum education standards** may be indicated when the student:
- Has not secured a practicum by the fourth week of the fall semester.
- Has not secured a practicum after two agency interviews or two opportunities for agency interviews.
- Has not completed required practicum hours as scheduled with the agency.
- Has not satisfactorily performed practicum assignments as reported by the practicum instructor.
- Has not achieved a passing score on the practicum evaluation.
- Is at risk of dismissal or has been dismissed from the practicum by the agency.
- Has other indications of difficulty in meeting practicum education standards.

Referrals related to **professional standards and behaviors** may be indicated when the student's interactions in class, in practicum education, in the University, and/or in the wider community are inconsistent with one or more of the professional standards and behaviors as defined above.

SEC Process
The SEC process is managed in as timely a fashion as possible while ensuring a fair, careful, and complete review of the student's performance.

Referrals to the SEC are made in writing to the SEC chair, who schedules the SEC meeting. The SEC chair notifies the student by email of the referral, the reasons for the referral, and the time and place of the SEC meeting, which may be held in person or online. The SEC chair may seek additional documentation related to the referral and may request information from the student's instructors and from the practicum education office about the student's performance in current classes and in practicum.

The student is encouraged to consult their faculty advisor or another support person of their choice prior to the SEC meeting and to bring that support person to the meeting. The student is asked to confirm receipt of the notice of the SEC meeting and to indicate whether they and their support person will attend.

Participants in the SEC meeting include the SEC chair; the relevant program coordinator; a faculty member; the practicum education director or assistant director, if relevant; the student; and the student's support person.

During the first part of the meeting, the SEC reviews information leading to the referral. The SEC chair introduces the committee members, reviews the reasons for the referral, and provides documentation or other pertinent information. The SEC then asks the student for their point of view. In conversation with the committee, the student may provide additional information; assess their progress toward demonstrating professional, academic, or practicum education standards; share their educational and professional goals; identify needed resources; express their preferred

outcome for the meeting; and suggest a plan for moving forward.

During the second part of the meeting, the student leaves the meeting, and the SEC goes into executive session to consider a course of action. The committee evaluates the student's progress toward demonstrating professional, academic, and or practicum education standards; discusses the student's strengths, goals, challenges, and barriers; identifies possible supportive resources, services, and strategies; and recommends whether and how the student may continue or continue conditionally in the program.

The SEC votes on its findings and recommendations, which are then forwarded in writing by the SEC chair to the chair of the Social Work department. The department chair may accept, reverse, or modify the SEC findings and recommendations and/or take other actions. The department chair may seek additional information or ask to meet with the student before making a final decision.

Once the department chair has communicated a final decision to the SEC, the SEC chair sends a decision letter to the student by email. The decision letter reviews the reasons for the referral and presents the department chair's decision, which may include a plan, a timeline, and the possibility of a follow-up SEC meeting to review the student's progress. The decision letter includes information about the appeal process. The student is asked to confirm receipt of the decision letter and to indicate whether they accept the decision.

Appeal Process
After the student has received the decision letter, the student may appeal the department chair's decision by filing a written grievance to the dean of the College of Health and Human Services. The written grievance should explain why the student believes that the SEC process was unfair or based on erroneous information. *The student must have exhausted departmental remedies before filing a grievance with the dean.* The dean may deny the student's appeal, reverse or modify the department's decision, or take other action.

Please note that the grade appeal procedure is a separate process that is not considered by the SEC.

Grade Appeal and Process
According to University policy, the awarding of grades is the responsibility of the instructor. A student who believes that an instructor has made an error concerning a grade for a course must follow the grade appeal procedure as outlined in the Southern Connecticut State University Student Handbook: http://catalog.southernct.edu/graduate/grades-standing.html

Course Withdrawal
Students may withdraw from a course through their student web account, effective upon the date

submitted, during the withdrawal periods outlined below. Any student considering a course withdrawal should confer with his or her instructor and academic adviser, in order to understand his or her class standing, before withdrawing from a course. If withdrawing from all courses in a semester, please refer instead to the Withdrawal from the University or Leave of Absence policies: https://catalog.southernct.edu/graduate/registration-policies.html

Students should consult Refund Policy for the impact on charges. A student's status as full-time or part-time will not change due to course withdrawals submitted after the add/drop period for the term; however, financial aid recipients should contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, as the withdrawn course(s) may reduce financial aid awards, which could result in the student owing funds to the University and/or government.

Leave of Absence
Students who need to take time off from their studies, with the intention of returning, must submit a Leave of Absence form to the Registrar's Office and are strongly encouraged to meet with their faculty advisor to discuss plans for degree completion. The leave of absence will be effective upon receipt of the form by the Registrar's Office, or as indicated by the student if completing the semester, whichever is later. Leave of absence requests are not retroactive and will not be accepted after the last day of the semester: https://catalog.southernct.edu/graduate/registration-policies.html

Students can take one year leave of absence and should contact the DSW Program Coordinator(s) to initiate plans for their return. Students who do not return within the allotted timeframe of one year will need to reapply to the DSW program.

Withdrawal from the DSW Program
Matriculated students who wish to withdraw from the DSW Program must complete a Graduate Student Withdrawal Form. The student's status is then changed to that of a non-matriculated student immediately or at the end of the semester, as requested by the student. If students who have withdrawn wish to resume graduate study, they must reapply to the School of Graduate and Professional Studies. The process of withdrawal from the DSW Program is separate from the process of withdrawal from courses in a given semester. For further information, please visit: https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/withdrawal

Online Teaching and Library Resources
Teaching Infrastructure
The program is designed to be delivered online with asynchronous and synchronous components. Students are expected to attend courses on-ground at SCSU for one week every summer. Synchronous online teaching and learning is supported through Blackboard, an online learning management system. At least seven synchronous sessions will be scheduled for each online course.

All DSW program information and other resources, including this handbook, and capstone and externship manuals are in Teams and available to enrolled students.

Library and Other Information Resources

Southern's Hilton C. Buley Library serves the many academic and research needs of the Southern community. The library maintains over 100 databases and electronic collections, and houses over half a million items including books, serials and serial back files, microforms, maps, government documents, rare books, video media, and more. The five-floor facility is also home to two computer labs, the Learning Resources Center, Information Technology offices, the Department of Information and Library Science, one library instruction classroom, and quiet rooms available for individual or group study.

Hilton C. Buley Library has an excellent collection that has supported the Social Work and Marriage and Family Therapy degree programs for decades. Students in this program will have direct access to resources at SCSU as well as other libraries in the CSCU system, which includes the four state universities and the 12 community colleges that share an integrated library system. The SCSU Library website is accessible at https://libguides.southernct.edu/home/

Subject Librarians

The library has subject specialist librarians, called subject liaisons, for every subject taught on campus. The liaisons perform library instruction and create the subject guides for their assigned subjects. The librarian for Social Work is Lisa Bier, who has spent 15 years working with undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty from the Department of Social Work. She is available for introductions to library services and more specialized class instruction session that are tailored to a particular course or assignment. She also meets with students one on one for advanced research assistance. These research consultations can occur via email bierL1@southernct.edu or phone (203) 392-5131.

Financial Aid, Supports, and Resources

The university offers a range of resources to support students' ability to pay for doctoral program costs. More information can be found at: http://catalog.southernct.edu/graduate/general-information/financial-aid.html

Eligibility for Financial Aid

Graduate students are expected to successfully complete at least 67% of the credits attempted at SCSU from the previous academic year or the last academic year attended to be eligible for financial aid. More information can be found at: https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/financial-aid/academic-progress

FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) should be prepared annually to

determine eligibility for financial aid. Please see the following link for more information: https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa

Grant Opportunities
The following links represent opportunities for DSW students to apply for different grants, scholarships, fellowships, and awards towards their education or research.

1. **Fahs-Beck Grant Programs**

http://www.fahsbeckfund.org/grant_programs.html

Awarded to doctoral students whose research has "the potential for adding significantly to knowledge about problems in the functioning or well-being of children, adults, couples, families, or communities, or about interventions designed to prevent or alleviate such problems." The full guidelines (including deadlines) are available at the above link.

2. **CSWE List**

https://www.cswe.org/centers-initiatives/cswe-scholarships-and-fellowships/

CSWE curates a list of funds available to students, including scholarships, contests, awards, fellowships, and grants. Guidelines and deadlines for each of the individual awards are linked on this page. Be sure to check them all out!

3. **SocialWork.Org List**

(https://www.socialwork.org/resources/social-work-scholarships/)

Scroll down to "DSW Scholarships" to see different opportunities. Many of these are scholarships meant to be put towards education and covering tuition-related expenses, but there are other opportunities as well. Guidelines and deadlines for each of the individual awards are linked on this page.