Preface

The purpose of the Handbook of the Graduate Social Work Program is to provide information on the major policy, program, and procedural requirements of the Division of Social Work at California State University, Sacramento in a single source document. This handbook is a supplement to the official California State University, Sacramento Catalogue, and, therefore, information presented here is subject to interpretation under the CSUS Catalogue. This handbook is intended to function as a convenient reference document for students as well as faculty. By becoming familiar with its contents, students and faculty members will find that the administrative functions of the Division will be enhanced and the operation of the graduate program improved overall. In addition, by following the provisions of the handbook, students will be assisted in their overall educational process with a minimum of confusion or delay and with the greatest degree of success.

This handbook is a work in progress and continuously updated as the program grows and evolves. Thus, it is hoped that both students and members of the faculty will provide feedback for the improvement of the handbook content and format over time. This document is maintained and available electronically at (http://www.csus.edu/hhs/sw).

The Division's main offices are located at 4010 Mariposa Hall and can be contacted by dialing (916) 278-6943.

Dr. S. Torres, Jr., Professor
Graduate Program Director

“Although every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the information in this [handbook], students and others who use this [handbook] should note that laws, rules, and policies change from time to time and that these changes may alter the information contained in this publication. Changes may come in the form of statutes enacted by the Legislature, rules, and policies adopted by the Board of Trustees of the California State University, by the Chancellor or designee of the California State University, or by the President or designee of the campus. It is not possible in a publication of this size to include all of the rules, policies, and other information that pertain to students, the institution, and the California State University. More current or complete information may be obtained from the appropriate department, school, or administrative office.” http://catalog.csus.edu/current/first%20100%20pages/academicpolicies.html
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Mission of the Division of Social Work at California State University, Sacramento

Established in 1964, the Division of Social Work at California State University, Sacramento is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is a nonprofit national association representing over 3,000 individual members as well as 158 graduate and 453 undergraduate programs of professional social work education. Founded in 1952, this partnership of educational and professional institutions, social welfare agencies, and private citizens is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as the sole accrediting agency for social work education in this country.

CSWE works to ensure the preparation of competent social work professionals by providing national leadership and a forum for collective action. The main responsibility of CSWE is therefore to promote and maintain the high quality of social work education. In addition, CSWE strives to stimulate knowledge and curriculum development, to advance social justice, and to strengthen community and individual well-being.

The Division of Social Work is part of a comprehensive regional University located in the State Capital. Its service area encompasses all of Northern California, a predominantly rural geographic area (300 square miles) with major urban pockets. Given its service area, the Division is committed to addressing the professional needs of both rural and urban areas, including inner cities. It meets this commitment by providing CSWE accredited educational programs (BSW & MSW), which focus on the empowerment of all oppressed groups and issues of social and economic justice.

The Division’s expectations of students who graduate with the MSW degree are framed by the general purposes articulated by the Council on Social Work Education for the profession of social work. "The profession of social work is committed to the enhancement of human well-being and to the alleviation of poverty and oppression…. Within its general scope of concern… it has four related purposes:

1. The promotion, restoration, maintenance, and enhancement of the functioning of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities by helping them to accomplish tasks, prevent and alleviate distress, and use resources.

2. The planning, formulation, and implementation of social policies, services, resources, and programs needed to meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities.

3. The pursuit of policies, services, resources, and programs through organizational or administrative advocacy and social or political action to empower groups at risk and to promote social and economic justice.

4. The development and testing of professional knowledge and skills related to these
The Division’s vision, mission, and guiding principles of the MSW program are consistent with the professional competence and leadership missions of the University and the College of Health and Human Services. The following vision, mission, and guiding principles were unanimously adopted by faculty in October 2006.

**Our Vision:** (As the faculty’s work is finalized this section will be updated)

We envision our graduates to be part of a globally conscious educational community with a lifelong passion for learning and a quest for excellence whose practice is guided by a commitment to sustainable human and societal development. Our individual faculty strengths join to create a mosaic of integrated program excellence. Our curriculum is distinctive and continually works toward evaluation and dynamic change through engagement and interaction with our diverse community. Through teaching, research, and joint collaboration we address solutions to community and world problems using various levels of intervention with a commitment to social justice.

**The Mission:** (As the faculty’s work is finalized this section will be updated)

The Division of Social Work strives to prepare competent social workers who can both lead and serve the richly diverse region in the development and delivery of services that contribute to human well-being and social justice. Towards this end, the division offers high quality undergraduate and graduate degree programs and teaching, research, and joint collaboration with the community.

**Our mission is strengthened by the following guiding principles:**

- As the Division of Social Work, we value the richness of human diversity; respect for human uniqueness; and constructive response to the challenges of diversity in an evolving pluralistic society.

- We value an educational curriculum and practice approaches that advance social justice: including, but not limited to, the attention to human rights; confrontation and transformation of oppressive forces; and empowerment of populations at risk.

- We value the importance of human relationships that are strength-based and promote human well-being, through collaborative and partnership processes.

- We value the preparation of ethically-driven, critical-thinking change agents who practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

- We value recruiting and maintaining a diverse faculty who collectively share the Division’s guiding principles and whose individual strengths and experiences provide special expertise to accomplish the Division’s mission.
• We value the inevitability of change as evidenced by our commitment to a curriculum that is dynamic and responsive to different levels of knowledge and practice approaches.

**MSW Program Goals**

1. **Leadership:**
   Provide leadership in the development and delivery of services responsive to strengths and challenges with the context of human diversity, human rights, oppression and social justice.

2. **Competencies:**
   Prepare ethically-driven, critical thinking, competent entry level and advanced professional social workers with a generalist perspective and skills as applied to specific and emerging areas of practice.

3. **Curriculum:**
   Provide curriculum and teaching practices at the forefront of the new and changing knowledge base of the theory and research in social work and related disciplines as well as the changing needs of our diverse client systems.

4. **Global Perspective:**
   Analyze, formulate and influence social policies that develop and promote a global as well as local perspective within the context of the historical emergence of Social Work practice regarding human rights, oppression and social justice.

5. **Accessibility:**
   Structure and offer programs and curricula in a way that provides availability and accessibility (weekend, night classes) that meet the needs of our diverse student body as well as complies with CSWE accreditation standards.

6. **Diversity:**
   Recruit, develop and retain diverse students and faculty who will through multi-level practice contribute special strengths to our programs and profession.
MSW Foundation Program Learning Objectives

Graduates demonstrate the ability to:

1. Apply critical thinking skills to question, understand, and analyze phenomena in the context in which they occur. (Critical thinking)

2. Internalize professional values and ethics of NASW’s Code of Ethics and the principles for ethical decision-making. (Values and ethics)

3. Respect the multi-dimensions of diversity and understand the meaning of these in practice with and on behalf of diverse client systems. (Diversity)

4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of empowerment, advocacy, and social action that advance social and economic justice. (Oppression and social justice)

5. Identify and interpret significant trends and issues in the history of the social work profession and its contemporary practices and issues. (Social work profession)

6. Apply the general problem-solving and strength-based methods and selected theory and skills specific to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. (Generalist practice)

7. Apply developmental and ecosystems perspectives and selected human behavior theories to multidimensional assessments in generalist practice. (Human development and behavior)

8. Assess the relationship of social policies to client system needs and engage in planned activities to develop policies and services responsive to human well-being and social justice. (Social welfare policies and services)

9. Develop an empirical base for practice through evaluation of research studies, use of research findings, and evaluation of practice interventions. (Research)

10. Use relationship and communication skills to establish facilitative conditions for professional relationships. (Relationship/communication skills)

11. Use supervision and consultation for continuous development of awareness, knowledge, values, and skills. (Supervision and consultation)

12. Use organizational resources to serve client systems and help develop needed resources. (Organizational competence)
Advanced Integrative Practice Concentration Learning Objectives

When integrated with the foundation objectives, graduates demonstrate the ability to:

13. Engage in multi-skilled practice through multi-level interventions to deliver and develop services that enhance human well-being while attending specifically to the needs and empowerment of those in vulnerable life conditions. (Advanced generalist)

14. Provide leadership through culturally competent direct practice; the development and administration of policies and services; and social and political action to facilitate sensitivity to cultural and ethnic diversity and the achievement of social and economic justice. (Social change leadership)

15. Engage in theoretical and practice research and evaluation necessary for accountability and evidence of effective practice and to contribute to professional knowledge building. (Advanced research)

16. Understand and use specific theoretical models to inform strategies, skills, and techniques for practice respectively with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. (Advanced theory)

17. Develop the ability to apply the core concentration knowledge and skills to specific practice contexts and populations and to add pertinent specialized knowledge and skills for this practice through the planned use of electives and the Culminating Experience. (Generic/Specific integration)

Educational Program

The Master of Social Work program is organized as a two-year full time and three-year part time sequence consisting of classes and field instruction experiences leading to the degree. The program helps the student understand the conditions that give rise to human problems and provides an opportunity to address these human problems using a multi-level integrative practice approach in order to ameliorate or resolve these conditions and their impact on various systems.

The curriculum leading to the Master of Social Work degree is designed to enable the student to develop professional competence in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, participate knowledgeably in the implementation of social welfare policy and administration, understand human growth and development as they affect social and personal functioning, and develop a social philosophy, ethics and values relating to the practice of professional social work.
Academic Requirements of the Graduate Social Work Program

The graduate degree program has specific requirements that must be completed successfully in order to earn the degree. These requirements are outlined below and cannot be waived or otherwise changed by the Faculty Advisor alone. In the graduate program, approval of the Graduate Program Director is required; in some instances, the approval of the Division Director and/or of the Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies is required. The Master of Social Work (MSW) degree as accredited by the Council on Social Work Education includes foundation, advanced coursework, and field instruction.

Students must maintain an average of a “B” (3.0 GPA) throughout the total 60 units of studies required for the Master of Social Work. Earning grades such as “C-” and “D” and “F” are not permissible if one is to successfully progress in the program; and, more than one “C” grade will threaten the minimum 3.0 GPA. MSW program requirements can be fulfilled in the two-year, the three-year program, or the intensive weekend program. The sixty units of study for the MSW are distributed as follows:

- Three units of Social Work and Diverse Populations
- Six units of Human Behavior in the Social Environment
- Six units of Social Welfare Policy and Services and Advanced Policy
- Twelve units of Social Work Practice
- Seventeen units of Agency-based Field Instruction
- Seven units of Social Research Methods (includes thesis/research project), and
- Nine units of Electives

Enrollment in the Field Practicum requires a concurrent enrollment in a practice course. Special Problems courses (SWRK 299) shall not be substituted for required courses.

[Note: language will change as curriculum changes for specializations]

The first year of graduate level study is considered the professional foundation. This foundation includes the following six areas of study in social work:

- Theoretical Bases of Social Behavior
- Social Work Practice
- Diverse Populations
- Social Welfare Policy and Services
- Methods of Social Research
- Foundation Placement Field Instruction
- Elective(s)

The second year of study is in the advanced generalist curriculum. The areas of study are:

- Advanced Integrative Practice
- Advanced Policy
- Advanced Placement Field Instruction
- Culminating Experience
- Elective(s)
Field Practicum

Each student in the graduate program is required to complete a total of four semesters of the field practicum. During the first year of study, students intern with field agencies for two days each week (approximately 16 hours and usually on Thursday & Friday of each week). This first year practicum is closely aligned with the professional foundation courses. During the second year of study, students intern for three days each week (approximately 24 hours and usually on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of each week). This second year practicum is aligned with the student's chosen career goals. The outcome of the graduate field practicum is to prepare students for advanced professional social work practice, for specialized human services positions, and for administrative and leadership positions. Information regarding field instruction aspects of the MSW program is provided at various points in this Handbook but is described fully in the Division of Social Work program document entitled “A Curriculum & Policy Guide for Field Education”

Culminating Experience

A CSUS requirement is the successful completion of the culminating experience by all graduate students. The culminating experience is described in detail later in this handbook.

Specialized Educational Opportunities Currently Offered
(as advanced specializations are finalized this section will be updated)

Title IV-E

Title IV-E is a competency-based program designed to prepare social workers for a career in Public Child Welfare Services. Title IV-E of the Social Security Act authorized the Foster Care and Adoption Assistance programs to provide federal matching funds to states for directly administering the programs. Its objective was to improve the quality of care of children in foster care, reduce the number of children in foster care, return children to their homes as soon as conditions permit, and facilitate the adoption or permanent placement of children who cannot be returned to their homes.

In 1990, the deans and directors of California’s then ten graduate schools of social work and the County Welfare Directors Association, with the help of the California Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers and funding from the Ford Foundation, collaborated to create the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC). CalSWEC’s goal was to improve the education and training of social workers for publicly supported social services. In 1992, CalSWEC entered into a contract with the California Department of Social Services to develop the Title IV-E [of the Social Security Act] MSW program to prepare and provide financial aid for students and graduates for careers in public child welfare.
The program offers stipend or reimbursement support for students interested in Child Welfare practice and policy. Upon graduation, the student must work in a county child welfare services agency or California Department of Social Services (CDSS) child welfare division for a period of time equal to the period for which he or she received support.

A student who is employed in a county or the state Department of Social Services must return to that agency and render one year of continuous and satisfactory full-time employment for each year of stipend award at a level appropriate to a new MSW in public child welfare. If a position meeting these requirements is not available in the agency to which service is owed, the student must apply for and accept an equivalent or higher position in a county child welfare service within a 75-mile radius of the student’s residence. If this is not available, the student must search, apply for, and accept an MSW equivalent or higher position in any California county child welfare services agency or the California Department of Social Services.

A student who is not a current employee must apply for and accept a position appropriate to a new MSW in a public child welfare agency within a 75-mile radius of the student’s residence. If no position is available within 75 miles, the student must search, apply for, and accept an MSW-level position in any California county child welfare services agency or the California Department of Social Services.

(Please visit the Pupil Personnel Services Certificate (PPSC) in School Social Work Program for more information.)

**Pupil Personnel Services Certificate (PPSC) in School Social Work Program**

The Master of Social Work degree program at CSUS is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and the Pupil Personnel Services Certificate in School Social Work program is fully accredited under the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, therefore, are subject to the rights and responsibilities of programs so accredited.

The Pupil Personnel Services Credential in School Social Work program (PPSC in SSW program) is offered through the Division of Social Work in conjunction with the College of Continuing Education (CCE) at Sacramento State. For more information on the PPSC in SSW program please review the information on the CCE website (http://www.cce.csus.edu/ppsc)

**MSW Program Application**

Individuals interested in applying to the MSW Program will need to complete all application materials. Information regarding application requirements can be viewed at the Division’s website http://www.csus.edu/HHS/sw/MSW/mswapplication.html. In addition to completing the MSW Program Application, applicants will need to complete the CSU Application for Graduate Studies (https://secure.csumentor.edu/).
Interested students who have completed coursework through a CSWE accredited graduate social work program at another university, may be awarded a limited amount of academic units.

**Degree Completion Checklist**

The Master of Social Work degree requires a total of 60 semester hours distributed across the course areas listed below. Students are to schedule time, at least once per semester, to confer with their academic advisor assigned in order to review their course of study. This checklist is a quick worksheet and reference tool for student use.

**FULL-TIME TWO-YEAR GRADUATE PROGRAM: STUDENT EDUCATIONAL CONTRACT**

**FIRST YEAR: PROFESSIONAL FOUNDATION AND BEGINNING CONCENTRATION**

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## Part-Time Three-Year Graduate Program: Student Educational Contract

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<td><strong>Total Units</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
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</table>
Consideration of External Social Work Coursework

A very limited amount of academic units may be awarded through the acceptance of course units from other CSWE accredited graduate social work programs. Please note any academic units approved for acceptance will be applied only to elective courses and must have been completed within the past three years. This means that the program does not allow for substitute of required courses outside of electives. Any requests for acceptance of external credit are the responsibility of the student and must be made in writing prior to the end of the second week of the first semester of study in the social work program.

Not more than six units of course work will be considered for acceptance and only when course work was successfully completed with a grade of “B+” or higher. The student is responsible for providing written support relative to the request before submitting a request to the Graduate Program Director. The student is responsible for meeting university level requirements that may be established by the Office of Graduate Studies.

Academic Advising

Regular and proactive advising serves students more effectively than reactive problem solving. Advisors make themselves available (during their office hours or by appointment) to meet with their assigned advisees usually once each semester.

The first step in academically advising any graduate student is to be sure that the student has taken time to do a careful self-assessment about their academic progress, degree requirements, and university/college/division requirements. It is the student’s responsibility to know and understand institutional requirements, which are made available through print and electronic resources. It is also the student’s responsibility to schedule time to meet with their advisor a minimum of once each semester during their advisor’s scheduled office hours.

Academic advisors are assigned based on the following model:

Two Year Full Time students, during their foundation year of classes, are assigned to their practice instructor for academic advising. Please be aware that additional students will be assigned to each full time faculty member given the number of students admitted to the graduate program and the fact that adjunct faculty are not contracted to serve the division beyond instruction.

As these students move to their advanced second year classes they are assigned to their project/thesis instructors for academic advising. Please be aware that additional students will be assigned to each full time faculty member given the number of students admitted to the graduate program and the fact that adjunct faculty are not contracted to serve the division beyond instruction.

Three Year Part Time students, during their foundation year of classes, are assigned to their HBSE instructors for academic advising. Please be aware that additional students
will be assigned to each full time faculty member given the number of students admitted to the graduate program and the fact that adjunct faculty are not contracted to serve the division beyond instruction.

As these students move to their second year classes they are assigned to their practice instructor for academic advising. Please be aware that additional students will be assigned to each full time faculty member given the number of students admitted to the graduate program and the fact that adjunct faculty are not contracted to serve the division beyond instruction.

As these students move to their third year classes they are assigned to their project/thesis instructors for academic advising. Please be aware that additional students will be assigned to each full time faculty member given the number of students admitted to the graduate program and the fact that adjunct faculty are not contracted to serve the division beyond instruction.

It is only after advisors/advisees have met, if any outstanding issues, questions, or concerns remain that students could be referred to the Graduate Program Director.

Each time a student meets with his/her advisor a Graduate Program Student Advising Record should be completed and placed in the student’s file maintained in the Division.

See below for a sample of the Division of Social Work Graduate Program student advising document.

Advisor’s Name: _______________________________________________________
Student Name: _________________________________________________________

Academic Advising Focus/Concerns Discussed:
___ Academic Advising
___ Thesis
___ Personal
___ Professional Development
___ Field Placement Related
___ Mentoring
___ Other ______________________________________________________

Comment: ________________________________  ____________________________

Advisor Signature  Student Signature

Date: __________________________

Academic Standards and Requirements

Students should refer to the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) (http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/) regarding their academic standing. The Office of Graduate Studies will notify students of their academic standing on the grade report at the end of each semester. Information about issues such as academic probation, disqualification, and reinstatement must be obtained from OGS.
Likewise, policies and procedures for registering, adding, and dropping courses should be obtained from the Registrar’s Office (http://www.csus.edu/registrar/).

**Responsibility for the Assignment of Grades & Grade Appeal**

Grading is the exclusive responsibility of the instructor, within the guidelines of the University. Neither students nor administrators assign grades.

Information about grade appeals at the University is found at this link (http://www.csus.edu/umanual/Acad%20Affairs/Grade_Appeal_Policy.htm) The Graduate Program Director encourages students and faculty to utilize a more direct and informal resolution process through direct communication.

**Leaves of Absence/Withdrawal from the University**

The purpose of a leave policy is to afford students certain protections of their rights to specified degree requirement options. Classified graduate students can maintain their status in the MSW program during an absence. In order to maintain these rights and statuses, formal leave should be requested and approval sought when a student will be out of CSUS enrollment two or more semesters.

One’s faculty advisor is a starting point for counsel and the Graduate Program Director for approval.

The University requires the completion of an appropriate form for securing approval and for protecting student rights to their educational status.

**Leave of Absence Procedures:** For graduate students, approval is required from the Graduate Program Director. Completed forms (http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/forms/assorted_misc_forms/leave_of_absence_request.pdf) are submitted to the Admissions and Records Office. Petitions for leaves of absence should be filed in advance of the absence. Retroactive approval is possible based on individual circumstances. At the conclusion of the leave, the Admissions Office may request evidence of the fulfillment of the leave plans.

Students remaining absent beyond the specified period lose benefits of the leave policy. Leaves approved for graduate students do not extend the seven-year time limit for the completion of the graduate degree program. Such graduate students must seek the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies for requests to re-admit. To return from a leave of absence of more than two semesters, a student must file an application for re-admission during the regular admissions filing period. An application fee must be paid for students out of enrollment for more than two semesters or for students who did not qualify for a leave of absence. Students out of enrollment for only one semester and not attending another university during that period are automatically granted a leave and are not required to file an application for re-admission and pay the fee; however, such
students must re-activate their files in the Admissions and Records Office by filing a short form in that office. Students subject to academic disqualification or dismissal or disciplinary action are not eligible for leaves of absence. Disqualified students may be reinstated after one semester out of attendance.

In circumstances where an incoming student needs to withdraw from all courses prior to or during the first-year first-semester they must re-apply.

Overarching Principles, Standards, and Educational Performance Outcomes for Students in the Division of Social Work

The seven items listed below act as philosophical guideposts designed to inform the Division of key elements of performance expectations that we hold important as a program.

1. Behave in an Ethical Manner
A student who behaves in an ethical manner undertakes to thoroughly understand and adhere to professional and personal codes of conduct that reflect an unyielding respect for self and others. This student acts in an ethical and principled manner not because it is expedient or self-serving but rather because to do so engenders, uplifts, and strengthens the inherent value and dignity of all peoples and because it is right in outcome and means.

2. Take Responsibility for Learning
A student who takes responsibility for learning demonstrates intellectual curiosity and initiative. This student understands the importance of regular, punctual attendance, is prepared to learn, sets learning goals, actively engages in learning tasks, uses available resources, evaluates own actions and works, and meets deadlines and due dates.

3. Think Critically
A student who thinks critically demonstrates willingness to question, patience to doubt, and readiness to reconsider. This student reflects on and evaluates information, details, evidence, and/or his or her own ideas and work in order to draw conclusions, solve problems, and/or conduct investigations.

4. Communicate Skillfully
A student who communicates skillfully writes and speaks in a clear, organized, and interesting manner. This student does so in both formal and informal situations and for a variety of audiences and purposes.

5. Collaborate Effectively
A student who collaborates effectively works with peers and/or mentors to produce something greater than he/she could accomplish individually. This student initiates their
own involvement, helps lead groups to set and achieve goals, is an active learner,
acknowledges contributions, and works towards solutions.

6. **Produce Quality Work**

A student who produces quality work exceeds the minimum requirements of tasks to
create products or performances that reflect skill, creativity, sophistication, and scholarly
achievement. This student gives attention to detail and, uses technology effectively to
complete tasks, products and/or presentations.

7. **Assumes Responsibility for Obstacles to Learning**

A student, who assumes responsibility for obstacles to learning prioritizes the need to act
on impediments and obstacles, seeks assistance early, as needed, and from appropriate
sources, and strives to increase self-awareness about learning style and resources to
maximize benefits from all learning experience.

Student Performance Review Standards

The expectations and standards students of professional versus non-professional degree
programs are, at their core, similar yet different from each other. In professional
programs the student is often thrust into course work concurrent with hands-on practice
situations that have real impact on the lives of real people with real problems and needs.
The expectations and standards of professional programs must therefore interweave
scholarship with codes of ethical conduct and scientific rigor with professional
competency. The Division of Social Work establishes chief among its goals in delivering
a program of graduate and undergraduate education, the preparation of individuals
committed to the knowledge, values, and skills of professional social work practice.

The establishment of and adherence to a clearly articulated set of programmatic goals and
performance standards for the Division’s students begins with a recognition that
becoming a competent and well trained professional in social work is a gradual process.
Functional standards of performance capitalize on strategies that uplift and do not focus
on diminishing people. The Division believes that its program expectations and
requirements promote redemptive not punitive interventions when success or progress
toward success is not easily forthcoming.

This means that not all criteria are expected to be met at all times. Persons who teach and
supervise students, along with program administrators, will assess student academic
performance and apply their professional judgment to determine if standards are being
met during a student’s educational career. Professional judgment is the capacity to assess
a situation by applying the values and knowledge of the social work profession,
combined with a professional’s own experience and practice wisdom.

Framework for the Evaluation of Student Performance in the Social Work Program

The Division of Social Work employs the following evaluative framework to guide
program faculty and administrators in their responsibility for carefully assessing and
regularly monitoring students in the Division’s programs regarding the student’s ability to function effectively across a variety of professional situations including but not limited to the classroom, field placement, and other settings where the individual in operating as a social work student. There are currently four areas of student capacity, performance, and functioning, which are viewed as inexorably linked in determining if program standards are being achieved. As an example scholastic ability is not sufficient onto itself as a determining criteria justifying continued enrollment in the program. That is, all four areas, taken separately, in various combinations, and together are subject to assessment at regular intervals to determine the appropriateness of a student’s continued enrollment in the program.

I. Ability to Acquire Professional Skills

A. Communication Skills

Demonstrates sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings.

**Written Communication:** Writes clearly, uses correct grammar and spelling, and applies appropriate writing style, including American Psychological Association (APA) referencing, appropriate source citation, and documentation. Demonstrates sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and complete adequately all written assignments as specified by faculty. Written work must be mechanically and stylistically acceptable. Serious deficiencies in areas such as spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, and coherent organization will result in lower grades. Students are encouraged to seek Division (tutoring) and University level (writing lab and course work) resources to improve academic skills such as writing and study. Plagiarism (claiming the work of someone else as your own) can potentially result in a grade of FAIL. Students may also be reported to the University Office of Student Affairs and face additional sanctions and ultimate dismissal for serious offences. Please see the University Policy of Academic Honesty ([http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/STU-0100.htm](http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/STU-0100.htm)) Students will demonstrate competence in written communication by:

1. Effective use of knowledge: the integration of concepts, theories, and information from readings, lectures, and seminar discussions.
2. The inclusion of personal points of view along with rationale, logic, and examples.
3. Organization: thesis as part of the introduction, smooth relationship between ideas and between paragraphs, and overall structure, integrative concluding section.
4. Clarity: understandability, good style and form.
5. Syntax, grammar, and spelling.
6. Timely completion and submission of all written assignments.
Oral Communication: Communicates effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals. Expresses ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates a willingness and an ability to listen to others. Demonstrates sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to complete adequately all oral assignments, and to meet the objectives of field placement experiences, as specified by faculty and field placement agency.

B. Interpersonal Skills

Demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals and to meet or exceed the ethical obligations of the profession. These skills include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and demonstration of respect for and consideration of others. The student takes appropriate responsibility for own actions and considers the impact of their actions on others.

Effective learning demands active participation. Take risks even if the environment does not feel completely "safe." One will not meaningfully act in any environment if one does not take risks. In order to enhance feelings of safety, and to create a positive learning environment, the following must apply:

1. Attends classes and is prompt.
2. Reads assigned course material.
3. Get needs met by interacting with others and by raising concerns and criticisms with the instructor. Completes all of one’s work.
4. Takes personal ownership of expressions of bigotry. In other words, rather than attribute a negative characteristic to a social group or to a member of that group, one begins with, "this is how I have been taught to believe," or "I don't like to admit it but I do have the belief that..."
5. Commits to personal/professional growth and self-exploration and behaves in a non-violent manner.

C. Cognitive Skills

Exhibit sufficient knowledge of social work and clarity of thinking to process information and applies it to appropriate situations in classroom and field placement settings. Demonstrate a clear groundedness in relevant social, behavioral and biological science knowledge and research - including knowledge and skills in relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of practice and self as practitioner. Exhibits ability to conceptualize and integrate knowledge and apply that knowledge across various settings the student must function in including but not limited to settings and transactions in the classroom, field placement, with faculty and other classmates.
D. Physical Skills

Exhibits sufficient motor and sensory abilities to regularly attend and actively participate in class and field placement with or without accommodations. (See section on Accommodations for Disabilities for clarification.)

II. Emotional and Mental Abilities Necessary for Performance in the Program and Professional Practice

A. Stress Management

Demonstrates ability to recognize and deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. Handles stress effectively by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive (appropriate) relationships with colleagues, peers, and others. Students are encouraged to seek Division (academic advisor) and University level (counseling center) resources to assess the best approach to better coping and adaptation.

B. Emotional and Mental Capacities

Uses sound judgment. Seeks and effectively uses help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance. Students are encouraged to seek Division (academic advisor) and University level (counseling center) resources to assess the best approach to better coping and adaptation. Engages in counseling resources for self or seeks out support and help if personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties do any of the following:

- Compromise scholastic and other performance,
- Interfere with professional judgment and behavior, or
- Jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the social work student has a professional responsibility (as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics which can be viewed online at http://www.naswdc.org/).

III. Professional Performance Skills Necessary for Work with Clients and Professional Practice

A. Professional Commitment

Exhibits a strong commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics. Demonstrates commitment to the core principles and essential values of social
work that includes the respect for the dignity and worth of every individual and his/her rights to a just share of society’s resources (social justice).

B. Professional Behavior

Students are to exhibit behaviors that are in compliance with program policies, university policies, professional ethical standards, and societal laws in the classroom, university community, field and community at large. Appearance, dress, and general demeanor reflect a professional manner. Shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, respecting others, being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements, and accepting supervision and criticism in a positive manner.

Students are to work effectively with others, regardless of level of authority. Advocates for him/her self in an appropriate and responsible manner and uses proper channels for conflict resolution. Shows a willingness to receive and accept feedback and supervision in a positive manner, as well as use such feedback to enhance personal and professional development.

C. Self-Awareness

Students are to exhibit knowledge of how one’s values, attitudes, beliefs; emotions and past experiences affect thinking, behavior and relationships. Accurately assesses one’s own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice. Shows awareness of self and how one is perceived by others. Reflect on one’s own limitations as they relate to professional capacities. Is willing to examine and change behavior when it interferes in working with clients and other professionals.

D. Ethical Obligations

Current behavior and classroom performance demonstrate adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional practice, noted in the NASW Code of Ethics. Ethical behaviors include:

- Adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics.
- No history of convictions which are contrary to professional practice.
- Systematic evaluation of clients and their situations in an unbiased, factual way. Suspension of personal biases during interactions with others.
- Comprehension of another individual’s way of life and values. Empathic communication and support of the client as a basis for a productive professional relationship.

- Appreciation of the value of diversity. Effective and nonjudgmental relation to and work with others who are different from oneself. Appropriate service to all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person’s age, class, race, religious beliefs, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and/or value system. No imposition of personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on clients.

- Demonstration of respect for the rights of others. Commitment to clients’ rights to freedom of choice and self-determination.

- Maintenance of confidentiality as it relates to human service, classroom activities, and field placement.

- Demonstration of honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences and qualifications; doing one’s own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source materials.

- Demonstration of clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. Does not sexually harass others; make verbal or physical threats; become involved in sexual relationships with clients, supervisors, or faculty; abuse others in physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual ways; or participate in dual relationships where conflicts of interest may exist.

IV. Scholastic Performance

By conferring at least once each semester (after, for example, the Registrar releases the semester Grade Report) with students to review and update the Educational Contract, the Faculty Advisor/Undergraduate or Graduate Program Director assures compliance with the academic regulations of the University.

A. Academic Standards (This is a brief summary of the policies as stated in the University Catalog)

While a grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 is sufficient for admissions consideration, graduate students must earn and maintain at least a 3.0 GPA. Undergraduate students must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA.

- Academic Probation when cumulative GPA overall or at CSUS falls below 3.0 for graduate students and 2.0 for undergraduate students.
Continued Probation when already on Academic Probation and the semester GPA continues to be less than 3.0 or 2.0 for undergraduate students.

Academic Disqualification when already on Academic Probation and/or Continued Probation and the earned GPA falls nine or more grade points below 3.0 for graduate students, 8.9 points below 2.0 for juniors and 5.9 points below 2.0 for seniors.

Academic Disqualification also occurs if a graduate student receives 3 or more “C” grades during the course of their graduate studies.

Academic Dismissal occurs when an undergraduate student has been reinstated after disqualification but earns a semester GPA below 2.0 or fails to meet the requirements specified in the reinstatement contract. Academically dismissed undergraduate students are not eligible for readmission without at least one semester of absence from CSUS.

Special Contract is required for students reinstated immediately after academic disqualification or readmitted after a break in enrollment after having been disqualified at the end of the previous enrollment. A student on this status is allowed to continue on a semester-by-semester basis with achievement reviewed at the end of each semester to determine if continued enrollment is appropriate.

B. Administrative-Academic Probation and Disqualification when students have:

1. Withdrawn (or fails to enroll) from all or a substantial portion of their courses in two successive semesters or in any three terms;
2. Repeatedly failed to progress toward a degree under circumstances within control of the student;
3. Failed to comply, after due notice, with an academic requirement(s) or regulation(s).

A student’s academic status is determined by grade point average. Grade Point Average (GPA) is computed by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the number of units attempted, except that neither CR nor NC grades are included in the calculation. A GPA of 2.0 indicates a C average; a 3.0 indicates a B average; a 4.0 indicates an A average.

Students must report errors shown on the grade report form to the Office of Admissions and Records within three months after the semester ends if they wish to request corrections.

C. Indicators of Academic Performance

Indicators of academic performance in the Division of Social Work may include but are not limited to the following:
Feedback or reference letters from faculty, work supervisors, or supervisors of volunteer human service activity or other field experiences.

- Feedback from agency-based or faculty field instructors.
- Observation of classroom, volunteer, or field placement behaviors.
- Performance in oral and written assignments, examinations, social work skills labs, or other appropriate coursework.
- Student personal statements or self-assessments.
- Interviews with faculty or other professionals.
- Taped interview situations (audio or video).
- Feedback from students, staff, university, helping professionals, or community.
- Feedback from faculty in other social work programs that students may have attended.
- Signed confidentiality statements, scholastic honesty statements, contract to adhere to NASW Code of Ethics, other contracts (performance and nonperformance-based contracts) between the Division and the student.

D. Accommodations for Disabilities

No student, otherwise qualified, shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the Division of Social Work. A student with a disability may be protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and be eligible for a reasonable accommodation to provide equal opportunity to meet academic criteria for professional behavior and scholastic performance. It is the responsibility of any qualified student with a protected disability (NOT the Division or any of its faculty), requesting a reasonable accommodation, to notify the Services to Students with Disabilities office (online at http://www.csus.edu/sswd/) and provide documentation to all parties as needed. The Services to Students with Disabilities office makes recommendations for accommodations. The Division of Social Work will review academic performance criteria in light of individual student circumstances to explore issues of appropriateness and reasonable accommodation. An initial assessment, subsequent plan, use of outside experts (including the Services to Students with Disabilities office), and periodic checks between the Division of Social Work and the student are appropriate courses of action in making reasonable accommodations.

Student Performance Review Procedures

It should be noted that student performance review procedures discussed here are subject to university rules, regulations, and procedures, therefore, circumstances and situations that warrant immediate suspension or dismissal of a student according to university policies or regulations will be followed.

Faculty and program administrators will share pertinent information with each other for the purpose of identifying student issues and in order to further enhance planning.
interventive efforts, and problem solving relative to potential performance concerns. Faculty and program administrators are obligated to follow university procedures related to responding to real or potential issues of student performance.

A. Performance Issues That May Result in a Student Review or Staffing

Student reviews can occur under any of the following circumstances:

- Failure to meet or maintain academic requirements as stated under Scholastic Performance
- Scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, falsifying academic records, or any act designed to give unfair advantage to the student. (Faculty must adhere to university guidelines. For complete University policy and procedures, see California State University, Sacramento, University Policy Manual or online at [http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/STU-0100.htm](http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/STU-0100.htm))
- Behavior judged to be in violation of the current NASW Code of Ethics
- Behavior judged to be in violation of the Student Discipline Code (See University Policy Manual or online at [http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/ums16150.htm](http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/ums16150.htm))
- Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or someone else
- Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice.
- Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior
- Failure to meet any of the performance expectations and standards seen as applicable under these, the Division of Social Work at California, Sacramento Student Performance Review Standards and Procedures

B. The Two Levels of Review

Two levels of review can occur in the Division of Social Work when assessing student performance. The level of review depends upon the potential seriousness of the concern(s). For purposes of distinguishing between the two levels of performance evaluation: Level I Review is the less formal but still potentially serious of the two levels, while a Level II Review or Student Staffing is the more formal and therefore more complex of the two. What follows next is a discussion of the trigger mechanism(s) to be considered when attempting to make a decision on the appropriate level or review, if any, to implement.

Level I Review

Whenever a faculty member, adjunct faculty or field instructor has concern(s) regarding a student’s performance he/she shall meet with the student to resolve the concern(s). However, if an issue is warranted to be of a serious nature, the Level I review can be bypassed and a Level II staffing can occur. The faculty member and the Graduate Program Director shall make this decision.
It is strongly recommended that the faculty member, adjunct faculty or field instructor raising a performance concern(s) with a student be prepared to communicate that concern(s) in a clear, concise, and factual documented manner.

If the issue(s) is not resolved, the Graduate Program Director should be contacted. The Graduate Program Director will contact the student’s Academic Advisor to help address the concern(s). If necessary, the Graduate Program Director will conduct additional fact finding activity such as reviewing the student’s academic record (paper & electronic) and or informally consult with other personnel having current contact with the student (written notes summarizing the sequence, process and outcomes of these meetings and activities should be made on the contact sheet found at the front of the student’s Division file thus creating a retrievable record of fact gathering and interventive efforts). It should be noted that a Level I Review may originate with a student’s Academic Advisor.

While it is not possible to establish an absolute and precise timetable for a Level I Review to be initiated, conducted and completed, every effort should be made to be as expedient as possible. Acting in an expeditious but nonetheless thorough manner is assumed to minimize the impact on the time and resources of all involved parties. In any event, not more than five business days should elapse from the time that the Graduate Program Director is contacted regarding a Level I Review and when he or she directly responds to the request for involvement. This timeline shall be appropriately amended if such contact is made too close to the end of a semester or the academic year.

**Level II Review (Student Staffing)**

If an issue is not resolved at the first level of review, or if an issue is serious enough to warrant bypassing a Level I staffing, the Graduate Program Director will decide if an Academic Review and Professional Standards Committee (AR&PSC) meeting will be convened with the student and involved faculty/program members.

A Level II Review involves convening the Academic Review and Professional Standards Committee (AR&PSC) which shall be composed of the Graduate Program Director (AR&PSC, Chair), the faculty member, adjunct faculty or field instructor where concern(s) originated, the student’s Academic Advisor (may be the individual with an expressed concern), and anyone else deemed as appropriate in the judgment of the student’s Academic Advisor or that of the AR&PSC Chair. The Field Education Director or the appropriate representative is also generally involved unless the staffing involves a student not yet in the field.

If an AR&PSC meeting occurs, it will be the Graduate Program Director’s responsibility to inform the student (and all parties concerned) in writing of the AR&PSC’s decision(s) which may include one or more of the following actions:

1. Continue the student in the program with no conditions. In these situations, the concern has been addressed and no further action by the student or program is required.
2. Establish formal conditions for the student’s continued enrollment in the program. An interventive or remediation plan will be developed by the Graduate Program Director in consultation with the student, and the concerned faculty member as needed. If the issue is found to extend beyond one class, all concerned faculty will be allowed input into the plan. This plan shall:

   a) specify the concern(s) in as much detail as possible
   b) indicate the actions to be undertaken by the student
   c) indicate the date by which the student must demonstrate the required level of knowledge, skill, behavior, or ethical conduct
   d) be monitored by the Graduate Program Director and the appropriate faculty member either classroom instructors, field liaison or director or the Academic Advisor

The student will be given a copy of the plan and asked to sign it indicating that he or she received a copy of the document. The student will also be informed, in writing, of the right to rebut the Plan or grieve the decision. The student may grieve or rebut the decision by appealing to the Chair of the Division within two weeks. The student may meet with the Dean as the final level of appeal. Interventive plans, all Level II (Student Staffing) reports (should include student’s written rebuttal if one is written) will be filed in the student’s Division file.

The Graduate Program Director shall, on or before the date specified in the plan for completion of the intervention or remediation, meet with the advisor and/or the faculty who had the concern(s), for a report on the student progress. The Graduate Program Director will also contact the student for input and perception of progress in addressing the concern(s). Ultimately, one of two outcomes must be attained to finally resolve the concern(s):

   a) The plan is met and the concern is alleviated. This is communicated in writing to all those in the above paragraph, AR&PSC and the Director of the Division. All documentation pertaining to the student review is held confidential by the division.
   b) The plan is not met and concern is not alleviated. The AR&PSC shall recommend that the student be dismissed from the program through declassification.

**Role of the Academic Advisor in a Level II Review**

The mentoring process is critical to helping both students who enter on academic probation as well as those who develop academic or professional difficulties. The Academic Advisor will set up monthly meetings (more often if necessary) with the student to discuss his or her situation, progress, and development.

**Reapplication after Dismissal through Declassification**
Any student, who is dismissed from the program through declassification as a graduate student from the Division of Social Work, may, if interested in returning at some later point, reapply to the Division of Social Work (but cannot reapply under any circumstances prior to the passage of one full academic year after being dismissed through declassification). Reapplication requires completing the entire application process again and must be done during the regular application cycle and procedures. The reapplication materials must include written notification from the applicant that they were dismissed through declassification from the Division at some earlier time. Failure to provide such notification in writing to the Division of Social Work will automatically disqualify the student and be cause for immediate denial of readmission.

All reapplication and subsequent readmission consideration to the Master of Social Work graduate program will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Admissions Committee during the regular admissions process and timelines used by the Division of Social Work. In cases of reapplication, the Chair (or their designate) or faculty representatives of the Admissions Committee will always interview the student.

**Thesis/Project Format Requirements Division of Social Work, CSUS**

It is the responsibility of the student to learn and correctly apply the formatting requirements of the Division and the University prior to submission for format review. For Division requirements refer to the MSW Graduate Thesis/Project Formatting Information Session PowerPoint. (http://www.csus.edu/HHS/sw/MSW/Thesis.Projects/Formatting%20Presentation2015_2016.pdf)

The Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) has very strict and exact guidelines for formatting, which they provide through their mandatory formatting workshops (http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/CurrentStudents/Thesis-Project-Dissertation/FormattingWorkshops.html).

Please be aware that the Graduate Program Director is responsible for determining if the thesis/project meets Division of Social Work formatting requirements and DOES NOT serve as an editor of thesis/projects.

**Division of Social Work Thesis/Project Format Review Procedures**


Additionally, the Division of Social Work annually establishes a deadline for thesis/project submission for format compliance review by the Graduate Program Director. Students are required to meet these deadlines. Failure to meet these deadlines will result in a delay in a student’s graduation.
The review and approval process is as follows:

1. The student submits the final version of their thesis/project after they have obtained the advisor’s approval and signature.

2. The thesis/project must be submitted for a format compliance review by the Graduate Program Director by the deadline. The Graduate Program Director DOES NOT serve as an editor. It is the responsibility of the student to learn and correctly apply the Division and the University format requirements prior to submission for format review (refer to the MSW Graduate Thesis/Project Formatting Information Session PowerPoint: http://www.csus.edu/HHS/sw/MSW/Thesis.Projects/Formatting.Presentation2015_2016Spring.pdf and OGS formatting (http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/CurrentStudents/Thesis-Project-Dissertation/FormattingWorkshops.html).

3. Students are required to log in their thesis/project at the Division’s Office. Waiting until the last day to submit the document will result in delaying your graduation.

**Pupil Personnel Services in School Social Work Certification & Licensed Clinical Social Worker**

**Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) in School Social Work Certification:** Section 44266 (c) and (d) of the California Education Code provides for certifying an MSW graduate meeting the requirement for the School Social Work Credential. The Pupil Personnel Services Credential in School Social Work program (PPSC in SSW program) is offered through the College of Continuing Education (CCE) at Sacramento State in conjunction with the Division of Social Work. For more information on the PPSC in SSW program please review the information on the CCE website (http://www.cce.csus.edu/ppsc).

After completion of coursework, fieldwork, and the CBEST, students in the PPS in School Social Work Certificate program may apply for the credential. In order to apply for the credential, students must complete and submit a packet of information to CCE. This information is also found on the CCE website (http://www.cce.csus.edu/pod/learn-more-about-credential-requirements). The Credential Analyst's Office at Sacramento State cannot process your credential application.

**The Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)** is a state-administered license established in California law and intended to protect the public relative to the professional preparations and practices of private social work practitioners. The license, however, is a preferred credential in many public social service agencies. The license may be acquired after securing the Master of Social Work degree from an accredited graduate program in social work and fulfilling the Post Graduate Licensing requirements. The California Board of Behavioral Science is responsible for the development and administration of the formal examination for the license and should be contacted for
information about all requirements for the license and about dates and places of the examinations by graduates interested in securing the credential. Eligibility criteria include two years of post-master’s professional experience under LCSW supervision.

Contact the Board of Behavioral Science Examiners at 916-455-4933 or refer to their web site http://www.bbs.ca.gov for detailed information about licensing requirements.

**Division of Social Work Resources**

- [Master of Social Work (links, resources, information, etc.)](http://www.csus.edu/HHS/SW/SWLinkResources.html)
- [Faculty and Staff Directory](http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/CurrentStudents/forms.html)
- [Field Placement Information](http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/CurrentStudents/forms.html)
- [Resources and Links](http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/CurrentStudents/forms.html)

**Important Web-Based Resources on Social Work**

The Division of Social Work has a list of resources that students may find useful http://www.csus.edu/HHS/SW/SWLinkResources.html

**List of University Forms and Manuals Important for Graduate Students**

Get the latest version of graduate study related forms and manuals from the Office of Graduate Studies at [http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/CurrentStudents/forms.html](http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/CurrentStudents/forms.html)

**CSUS Support Services for Students**

Most student services programs are housed in Lassen Hall, a separate building located directly behind (or east) of the main University Administration Building (Sacramento Hall). Information about these many resources can be found at the [Student Resources, Campus Life, and Academic Support](http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/CurrentStudents/forms.html) website.

**Student Rights and Responsibilities**

- [From the CSUS Policy Manual Online](http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/CurrentStudents/forms.html)
- [Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures](http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/CurrentStudents/forms.html)
- [Student Conduct Code](http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/CurrentStudents/forms.html)