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## **Master of Social Work (MSW) Program Policies**

### Fall 2021-Summer 2022

This document summarizes the Program Policies of the Master of Social Work (MSW) Program for the fall 2021 to summer 2022 academic year.

### **Table of Contents**

<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Page</b>
Program Standards	2
Grading	3
Criteria for Grading and Evaluation	5
Lateness	7
Expectations	9
Attendance	11
Academic Integrity	12
Zoom Requirements and Guidelines	13
Electronic Communication and Social Media Policy	15
Student Accessibility Services	16
Title IX Policy	17
Resources	18
Health and Safety	19
Emergency Notification	20

### **Program Standards**

The Nazareth College MSW Program evaluates performance in four general areas: (1) basic abilities to acquire professional skills; (2) mental and emotional abilities; (3) professional performance skills; and (4) scholastic performance. Both professional behavior and scholastic performance comprise academic standards. These standards are utilized in assessing student's academic performance in meeting course expectations.

## Grading

Grades are assigned based upon your performance.

### **Letter grades are assigned according to the following scale:**

A, A- Superior and exceptional work which meets a level of professional competence and expertise worthy of publication and/or public presentation. All criteria have been met at a high standard.

95-100	A
90-94.9	A-

B+, B, B- Above average work demonstrating occasional examples of excellence. At least three of the five criteria have been met at a high level of competence.

87-89.9	B+
84-86.9	B **
80-83.9	B- *

C+, C, Just adequate work which minimally meets professional standards of competence as defined by the criteria. Some criteria have not been met; others are included at an average or minimal level of competence.

77-79.9	C+
74-76.9	C

<u>For undergraduate students</u>
73, 74, 75, 76
C
70, 71, 72
C-
67, 68, 69
D+
63, 64, 65, 66
D
60, 61, 62
D-
59 and below
F

<u>For graduate students</u>
Below 74
F
- A minimum grade of B- is required for all practice courses (SWK 501, 502, 601, 602, 604, 605, 654, and 680) and clinical courses (SWK 503 and 508)
- A minimum of B is required for a satisfactory grade in all field courses (SWK 504, 505, 608, 609, 610, and 611)

**Incomplete.** Due to circumstances beyond the control of the student, course work or assignments are not completed during the quarter. This grade cannot be given to raise a grade. This grade is not an automatic process and required an Incomplete Contract be submitted to the Registrar's office. Consult with the instructor as soon as you foresee a problem completing the requirements.

## **Criteria for Grading and Evaluation**

The following criteria can be used by the student as a guideline for self-evaluation as work is being planned and written for an assignment including an oral presentation or a written work. In evaluating the work, which is submitted for evaluation and feedback, the instructor uses these same criteria.

### **Organization**

All assignments, including written work and oral presentations, should be well organized and clear. Work should follow a systemic progression of thought.

### **Conceptual Clarity**

All concepts within the assignment should be clearly explained and detailed. An integration of external sources to credit the summary or explanation of the concepts is provided. The grade will be determined on the ability to move across a continuum of abstraction to concreteness, dealing systematically with material.

### **Critical Thinking**

In assignments, information from literature or class should not simply be repeated but instead used to provide exploration, reflection, integration, analysis, and critical thought. Assignments should demonstrate analytic depth which integrates the competencies of social work including. Critical thinking will be considered through the way you interact with ideas, bring to bear your analytical thinking in evaluating the policy, and utilize conceptual models as a means of evaluating and critiquing information.

### **Style**

Assignments may be assessed by writing or presentation style.

**Writing style.** Students are responsible for understanding the writing style expected of written work. Some assignments require the use of reflective writing whereas others require evidence-based or research oriented writing. In reflective writing, the integration of one's own experience and practice can be considered. If evidence-based or research oriented writing is utilized, all salient points should be well supported with external sources.

**Presentation style.** During presentations, students are expected to be professional in language, tone, and behavior. Content should be shared in an engaging and informative manner. Content should be well supported by external sources and credited through verbal statements and references.

### **Use of Literature**

All major points and concepts should be supported by relevant literature or research. The integration of external sources should be used to craft an overall argument and discussion, rather than a source by source summary.

Assignments should be informed by primary sources. While the use of class lectures or textbooks may be permitted in some classes, note these usually serve as secondary sources.

### **Formatting**

It is expected that all assignments adhere to the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA), 7<sup>th</sup> edition. Please see the APA manual for specific guidelines and detail.

### **Lateness**

#### **Program Policy**

The *Program policy* requires that assignments are turned in by the assigned due date and assignments received after that date are penalized.

### **Expectations**

#### **Preparation**

Students are expected to come to class prepared. In most classes, preparation means having completed any assigned readings and critically considered the contents with enough thought to engage in class discussion or activities.

The instructor is expected to come to class with prepared lectures, exercises, and related teaching materials to involve the students in the course material. The teacher is expected to assemble the syllabus and to use this as a framework for the course.

Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning within the context of the syllabus and to be open to feedback on the development of their academic and professional knowledge, values, and skills.

#### **Learning Environment**

Students and the instructor are expected to work together to create an environment conducive for optimal learning. Such an environment includes, but is not limited, to respecting the rights, beliefs, and opinions of each member of the community. One need not agree with each other, and spirited academic debate is encouraged, but it must be conducted in a respectful manner.

#### **Engagement**

It is expected that all students are active, engaged, and respectful learners. It is also expected that all students encourage active participation of others in their learning through class discussions, discussion board, and other learning activities. To assist everyone in the learning process, it is important to avoid disrespectful comments, side conversations, and distractions. To be fully engaged, do not use electronic devices (such as cell phones, laptops, and tablets) for activities not directly related to class.

**Integration**

It is important to use course topics, activities, discussions, and assignments to promote integration. Integration means making connections, both conceptual and practical, between the course curriculum and personal or professional experiences.

**Accountability**

Holding oneself accountable for timely and high quality work is important and will promote future practice.

**Professionalism**

It is expected that all students uphold the highest standards of professionalism. Demonstrating professional behavior is aligned with ethical principles of social work and the standards of the professional.

Unprofessional behavior observed in any social work course will be addressed following MSW program and Nazareth College policies. For more information, please see the *MSW Program Student Handbook* and the Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<http://catalog.naz.edu/content.php?catoid=91&navoid=2494>).

**Privacy and Confidentiality**

It is expected that information discussed and processed in a classroom setting is handled in a private and confidential manner. The guidelines of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) should be followed. See <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/laws-regulations/index.html> for more information and detail.

**Attendance**

Students are expected to attend and participate in all sessions of the courses for which they are registered. Students are expected to be familiar with the College's academic calendar for graduate courses and any specific course requirements and should avoid making travel or other plans that require them to miss classes. A student who is unable to participate in any class, examination, or assignment due to religious requirements shall not be penalized, provided the instructor has been notified in writing at least two weeks prior to the absence.

While there is no officially recognized system of "allowed" absences, departments and individual faculty members may establish their own criteria, and it is the student's responsibility to know these criteria. In cases of excessive absence, the instructor may advise the student to withdraw from the course.

Regardless of the reason for absence, it is the responsibility of the student to make up all missed work to the satisfaction of the instructor. Students must meet deadlines for course requirements during a period of absence unless the student makes alternate arrangements with the instructor **prior** to the original due date.

### **Online and Hybrid Courses**

In online and hybrid courses, class attendance is represented through a variety of assignments and activities that demonstrate class engagement. As in all courses, but particularly in online and hybrid courses, active and consistent participation is required and critical to student success. Failure to fulfill weekly, online and hybrid course expectations jeopardize student learning and academic success and do count as absences.

### **COVID-19 and Course Absences**

The College will use the Starfish Early Alert System to notify instructors of students who will be absent from class due to quarantine and isolation. Instructors will then determine what method they will use to allow the student to maintain academic engagement without penalty due to medical absence. Students are expected to maintain communication with their instructors. Students who are medically unable to communicate with the instructor should work through Student Accessibility Services.

### **Academic Integrity**

Nazareth College defines academic integrity as “honest and responsible scholarship” (University of Oklahoma, 2018, para. #). Academic integrity is further recognized by the College as being characterized by five values designated by the International Center for Academic Integrity: “honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility” (International Center for Academic Integrity, 2014, p. 16).

As members of the Nazareth College community, all work submitted for grading should be entirely one’s own, unless the instructor makes it clear in the assignment that student collaboration is expected. It is expected that students will refrain from any activities that deceive an instructor in the evaluation of the student’s academic performance. This includes, but is not limited to, inadvertently or intentionally failing to cite sources or using insufficient paraphrasing or synthesis of another’s ideas. In all assignments students must pay particular attention to proper citation according the APA format, 7<sup>th</sup> edition guidelines. Students unfamiliar with these guidelines are responsible for obtaining them.

Nazareth College shares the Center’s preference for an academic, supportive, and promotive approach to academic integrity rather than one focused mainly on violation detection and disciplinary consequence. Any concerns with academic integrity will be addressed in a manner consistent with the College’s graduate school procedures.

Please see

[http://catalog.naz.edu/content.php?catoid=91&navoid=2494#academic\\_integrity](http://catalog.naz.edu/content.php?catoid=91&navoid=2494#academic_integrity) for an overview of these procedures.

## **Zoom Requirements and Guidelines**

*Note that these guidelines are Department-wide in Social Work*

The purpose of the guidelines that follow is to facilitate engagement, participation, and a sense of community. Please communicate with the course instructor if you have questions or concerns.

1. It is important to maintain professionalism during classes, both in-person and held on Zoom. Please make every effort to listen respectfully, actively participate, and engage in collegial behavior.
2. Please add your name and photo to your Zoom profile. You may also choose to include your preferred pronouns.
3. Please join Zoom sessions from a laptop/computer rather than a phone whenever possible. There are a variety of features not available when a phone is used to access Zoom.
4. You are strongly encouraged to have your video/camera on during the entire class session. Situations may arise when your camera needs to be turned off temporarily; Please restart as soon as possible. If a situation arises where your camera needs to be off for long periods of time or an entire class period, contact your instructor to discuss.
5. Please mute your audio unless you are speaking. If you are having trouble entering the conversation or are worried about interrupting, use the 'raise your hand' feature.
6. Please do not multi-task (e.g., avoid checking texts or social media or engaging in other tasks that interfere with your ability to focus, listen and participate).
7. Use the chat feature to share ideas or questions to the whole class ("everyone" chat communication) or to the instructor individually ("private" chat communication). Please do not use the chat feature to engage in non-course related discussion and be mindful of the best times during the conversation to share a chat posting. Please note that while an instructor or classmate is sharing their screen, the chat log may not be visible and it might be helpful to unmute to share your comment/question.

\*If a circumstance unexpectedly arises that prevents you from turning your camera on or actively participating in class, contact your instructor (ideally, before class). Please note this may impact your class participation or attendance grade.

### **Recording**

Whether learning is in person or remote, safety and trust in the classroom are essential. Social work education, by its very nature, encourages students to reflect on themselves as developing professionals. Ideas, experiences, differences converge in the classroom experience. On the rare occasion when a student needs to record a class session (e.g., as a reasonable accommodation or to listen to a lecture again), the instructor must be notified and permission obtained where applicable. The instructor will advise the class

when a session is being recorded (either by a student or by the professor for instructional reasons) so that informed decisions are made as to classroom discussion. To do otherwise, violates the [National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\) Code of Ethics](#) (2021).

### **Electronic Communication and Social Media Policy**

When using electronic or online communication and social media, all students are expected to adhere to the ethical standards of the profession. As stated in the [National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\) Code of Ethics](#) (2021), students are expected to maintain professional boundaries including through online communication. As such, students should refrain from establishing online or virtual relationships with clients and faculty including through social media. During all electronic and online interactions, students should communicate with classmates, field instructors, faculty and colleagues in a professional fashion. All postings on social media sites must follow confidentiality guidelines and should reflect the highest professional standards. Students should think carefully about how their comments, images and postings represent themselves, the College, and the profession. Violations of ethical and professional standards are subject to disciplinary actions by the Program, the Department, and the College.

### **Student Accessibility Services**

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) ensures students with temporary and permanent disabilities have equal access to educational opportunities across campus. SAS coordinates appropriate accommodations and support services for students. SAS advocates, counsels, and connects students with campus and community resources.

The only way students are able to receive official accommodations at Nazareth College is by registering with the Office of Student Accessibility Services and providing official documentation of their disability. Once their document has been processed, students receive a letter of accommodation that they must present to the instructor. In the absence of that process and a letter from the Office of Student Accessibility Services specifying the accommodations, no accommodations may be provided for the student. For legal reasons, you are strongly encouraged to stay within the bounds of this policy and procedure.

The Director of the Office of Student Accessibility Services is Erika Hess (office: GAC61, phone: 389-2498, e-mail: ehess6@naz.edu). The Handbook for Students with Disabilities is available as a PDF file at: <http://www.naz.edu/student-disabilities/>

### **Statement from the Office of Student Accessibility Services**

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your academic course work or participation in a class, please contact the Office of Student Accessibility Services (GAC, Room 61). It is your responsibility as a student

requesting an accommodation due to a qualifying disability to self-identify by registering with the Office of Student Accessibility Services and to furnish documentation about the nature of the disability. Informing other faculty or staff personnel does not constitute registering with the Office of Student Accessibility Services. You must provide documentation of your needs to the Office of Student Accessibility Services so that reasonable accommodations can be requested in a timely manner. The Director of the Office of Student Accessibility Services will determine with you what accommodations are necessary, appropriate, and reasonable based on the documentation provided. All information and documentation is confidential. If appropriate, the Director of the Office of Student Accessibility Services will write a "letter of academic accommodation" that you can share your course instructor. Note: all students are expected to fulfill essential course requirements with or without reasonable accommodations.

### **Title IX Policy**

Nazareth College is committed to fostering a climate free from sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, stalking, and sexual harassment and to providing options, support, and assistance to members of our community affected by various forms of sexual misconduct. If you have been the victim of sexual violence, we encourage you to report the incident(s) to someone you trust. If you report an incident of sexual harassment, including sexual violence, dating or domestic violence, and/or stalking to a faculty or staff member, she or he must notify our college's Title IX coordinator, Heather Sourwine (hsourwi8@naz.edu 389-2026) about the basic facts of the report. Ms. Sourwine, or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator, will then contact you to learn more about the circumstances, perform an initial assessment of the reported conduct, and ask for your preferences about what to do next, including assessing any needed interim measures and connecting you to appropriate resources. For more information about your options, please go to [www.naz.edu/titleix](http://www.naz.edu/titleix)

You may choose to speak confidentially with certain individuals on campus and in the community. A list of individuals with whom you can speak in a confidential capacity and who can connect you with support services, as well as discuss options for addressing the sexual misconduct, can be found in Section X B, Confidential Resources and Support, of the Sexual Misconduct Policy. The full policy is online at [www.naz.edu/titleix](http://www.naz.edu/titleix)

### **Resources**

There are College resources to help promote your success as a graduate student. These resources include, but are not limited to, the Writing Center, Center for Life's Work, Student Accessibility Services, Student Success, Health and Counseling, Campus Safety, Fitness Options, Financial Aid, Community and Belonging, Mentoring, and

Student Services. To learn more about these resources, please visit <https://www2.naz.edu/graduate-students/>

### **Health and Safety**

To protect the health and safety of all in the Nazareth community, the Program, Department, and College regularly disseminates information about current regulations, policies, and guidelines.

#### **COVID-19**

Please frequently refer to the policies specific to COVID-19 outlined here: <https://www2.naz.edu/covid-19-resources/>

As of the start of the semester (August 2021), to protect the health and safety of all in the Nazareth community, students (regardless of vaccination status) are temporarily required to wear masks at all times while in instructional spaces. Please review the College's COVID-19 Resources. If you have a health condition that prevents you from wearing a mask, please contact Student Accessibility Services to apply for a medical accommodation. If you are exposed to someone who tests positive for COVID-19 and/or develop symptoms, please read through Testing, Precautionary Quarantine, Quarantine, and Isolation for information on next steps.

#### **Mental Health and Well-being**

Optimal mental health and overall well-being is important to your success as a student. Nazareth College provides services that can help support your mental health and well-being and, in turn, promote academic and vocational performance. For additional information, please see the Health and Counseling Services website: <https://www2.naz.edu/health-and-counseling/counseling-services/>

### **Emergency Notification**

Nazareth College has a centralized emergency notification system called NazAlert. NazAlert will notify those who have enrolled an emergency on campus, the nature of the situation, and steps to take. This system is free. To learn more and sign up for notifications please visit <https://www2.naz.edu/campus-safety/department-services/nazalert/>