MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

PROGRAM HANDBOOK

Developed 2018; revised May 2019
This handbook is neither a contract nor an offer of a contract. The material contained herein is not intended to substitute for or otherwise modify the regulations that are contained in the current Northcentral University Catalog or any other official documents. This handbook was designed to document requirements specific to the MSW degree programs. The University reserves the right to change any provision or requirement, including fees, at any time with or without notice. The University further reserves the right to require a student to withdraw from the University for cause at any time. Failure to read this handbook does not excuse students from the requirements and regulations described herein.

Northcentral University welcomes all qualified adult students and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status, or disability. This applies to all Northcentral University policies, practices, or procedures involving applicants, students, faculty members, employees, and the public. Northcentral reserves the right to refuse admission to anyone the University believes does not meet Northcentral University academic standards or demonstrates actions or behaviors not aligned with Northcentral University policy.

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NCU SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

NCU MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
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Welcome!

Dear Northcentral Master of Social Work Student,

Welcome to Northcentral University’s Master of Social Work Program! We are pleased to have you as learners and colleagues while we pursue knowledge and skills in the broad, exciting field of Social Work. We can assure you, as long-time social workers, there is never a dull moment in this field. It is always engaging and interesting and challenging.

This Program Handbook will help you as you begin and progress through your studies. We wish you the best and look forward to your participation in, and contribution to, the MSW Program at Northcentral University.

Sincerely,

The Program Director and Faculty
of the MSW Program at NCU
WELCOME TO THE NORTH CENTRAL UNIVERSITY MASTER IN SOCIAL WORK (MSW) HANDBOOK

- You may use this online help system to locate policy information and print individual handbook sections.
- To navigate using the sidebar to the left:
  - Click one of the chapter titles or an appendix to see the topics in that portion of the manual.
  - Click a topic title to display that portion of the handbook.
- You may also use the search function to locate the topic you are looking for.
- To print an individual topic, click the print button while the topic is displayed.
- If you wish to print the entire handbook, click on “Table of Contents/Print Version”.
- To return to the MSW home page, click on “Back to MSW Site”.
- Direct any question about the handbook to the Chair, Department of Marriage and Family Sciences or the MSW Program Director, Department of Marriage and Family Sciences.
THE PROFESSION OF SOCIAL WORK

Social work is a profession, as well as an academic discipline. Professional social work practice is unique from other helping professions in its approach of assisting clients to function optimally within their environments. The person-centered and person-in-environment approach is central to social work practice. Through these perspectives, professional social workers are uniquely trained to empower clients and create the opportunity for clients to change themselves and their situations. Social work practice is strengths-based since social workers assist people in identifying their problems, identifying their skills and competencies, and recognizing particular strengths that can help them to address particular problems. Social workers engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. All fifty (50) states and the District of Columbia and various holdings (such as Virgin Islands and Guam), as well as all Canadian provinces, currently have active legislation that governs the practice of master's level social workers for the purpose of protecting the public.

SOCIAL WORK IS A LICENSED PROFESSION!

Social work is a licensed profession, as are hundreds of professions. Individual states have the constitutional duty to protect their citizenry from harm. Social work is identified as a profession that has access to people’s private information, and so states want to protect the public from harm that can emerge from the unethical, illegal, or incompetent practice of social work.

Most people would hesitate to go to a physician who is not licensed. Physical health, however, is no more important than mental and emotional and community health. Because social workers are deeply involved in people’s personal, family, and community lives, it is extremely important that they be licensed and accountable to the state as they deliver, organize, and administer services to clients or client groups.

To be licensed, a graduate must meet the licensing requirements of the state(s) in which the graduate wants to practice. Once the state approves the individual to sit for the national test, the graduate must take and pass one of the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) exams (Bachelors, Masters, Advanced Generalist, or Clinical). The state will then issue and control the license, which must be renewed at regular intervals.

Each state board is the ultimate authority on its own rules and regulations governing the practice of social work in their jurisdiction, so sometimes it is puzzling to know how to find licensure answers. Licensure information and important links to other sites will be found on the NCU MSW webpage. Testing processes are explained at www.aswb.org.
OVERVIEW OF THE NCU MSW PROGRAM

Northcentral University, a regionally accredited educational institution, uses distance-based (online) education as the predominant method of instruction and interaction for its degree programs. The MSW Program is organizationally housed within the Department of Marriage and Family Sciences (DMFS), which is part of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SSBS).

The NCU MSW Program is working towards accreditation through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The great majority of the coursework and training process is conducted online, with the exception of the field practicum component. This Program has no residency requirement, allowing students to complete their program without having to relocate.

Program Sequence

The Program content incorporates the knowledge, values, and skills required to work competently as both a generalist practitioner and leader engaged with individuals, families, groups, communities, and social service organizations.

- The Foundation Track is designed for students who do not hold the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) and prepares students for study of the advanced generalist specialization. This specialization equips students to be social work leaders and practitioners in a broad array of services to humankind.
- The Advanced Standing Track builds on the foundation generalist perspective by teaching advanced skills for working with clients, groups, and organizations. Students who hold the BSW from a CSWE-accredited school may apply to begin their NCU MSW study as advanced standing students.

The Program is based on the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession, emphasizing evidence-based and research-informed education, accompanied by coursework necessary to prepare students for the diverse career opportunities available in the field. The Master of Social Work degree will prepare graduates for a variety of positions, such as clinic and program director, work with vulnerable families and children, administering state and county social services, performing medical social work, or independent practice clinical social work (with post-degree supervision and license regulations by jurisdiction).

Specialization: Advanced Generalist

NCU’s MSW Program allows students to focus their studies in the specialization area of advanced generalized content. By focusing on this specialization of advanced generalist social work, students gain both content and applied knowledge that enables them to become an “expert” in generalist practice, the hallmark of social work practice at the master’s level.
The MSW Program centers on developing the knowledge, values, and skills, as well as the personal and professional growth required for effective, ethical practice in social work. Students critically analyze a broad range of social work theories and knowledge, use research, and apply professional standards of conduct.

**No Academic Credit for Life Experiences or Previous Work Experiences**

Though many NCU students start the MSW Program with life or work experiences that inform their understanding of social work practice, NCU does NOT grant academic credit for such experiences.

**Practicum**

Central to the MSW education is the practicum (or field placement) under supervision in a social work setting. This on-site training prepares students to work in a variety of settings, such as mental health centers, public service agencies, and military service centers. Students complete practicum in their local areas with approved local site supervisors who have the necessary credentials and practice experience to design effective practicum learning opportunities for students. Practicum students will also have biweekly interactive online practicum sessions with MSW faculty members.

Graduates of the NCU MSW Program will be well prepared to work in leadership roles, administrative positions, and clinical roles. They are also prepared to seek licensure post-graduation in their home state, country, or area. Though the MSW program at Northcentral University is designed to meet requirements for the post degree licensure, it is the responsibility of students to determine the licensure requirements in their state or jurisdiction.

**Faculty**

The MSW faculty are all professionals trained in generalist practice and social work service delivery, and hold doctoral degrees and MSWs from CSWE-accredited programs. The faculty consists of diverse professionals with a variety of cultural and professional backgrounds. Faculty participate in teaching, scholarship, service, and practice activities that enhance the Program.

**Student Recruitment**

NCU has an intentional, comprehensive strategy to attract and retain a diverse student body. Because NCU uses a distance-based education format, the program removes many barriers that often prevent access to students who may be from marginalized populations and unable to attend a location-specific MSW program.

**Liability Insurance and Background Checks**

Each practicum student is required to obtain student-level liability insurance. Students can purchase this through their NASW student membership, or through various insurance outlets. Students must have liability insurance before they can begin their practicum. As International students have different country regulations,
these students are required to submit written proof that liability insurance is not required in their home country where they are practicing.

All students are required to complete a criminal background check prior to the start of their first practicum. The background checks are paid for by the university and are designed to ensure students are appropriate to recommend to various clinical placements sites and help student determine if there are any previous life events that maybe be a barrier to them pursuing licensure in their home state.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Northcentral University offers an array of student support services. Contact information for all student support services can be found in the current Northcentral University Catalog. The Learning Management System (NCUOne) is where students will find information related to Disability Services, Accounting, Faculty Services, Technical Support, Registrar, Financial Aid, Library services, Academic Advising and others

**FACULTY AND STUDENT GOVERNANCE**

**Faculty Governance**

Faculty governance is central to the NCU model, both within the Program and across the university to ensure the Program is able to achieve its educational outcomes. Faculty Governance is defined as faculty (core and adjunct) working collaboratively with administration and engaging meaningfully in the life of the university beyond teaching and research. For more information regarding Faculty Governance refer to the University Policy and Procedures manual section 202-3 Faculty Role in Governance.

The MSW faculty has regular meetings to share ideas and influence the direction of the Program. They also meet with Academic and Financial Advisors, the MSW Program Director, and the Department Chair to discuss student needs and any changes that can better support students. Faculty teaching practicum courses meet regularly with the Field Education Director to discuss practicum student needs. The entire teaching faculty meet together monthly during a Faculty Focus Meeting with the Dean and other administrative faculty to further discuss policies, procedure, updates, changes, and ideas for improvement across the entire Program.

Twice a year the entire faculty meet for a multi-day department retreat to review outcome data, conduct strategic planning, discuss proposed changes, and explore ideas for continuous improvement. MSW faculty also participate on a variety of Program, School, and University level committees and taskforces dealing with such items as curriculum delivery, ways to enhance diversity, research opportunities, and assessment of student outcomes.

**Student Governance and Leadership Opportunities**

Student governance is important, both within the Program and across the university. The university Policy and Procedures manual, section 208-7 Role of Student in Governance, indicates that students have a valuable perspective on the educational services they receive. Therefore, the University benefits from their perceptions on academic and administrative matters.
Students in the MSW Program are encouraged to participate in governance through serving on:

- School of Social and Behavioral Sciences Diversity and Community Committee, which works to enhance diversity and promote equity in curriculum and in respect for each member of the learning community.
- MSW Student Advisory Board, which serves as a liaison between students, faculty, and administration while recommending suggestions to strengthen the Program.

**PROGRAM MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES**

**UNIVERSITY MISSION, VISION AND GOALS**

The MSW Program’s mission and values are buttressed by the University, Department, and School mission. Please visit the NCU Catalog or website for the University current Vision, Mission, and Values.

**Department and School Mission**

The Program’s aims comport well with the Department of Marriage and Family Sciences and the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences mission of providing students with accessible education opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values integral to professionals in the social and behavioral sciences. Social work is one of the oldest and most respected of professions within social sciences.

**MSW Program Mission**

The MSW Program mission is to provide students throughout the world with current applicable social work knowledge and skills that contribute to practice knowledge, skills, and abilities, as well as leadership attributes and confidence in positively affecting the circumstances of those in need and of the agencies and facilities that serve the most vulnerable people in society. This program mission aligns with NCU’s mission of helping students achieve the knowledge and skills to become valuable contributors to their communities and within their professions by providing an educational program that focuses on professional practice and professional competence.

**MSW Program Philosophy and Vision**

The MSW Program philosophy is based on the core values of social work which are based in commitment to foster integrity, achieve competence, engage in service, and demonstrate respect for all people.

Working within evidence-based and research-informed frameworks, the MSW Program empowers students to efficiently and ethically serve individuals, families, and communities. This service enhances quality of life. It also values the exchange between the social worker and client or client group, appreciating that every person is unique and worthwhile, and works towards social benefits that will make life better for underserved populations.
**Profession’s Purpose**
The mission statements of the university, school, department, and MSW Program reflect and support the purpose of social work, preparing social workers with skills to engage in advocacy, empowering vulnerable populations, cultivating social change and functioning, and developing leadership skills to serve individuals, organizations, and communities.

**Profession’s Values**
These mission statements reveal NCU values. NCU values the engagement of students and faculty in working for the betterment of society. NCU emphasizes the use of learning to improve the conditions of the community and the world in which we live, and supports the faculty in applying skills in the classroom and engaging in research that will benefit society.

The profession strongly encourages professionals to build their knowledge and skill base throughout life. The MSW Program provides continuing education to its faculty, field instructors, and field liaisons to enhance life-long learning and to build skills required by the highest standards of practice. Students are encouraged to join their state chapter of National Association of Social Workers (NASW), or other professional associations, and participate in continuing education activities. Lifelong learning and continuing professional growth are reinforced by encouraging students to obtain appropriate licensure in their jurisdiction of practice, with the understanding that earning an MSW is only the beginning of a lifelong commitment to professional learning.

**Program Context**
Online education allows working students to take classes on a schedule convenient for them. The profession of social work—and our MSW Program—recognizes this ‘people-first’ philosophy that places the needs of the individual as primary. Our Program recognizes and celebrates the diversity of the careers that graduates can build with an MSW.

Social work careers are quite numerous. The Department of Labor speaks to career trends for Master of Social Work graduates. The employment of child, family, and school social workers is projected to grow six percent from 2014 to 2024. Employment of healthcare social workers is projected to grow 19 percent from 2014 to 2024, which is much faster than the average for all occupations. Healthcare social workers will continue to find work helping aging populations and their families adjust to new treatments, medications, and lifestyles. Employment of mental health social workers is projected to grow 19 percent from 2014 to 2024, much faster than the average for all occupations.

Based on this information of social work career trends, our Program offers a generalist focus designed for competitive employment emphasizing the field of social work in all its career diversity. In today’s market, Master’s level social workers need to have skills in the business of social work that demonstrates the distinctive expertise, impact, and value of social work to industry, policy makers, and the general public. These elements are integrated in our social work curricula at all levels.
ALIGNING PROGRAM GOALS WITH CSWE STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

The NCU MSW Program is seeking full accreditation with the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Program goals reflect CSWE Core Competencies and standards in these ways:

1. To prepare students to be practitioners and leaders in diverse social work careers and settings using evidence-based and research-informed practices (supports all core competencies outlined in CSWE Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards [EPAS]).
2. To prepare students to add to the knowledge base and promote social work professional values (supports all EPAS competencies).
3. To prepare students who are competent for advanced clinical practice with individuals, families, and groups, and business leadership roles in the social work profession (supports all EPAS competencies).
4. To empower graduates to become valuable contributors to their communities and within the social work profession while acknowledging the diversity and differences of clients in a professional and compassionate manner (supports EPAS competencies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 & 9).

ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING — POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The MSW Program follows a repeating assessment cycle which aligns with NCU’s Institutional Assessment practices. The Program also embraces a culture of assessment as part of our ongoing strategic plan of continuous improvement.

The assessment cycle:

1) Gather data
2) Analyze and interpret data
3) Develop action plans based on the data
4) Measure success of action plans and start the cycle again

The Council on Social Work Education has adopted nine core social work competencies which are the key educational outcomes of the MSW Program:

✓ Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
✓ Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice;
✓ Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice;
✓ Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice;
✓ Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice; Competency;
✓ Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities;
✓ Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities;
✓ Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities;
✓ Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

The core competencies are scaffolded throughout the curriculum. Student achievement of the competencies is assessed via faculty rating on specific assignments. Select assignments have been identified to serve as
artifacts for specific competency behaviors. Using a rubric, faculty rate student achievement of the competencies on the following scale: Does not meet expectations, Beginning level of skill, Competent, Advanced, Mastered.

During practicum/internship courses students are rated by their field supervisors using an evaluation. The items rated on the field evaluation align with CSWE's EPAS.

These and other indicators of student learning and satisfaction are collected, aggregated and reviewed in an annual program assessment report. The aggregated data and analysis are provided to various Communities of Interest (COI) including but not limited to faculty, students, Student Advisory Board (SAB), Professional Advisory Council (PAC), University administration, and others as appropriate. Faculty review MSW educational outcome data once per year at the faculty semi-annual retreat. Faculty develop action plans to improve educational outcomes, curriculum, and overall program quality based on outcome data and faculty feedback when changes are warranted. The Program solicits feedback from each community of interest, and uses that feedback to change and improve the Program.

GENERAL PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

STUDENT RECRUITMENT POLICY
The MSW Program uses a targeted recruitment policy, consistent with the university mission, values, and anti-discrimination policies. We seek out highly motivated professionals who can benefit from an accessible opportunity to earn an accredited degree in MSW. We reach out to a world-wide diverse group of potential students through various multi-media and social media outlets, magazines, and regional and national conferences.

ADMISSIONS POLICY
To be admitted to the Northcentral University MSW Program, a student must hold a conferred bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited academic institution. Students applying to the MSW Advanced-Standing Program must have earned, within the last seven (7) years, a BSW (with a 3.0 GPA in social work courses) from a CSWE-accredited social work program. Applicants submit a current resume or curriculum vita, and copies of degree transcripts, and an application packet that reviews the Program requirements and expectations. In addition to completing an application form, applicants respond to a series of essay questions. They also complete a Statement of Professional Ethics and Conduct, in which they must report any criminal behavior that may be relevant to training and practicing as an MSW. Any prospective student who has been convicted of a felony prior to or subsequent to admission is required to immediately inform the MSW Program Director of this conviction in order to determine the best course of action. (In addition, a felony conviction may also disqualify a student from some practicum placement sites, and may inhibit future licensure.) After submitting all required materials MSW applicants must participate in a one-to-one synchronous interview with MSW faculty. All students will complete a background check prior to beginning field experience.
UNIVERSITY ORIENTATION
University enrollment specialists and students’ academic advisors orient students to the learning environment using both synchronous and asynchronous meetings and materials.

PROGRAM RETENTION POLICY
The MSW Program facilitates the success and retention of all students in ways that are consistent with the university mission and anti-discrimination policy, by training our faculty, advising our students, and offering an array of student support services.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY
The MSW Program abides by the University’s Non-Discrimination Policy, as found in the current Northcentral University Catalog. Faculty are invested in students’ personal and professional growth, which incorporates understanding and appreciating diversity. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, ethnicity, relationship status, gender identity, health status, national origin, race, color, religion, spiritual values, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status (SES), learning disabilities, physical limitations, age, veteran status, belief systems, and academic and professional background. Respect for diversity is embedded in the NCU MSW Program curriculum, practicum, and educational outcomes, and the Program is committed to appropriately acknowledging and discussing issues of diversity. Because our students, faculty members, and site supervisors come from a wide variety of contexts, their characteristics add to the total picture of diversity throughout our context, makeup, and learning activities.

Transfer Credits
The MSW program will allow for transfer of up to 6 credit hours for the Advanced Standing track and 12 credits for the Foundation track. For the Advanced Standing track, credits must be from a CSWE-accredited MSW program. Transfer credits for the Foundation track must be completed at a regionally accredited institution and must be awarded a 3.0 (grade of B) or higher. For the Advanced Standing track, students may apply for transfer of up to 6 credit hours of graduate credit earned outside the MSW program (grades must be B or higher) under the following guidelines:

1. Course work which would be over seven years old at the completion of the degree program (as defined by the student’s plan of study) may not be used.

2. Acceptance of transfer credits will depend upon how those credits fit within the MSW requirements and the student’s overall plan of study.
3. Only applicants from CSWE-accredited graduate social work programs will be considered for admission as transfer students for the Advanced Standing track.

The transferability of credits earned at Northcentral University is at the discretion of the receiving college, university, or other educational institution. Students considering transferring to any institution should not assume that credits earned in any program of study will be accepted by the receiving institution. Accreditation does not guarantee credentials or credits earned at Northcentral University will be accepted by or transferred to another institution. To minimize the risk of having to repeat coursework, students should contact the receiving institution to evaluate the transferability of credits and/or acceptability of degrees, diplomas, or certificates earned.

What Students Should Expect Once They are Accepted at NCU

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<tr>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<td>Academic Advisor</td>
<td>Provides the student access to the Virtual Campus, and works with the</td>
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<td>and MSW Advisor</td>
<td>student to master the online environment. The MSW Program will also</td>
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<td></td>
<td>assign an advisor to support career plans and goals relevant to work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>as a MSW.</td>
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<td>Student</td>
<td>Stays in contact with her or his Academic Advisor (AA) in order to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>adjust the timing of courses, ask questions, or request information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>or assistance regarding any matter related to the Program’s educational</td>
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<td>aspects.</td>
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<td>Student</td>
<td>Uses the Virtual Campus as the primary means for: entering and</td>
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<td>completing coursework and degree requirements; communicating with</td>
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<td>faculty, staff, and other students; and accessing University resources</td>
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<td>such as the Northcentral Library, the Academic Success Center (ASC),</td>
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<td>and the IT Help Desk. Using the Virtual Campus, the student can</td>
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<td>review her or his degree plan, request and register for specific</td>
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<td></td>
<td>courses, manage educational finances, and enter or edit personal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Begins courses and submits assignments in a timely manner. No “bulk</td>
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<td></td>
<td>uploading” is accepted. The student must receive feedback and a grade</td>
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<td></td>
<td>on the assignment before the student can upload the next assignment.</td>
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<td>Faculty Member</td>
<td>Engage with student throughout the course. Send a request to student</td>
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<td></td>
<td>in the first week of class to have a synchronous meeting with the</td>
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<td>student to get to know the student and discuss expectations of the</td>
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<td>course. When the student completes and submits assignments, the</td>
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<td>faculty member reviews, evaluates, offers detailed feedback, and</td>
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<td>submits the feedback and grades for students’ completed work. The</td>
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<td>University requires that faculty must respond to questions in</td>
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<td>messages or email within 24-48 hours, and they must grade and submit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the graded assignment within four days of the due date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Takes advantage of the asynchronous model to work at their convenience,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>within the allowed time frames for course participation and faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>member responsiveness. Students are encouraged to also set time to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>talk via Skype (or by phone) with their faculty.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MINIMUM TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING

MINIMAL TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS
Students in an online program must have the technological resources necessary for them to be successful. The following link explains the minimum technical requirements for NCU students:

http://www.ncu.edu/tuition-and-admissions/admissions-requirements/technical-requirements

TECHNOLOGY TRAINING
There are three key applications of technology used in the Program: the Learning Management System (LMS), video conferencing applications for the practicum courses, and clinical tracking application. The following training is required:

For Students:

- **Learning Management System.** Students participate in the “Walk to Class” with their academic advisor. Advisors provide a personal one-on-one training regarding how to use the LMS (online classroom).
- **Video Conferencing.** Currently, the MSW Program uses an application called Zoom, which is a HIPAA-compliant video conferencing tool. Students are required to participate in the orientation and training that will be provided during their first practicum. In addition, students are required to review the asynchronous trainings for this tool.
- **Practicum Tracking Application.** The MSW Program uses an electronic system, currently Tevera, to track all practicum hours a student earns and all supervision the student receives during the practicum courses. The application allows local site supervisors to verify and sign off on practicum hours and all supervision hours. Students receive guidance and training with this electronic system during their practicum courses with their assigned faculty.

For Site Supervisors:

- **Practicum Tracking Application.** The only technology site supervisors are required to use is the electronic system, which tracks all practicum hours and allows local supervisors to sign off on client contact hours and supervision hours. Supervisors and students have indicated that the application is intuitive and user-friendly. The Field Education Director provides training or orientation as needed.

For Faculty:

- **Learning Management System.** As part of the hiring process, faculty are required to complete faculty training on the Learning Management System, provided by the university’s Center for Teaching and Learning. This training is continually updated, so faculty will be enrolled in the most current version of the training during the hiring process.
Video Conferencing. The MSW Program uses Zoom, a HIPAA-compliant video conferencing tool. Faculty are trained how to use this tool when assigned to teach practicum and/or internship courses. Additional asynchronous training for this tool is provided at the following location (https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/201137166- Audio-Video-Sharing).

PROGRAM POLICY: STATE LICENSURE LIMITATIONS

Although licensure laws are governed by individual states and can change frequently, the MSW Program administration seeks to identify licensure restrictions by state and notify applicants in those states with any known limitations. For instance, a few states may require particular course credits for licensure, above and beyond standard degree plans. However, the license the student will earn as a professional belongs to the student, not to the MSW Program. Completing the Program does not guarantee licensure.

Consequently, it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that he/she understands and meets all licensure requirements of the state in which the student projects to be licensed. The student is responsible for earning, respecting, and maintaining the license throughout her or his career.

PROCEDURE: APPLICANTS WITH KNOWN LICENSURE LIMITATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSW Program</td>
<td>Provide the Licensure Limitation Acknowledgement Letter to all applicants and students who express an interest in practicing in states that may have requirements for specialized accreditations or other unique requirements above and beyond the standard degree plan at NCU.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant</td>
<td>Complete the Licensure Limitation Acknowledgement Letter which requires initials and a signature acknowledging the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NCU’s MSW Program is designed for individuals desiring to pursue post-graduate licensure in their respective state(s) or jurisdiction(s). NCU staff and faculty have informed me that the state in which I have indicated a desire to practice may have requirements for specialized accreditations or other unique course or credit requirements above and beyond the standard degree plan at NCU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To graduate with an MSW from NCU students must complete all practicum requirements (i.e. a minimum of 900 hours).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I have reviewed my state laws and regulations and/or contacted my state licensing board to determine that I am able to obtain post-graduate licensure even though it is NCU’s understanding that my state may have requirements for specialized accreditations or other unique requirements above and beyond the standard degree plan at NCU.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STUDENT BEHAVIOR

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY
The social work profession has very strong ethical mandates to maintain confidentiality. Students are required to sign the Student Acknowledgement Form as part of admissions acknowledging that they have read, understood, and have agreed to abide by all confidentiality policies required by the Program, and that they have reviewed this Program Handbook. Students are expected to engage in a high level of self-reflection and personal application, and to hold confidential personal information they hear in courses or in field. Faculty, staff and site supervisors are expected to handle student disclosures with respect and will only share information with other NCU MSW faculty, NCU administrators, site supervisors, NCU staff, or student employers for the purpose of assisting the student to develop and flourish as a master’s level social worker.

Faculty and site supervisors work collaboratively to benefit the students and the MSW Program. Therefore, the MSW faculty and staff may discuss and disclose information concerning a student’s performance and learning needs. This information, including information a student may share in courses, will only be disclosed among other MSW faculty and staff as deemed pertinent for the benefit of the students or the MSW Program. No information will be shared outside of those listed above without consent of the student or without prior notification to the student of the disclosure, except in cases of emergency or litigation.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
All work submitted in each course must be the student’s own work. This includes all assignments, exams, term papers, and other projects the Faculty requires. Submitting another person’s work (represented as that of the student’s without properly citing the source of the work) will be considered plagiarism and will result in an Academic Integrity Policy Violation Notice being filed by the Faculty Member. Violating Academic Integrity results in an unsatisfactory grade for the work submitted or for the entire course, and may result in academic dismissal. Student assignments are automatically submitted to TurnitIn.com for originality evaluation.

CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY
Northcentral University has a Code of Conduct (found in Section 7 of the Northcentral University Catalog, Ethical Conduct) for all students and faculty in the University community, including applicants and alums. Students in the MSW Program are expected to abide by this code at all times. In addition, MSW students are expected to follow the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics,
which is reproduced in many textbooks and at nasw.org. Students found to have violated or to have attempted to violate either of these Codes will be subject to disciplinary sanctions, up to and including dismissal from the University.

Every state and jurisdiction, in connection with its licensing law, also has a code of conduct (or similarly titled element that has the authority of state law). Students are well advised to study this part of the law for the state(s) in which they intend to practice.

**NASW CODE OF ETHICS AND STATE CODES OF ETHICS**

All faculty, local site supervisors, and students will conduct their practices and professional relationships in accordance with the most current edition of the NASW Code of Ethics. In addition, each state regulatory board establishes codes of ethics or codes of conduct to govern licensees’ practice, and students should be familiar with the code of the state(s) in which they plan to practice. The NASW Code is an aspirational code and is seen as a “best practice” guide. State codes, however, have the weight of law behind them, and violations can result in legal penalties.

When practicing, supervising, or engaged in practicum, all students, faculty, and site supervisors must follow the NASW Code of Ethics and the state code. Students will learn about NASW ethical guidelines in their Ethics course, and they will delve into ethics in virtually all courses. Every student must have a working knowledge of ethics prior to participating in practicum, and must work ethically in practicum. Students should meet with the Director of Field Education if they have questions regarding MSW ethics.

**Lifelong Learning**

Earning an MSW is the beginning, not the end, of learning. Professionals are diligent in pursuing learning throughout their lives. One organization that offers lifelong learning and professional relationships is the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), and NCU faculty recommend that students join NASW. NASW student membership provides career enhancing benefits as well as allows students to purchase liability insurance at a reduced student rate.

In addition to NASW, there are numerous professional associations that help social workers remain current in their skills (such as the Group Work Association). Effective MSWs invest in their professional development. Being involved with relevant professional associations such as the NASW is an important part of the learning process and of establishing a professional identity as a MSW.
PROGRESSING THROUGH THE MSW PROGRAM

Please consult the current version of the Northcentral University Catalog for information regarding course policies relevant to the MSW Program, including:

- Course Participation
- Assignment Submissions
- Recommended Schedule for Course Completion
- Submittal Turn-Around Schedule
- Course Learning Assessment/Course Grade

See Section 5 – Academic Policies > Grading Policies of the Northcentral University Catalog for information about the NCU Grading Policies.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS
Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the standard by which Northcentral University measures students’ progress toward completing a degree or certificate program. The three components of SAP are Grade Point Average (GPA), Course Completion Rate (pace), and Maximum Timeframe. If, at any time, a student is not meeting the minimum requirements for SAP, he/she receives an email notification in Virtual Campus as well as an email to the personal address on file. However, it is ultimately the student’s responsibility to know these requirements, and failure to receive notification does not nullify the SAP status. Additional information regarding the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy can be found in the NCU Catalog.

Moving Toward Practicum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Action: Practicum Readiness Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Satisfactorily completes first three courses and moves into the Practicum Preparation Process (PPP) in the fourth course. The Field Education Director will interview the student to discuss practicum readiness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Education Director</td>
<td>Determines student’s practicum readiness. All students are required to undergo background checks prior to starting practicum. (Any students who have already completed a background check as part of their admissions process to be accepted into the program will not be required to complete a new background check unless this is required by their placement site.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TRACKING PROGRESS

Once students enter the practicum course sequence, field faculty and site supervisors monitor students’ progress collecting necessary client contact hours and required supervision hours.

Students failing to complete a minimum of 220 field hours by the end of Generalist Practicum I will be required to submit a Practicum Placement Plan that outlines any difficulties they face collecting hours and how they plan to address these difficulties.

Likewise, students in the MSW Program failing to complete a minimum of 450 hours by the end of Generalist Practicum II will be required to submit or update a Practicum Placement Plan that outlines their difficulties in collecting field hours and how they plan to address these challenges.

1) Students in the MSW Foundation track are expected to acquire a minimum of 675 hours by the end of their first Advanced Practicum course. If this is not the case, the student can meet with the Field Director to discuss plans to address this situation.

If a student in the MSW Program (Foundation Track) has not completed a minimum of 900 field hours by the end of the four practicum courses, she or he should meet with the Field Director.

GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES

Notice: Please consult the current version of the Northcentral University Catalog for information regarding curriculum, academic requirements, fees, deadlines, academic policies (including requirements regarding English proficiency and degrees awarded by non-U.S. Institutions), and application and admission requirements. All students in the MSW Program are expected to be familiar with the MSW Program Handbook and the policies outlined in the current University Catalog, as well as agree to abide by all key policies and procedures. In addition, students are expected to abide by the professional and ethical behavior outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics, and failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program.

The Program highly encourages students to go to the licensing board website of the state(s) in which they expect to be licensed, and locate and carefully read that state’s Code of Conduct. This is law governing social workers’ behavior; violations carry penalties.

CREDIT HOUR REQUIREMENTS

Students who do not hold a BSW from a CSWE-accredited program enter the Foundation track, which requires the completion of a total of 60 credit hours. Students who hold a BSW from a CSWE-accredited program can enter the Advanced Standing track, which requires the completion of a total of 36 credit hours. Students are responsible to work with their academic advisors as well as contact their state licensure board to ensure that the program meets the requirements of the state in which they will be seeking licensure.
TIME LIMITS FOR COMPLETING THE DEGREE
Northcentral University allows 6 years to complete Master’s programs requiring more than 36 credit hours. Students who are unable to complete a degree program within the stated maximum time limits are dismissed. Students who believe they have extenuating circumstances may document the circumstances and ask their respective School Dean or designee to consider those issues. Exceptions to the policy are determined on a case-by-case basis.

NOTIFICATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
While the field of social work is an increasingly international phenomenon, it continues to have strong historical and contextual roots in the western cultures, including the United States. Therefore, much of the practice, literature, and research in the field continues to be conducted in contexts common in western cultures. One benefit online education offer is the possibility of expanding social work practice into international contexts, thus widening the field’s knowledge base and applicability. While all students are encouraged to read broadly in the professional literature, international students are specifically encouraged to seek out literature and experiences that will help them to practice ethically and sensitively in their local contexts. In addition, international students are strongly encouraged to work closely with their local supervisors to practice in ways that are ethical and effective and appropriate to their local contexts.

LICENSURE AND ACCREDITATION
The NCU MSW Program strongly encourages students to become licensed and to maintain licensure and part of their professional accountability. The student is responsible for ensuring that the MSW Program at Northcentral meets the licensing requirements of the local state licensing board in the state(s) in which the student will be licensed. Northcentral cannot provide assistance to students in interpreting a state’s licensure requirements.

The NCU MSW program is currently in Pre-Candidacy for Accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education’s Commission on Accreditation. Pre-Candidacy status indicates that the Program has submitted an application to CSWE and is being reviewed for Candidacy. A program that has attained Pre-Candidacy has not yet been fully reviewed by the CSWE Commission on Accreditation or verified as complying with the CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. The Council on Social Work Education does not publicly disclose whether programs have currently attained Pre-Candidacy Status until they are granted Candidacy.

Students who enter the program while it is still in Pre-Candidacy will not be recognized as attending a program in Candidacy unless the program attains Candidacy in the academic year in which those students enter. The Candidacy Process is typically a three-year process and there is no guarantee that a program in Pre-Candidacy will eventually attain Candidacy or Initial Accreditation. Students who enter programs that attain Candidacy in or before the academic year in which they begin their program of study will be retroactively recognized as having graduated from a CSWE-accredited program once the program attains Initial Accreditation. Candidacy by the Council on Social Work Education’s Commission on
Accreditation applies to all program sites and program delivery methods of an accredited program. Accreditation provides reasonable assurance that the program meets quality standards and produces graduates who are competent to practice.

PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS

MSW PRACTICUM

Practicum (field placement) connects a student to applied learning settings, experiences, and responsibilities. The student in that setting can practice using knowledge from courses refining real-time learning experiences. Foundation track students complete 900 hours of qualified practicum; advanced standing students complete 500 hours. There are four practicum courses for Foundation students and 2 practicum courses for Advanced Standing students.

- MSW-6009 Generalist Practicum I (3 credits for 12 weeks)
- MSW-6010 Generalist Practicum II (3 credits for 12 weeks)
- MSW-6901 Advanced Practicum I (3 credits for 12 weeks)
- MSW-6902 Advanced Practicum II (3 credits for 12 weeks)

The Practicum courses are each 3-credit, 12-week courses, consisting of a series of assignments that students must complete and upload through the electronic system, as well as accruing their practicum contact hours in their practicum sites. The experience is enhanced by the student attending a mandatory one hour bi-weekly practicum seminar with a MSW Faculty Member, as well as spending one hour of supervision weekly from a local supervisor.

The MSW full-time faculty and staff support students in securing quality practicum placements, guiding students through this process, speaking with potential placement sites identified as a possible fit for the student, using a national database of potential placements sites, and providing training materials to help the student present him/herself in a professional and appropriate manner. The MSW program cannot require a potential placement site to hire students. It is the student’s responsibility to act professionally in order to secure a placement site and supervisor. We encourage students to contact the Field Director for any additional individualized support they may need in this process.

PRACTICUM EXPECTATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

1) Students must qualify for Practicum by completing the Practicum Preparation Process. This process includes 1) Informing the Field Education Director of potential practicum sites, and 2) Site and Supervisor Vetting and Contracting. Students who need to switch or add placements or supervisors after starting with the original placement or supervisor must complete the Site and Supervisor Vetting and Contracting process.

2) MSW practicum students must know and follow the practicum experience regulations at their practicum site.

3) Foundation Practicum students who move through the Advanced track must complete a total of at least 900 hours of qualified agency work to meet graduation requirements. Those who are Advanced Standing students must complete 500 qualified hours in the agency.

4) Practicum students must participate in weekly supervision sessions with the local site supervisor. We divide the practicum experience over four courses: Generalist Practicum I, Generalist Practicum II
and Advanced Practicum I, and Advanced Practicum II. On average students should plan to earn at least 225 hours for each practicum.

5) In addition to the student, there are two people who are very important to the process: the NCU practicum faculty, and the local site supervisor. Their roles are different.

6) NCU students attend bi-weekly practicum seminars facilitated by NCU faculty. These seminars help students to process and integrate theoretical concepts they have learned in the classroom and the experiences they have had during their on-site activities.

7) For legal and ethical purposes, the local clinical supervisor is the “supervisor-of-record” and is responsible to provide adequate supervision for students to practice ethically and legally within their placement site.

8) Students must actively participate in Practicum at Northcentral, including in the interactive practicum seminars required in the practicum courses.

**MSW Practicum Supervisor Qualifications**

**Local Agencies and Organizations, and Site Supervisors**

Appropriate Field Experience agencies for social work students are those which serve social work populations and meet the Program’s curriculum standards. Local Practicum Instructors (Field Instructors) must have the specified credentials and practice experience necessary to design the student’s practicum learning opportunities; this will enable the student to master and demonstrate competence and meet Program standards.

Field Experience placements will have an agency staff member who supervises the student in the Field. This individual is the Local Practicum Site Supervisor, employed by the agency or organization. Preferably, the Supervisor holds an MSW degree from a CSWE-accredited social work program and has a minimum of two years of post-MSW experience. We will also approve licensed Local Practicum Supervisors who have a master’s degree in a social work related field. The Local Practicum Supervisor will evaluate the performance of the student through field evaluations and site visits from MSW faculty liaisons.

**Practicum Courses**

**MSW Practicum**

The actual content of the Practicum courses closely resemble traditional practicum learning and are conducted through bi-weekly practicum seminars, designed to supplement and broaden what students learn in the practicum placement.

The interactive, online practicum seminars, which last for approximately one hour, allow faculty liaisons and students from a variety of sites to identify and discuss their field learning experiences and how the classroom concepts they have learned help them to understand what is happening in field. Students learn from one another—and learn about other social work fields of practice—in this process.
TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Students are encouraged to acquire a webcam and a noise-cancelling headset with microphone to make seminars more satisfying. In practicum seminars, students meet in a secure online forum through Zoom for live web conferencing. Before meeting for the first time, students and faculty can run a trial to test the technical components of the process, such as making sure webcams work, sharing a presentation, etc. The Practicum Handbook also has additional information regarding how to use the learning platform and technology.

MSW faculty will provide the link for the bi-weekly seminars in their Welcome Email. Prior to clicking to open the link, it is best to have closed all other applications that may be open on the student’s computer as these may interfere with the operation of the web session (due to bandwidth issues).

*Students are expected to manage confidential client data in a manner that adheres to the Standards of the 2017 NASW Code of Ethics and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Review the Technology Checklist within the Practicum Handbook for more information about the use of technology in practicum work at NCU.*

LOGGING HOURS

Students are required to log their practicum and supervision hours. Each month in Practicum courses, students should post their hours to the appropriate assignment in Tevera. The Field Director and MSW faculty facilitating field will review hours. If there are logging errors or concerns, faculty will address this with the student or the Field Education Director.

WHEN THE STUDENT HAS DIFFICULTIES

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS WHO EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES

A student who is placed on probation may take several steps as a part of his or her remediation plan. This plan may include, but is not limited to, the following:

(a) reducing the student’s course load,
(b) referring students to the Northcentral University academic assistance resources,
(c) considering a possible leave-of-absence,
(d) suggesting a referral of a student for therapy or medical intervention in his or her local community,
(e) creating a behavioral contract to outline the necessary changes and steps that must be taken to successfully complete the program,
(f) requiring additional sections of practicum beyond the minimum normally required by the Program,
(g) providing additional faculty mentoring.
All recommendations are designed with the goal of helping students to succeed. However, the MSW faculty’s primary concern must first be the welfare of the clients seeking assistance. If, during a student’s program, the faculty determines that a student does not have the personal and professional health and maturity needed to be an effective social work practitioner, the student will be advised of this and counseled to seek another area of study.

STUDENT COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES
Part of the process of becoming a professional is learning to deal appropriately with disagreements and grievances. Most concerns can be effectively addressed and resolved between student and faculty. Engaging in a respectful interchange of ideas and concerns with peers and supervisors is an important part of a student’s professional development. Addressing concerns in a professional manner is an important graduate student skill.

Students may have an academic or practice skill concern, or an administrative question about Program or university policies and procedures. In that case, they should follow the steps described in the University Catalog. For academic concerns regarding grade appeals, students should contact their Academic & Financial Advisor or refer to the University Catalog for the current appeal process.

PROGRAM PROBATION
Occasionally students who experience difficulty in their graduate program may face probation or other corrective actions. The University or the MSW administrative faculty may place a student on probation for unsatisfactory academic progress or for unsatisfactory performance in practicum. These actions may include, but are not limited to, practicum placements, professional or ethical violations, or concerns identified by faculty.

A student placed on probation will develop, in consultation with MSW faculty, a remediation plan (Guided Action Plan). Remediation plans are structured to help students work through whatever difficulties they are experiencing, with the ultimate goal of helping them achieve their professional goals. These Guided Action Plans specify, in writing, the basis for the probation, the term of the probationary period, and the conditions which must be met in order to be removed from probationary status. Students placed on probation will remain on probation for a minimum of twelve weeks. Students placed on probation for unacceptable grades must successfully remediate the unacceptable grade and meet the requirements of their remediation plan, without incurring any additional complaints or problems, in order for probationary status to be removed.

A student must make satisfactory progress on the remediation plan, as determined by faculty consensus, to be removed from probation. Failure to meet the conditions of probation will result in the student's dismissal from the Program. If a student believes that the probationary status is not justified, or that the conditions of the probation are unreasonable, the student may appeal in writing to the MSW Program Director within 10 working days. A student who has formerly been on probationary status may be terminated from the program for future inappropriate conduct or subsequent academic difficulties.
DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Being dismissed from the Program may result from the student’s decision or the faculty decision. Students with a history of legal difficulties, or with legal charges or issues pending at the time of enrollment, are expected to make full disclosure of said charges during the enrollment and interview process. A student who fails to disclose information or who is convicted of a felony while in the Program may be dismissed from the Program. Students who violate the University’s Code of Conduct and/or Academic Integrity policy while enrolled in the Program may be subject to immediate administrative dismissal. Students who have been dismissed due to a violation of the Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity policy, or due to any other legal or ethical matter, do not qualify for readmission to Northcentral University. Students in violation of the University’s Attendance policy may be withdrawn. Dismissal of students who fail to meet their financial obligations to the University is handled by the Accounting department. The Code of Conduct, Attendance policy, and a summary of the Academic Integrity policy are published in the Catalog. Complete information concerning Academic Integrity is provided in the Virtual Campus to students. For additional information regarding Dismissal Policies students can reference the NCU Catalog.

APPEALS, GRIEVANCES, AND CONCERNS

Students who believe they have mitigating circumstances and wish to appeal their administrative dismissal must initiate the appeal within 30 days of receiving the dismissal notification. Students appealing an administrative dismissal must follow the process outlined in the university Catalog found in Chapter 8-Student Rights and Responsibilities. The Administration and University Documents sections in the Virtual Campus is where students will find links for Grade Appeals, Grievances, the SAP Appeal form, and a link for students to register “Concerns” (e.g. regarding Accounting, Faculty Services, Technical Support, Registrar, Financial Aid, and "All Others"). Students who register a concern may check back to see if the concern was resolved, is in progress, or has been escalated by the Office of the Ombudsman Office to another appropriate office of the University for resolution.

As indicated in the university catalog (Chapter 8: Student Rights and Responsibilities/Subsection: Student Grievances), in the event that a student has a complaint or dispute with the University regarding the University’s application of policies and procedures, its decisions, or judgments, the student has a right to seek a satisfactory resolution through the formal avenues of appeal and/or grievance. A grievance may not be filed if other avenues such as filing a “Concern” or an “Appeal” are available to the student.

ESCALATION PROCEDURES

1. Student approaches the Academic Advisor, Financial Services Advisor, and/or Faculty
2. The matter goes to the Academic Liaison Associate Director of Student Services
3. Student Submits an Electronic Concern, which is auto-routed to Functional Team Leaders for resolution. Simultaneously, the Concern is routed to the Office of Compliance Management for review and alternate routing if necessary, including escalating the concern to a grievance level complaint.
4. Grievance: A grievance is a formal complaint that has not been resolved at other levels within the University. Being “adequately addressed” does not mean that the decision was necessarily made in the student’s favor. It means that the matter is afforded due diligence and is adjudicated in accordance with ethics, academic integrity, policies, regulations, and laws.
5. Appeals of final grades must use the appeal process defined in “Appealing a Final Grade” in the Northcentral University Catalog. Review carefully the directives on appeals as often the decisions of Deans in these matters cannot be grieved. (Note: Other Appeals include but are not limited to: SAP, academic dismissal, administrative dismissal, and re-admission. Students should refer to the catalog for details on advancing these types of appeals.)

**ADJUDICATION**

Formal grievances are reviewed by the appropriate senior leader (i.e., the Chief Academic Officer and Provost for all academic decisions) and are considered final.

Students may not grieve the stated or published policy of Northcentral University. They may file a complaint with the California State Board for Private Postsecondary Education. The student must contact the State Board for further details.

**GRADUATION POLICY**

When students complete all program requirements, they contact their Academic Advisor to electronically petition for graduation. The Academic Advisor will conduct a Graduation Audit to assure that all requirements of the program and degree, as well as those of the University, are met prior to conferring the degree. The MSW Director conduct an additional audit to ensure that all Program-specific requirements have been met.

For all students, degree requirements include:

- 3.0 (letter grade of “B”) or higher cumulative GPA
- Official documents on file on which to base admission from an appropriately accredited academic institution
- Official transcripts on file for all transfer credit hours accepted by the University
- All financial obligations to the University paid in full

Program Specific Requirements include:

- Completion of all coursework
- Completion of all practicum requirements
  - Verification by the student and supervisor of accrued practicum hours and supervision
  - Approval by the Director of Field Education

Once the Academic Advisor and MSW Program Director have approved the request, they contact the Accounting Department to verify that all fees are paid. After approval, Accounting contacts the Registrar to issue the diploma.

**Good Luck to All NCU MSW Students!**