



## PhD Program Handbook

This handbook is intended to be a resource and guide for PhD students as you engage with your learning community and academic progression. We encourage all students to understand the policies and procedures within the University as well as within the School of Social Work. Please also reference the [Student Conduct Code](#) and the [Graduate and Professional Bulletin](#).

[The Graduate School Handbook](#) provides specific information related to your responsibilities as a graduate student. The Graduate School also provides essential information on [steps once you are admitted](#), important dates and deadlines required to [complete your degree](#), and [policies and procedures](#).

Our program policies are ever evolving. With this in mind, the information is subject to change, and the School of Social Work will update this handbook often. The handbook is not intended to be and should not be regarded as a contract between the Colorado State University School of Social Work and any student or other person. The most current CSU General Catalog/Graduate Bulletin is the guiding policy authority.

As questions arise for you, our team is here to offer support and guidance. Please reach out to a member of the PhD team with any questions, feedback, or concerns.



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## Welcome to the School of Social Work at Colorado State University!

### Message from the Director of the School



Congratulations to you on launching your PhD journey at the Colorado State University School of Social Work! You have chosen to enter a community of ethical leaders with a passion for using scientific inquiry and pedagogy to advance equity and justice and improve the human condition. Regardless of where your degree takes you, your skills will allow you to translate knowledge into action for policy and practice.

As demand for social work practitioners increases, so does the need for skilled educators and scholars. You have entered a rewarding and sometimes demanding path to support the profession in its growth. You will build on your abilities to communicate effectively with practitioners, scholars, and policymakers from multiple disciplines. During your time at CSU and beyond, you have the advantage of learning from a faculty comprised of international experts in areas including behavioral health, child welfare, equity and inclusion, social policy, and human-animal interventions. They bring knowledge from their research and practice to support social change and academic excellence. Their support and mentorship will inspire you to achieve great things!

From the bottom of my heart, I welcome you to our learning community. I wish you the very best now and throughout your career.

Charlotte Lyn Bright, PhD, MSW  
Director and Professor, School of Social Work



## Message from the Doctoral Program Director



It is a pleasure to welcome you to the PhD program in social work. You are joining a vibrant school that is known for admitting stellar students across our BSW, MSW, and PhD programs. We place a heavy emphasis on providing students with challenging learning environments at all educational levels and consistently garner high rankings for our undergraduate and graduate programs.

Our PhD program began in 2002 as part of an Interdisciplinary PhD program located in the School of Education. While this partnership was fruitful, our faculty felt it was important to develop a doctoral training program in the School of Social Work that aligned with social work ethics and values. In the summer of 2011, the School of Social Work received approval by the Governing Board and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education to launch our PhD program. The PhD curriculum was recently revised to provide students with the necessary preparation for careers in anti-oppressive and anti-racist research, pedagogy, policy, and practice.

While pursuing your degree, you will have opportunities to partner with our faculty on research projects, publications, grant writing, and teaching. The members of our School welcome you, from near and far, to our learning community and encourage you to become involved in and outside of the classroom.

Kindly,

Jen Currin-McCulloch, PhD, LSW  
Associate Professor and Doctoral Program Director  
School of Social Work  
1586 Campus Delivery  
Education 22  
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1586  
[jen.currin-mcculloch@colostate.edu](mailto:jen.currin-mcculloch@colostate.edu)

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## Contact Information

School of Social Work  
Campus Delivery 1586  
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1586

**Office Phone:** 970.491.6612  
**Fax:** 970.491.7280

**School of Social Work Director**  
Dr. Charlotte Bright  
970.491.2378  
[Charlotte.Bright@colostate.edu](mailto:Charlotte.Bright@colostate.edu)

**PhD Program Director**  
Dr. Jen Currin-McCulloch  
970.491.3931  
[Jen.Currin-McCulloch@colostate.edu](mailto:Jen.Currin-McCulloch@colostate.edu)

**PhD Graduate Program Coordinator**  
Kelly Jackson  
970.491.4909  
[Kelly.e.Jackson@colostate.edu](mailto:Kelly.e.Jackson@colostate.edu)

**Student Financial Aid**  
970.491.6321  
<https://financialaid.colostate.edu/contact-us-email/>

**Registrar's Office**  
970.491.4860  
[Registrarsoffice@colostate.edu](mailto:Registrarsoffice@colostate.edu)



## School and Program Overview

### The School of Social Work History

Throughout its history, the School of Social Work (SOSW) at Colorado State University has made a continuous effort to develop and maintain a program that is responsive to three distinct, but related, interests: 1) the profession of social work as represented by the Council on Social Work Education's Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards; 2) the human services agencies and clients in the state, the region, the nation, and the globe; and 3) the land-grant oriented mission and goals of Colorado State University. The following abbreviated history of social work education at Colorado State demonstrates how these three interests have merged to create and shape the social work education programs offered today.

In the mid-1960s, the U.S. government initiated a program (administered by state social services agencies) to increase the supply of social workers by making funds available through Title XX of the Social Security Act (and predecessor legislation), designed to encourage universities to create baccalaureate-level social work education programs.

Although Colorado State University (CSU) had previously offered a few social work courses in its Department of Sociology, these courses did not constitute a program that would prepare a graduate for social work practice. In 1968, the Colorado Department of Social Services and CSU entered an agreement to create a full baccalaureate social work major that would be housed in the Department of Sociology, delivered by a faculty of professional social workers, and funded with Title XX funds supporting 75% of the program costs. The agreement anticipated that the cost of operating the program would gradually shift to the university, and by 1977, it would be fully funded by CSU. A total of 150 students initially declared the social work major, and the first graduating class received the BA in social work in 1971.

In 1970, the Council on Social Work Education initiated a process of accreditation for baccalaureate social work education by granting "approval" status to 151 schools that met the established criteria. CSU was one of the first universities to attain that national recognition. Four years later, "approval" was upgraded to professional "accreditation," and again, CSU was among the first 135 baccalaureate social work education programs to achieve full accreditation, which has been maintained continuously since that time. Enrollment surged to a high of 375 majors during the mid-1970s, and it was necessary to cap the major at 325 students because new resident instruction resources were devoted to taking over the agreed-upon increasing percentage of program costs rather than funding new faculty positions to meet the growing student demand. In the 1980s, the stated goal of the Reagan administration was to dismantle public human services, discouraged students from majoring in social work (both at CSU and throughout the United States), and the number of majors at CSU dropped below the cap to as few as 177 in the mid-1980s.

In 1976, an outreach innovation was introduced aimed primarily at assisting public social services workers to improve their competencies and credentials. Again, making use of federal funds available through Title XX, a distance education program was developed, designed to help persons who possessed baccalaureate degrees in other disciplines obtain a "second bachelor's degree" in social work. Achieving this second bachelor's degree also allowed these students to complete a master's degree in social work in a reduced time (i.e., advanced standing) in many MSW programs throughout the United States.

By that time, the new department's programs were completely funded by the university, and plans were initiated to create a master's level social work education program (MSW). It was determined that the second bachelor's degree would be phased out and its resources devoted to developing the MSW. At that time, no MSW programs existed in the states of Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, or South Dakota, and the only other accredited social work education program in Colorado was the MSW program offered at the University of Denver (DU). The MSW program at DU was primarily oriented to specialized social work practice delivered in the Denver metropolitan area, and the tuition at that private university was viewed as prohibitive by many potential social work students. Given CSU's land-grant



mission to serve people throughout Colorado, the recognized needs of the neighboring states that did not offer the MSW, and the desire to avoid direct competition with DU, the proposed MSW program was oriented to preparing advanced generalist social workers especially capable of responding to the human services needs of small towns and rural areas or communities that were undergoing rapid transition (e.g., energy boom/bust towns, urban sprawl). That focus was later expanded to include preparation to serve residents in urban areas, especially along the Front Range.

In July 1984, the MSW program was approved by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, and in June 1985, it was accepted into candidacy for accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education. Eligibility for initial accreditation was achieved in 1986, and fully accredited status was granted in 1992. The first class of 18 master's level graduates received their degrees in 1986.

Another major program innovation was approved by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education in 1990 when an alternative MSW program (with the University of Southern Colorado in Pueblo) was initiated. The University of Southern Colorado (USC), a sister university in the Colorado State University System, had by then achieved accreditation for its baccalaureate social work program and joined CSU in making the MSW accessible to students from the southern part of the state. The inclusion of USC in this social work education effort was also intended to recruit a more culturally diverse student body than is found in northern Colorado. Approval of this alternative program was granted by the Council on Social Work Education in 1992, and the first 23 students graduated in 1994. This effort became the Colorado State University System's first cooperative program. In 2003, USC merged with CSU and is now named Colorado State University – Pueblo.

CSU School of Social Work further expanded its outreach efforts by admitting a cohort of 27 students living in the Western Slope to the MSW program in 1998. Students took their graduate courses in Grand Junction over four years. The first Western Slope class earned MSW degrees in May 2002. The School of Social Work admitted a second cohort of Western Slope MSW students in fall 2003. These students graduated in May 2006. The first Colorado Springs Distance MSW cohort of students graduated in December 2008. The second cohort began in January 2009 and graduated in December 2011. A third cohort was admitted in Colorado Springs in January 2012. In January 2010, the first Central Colorado MSW cohort was admitted. The Central MSW program was initiated in response to a growing demand for our weekend distance MSW from across the state of Colorado and beyond. The Central cohort held classes in Thornton and graduated in December 2012. In January 2015, distance programs were converted to a hybrid model with much of the class experience offered in an online format, while two weekends per semester are required for face-to-face classroom experiences. Currently, the distance program is offered through three cohorts along the Front Range.

To continue to meet the needs of students and the community, the School of Social Work piloted an Advanced Standing program for students with BSW degrees from undergraduate social work programs accredited by the CSWE. Approximately 30-35 students with BSW degrees from accredited schools are admitted each year.

Consistent with its roots in supporting the human services agencies, the CSU School of Social Work has devoted considerable effort to outreach activities. Substantial collaborations have been in the areas of research, curriculum development for and provision of statewide training to county child welfare and child protection workers. In 2002, the name of the Department of Social Work was officially changed to the School of Social Work to more accurately reflect the increased breadth of activities across national and international arenas.

The Social Work Research Center (SWRC) was approved in 2004, representing a collaboration between Colorado State University (School of Social Work) and community partners. Examples of community partners include County Departments of Human Services in Colorado (i.e., Larimer, Boulder, Adams, El Paso, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Pueblo, Weld, Broomfield, and Jefferson Counties), The American Humane, and Larimer County Mental Health. The purpose of



these collaborations is to create formal links between human services agencies and higher education by researching and evaluating innovative and standard programs and research-affirmed practices to advance social work practice and theory, promote social welfare and social justice, and enhance learning and practice in such areas as child welfare and juvenile delinquency. The mission of the Center is to serve the people of the State of Colorado, as well as at the national and international levels, in the area of social work. The Center provides support to faculty, students, and community partners. It also facilitates training, mentoring, and program development services to social welfare agencies, governmental departments, community groups, students, and faculty.

In 2006, the Social Work Center for Lifelong Learning and Outreach Education (CLOE) was established. The Center for Lifelong Learning and Outreach Education develops, administers, and integrates degree and non-degree educational programs that extend outside the on-campus degree programs of the School of Social Work. The Center provides oversight to maintain high-quality programs that are consistent with the mission and goals of the School of Social Work, the College of Health and Human Sciences, and Colorado State University. CLOE fosters increased faculty and student involvement in community improvement as resources for social workers and human service personnel, providing lifelong learning opportunities, and engaging alumni in both providing and participating in the educational opportunities offered by the Center.

Since the middle 1990's, faculty in the School of Social Work explored various options related to establishing a PhD program in Social Work. In 2002, the School of Social Work requested the opportunity to join the Interdisciplinary PhD program within the School of Education. A curriculum for a Social Work concentration was proposed and accepted by the School of Education's Graduate Committee. The first cohort of PhD students with a desire to pursue the Interdisciplinary degree with a Social Work concentration was admitted in the fall of 2002. Since that time, student cohorts have been admitted every other year. In the fall of 2006, a committee of faculty in Social Work began the application process to develop a PhD in Social Work. Final approval for the proposal was received in the summer of 2011 from the Board of Governors and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. The first cohort of students for the PhD in Social Work was admitted for the fall semester of 2012.

## School of Social Work Mission

The School of Social Work strives to create an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and liberatory learning community. We prepare leaders who demonstrate excellence in practice, research, advocacy, and community engagement across local and global settings.

## School Goals and Objectives

### Research

Conduct high-impact interdisciplinary research, which incorporates principles of social, economic, and environmental justice and seeks to improve lives and well-being for all.

1. Maintain the highest standards of ethical scientific integrity and inquiry.
2. Advance the social work knowledge base regarding diverse populations by conducting culturally responsive research.
3. Move the social work field of practice forward through increasing peer-reviewed, research-based publications, presentations, and student mentoring.
4. Increase interdisciplinary research and grant activities to enhance theoretical innovation, scientific methodology, and outcomes.
5. Conduct translational research responsive to Social Work Grand Challenges and emerging trends impacting social work practice and policy.



## Teaching/Mentoring/Advising

Through exemplary teaching, mentoring, and advising, prepare students with critical-thinking and practice skills to generate change that advances social, economic, and environmental justice and improves human well-being.

1. Maintain high retention and graduation rates through exemplary advising, teaching, and mentoring.
2. Provide high-impact, experiential learning opportunities such as field education, practicums, service learning, study abroad, and community engagement.
3. Advise and mentor students for leadership, professional development, and lifelong learning.
4. Create a culture of challenging academic standards and expectations based on theoretically informed scientific inquiry and best practices.
5. Infuse cultural diversity and inclusion across the curriculum and the learning environment.
6. Educate students to apply critical thinking to analyze current systems, formulate interventions, and advocate for improved human rights and well-being.

## Outreach, Service, and Engagement

The School of Social Work will lead engagement between the University and communities to promote lifelong learning and advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

1. Actively engage with local and global communities to promote enhanced service quality and equity for all persons.
2. Engage in academic-community partnerships to conduct and disseminate research that informs community-based programs and services.
3. Expand student opportunities for engagement with local and global communities to learn and practice cultural humility.
4. Provide opportunities for social action and advocate for human rights and environmental justice at all system levels.

## Diversity

As recognized leaders, the School will utilize critical lenses to promote diversity, equity, social justice, human rights, and inclusive excellence through culturally responsive education, research, and outreach.

1. Educate about the systemic effects of race, racism, and the mechanisms of power and privilege as they perpetuate oppression and marginalization.
2. Develop a culturally inclusive School environment and activities that promote self-awareness, cultural humility, respect, and appreciation for the dignity and worth of all people.
3. Increase diversity among students, faculty, and staff.
4. Increase faculty and student participation in multicultural curriculum projects and pedagogical training in diversity and cultural responsiveness.
5. Cultivate a student body that respects diversity and addresses inequities through education, research, and outreach.
6. Increase faculty engagement and leadership in opportunities to promote inclusive excellence across local, regional, and global communities.

## Resources

The School will provide the administrative support and resources necessary to accomplish identified goals.

1. Acquire and maintain appropriate technology to support the needs of faculty, staff, and students.
2. Identify funding for building revitalization.
3. Create a funding base for supporting students through increasing scholarships and research/teaching assistantships.
4. Provide resources for faculty and staff professional development.
5. Increase the number of faculty.



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6. Allocate sufficient resources to allow for effective and efficient school functioning.
7. Establish class sizes that allow for engaged learning.



## Doctoral Program Mission and Goals

### Mission

The PhD program cultivates scholar-activists and transformative leaders who advance social work theory, policy, and practice through community-engaged, anti-oppressive research and innovative pedagogy in pursuit of social, environmental, and economic justice.

### Goals

Upon completion of the PhD program, graduates will be able to:

1. Design and conduct community-engaged, anti-oppressive research that addresses critical social, environmental, and economic justice issues through innovative methodological approaches and ethical scholarship practices.
2. Develop and apply transformative pedagogical approaches for professional social work education that integrate principles of social justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion while fostering critical thinking and liberatory learning environments.
3. Demonstrate ethical leadership and scholar-activist practice by engaging in policy analysis, advocacy, and community partnerships that promote systemic change and advance human rights.
4. Cultivate collaborative partnerships with communities and stakeholders to ensure research and educational initiatives are culturally grounded and responsive to community needs and assets.
5. Communicate research findings and scholarly knowledge effectively to diverse academic, professional, policy, and community audiences through culturally responsive, accessible, and inclusive approaches.

The PhD in Social Work program learning objectives are intentionally designed to advance the university's institutional learning objectives through a social justice lens. Our emphasis on anti-oppressive research methodologies and innovative pedagogical approaches directly supports **Creativity** by fostering new ways of understanding complex social problems and developing transformative solutions. The program's focus on critical analysis and theoretical synthesis aligns with **Reasoning** through the development of analytic skills and ethical decision-making frameworks.

**Communication** objectives are met through the dissemination of knowledge to diverse audiences, including academic, policy, and community stakeholders. Our commitment to **Responsibility** is evident in the program's emphasis on ethical leadership, policy critique that addresses systemic inequities, and scholar-activist practice that promotes human rights and social justice. Finally, **Collaboration** is central to our community-engaged scholarship model, which requires meaningful partnerships with communities and stakeholders to ensure research and educational initiatives are responsive to community needs and mutually beneficial. Through this integrated approach, PhD graduates emerge as transformative leaders equipped to address society's most pressing challenges through scholarly excellence and ethical practice.



# PhD Program Curriculum Overview

## Curriculum

The curriculum leading to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work combines a core curriculum in social work with outside coursework drawn from related disciplines and includes thorough training in research methodology and data analysis. At the same time, the curriculum allows the student reasonable flexibility in tailoring programs of study to their special area(s) of interest under the guidance of their advisor and committee.

### Program of Study (Full Time)

*Subject to Change Depending on Course Availability*

#### Year 1 – Fall

SOWK 701 (3 credits)  
SOWK 706 (3 credits)  
1 Methods or Elective Course\* (3-4 credits)

#### Year 1 – Spring

SOWK 704 (3 credits)  
2 Methods or Elective Courses (3-4 credits)

#### Year 2 – Fall

SOWK 702 (3 credits)  
SOWK 703 (3 credits)  
1 Elective (3 credits)

#### Year 2 – Spring

SOWK 705 (3 credits)  
Elective/Research Course (3 credits)  
Elective/Research Course (3 credits)

#### Year 3 – Fall

Elective/Research Course (3 credits)  
Preliminary Exam\*\*

#### Year 3 – Spring

Dissertation Proposal  
Defense

#### Year 4 – Fall

Dissertation

#### Year 4 – Spring

Dissertation Defense

\*Students can select from the following courses for the statistics and qualitative methods requirements, OR they can seek approval from the PhD Program Director for an equivalent course offered at CSU that meets the requirements.

*Please note that these course offerings may change as school, college, and university resources shift.*

1. Statistics: Students must take 2 statistics courses and can take STAT 511/512 (both 4 credit courses), PSY 652/653 (both 4 credit courses), or EDRM 606/701 (both 3 credit courses) or seek approval for an equivalent.
2. Qualitative Methods: Students must take 1 qualitative methods course and can take EDRM 704, JTC 665, or SOC 610, or seek approval for an equivalent.

\*\*For full-time students, the preliminary exam will be completed over the summer between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year (due on August 15<sup>th</sup>).

The program includes 50 hours of post-master's credit, including 15 credits in social work, 14 credits in research courses, 9 elective credits (with one 3-credit course required to be an additional research course), and at least 12 dissertation hours. This schedule does not account for summer courses, but students may choose to complete required courses in the summer.



## Course Descriptions

### Social Work Courses:

#### **SOWK 701: Contemporary Issues in Social Work**

Course Description: Issues and trends currently impacting social work research, professional education, and practice.

#### **SOWK 702: Social Welfare Policy**

Course Description: Social policy analysis and impact on social welfare systems and programs.

#### **SOWK 703: Pedagogical Approaches in Social Work**

Course Description: Pedagogy and practices for teaching social work curriculum.

#### **SOWK 704: Theory for Applied Social Sciences**

Course Description: Nature and processes of theory building in social sciences. Issues of epistemology, logic, political and moral philosophy.

#### **SOWK 705: Systematic Research for Scientific Inquiry**

Course Description: Systematic research in areas of interest that summarizes findings from available studies and provides a critique of the current body of evidence in this area.

#### **SOWK 706: Advanced Research Methods for Social Work**

Course Description: Qualitative and quantitative social work research methods centered on anti-oppressive and anti-racist frameworks. Topics include ethics and power in research; developing research questions and hypotheses that advance anti-oppressive practice and policy in the field; research designs; sampling and measurement considerations from an anti-oppressive lens; and critiquing and evaluating research from an anti-oppressive framework.

### Research Courses:

#### **EDRM 606: Principles in Quantitative Data Analysis (3 credits)**

Course Description: Quantitative data analysis in social science research; descriptive statistics; fundamentals of inference

#### **EDRM 701: Applied Linear Models (3 credits)**

Course Description: General linear model applications in educational research, emphasizing conceptual understanding and characteristics of non-experimental designs.

#### **STAT 511: Design and Data Analysis for Researchers I (4 credits)**

Course Description: Statistical methods for experimenters/researchers emphasizing design and analysis.

#### **STAT 512: Design and Data Analysis for Researchers II (4 credits)**

Course Description: Advanced statistical methods for experimenters and researchers, emphasizing design and analysis.

#### **PSY 652: Methods of Research in Psychology I (4 credits)**

Course Description: Psychological research emphasizing hypothesis testing and simple research designs, introducing general linear model approach.

#### **PSY 653: Methods of Research in Psychology II (4 credits)**

Course Description: Advanced research designs emphasizing general linear model approach.



**EDRM 704: Qualitative Research (3 Credits)**

Course Description: Examination of qualitative research theory, methods, and applications to education and the social sciences.

**SOC 610: Seminar in Methods of Qualitative Analysis (3 Credits)**

Course Description: Examination and application of qualitative techniques of analysis.

**JTC 665: Qualitative Methods in Communication Research (3 Credits)**

Course Description: Techniques for collecting, interpreting, and analyzing qualitative communication data.

**Three additional 3-credit Graduate-Level Elective Courses are required.**

Interdisciplinary graduate-level electives can stem from any department at CSU; the following departments are commonly selected by our PhD students: Economics, Education, Human Development and Family Studies, Psychology, Sociology, and Political Science. At least one of these electives must be an additional research methods course. Research courses may be in the School of Education or elsewhere in the University as approved by your advisor. Please note that courses are subject to change; make sure to check the course catalog for availability.

***Additional Social Work electives that can be taken to fulfill the elective requirements:***

**SOWK 784**

Supervised College Teaching

Note: Students interested in taking this course must complete the Supervised College Teaching Form

**SOWK 786**

Research Practicum

Note: Students interested in taking this course must complete the Research Practicum Form

**SOWK 795**

Independent Study

Note: Students interested in taking an independent study must complete the Independent Study Form

***In addition, students must register for at least 12 dissertation hours (SOWK 799).***



# Progress to the Doctorate

## Introduction

Earning the Doctor of Philosophy degree involves considerably more than the completion of credits through coursework. You must also apply the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom toward the dissertation, which represents a distinct, higher-level, and culminating effort.

Milestones in the process include:

- Application
- Admission
- Enrollment and Registration
- Committee and Program of Study
- Preliminary Examination
- Dissertation Proposal
- Dissertation
- Graduation

Each of these is discussed in further detail below. Also included are a Quick Guide to the preliminary and dissertation process, a Progress to the Doctorate Checklist, and a forms checklist.

## Application

To be considered for the program, potential students must complete the application process for the School of Social Work and the Graduate School. The required application documents are located on our program [website](#). Applicants should contact the PhD program office before applying to the program. PhD applications are due January 1<sup>st</sup> for fall admission. Please keep in mind that we accept applications every other year, during even-numbered years, and admitted students begin the program in the fall semester of the following odd-numbered year. All materials must be received before the deadline to be considered. Enrollment in graduate-level classes either on or off the campus does not constitute admission to the PhD program.

A statistics course is required within the two years before enrollment. Note that this requirement does not have to be satisfied before admission, but rather before enrollment.

If the graduate admissions committee determines the applicant does not have a sufficient background in any of the core areas required by the program, the committee may prescribe additional coursework before enrollment. Courses taken to meet these prerequisite requirements cannot be used to meet program requirements.

A maximum of 10 additional credits taken after completion of the master's degree can be transferred into the program if appropriate. The decision as to whether or not post-master's coursework may be transferred into your Ph.D. program is solely at the discretion of the PhD Program director and must be approved by the Graduate School. All courses to be applied toward fulfilling the requirements for a doctoral degree must have been completed within the ten years immediately preceding the date of completion of requirements for the doctoral degree.



## Application Requirements

Applicants must have the following:

- Master's degree in social work (M.S.W.) or an allied discipline from an accredited institution
- A completed statistics course within two years before enrollment (if admitted)

Note: We will give preference to applicants who have an MSW. Further preference will be given to applicants who have an MSW and at least 2 full years of post-MSW professional practice experience.

Required Application Materials:

To be uploaded to the Graduate School's online application during the application period:

- **Resume/CV**
- **Official transcripts** from each post-high school institution attended. To be official, transcripts must be sent directly from the issuing institution to CSU. If the transcripts are in a language other than English, we require that certified translations accompany the transcripts. (Exception: Colorado State University transcripts do not need to be sent.)
- Three **letters of recommendation**, at least one of which should be from a former professor and speak to the applicant's ability to succeed in the Ph.D. program. The letters must be uploaded directly from the person recommending you to the Graduate School application site. You provide CSU with the email addresses of those submitting recommendations, and CSU then sends those people instructions on submitting the recommendation.
- **Personal Statement:** In less than 2500 words, applicants must address the following prompts.
  - Tell us why you want to pursue a PhD in social work. What academic or professional experiences have prepared you for advanced studies in the field of social work? What are your long-term professional goals with this degree?
  - What are your current research interests? Keep in mind that your research interests may not be fully developed and may change over time. We're interested in understanding how you think about pressing issues in the field of social work and what issues you would like to explore in a doctoral program.
  - Why are you interested in CSU's School of Social Work PhD program? Please indicate faculty research that interests you.
  - How do your professional goals and/or future research/teaching interests align with our School's commitment to preparing leaders who demonstrate excellence in practice, research, advocacy, and community engagement?
  - Please describe your commitment to and involvement in/action toward advancing established social work values and ethics through your practice and/or research.
  - Please describe how personal attributes and experiences (such as motivation, leadership, resilience, problem-solving, curiosity, critical thinking, creativity, teamwork, tenacity, caregiving, volunteer work, and community engagement) have prepared you for a doctoral program.
  - Please describe a time you faced an academic or professional challenge and how you addressed it. What lessons or insights did you learn from that experience, and how did it carry forward in your academics or profession?

Also, please note:

- **Interviews** may be required as part of the application process.
- **International students** are required to score a minimum of 550 (paper-based) or 80 (internet-based) for TOEFL; 6.5 for IELTS.



- **WICHE/WRPG** If you live in the Western United States Region outside of Colorado and would like to apply for in-state tuition with WICHE/WRPG, you can indicate this in the online Graduate School application.
- Application requirements may be subject to change by our department, the Graduate School, and/or the CSU Office of Admissions.

## Admission

Students admitted into the program will receive notice of admission by email from the Graduate School and a letter of acceptance from the School of Social Work. Students should reply to the School of Social Work with their intent to accept or decline admittance by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Admission is considered invalid if you do not enroll in the term the admission notification indicates. Admission can be delayed if needed by submitting an official request to the PhD program director for a change in the admission term.

Instructions on how to access RamWeb will be included in the acceptance letter from the Graduate School. Students should follow the instructions given and familiarize themselves with RamWeb before registration.

## Registration

Before registering for each semester, students must make an appointment with the PhD program director. During the first semester, this meeting will include developing a tentative program of study. Each semester thereafter, students should make an appointment before registration to review and revise their program of study. **Students will not be able to register until this meeting occurs each semester.**

New students should familiarize themselves with the registration procedures as outlined on the CSU Registrar's [website](#). Students can register for the appropriate courses on [RamWeb](#). Address and email changes must be kept current with the School of Social Work and the Office of Admissions and Records.

All students admitted to a graduate program at Colorado State University are required to be continuously registered in the fall and spring semesters throughout their degree programs. This policy applies from the time of first enrollment through the graduation term. Students may fulfill this requirement by registering for any graduate credit-bearing course.

In some situations, students may register for Continuing Registration (CR) instead of credit-bearing courses. Enrollment in CR should only be used when students are not actively working toward degree requirements. This might occur due to extenuating circumstances or during the student's graduation semester after all requirements have been cleared during the previous semester. CR credits must be cleared with the PhD program office before registration. Please contact the PhD program office for detailed policy or questions regarding CR.

There is a ten-year time limit for completion of the doctoral degree. Courses to be applied toward fulfilling the requirements for the master's and doctoral degrees, including any that may have been transferred from another institution, must have been registered for and completed within the ten years immediately preceding the date of completion of requirements for the degrees (Graduate and Professional Bulletin).



## Program Withdrawal or Non-Continuous Registration

There are several ways that social work graduate students may exit the PhD program before successful completion of the curriculum and graduation: a graduate student may voluntarily withdraw from the PhD program; may be dismissed from the program for scholastic or non-scholastic reasons; or may fail to continuously register in the PhD program (see above). The School of Social Work will not consider re-admission applications from students dismissed from the program for scholastic or non-scholastic reasons. A student who voluntarily withdrew from the program or failed to continuously register may re-enroll in the PhD program by formally reapplying to the School of Social Work and the Graduate School. The student application will be reviewed by the admissions committee following the normal admissions process. Readmission is not guaranteed.

## Graduate Committee and Program of Study

Before registering for the fourth semester courses, students are required to select a Graduate Committee and complete a GS-6 Program of Study Form. **Note:** All graduate school forms, like the GS6, are now electronic and can be accessed via students' RAMWeb account.

### Graduate Committee

During the first year of the program, students should begin to identify possible faculty mentors who can serve as the chair of their graduate committee. Once a chair has been identified, this person will serve as the student's advisor. The advisor will help the student identify additional committee members; identify possible electives that will advance their substantive and methodological expertise needed to develop their independent research products, including the preliminary exam and dissertation (described further below); and advise the student of possible career trajectories. Students should choose committee members carefully, as they will pass judgment on their abilities as a student, a researcher, and a professional.

**Note:** It is recommended that students and advisors consider developing a mentoring agreement similar to the one described above for structuring graduate research assistantships. See Appendix C for the mentoring agreement form.

Guidelines for choosing members include selecting individuals who: (a) bring necessary substantive and/or methodological expertise to effectively support the preliminary exam and dissertation projects; (b) have a history of working well together; (c) have research interests similar to yours; and (d) complement each other well in their coverage of the knowledge you want to attain in your program of study. Selection of graduate committee members should be finalized on the GS-6 Form and must be approved by the PhD Program, the student's advisor, and the CSU Graduate School.

The committee must consist of at least four faculty members who include: (1) an Advisor/chair from the School of Social Work; (2) two members from the School of Social Work; and (3) an outside committee member from an outside department. Please visit the Graduate School's [website](#) for additional guidance on forming a committee.

Regardless of how carefully committee members are selected, there may be a need to change or replace committee members. This is a common occurrence, especially during the dissertation phase of the PhD program. To change a committee member, students should have a well-considered and justifiable reason. Committee changes are completed with Form GS9A.



## Program of Study

Once an advisor is identified, the student will review courses and complete a SOWK 01 – Program of Study Review form with their advisor's guidance. In some cases, a student's Graduate Committee may suggest or require additional classes to be added to the Program of Study. This form is helpful when completing the online GS-6 with the Graduate School.

The Program of Study must be approved by the Graduate School and is considered a contract for the actual courses that students will be required to complete the degree. Each semester, the program of study will be reviewed by the PhD Program Director in the pre-registration meeting described above. This meeting is **required** before students can register for the next semester. If changes are made to your Program of Study, you do not need to submit a new GS-6. The changes can be implemented, with the approval of your advisor, when you apply for graduation.

Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in the courses listed in their Program of Study. They must complete each course on the Program of Study with a grade of B or better, or with a grade of S if the course is offered on a pass/fail grading basis.

## Preliminary Examinations

The purpose of the preliminary exam is to assess the student's ability to critically appraise and describe the evidence in a substantive area of interest; identify the social justice implications for the substantive area as well as the methods identified to address the proposed research questions; identify and apply theory to this substantive area; clearly articulate gaps in the literature base; apply quantitative or qualitative methods to address key gaps in the literature; and describe the practice and policy implications for addressing these gaps. The outline below details each of these sections. The exam should be a double-spaced paper that does **not** exceed 50 pages (excluding references and any appendices).

For full-time students, the preliminary exam will be proposed at the end of the second year of coursework by May 15<sup>th</sup>. Students will then have 3 months to complete the exam and submit it by August 15<sup>th</sup>. Only under special circumstances will extensions be granted **on a case-by-case basis for one semester**. For part-time students, the exam will still be completed within 3 months; specific deadlines will be determined by the completion of all required coursework.

**Note:** The preliminary exam can be taken while students are still completing elective credits, but it cannot be taken until *all* required coursework is completed.

The exam will be proposed to and graded by each student's graduate committee. This committee, which is comprised of the student's advisor or chair, two additional faculty members from the School of Social Work, and a faculty member from an outside department, will review the exam proposal and come to a consensus about exam expectations. For full-time students beginning their exam by May 15<sup>th</sup>, this committee meeting to review the exam proposal should take place before the May 15<sup>th</sup> start date. Full-time students who receive an extension, as well as part-time students, should negotiate the exam timeline during this oral review based on the 3-month required completion.

This committee will also review the exam within two weeks of submission and provide written feedback, noting questions, concerns, and areas of strength by September 1<sup>st</sup>. The oral review of the committee's feedback should occur within two weeks of when the student and their advisor receive written feedback from each committee member; this oral review should take place by September 15<sup>th</sup>. Please note that these specific dates are relevant only for full-time students beginning their exam by May 15<sup>th</sup> at the end of their 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Full-time students who receive an extension and part-time students will likely be on another timeline to be determined at the exam outline review meeting.

A grade of pass or revise & resubmit will be given by the committee. If a revise & resubmit is given, students will have 3 months to complete the revision and resubmit it for the committee's review. At this time, a grade of pass or not pass



will be given by the committee. Since only 1 retake is allowed, students who do not pass will be dismissed from the program.

The GS-16 must be submitted **within two working days** after successful completion of the preliminary exam.

*See Appendix A for a detailed outline of and grading rubric for the preliminary exam.*

## Dissertation Proposal

Following the passing of the preliminary examination, the student will prepare the dissertation proposal. If following the traditional book-length dissertation format, the proposal usually will consist of a draft of the first three chapters of the dissertation, which are the introduction, literature review, and methodology. This draft should not exceed 50 pages. Sections of the preliminary exam may be used in the dissertation proposal and the final dissertation product. These chapters will be further developed and finalized once the proposal is approved. If selecting the Multiple Article Option (MAO), the proposal will include an introductory chapter (Chapter 1) that describes the problem under study, outlines each of the 3 articles that will be included, and a list of proposed journals, a timeline for completion, and other aspects as described in the MAO policy in Appendix B.

To assist with dissertation completion, the student and advisor are required to complete the Dissertation Proposal Planning Form (SOWK-07) and submit it to the PhD Program Office within one month of completion of the Preliminary Exam.

If the dissertation research is based on a faculty member's project, issues about co-authorship of material to be published from the dissertation are to be discussed, and an agreement specified in writing should be a part of the dissertation proposal. See the APA website on [Publication Practices and Responsible Authorship](#) for guidance. If circumstances change during the dissertation research, the written agreement will be revised. See further guidance on co-authorship and copyright issues when pursuing the MAO dissertation.

When the advisor and the student agree that the proposal is complete, it will be circulated to committee members at least two weeks before the proposal defense. The proposal defense should include a brief presentation of the dissertation proposal and allow time for questions and feedback from the committee members. The committee will provide feedback to the student and must conclude with a pass before the student can move on to conducting their dissertation research. A pass signifies that members of the committee believe that it sets forth a satisfactory plan for the research study, and the student may proceed with their dissertation. A pass can be given even if the committee recommends revisions to the proposed research. The committee may ask to see a revised proposal before a pass is given. Approval of the proposal (**pass**) requires the unanimous approval of all members of the student's committee. Once the committee approves the proposal, a SOWK-09 form will be signed by all committee members and submitted to the School of Social Work's PhD Program Office.

## Dissertation

The PhD Dissertation and Defense are the final steps in completing the PhD program. Students writing their dissertation should work closely with their advisor and committee to make sure it is progressing as planned. Please refer to the Graduate School [website](#) for the dissertation about the format, submission process, and responsibilities of advisors and students.

When the student and advisor agree that the dissertation is complete, a final oral Dissertation Defense should be arranged. It must be held before the end of the eleventh week of the graduating term for the fall or spring semester and by the end of the fifth week of the eight-week summer term. Voting at all final examinations shall be limited to the



members of your committee, and a majority vote is necessary to pass the examination. Signatures of all committee members are required on the GS-24 Form, indicating whether they vote to pass or fail.

All Final Oral Dissertation Defenses are open to the public. Doctoral students are encouraged to attend several dissertation defense meetings during their program to better understand the process before defending their work.

Students must submit a Thesis/Dissertation Submission Form and the Survey of Earned Doctorates confirmation certificate to the Graduate School and then submit their dissertation electronically. See the Graduate School [website](#) for more information.

## Human Subjects in Research

The University is required to comply with the federal regulations governing review of research that involves human subjects. Annually, we must assure the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) that the University is complying with the requirements of 45 CFR 46. This is an NIH reference but has been incorporated virtually verbatim into the regulations of 16 other federal agencies; additionally, the regulations state that the University will apply the same standards to all projects involving human subjects, regardless of funding or funding source. Activities are to be reviewed as proposals and may not wait until funding for the activity is forthcoming.

No dissertation using human subjects will be accepted by the Graduate School without an IRB approval number. Information on obtaining an IRB number and the use of human subjects can be found at the Office of the Vice President for Research [website](#).

Any activity involving human subjects is subject to review, including soliciting questionnaires and surveys, videotaping activities, audio taping, observing behavior, and obtaining individually identifiable data about a person.

Before submitting your application, you must attend a training on campus or online. Information about training availability can be found on the IRB [website](#).

Please see the [IRB website](#) for deadlines for submission and meeting dates for the Social and Behavioral Science IRB. Submit the application via the [Kuali IRB system](#). Following the meeting (on the 3rd Thursday of each month), an email from the IRB regarding the IRB's determination will be sent to the PI (and all personnel listed on the protocol) within 10 working days.

A researcher may not initiate human participant involvement (including recruitment and/or records access) until an IRB approval number for the project is received.

## Graduation

To apply for graduation, you must complete the GS-25 Form and have it signed by your advisor and the PhD Program Director. This is due to the CSU Graduate School by the end of the fourth week of the graduation term for fall or spring semester, and by the first week of the eight-week summer session for those graduating that term. You must be enrolled for a minimum of one credit or continuing registration in the term in which you graduate.

In addition, students must complete form GS-30. This form is required of all PhD students submitting a dissertation after the final dissertation has been reviewed and approved by the student's committee. The completed and signed form must be submitted to the Graduate School Office by the published deadline date of the student's graduating term and before the electronic submission of the thesis or dissertation.



You are requested to attend the graduation ceremony, where you will be hooded by your advisor at the Graduate School ceremony. Ceremonies are held at the end of the Fall and Spring terms. Summer graduates are requested to attend the Spring ceremonies.

## Responsibility for Meeting Deadlines and Requirements

Although your advisor and others will be helpful to you in understanding the various requirements, deadlines, and standards leading to your graduation, the final responsibility for meeting them rests with you, the student. It is your responsibility to become informed about everything required of you to earn your PhD.



## Prelims, Dissertation, and Defense Quick Guide

- 1. Complete Required Coursework**
- 2. Comps (Preliminary Exam)**
- 3. Prelim Follow-up**
  - a. Complete GS 16 Form - Report of Preliminary
- 4. Develop Dissertation Proposal**
- 5. Proposal Defense**
  - a. Complete SOWK 08 Form – Approval of Dissertation Proposal
- 6. Research and Write Dissertation**
- 7. Apply for Graduation (Before Defense)**
  - a. Complete form GS 25 – Application for Graduation, usually due early in the semester of expected graduation
- 8. Dissertation Defense**
  - a. Complete form GS 24 – Report of Final Examination Results must be successfully completed before the graduation ceremony
  - b. Complete form GS 52 – Graduation Clearance Response, only needed to clear discrepancies not addressed in GS 25
  - c. Complete form GS 30 – Thesis/Dissertation Submission, after dissertation approval
- 9. Graduation Ceremony**



## Doctorate Student Checklist

Earning the Doctor of Philosophy degree involves considerably more than the completion of credits through coursework. This outline is an assistive guide to the doctoral journey. Completion of all steps does not guarantee graduation or a degree. Sufficient time should be allotted for all forms requiring signatures.

Step	Timing	Responsibility
<b>1. Admission</b>		
a. <u>Confirm Acceptance</u>		
b. Receive <i>Graduate School Notice of Admission</i> (via email).		
c. Respond by email with intent to accept or decline admission.	By the deadline indicated	Student
<b>2. Enrollment and Registration</b>		
a. <u>Contact Program Director</u> : Discuss required coursework and overall program of study	Before registration	Student, Program Director
b. <u>RAMWeb</u> : Retrieve, Renew, Confirm RAMWeb ID: See this website to set up your Net ID <a href="https://admissions.colostate.edu/apply/student-id-university-email/">https://admissions.colostate.edu/apply/student-id-university-email/</a>		Student
c. Register for classes, view additional account information, and Graduate School guidelines: ( <a href="http://ramweb.colostate.edu/">http://ramweb.colostate.edu/</a> )		
<b>3. Coursework</b>		
a. <u>Complete</u> the Program of Study Form (SOWK-01)	1 <sup>st</sup> semester	Student, Program Director
b. Continue your coursework as discussed previously with the program director		
<b>4. Committee and Program of Study</b>		
a. <u>Identify Committee</u>	Before registering for fourth-semester courses	Student, Advisor
b. <u>Finalize Program of Study</u>		
c. Meet with advisor to discuss coursework and program of study		Student, Advisor
d. Complete and submit the GS-6 to SSW and the Graduate School		
<b>5. Prelim Exams and Moving towards Candidate Status</b>		



Step	Timing	Responsibility
a. Meet with Advisor to discuss the order, content, and scheduling of exams		Student, Advisor
b. Propose the preliminary exam to the committee and determine exam expectations		Student, Committee
c. <u>Complete</u> the Intent Form (SOWK-06)	By May 15 <sup>th</sup> in the second year (if a full-time student)	Student, Advisor
d. Complete the exam	Within 3 months	Student
e. Committee members will read and evaluate the exam using the grading rubric in Appendix A	Within 2 weeks of receiving the completed exam	Committee
f. Written feedback provided to student; hold oral review of exam with committee; provide final grade	Within 2 weeks of receiving the completed exam	Student, Committee
g. Discuss revision as needed		Student, Advisor
h. Submit Graduate School Report of Preliminary Examinations for the Ph.D. Degree GS-16; if a revise & resubmit is given for the 1 <sup>st</sup> attempt, the GS-16 is not submitted until the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and final attempt is graded.	Within 2 working days of the committee decision	Committee
i. If the committee passes the student – the student becomes a PhD Candidate		
<b>6. Dissertation Proposal</b>		
a. Meet with advisor to discuss expectations and readiness		Student, Advisor
b. Make any necessary changes to committee members using Form GS-9A		Student
c. <u>Complete</u> the Dissertation Proposal Planning Form (SOWK-07)		Student, Advisor
d. Submit a copy of the proposal to the committee members and create a PowerPoint Presentation outlining the proposal	2 weeks before the meeting	Student
e. Meet with the committee and propose dissertation research		Student, committee
f. Complete Form SOWK-08 and get signatures denoting approval from committee members; Submit to SSW		Student
<b>7. Work on the Dissertation</b>		
a. Meet with advisor and methodologist to develop a timeline for dissertation progress		Student, Advisor



Step	Timing	Responsibility
b. Submit the Application for New Human Subjects Research Review to the IRB, Advisor is PI (Student is the Co-PI)		Student
<b>8. Application for Graduation</b>		
a. Meet with advisor to discuss graduation timeline		Student, Advisor
<b>9. Dissertation Defense</b>		
a. Meet with advisor to review dissertation and application for graduation (Form GS-25)		Student, Advisor, Program Director
b. Coordinate with the committee a time to defend the dissertation	2 semesters after submitting the G-16 Form	Student, committee
c. Submit a copy of the dissertation to the committee members	2 weeks before the presentation	student
d. Schedule a room for Defense		Student, Advisor
e. Meet with the committee to defend the dissertation		Student, committee
f. Complete the Report of Final Examination Results Form GS24 and submit it to the Graduate School	Immediately following the dissertation, submitted within 2 working days	Committee
g. If passed, submit the GS24 within 2 working days of the committee decision		Student
h. If failed, note conditions that must be met, provide a copy SSW and submit it to the Graduate School within 2 working days of the committee decision		Student
i. Signing of the dissertation defense signature papers	Immediately following the defense	Student, committee
j. Make suggested changes to the dissertation		Student
k. Provide an electronic copy of the dissertation		Student
<b>10. Graduation Requirements</b>		
a. Complete the following:		Student
1. GS30 Form - Thesis/Dissertation Submission		
2. Human Subject Form for Closure to the IRB, along with research documents		
3. Submit an electronic copy of the dissertation to the Graduate School and the Library		
4. Review Degree Audit		
5. Attend Graduation Ceremonies		



## Forms Checklist

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID \_\_\_\_\_

Forms in boldface type are required.

Form Number	Form Title	Date submitted
GS6	Program of Study	
SOWK-01	Program of Study	
SOWK-02	Petition for Waiver of PhD Requirements	
SOWK-03	Application for Approval of Research Practicum	
SOWK-04	Enrollment for Supervised College Teaching	
SOWK-05	Application for Approval of Independent Study	
SOWK-06	Intent to Complete Preliminary Exam	
GS16	Report of Preliminary Examination for the Ph.D. Degree	
SOWK-07	Dissertation Proposal Planning Form	
SOWK-08	Committee Approval of Dissertation Proposal	
GS24	Report of Final Examination Results	
GS25	Application for Graduation	
GS25B	Discrepancy Clearance Response (to update the GS6)	
GS30	Thesis/Dissertation Submission	



## Financial Assistance

### Financial Aid

Please refer to Colorado State University's Office of Financial Aid (<https://financialaid.colostate.edu/>) for information on tuition, scholarships, and loans.

### Graduate Student Employment

While there are no guaranteed funding packages, the School of Social Work will provide Graduate Assistant (GA) positions to selected PhD students as funding allows. A separate application process may be required. Each year, positions are identified in the school and awarded on a competitive basis. Please check with the PhD program director before the start of the academic year to see if positions are available and what the application process might be.

Students may also be employed as GAs, where they will independently teach a BSW or MSW course. Course assignments are determined by the School Director depending on course availability and coverage needs. Students interested in teaching should provide a current CV to the PhD program director that can be shared with the School Director. Please keep in mind that practice courses at the BSW and MSW levels are restricted by the Council on Social Work Education to be taught only by those with an MSW and at least 2 years of post-MSW professional practice experience.

All student employees will be required to undergo an annual performance review; this will be required for reappointment should the School of Social Work have resources to continue the GA. For GAs who hold research responsibilities, this annual performance review should be conducted at some point during the spring semester of the appointment and will include the GA supervisor's assessment of performance of key tasks; written feedback on performance, including noted areas of strength and areas needing improvement, will be provided to the GA. A copy of this feedback should be provided to the PhD program director. For GAs who hold teaching responsibilities, the annual performance review will be performed by the School Director at the conclusion of the course. GAs must provide the program director performing the review with all feedback received from students in the course. Similarly, written feedback on performance, including noted areas of strength and areas needing improvement, will be provided to the GA. A copy of this feedback should be provided to the PhD program director.

### Mentoring For Graduate Research Assistants

The School of Social Work, on occasion, as funding allows, can award research assistantships to doctoral students. To assist in building a productive mentoring relationship, a mentoring agreement form must be submitted to the PhD program director at the beginning of each academic year that outlines goals and expectations for both the mentee and mentor and is signed by both parties. This mentoring agreement is intended to support an effective mentor relationship between graduate research assistants and their faculty/research staff mentors. It should outline key goals/tasks and mutually agreed-upon expectations for both parties. See Appendix C for the draft agreement.



## School of Social Work Academic and Professional Standards

Students must demonstrate consistent, satisfactory progress toward completion of their degrees across all semesters of academic coursework, the preliminary exam, and the dissertation to graduate from the program. The following describes expectations and responsibilities of students that directly pertain to the successful completion of their degrees, in addition to related policies and procedures.

### Scholastic Performance Standards

#### Maintain Good Academic Standing

PhD students must earn a B or better in all degree-required coursework and maintain a cumulative 3.0 grade point average (GPA). For courses graded with satisfactory/unsatisfactory, students must earn an S. Specifically:

- No course with a grade of "C" or below will be credited toward the graduate degree.
- A grade of unsatisfactory ("U") in a required course is grounds for review by the PhD program director and possible recommendation for dismissal from the School of Social Work.

Failure to maintain good academic standing results in being placed on academic probation. The probationary period extends for one semester beyond the one in which this status is acquired. During this probationary period, the student must register for traditionally graded courses that affect the grade point average. Students on probation are subject to dismissal by the academic department or the Dean of the Graduate School at the end of the probationary semester unless good academic standing has been regained. This requires adequate improvement in cumulative grade point averages (3.000) and/or satisfactory progress as determined by the student's academic advisor. Please see the Graduate and Professional Bulletin for additional details on Graduate School requirements and procedures for maintaining good academic standing.

#### Uphold Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold academic integrity as outlined by the University. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and falsification. Procedures for addressing academic misconduct are detailed in the [Graduate and Professional Bulletin](#).

### Professional Performance Standards

To demonstrate satisfactory progress toward completion of their degrees, students are expected to maintain good standing with the School of Social Work and the University and uphold high standards of professional behavior throughout their educational program and in the context of all academic and professional settings encountered as social work students. Serious or sustained problems related to professional behavior may lead to a recommendation for dismissal from the program (see: Dismissal from the Program). It is vitally important, therefore, that students commit themselves to a process of developing high standards of professional behavior throughout all parts of the Social Work program.



The NASW Code of Ethics is the cornerstone of determining and guiding ethical behavior for social workers and students, and adherence to these ethical standards is a requirement and standard for the program. Evidence of a serious breach in research ethics or in the NASW Code of Ethics may prompt a recommendation for immediate dismissal of a student from the program. Students are directed to review the NASW Code of Ethics and the webpage of the Office of the Vice President of Research that addresses Research and Scholarly Ethics.

Inability, unwillingness, or failure to meet generally accepted professional guidelines of conduct, integrity, or emotional stability may result in the initiation of Student Development and Accountability Procedures (see below). The following presents examples, but not a complete list, of behaviors that may constitute professional concerns in areas of functioning essential to the professional social worker:

### **Acceptance of Responsibility**

- Failure to adhere to basic principles of social work practice includes abiding by the NASW Code of Ethics, maintaining confidentiality, and showing respect for clients and colleagues.
- Inability to perform adequately in a graduate research assistantship (GRA) or teaching (GTA) assistantship.
- Failure to take adequate steps to address or remedy personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, suicidality, or mental health impairment that interfere with their assistantship or the classroom learning environments, even though appropriate ADA accommodations may have been provided.
- Impaired performance in the classroom or their work as GRAs or GTAs. Behaviors include, but are not limited to, active substance use, inability to focus or communicate, distortion in thought processes, or otherwise being unable to develop appropriate working relationships in the social work context.
- Unethical or criminal conduct that interferes with competent performance as a social work practitioner or may potentially compromise the safety of others or client services.
- Private conduct that interferes with the ability to fulfill student responsibilities or that represents dishonesty, fraud, deception, or misrepresentation.

### **Commitment to Learning**

- Failure to adhere to attendance standards within the PhD program. Inability to consistently be where you have committed to be. Failure to report on time. Consistent lateness in meeting work deadlines.
- Behavior in the classroom that disrupts the learning of other students.
- Behavior in GRA activities that causes a disruption in the completion of work tasks or creates an untenable relationship with the GRA supervisor.
- Behavior in GTA activities causes a disruption in the learning of students in the course being taught.
- Lying, cheating, or any form of plagiarizing in coursework (see Graduate and Professional Bulletin)

### **Communication Style: Written, Verbal, and Non-verbal**

- Inadequate written or verbal communication skills impede the ability to work effectively with faculty, peers, and supervisors.
- Use of disrespectful or derogatory language in written or verbal communication with or about fellow students, colleagues, supervisors, or instructors
- Inappropriate use of social networking or social media (including personal social media accounts)

### **Interactions with Others**

- Inability, unwillingness, or failure to respect human and cultural diversity.
- Acts or threats of physical violence or verbally abusive behavior toward fellow students, colleagues, supervisors, or Educators.



## Participation in the Supervisory Process

- The inability to accept constructive feedback and effectively utilize supervision from the PhD program director, classroom instructors, GRA/GTA supervisors, and/or an inability to make changes recommended by this feedback.
- Failure to adhere to university policies and professional standards.

## Time Management and Organization

- The inability or failure to engage in tasks associated with GRA/GTA requirements, as assigned by the supervisor.
- Persistent inability to meet deadline dates on assignments and projects, suggesting an inability to be dependable and responsible in the GRA/GTA role.

## Graduate School Appeals Procedure

The Graduate School at CSU encourages informal resolution of appeals and grievances whenever possible. However, the policy explicitly states that graduate students may appeal decisions concerning unsatisfactory performance on graduate preliminary or final examinations, academic probation for reasons of unsatisfactory progress toward the degree other than insufficient grade point average, termination of or election to void an assistantship for reasons outlined in the terms and conditions applicable to graduate assistant appointments, or dismissal from the graduate program for academic reasons. For details, refer to the current online [Graduate and Professional Bulletin](#) published by the CSU Graduate School Office.

## Academic Integrity

The foundation of a university is truth and knowledge, each of which relies fundamentally upon academic integrity and is diminished significantly by academic misconduct. Academic integrity is conceptualized as doing and taking credit for one's work. A pervasive attitude promoting academic integrity enhances the sense of community and adds value to the educational process. All within the University are affected by the cooperative commitment to academic integrity. Faculty/instructors shall work to enhance a culture of academic integrity at the University (see the *Colorado State University General Catalog* for the [academic integrity policy](#)).

Academic misconduct (see examples below) undermines the educational experiences at Colorado State University, lowers morale by engendering a skeptical attitude about the quality of education, and negatively affects the relationship between students and instructors.

Instructors are expected to use reasonably practical means of preventing and detecting academic misconduct. Any student found responsible for having engaged in academic misconduct will be subject to academic penalty and/or University disciplinary action.

Students are expected to share responsibility for the academic integrity of the University by reporting incidents of academic misconduct. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to):

- Cheating in the classroom - Cheating includes using unauthorized sources of information and providing or receiving unauthorized assistance on any form of academic work. Examples include copying the work of another student on an exam, problem set, or quiz; taking an exam or completing homework for another student; possessing unauthorized notes, study sheets, answer codes, programmed calculators, or other materials during an exam; and falsifying exams or other graded paper results.



- Plagiarism - Plagiarism includes the copying of language, structure, ideas, or thoughts of another and representing them as one's own without proper acknowledgement. Examples include a submission of purchased research papers as one's work, paraphrasing, and/or quoting material without properly documenting the source. More information on plagiarism is available in the next section.
- Unauthorized possession or disposition of academic material - Unauthorized possession or disposition of academic materials includes the unauthorized selling or purchasing of examinations or other academic work; stealing another student's work; unauthorized entry to or use of material in a computer file; theft or mutilation of library materials; and using information from or possessing exams that an instructor did not authorize for release to students.
- Falsification - Falsification encompasses an untruth, either verbal or written, in one's academic work. Examples include receiving unauthorized assistance or working as a group on a take-home exam, an independent exam, or other academic work without authorization, or lying to avoid taking an exam or turning in other academic work. Furthermore, falsification of any University document is a violation of academic integrity. Examples include student identification numbers, transcripts, grade sheets, credentials, University status, or letters of recommendation. Forging a signature is another specific example of falsification.
- Facilitation of cases of academic dishonesty - Facilitation of any act of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, and/or falsification of documents, also constitutes a violation of CSU's academic integrity. Examples include knowingly discussing specific content of a test or examination you have taken with another student who has not yet taken that test or examination, or facilitating, by sharing one's work, a student's efforts to cheat on an exam or other academic work.

A student's graduate advisory committee or an appropriate School graduate committee may recommend immediate dismissal or an appropriate lesser penalty where the committee determines that the student has engaged in behavior that is in violation of the [NASW Code of Ethics](#) or academic dishonesty, including but not limited to such acts as cheating, plagiarism, and falsification of data or documents. Such a recommendation must be documented in writing with substantive justification for the recommended action. It must be referred to the Director for approval and the Dean of the Graduate School for final action. The Dean shall secure the concurrence of the University Discipline Officer for any penalty imposed. The student may [appeal](#) such action through the existing Graduate School appeals procedure.

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the use of any source, published or unpublished, without proper acknowledgment. The most important thing to know is this: if you fail to cite your sources, whether deliberately or not, it is still plagiarism. Ignorance of academic regulations or the excuse of sloppy or rushed work does not constitute an acceptable defense against the charge of plagiarism.

When in doubt, cite. It's always preferable to err on the side of caution and completeness.

1. Quotation. Any verbatim use of a source, no matter the size, must be in quotation marks and cited.
2. Paraphrase. A paraphrase is a restatement of another person's thoughts or ideas in your own words, using your sentence structure. Paraphrasing correctly:
  - Do NOT simply rearrange words in a sentence.
  - Do NOT just substitute parts of a sentence with the thesaurus.



- DO synthesize material and describe it in your own words.
- DO summarize another's work and give credit to the author

3. Facts, Information, and Data. If any information is found exclusively in a particular source, you must acknowledge that source.

4. False Citation: When you cite a source you didn't read yourself.

5. Unauthorized submission of your OWN academic work for multiple classes is considered plagiarism. Occasionally, a student may receive permission to rewrite a piece from another class or to satisfy two requirements by producing a single piece of work. However, the student MUST get prior written permission from each professor involved (see <https://odoc.princeton.edu/curriculum/academic-integrity> for further information).

For international students, it's especially important to review and understand the citation standards and expectations for institutions of higher learning in the United States.

- CSU's Academic Integrity is detailed in the General Catalog, Policies and Guiding Principles, 1.6, as well as the Graduate Bulletin, L5.1.
- APA Plagiarism and Self-Plagiarism (section 1.10) "Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due (APA Ethics Code Standard 8.11, Plagiarism). Quotation marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. *Each time* you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words), you need to credit the source in the text." The American Psychological Association (APA) 2010, p. 16). The APA Manual also addresses the issue of self-plagiarism, which occurs when "researchers present their own previously published work as new scholarship" (p. 16). The essential idea in terms of avoiding self-plagiarism is that "the core of the new document must constitute an original contribution to knowledge, and only the amount of previously published material necessary to understand the contribution should be included, primarily in the discussion of theory and methodology" (APA, 2010, p. 16). In general, words or ideas from previously published work must be cited.

## Artificial Intelligence Policy

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a powerful technology that can enhance your learning experience in this course if approved by your instructor. AI can help you with various academic tasks, such as writing, research, editing, and more. You can use AI to generate ideas, outlines, or drafts for your assignments, to check your grammar, spelling, or style, to find relevant sources or references for your topics, or to paraphrase or summarize information from other sources.

However, AI also has limitations and challenges that you need to be aware of and critically analyze. The expanding use of AI in higher education has environmental implications—such as higher energy use and carbon emissions—highlighting the importance of adopting sustainable and responsible implementation strategies. Additionally, you should be critical of the information generated by AI. AI tools are not perfect and may produce inaccurate, incomplete, false, and/or biased information. You should always verify and evaluate the quality and reliability of the information generated by AI. You should also be aware of the potential ethical and social implications of using or spreading false or misleading information.

If using AI, you are accountable for your use of this tool and responsible for any consequences or damages caused by your use of AI. Some platforms may collect and store data, so be aware of privacy concerns with any information



you share. All use of AI must be conducted responsibly and ethically, respecting the rights and dignity of others, while also aligning with academic integrity, intellectual property, privacy, and human rights. You should not use AI to harm or deceive others. You should also be mindful of the diversity and inclusion of different perspectives and experiences in your use of AI. It is imperative to avoid using AI to reinforce stereotypes, prejudices, or discrimination.

You should use AI as a tool to learn, not just to produce content, while also being aware that AI does not guarantee saving time. AI can help you improve your skills and knowledge, but it cannot replace your creativity, critical thinking, or judgment. You should use AI as a supplement, not a substitute, for your efforts and contributions. You should also use AI as an opportunity to explore new possibilities and perspectives, not just to confirm what you already know.

If using AI tools, you must acknowledge [the AI tool or service you used with an APA formatting citation](#), as well as cite the sources of information following APA formatting. This is not only to avoid plagiarism, but also to give credit to the creators and contributors of the AI and the information.

This policy was created with the assistance of Bing Chat AI.

Bing Chat. (2023). *Chat Bing* (Version 4) [Large Language Model]. <https://bing.com/search>



## Student Association

The [Student Association of Social Workers](#) (SASW) is the student organization for the program on campus. The SASW is an organization that gives School of Social Work students a voting voice at the School Council, so they have input on and can advocate for what they believe is best for the school and current and future students. In the video below, hear from students about SASW's purpose and learn how to get involved. Representatives from each academic program will be voted on by their student body. For questions about the SASW, please contact the faculty Advisor, [Paula Yuma](#).

### **Position Descriptions**

- Program Representatives: One student from each program (BSW, MSW, Distance MSW, and Ph.D.) will be elected by their peers to represent the student body in the School Council and vote on their behalf.
- Communications Coordinator: Point person regarding updates and events, social media, and meeting minutes.
- President: Organizes and facilitates meetings and works with SASW to achieve goals.
- Financial Officer: Coordinates financial aspects of SASW.

## Resources

Dissertation Formatting Guide:

<https://graduateschool.colostate.edu/thesis-dissertation/>

Graduate School Forms Database:

<https://graduateschool.colostate.edu/forms/>

Dissertation Submission Site:

<http://lib.colostate.edu/etd>

Graduate School Timeline:

<https://graduateschool.colostate.edu/current-students/steps-to-your-phd-degree/>

RamWeb:

<https://ramweb.colostate.edu/>

Graduate School Bulletin:

<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/graduate-bulletin/>

Faculty and Staff:

<https://www.chhs.colostate.edu/ssw/about-social-work/faculty-and-staff/>

Academic Calendar:

<https://calendar.colostate.edu/academic/>

Student Services and Resources:

<https://studentaffairs.colostate.edu/resources/current-students/>

Library:

<http://lib.colostate.edu/>



## Appendices

### Appendix A. Guide for the Preliminary Exam

#### Guide for the Preliminary Exam

##### **Purpose:**

The purpose of the preliminary exam is to demonstrate competence in the core concepts and methods of social work scholarship, including equity and social justice considerations, as well as the capacity to conduct independent research consistent with the expectations for the dissertation. In this exam, committees (see below) assess the student's ability to describe and **critically appraise** the evidence in a substantive area of interest; identify and apply theory to this substantive area; clearly articulate gaps in the literature base; identify quantitative or qualitative methodological approaches to address key gaps in the literature; and describe the practice and policy implications for addressing these gaps. The outline below details each of these sections. The exam should be a double-spaced paper that does not exceed 50 pages (excluding references and any appendices).

The preliminary exam procedures include the following:

1. A written outline of no more than 10 double-spaced pages describing how the student will address each of the required sections of the preliminary exam
2. An oral review of the exam outline with the student's committee to review committee feedback on the proposal, and establish consensus across the committee on what is expected for each section
3. A written preliminary exam not to exceed **50** double-spaced pages that demonstrates the student's understanding of their substantive area of interest by critically appraising the literature base and describing appropriate theoretical perspectives relevant to the problem under study, identifying critical gaps in the literature and research questions intended to address these gaps, noting methodological approaches to address the identified questions, and offering practice and policy implications for this proposed research.
4. An oral review of the written preliminary exam with the student's committee to discuss feedback, respond to questions and concerns, and discuss next steps.

For full-time students, the preliminary exam will be proposed at the end of the second year of coursework by May 15<sup>th</sup>. The oral review of the exam proposal should also occur by May 15<sup>th</sup>. Students will then have 3 months to complete the exam and submit it by August 15<sup>th</sup>. Only under special circumstances will extensions be granted **on a case-by-case basis for one semester**. For part-time students, the exam will still be completed within 3 months; specific deadlines will be determined by the completion of all required coursework.

During the exam writing, students cannot consult with their committees unless it is to clarify an expectation outlined in the exam. In other words, students may not seek substantive input from their committees while they are writing the exam, but may seek clarification on expectations. Students can request an outside reader to review the exam before submission to their committees for grading. This outside reader can provide feedback to the student on writing structure and flow, clarity of the ideas presented, and overall readability (e.g., grammar, writing quality). Requests for an outside reader should be made to the PhD program director. An outside reader must provide feedback within the 3-month completion requirement; therefore, adequate time must be built in for their review and for making any needed revisions before the 3-month timeline has expired.



The exam will be proposed to and graded by each student's graduate committee. This committee, which is comprised of the student's advisor or chair, two additional faculty members from the School of Social Work, and a faculty member from an outside department, will review the exam proposal and come to a consensus about exam expectations. Full-time students who receive an extension, as well as part-time students, should negotiate the exam timeline during this oral review based on the 3-month required completion.

This committee will also review the exam within two weeks of submission and provide written feedback, noting questions, concerns, and areas of strength by September 1<sup>st</sup>. The oral review of the committee's feedback should occur within two weeks of when the student and their advisor receive written feedback from each committee member; this oral review should take place by September 15<sup>th</sup>. Please note that these specific dates are relevant only for full-time students beginning their exam by May 15<sup>th</sup> at the end of their 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Full-time students who receive an extension and part-time students will likely be on another timeline to be determined at the exam outline review meeting.

A grade of pass or revise & resubmit will be given by the committee. If a revise & resubmit is given, students will have 3 months to complete the revision and resubmit it for the committee's review. At this time, a grade of pass or not pass will be given by the committee. Since only 1 retake is allowed, students who do not pass will be dismissed from the program.

### **Required sections of the Preliminary Exam**

- I. Introduction and Background:** The student will describe a substantive topic of interest (i.e., a problem area that is relevant to social work). This section should define the problem, including its prevalence, the nature and history of the problem, and current trends. In this section, it is important to note the problem's relevance to social work as well as any biases, prejudices, and omissions, especially those relevant to marginalized populations.
  - a. Statement of the problem**
  - b. Relevance of the problem to social work and social justice**
  
- II. Critical Appraisal of the Literature and Discussion of Theory:** In this section, the student will describe and critically analyze current and historical empirical evidence related to the problem area. This review should include a discussion of the primary methodological approaches used to examine the problem. Important empirical gaps in the knowledge base should then be identified. In addition, appropriate social theories (at least one) that provide a context for understanding the onset and/or persistence of the identified problem should be identified and critically reviewed. A discussion of how the selected theories (or theory) have been applied to the problem area should be included, with attention given to how the selected theories (or theory) could inform prevention and/or intervention in this area. Important theoretical gaps should also be discussed. This section should conclude with the identification of two or more research questions that will address the identified gaps in this literature base and that can advance knowledge in this problem area. Appropriate methodological approaches to address each question must also be included.
  - a. Description and critical appraisal of the current literature**
    - i. What is the current evidence on this problem?**
    - ii. What does this evidence add to the understanding of the problem?**
    - iii. What is the quality of this evidence?**
    - iv. How does this evidence contribute to social justice or fall short?**



**b. Application of theory to the problem**

- i. What are the most relevant theories that explain the problem?
- ii. How have these theories been applied in the current literature?
- iii. How do these theories consider, ignore, or uphold social justice?

**c. Identification and Discussion of Gaps**

- i. What are the empirical gaps in the literature?
- ii. What are the theoretical gaps in the literature?
- iii. What are the social justice gaps in the literature?

**d. Proposed Research Questions**

- i. What methodological approach can be used to address each research question?
- ii. What are the relevant design considerations for each research question? Briefly discuss design, sampling, data collection, and data analysis considerations for each research question and the identified methodological approach. Also, briefly articulate the social justice implications for the proposed methods, as well as briefly note any anticipated limitations to the study design.

**III. Conclusions and Implications:** In this section, the student will describe the practice and policy implications for addressing these gaps and for the proposed research.



## Grading Rubric:

A grade of pass or revise & resubmit (R&R) will be issued for the preliminary exam. If an R&R is given, students will have 3 months to revise their exam and resubmit it to their committee. At this time, a grade of pass or not pass will be issued. Since only 1 retake is allowed, students who do not pass will be dismissed from the program.

Required Elements	Excellent	Good	Poor/Unacceptable
<b>Introduction of Scholarly Area of Interest and Statement of the Problem</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Topic area description</li><li>▪ Statement of the problem</li><li>▪ Description of the relevance to social work and social justice</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Clearly describes the problem and its relevance to social work</li><li>▪ Effectively describes the problem's relevance to social justice</li><li>▪ Effectively uses empirical evidence</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Describes the problem and its relevance, but lacks sufficient detail to demonstrate an in-depth understanding</li><li>▪ Describes the problem's relevance to social justice</li><li>▪ Cites empirical evidence but does not integrate it</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Does not describe the problem or its relevance adequately</li><li>▪ Does not effectively describe the problem's relevance to social justice</li><li>▪ Does not use or integrate empirical evidence adequately</li></ul>
<b>Critical Appraisal of the Literature and Discussion of Theory</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Summary and critique of current evidence, including its epistemological frameworks &amp; trends shaping the knowledge base</li><li>▪ Summary of current gaps in the evidence base</li><li>▪ Summary of potential research questions that address gaps</li><li>▪ Identification of relevant research questions to address the literature, theoretical, and/or social justice gaps</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Demonstrates in-depth understanding &amp; critical analysis of the current evidence base</li><li>▪ Clearly identifies the social justice contributions of the evidence base and/or where it falls short</li><li>▪ Clearly articulates theoretical perspectives relevant for understanding the problem and how these theoretical perspectives consider, ignore, and uphold social justice</li><li>▪ Clearly describes the current literature, theoretical, and social justice gaps</li><li>▪ Demonstrates in-depth understanding of these gaps</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Demonstrates beginning understanding and critique of the current evidence base. Identifies the social justice contributions of the evidence base and/or where it falls short</li><li>▪ Acknowledges theory but does not clearly apply it to understanding the problem or adequately consider how these theoretical perspectives consider, ignore, or uphold social justice</li><li>▪ Describes the current literature, theoretical, and social justice gaps in basic terms rather than in-depth</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Does not demonstrate understanding or critique of the current evidence base</li><li>▪ Does not identify the social justice contributions of the evidence base, and/or where it falls short</li><li>▪ Does not adequately apply or describe theoretical perspectives relevant for understanding the problem and/or how these theoretical perspectives consider, ignore, or uphold social justice. Does not describe all aspects of the current literature, the theoretical, and social justice gaps</li><li>▪ Does not demonstrate an understanding of</li></ul>



Required Elements	Excellent	Good	Poor/Unacceptable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Thoroughly describes potential research questions and how each one addresses the identified gaps</li><li>▪ Clearly articulates an appropriate design</li><li>▪ Clearly articulates the social justice implications for the proposed methods</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Demonstrates some understanding of these gaps. Cites empirical evidence but does not integrate it</li><li>▪ Describes potential research questions and how they address gaps</li><li>▪ Shows some ability to develop qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods designs to address the identified gaps</li><li>▪ Articulates some social justice implications for the</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ these gaps. Does not use or integrate empirical evidence adequately. Does not describe or include appropriate research questions</li><li>▪ Does not demonstrate the ability to develop a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods design to address the identified gaps</li><li>▪ Does not articulate social justice implications for the proposed methods</li></ul>
<b>Conclusions and Implications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Discussion of study limitations and potential contributions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Clearly articulates study limitations and potential contributions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Describes some limitations and potential contributions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Does not adequately describe limitations and/or potential contributions</li></ul>
<b>Organization &amp; Writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Organizes information into meaningful topic areas</li><li>▪ There is a natural progression from one topic to the next</li><li>▪ Makes a few grammatical errors</li><li>▪ Consistently and correctly uses APA citations, references, and formatting</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Organizes information into meaningful topic areas</li><li>▪ Makes some grammatical errors</li><li>▪ Uses APA citations, references &amp; formatting for most items with some</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Information is not well organized into topical areas</li><li>▪ Numerous grammatical &amp; spelling errors</li><li>▪ Uses APA citations, references &amp; /or formatting incorrectly and/or sporadically</li></ul>



## Appendix B. Guidelines for the Multiple Article Option (MAO) Dissertation

### Guidelines for the Multiple Article Option (MAO) for the Dissertation

Students in the Ph.D. program may choose an alternative approach to the dissertation known as the Multiple Article Option (MAO). The MAO allows students to complete the dissertation requirement by writing, under the supervision of their major professor and dissertation committee, a minimum of three articles designed for publication in peer-reviewed journals. The goal is to help students to: 1) learn the process of writing for publication; 2) become familiar with the form and content of journal articles; 3) establish a publishing record; 4) contribute to the professional knowledge base; and 5) prepare for entry into the academic job market.

Students interested in pursuing the MAO should consult with their dissertation chairs regarding the feasibility and suitability of this option. All MAO dissertations require prior approval of the dissertation committee and Ph.D. Program Director. When choosing a committee, a student should consider faculty members who have strong journal publishing records.

#### Requirements

1. Students who choose the MAO format must complete, to the satisfaction of their committee, at least three manuscripts suitable for submission for publication as journal articles.
2. The manuscripts should form a cohesive body of work that supports a theme or themes that are identified clearly in the dissertation proposal.
3. At least two of the three manuscripts must be data-based research reports. The third may be in the form of a position paper, review of the literature, historical review, or other such work, as approved by the dissertation committee.
4. A certain amount of overlap between the articles is acceptable. For example, portions of the literature review may need to be cited in the various articles because they delineate the entire historical background of the study's focus. Redundancy can be carefully reduced by citing one's work. However, self-plagiarism - reusing one's own previously written work or data in a 'new' written product without letting the reader know that this material has appeared elsewhere - is prohibited.
5. An article previously published by the student may be, with the approval of the student's dissertation committee and the Ph.D. committee, and the Program Director to be counted as one of the three articles required by the MAO guidelines. The article must represent work undertaken while the student is enrolled in the Ph.D. program and must be approved at the time of the student's dissertation proposal defense. No more than one such article may be counted.
6. Articles may have been published before the defense. However, if this is the case, students must secure all copyright permissions before finalizing the proposal and formatting the dissertation. The student should make sure that this entire process is compliant with the university's [dissertation format guidelines and copyright requirements](#).
7. Articles should be submitted to journals following the style requirements of those particular publications, but for the MAO-format dissertation, the articles must follow [University guidelines](#) concerning formatting and presentation.



8. To fulfill MAO requirements, each article manuscript must be formally submitted (but does not have to be accepted at the time of the dissertation defense) to a journal approved by the dissertation committee. The committee will assist the student in selecting journals that will challenge the student while also offering a reasonable chance of publication success. Appropriate journals include high-impact peer-reviewed journals in the field of social work or an allied discipline.
9. All article manuscripts must be submitted before the dissertation defense unless otherwise approved by the dissertation committee and the Ph.D. committee. Program Director.
10. If an article is rejected by a journal during the dissertation process, the student may submit it to another journal approved by the dissertation committee. In the case of a revise and resubmit during the dissertation process, any changes to the article must be approved by the dissertation committee. Co-authorship will not be changed for a revise and resubmit.
11. If an article is rejected by a journal after the successful completion and defense of the dissertation, co-authorship decisions that were made during the dissertation process will no longer be in effect. Submission to a new journal will be at the sole discretion of the PhD graduate. After the successful dissertation defense, any new submission or resubmission, including changes in the authorship or article content, will be at the discretion of the PhD graduate.

## Authorship

1. Students must be listed as first author on all article manuscripts submitted for publication and intended to count toward MAO requirements. No other students can be co-authors on any of the articles. Co-authors must be identified at the student's proposal defense. The article and the role of the co-authors must be presented and approved by all members of the dissertation committee. Any changes in co-authorship must be approved by the student's committee.
2. Co-authorship must follow authorship guidelines as outlined in the Ph.D. Handbook.
3. To avoid conflicts of interest, any co-authors who are members of the student's dissertation committee must recuse themselves from judging articles carrying their name. In these cases, two additional faculty members chosen by the Ph.D. Program Director will, before the defense and in concert with those committee members who are not co-authors, determine the suitability of the article(s) in question.

## ***General Authorship and Collaborative Research Guidelines***

As part of their doctoral preparation, all Ph.D. students should engage in research and scholarship in collaboration with their peers and/or faculty. This process should be based on the principles of mutual respect, critical inquiry, and collaboration. The following guidelines apply:

1. Early in their work with students, faculty members have a responsibility to discuss and agree upon each contributor's responsibilities and authorship expectations, including order of authorship. Faculty have a special responsibility to help students contribute as much as they are able.
2. As soon as possible in any research or writing collaboration, those involved should agree on data ownership.
3. All contributors making a substantial contribution to articles should be listed as authors.
4. Order of authorship generally should reflect the extent of contribution, except that the level of contribution required for students to be listed as authors may be less than that required of faculty. When individuals' contributions are approximately equal, preference in order of authorship should be given to students.



5. Faculty have the responsibility to ensure that students' dissertations represent original, independent work. Articles that students prepare based on their dissertation findings would be expected to list the student as first or sole author.

## Organization

Dissertations completed in the MAO format must include an abstract that synthesizes the articles, an introduction (Chapter 1), and a conclusion (Chapter 5).

The introduction (Chapter 1) should include:

1. A definition or statement of the problem.
2. The importance of the problem, i.e., why it is worth researching, and why it matters to the field of social work.
3. The theoretical foundation(s) supporting the problem/issue.
4. An overview of the important literature (overview, because each article submitted for the MAO will have its unique literature review).
5. The research questions.
6. The methodology to be used to answer those questions.

Chapters 2-4 present each article separately, organized as the introduction, methods, results, discussion, and implications for the field of study.

The conclusion (Chapter 5) should summarize the dissertation's major findings and discuss their implications for the field of study as well as for social work practice and social policy. It should also help readers see clearly the linkages (i.e., similarities and differences) between the separate manuscripts that are included in the dissertation, as part of a larger effort to present the dissertation as a coherent body of work.

## Formatting

The dissertation will be formatted and bound consistent with [University guidelines](#).

## Proposal and Defense Procedures

1. Dissertations prepared using the MAO format will be subject to proposal and dissertation defense procedures as specified by program policy.
2. The dissertation proposal must include:
  - a. The introductory chapter is outlined above (Chapter 1).
  - b. Copies of any completed articles, whether published or not (if applicable).
  - c. An outline of any articles in progress, including major research question(s) addressed, methods, and any preliminary results if available.
  - d. A list of proposed journals.
  - e. A timeline for completion of the work.
  - f. IRB approval and research procedures, if required.
3. For the dissertation defense, students will present a final document that includes all the elements required by the University Graduate School for a traditional dissertation (e.g., abstract, table of contents, appendices); their introductory chapter; any previously published article(s); article(s) submitted for publication; and a concluding chapter as outlined above.

## *Incorporation of Previously Published, Accepted, and Submitted Articles as Chapters of a Dissertation*



1. The dissertation (final product) looks like any other dissertation. In other words, it has the same parts and the same format as any other dissertation.
2. Each previously published reprint and accepted or submitted article (or chapter as an article prepared for publication) is treated as a separate chapter.
3. The dissertation must have a general abstract that covers all components. A general introduction and general conclusion are recommended.
4. If a dissertation incorporating previously published articles as chapters is selected, references should be placed at the end of each chapter, not at the end of the manuscript. Each set of references may follow a different style guide, depending on the journal in which the chapter is published or will be published.
5. Reprints are acceptable. However, some departments require that previously published articles be reformatted to match all other chapters.
6. The reprints are accepted as they are, except they must be single-sided copies only, must fit within the thesis margins, and must be numbered consecutively with the rest of the text. All other chapters (whether accepted, submitted, or in preparation) must fit campus guidelines, as specified in the Handbook (margins, subheads, figure and table placement, etc.).
7. In the List of Figures and List of Tables, figures and tables from reprints are treated as if they are numbered concerning the rest of the text. A local, decimal numbering scheme must be used. For example, in the List of Figures, the first figure in Chapter 5, which is a reprint, is listed as 5.1.
8. The requirement that all print be at least 2 mm does not apply to reprints.
9. Copyright issues frequently arise with previously published material. Students must obtain permission to duplicate copyrighted material (and, possibly, multiple author releases).
10. As for any other thesis or dissertation, students are urged to submit their manuscripts before the defense for a preliminary review.

**\*\* Note: This policy was adapted from the University of Utah, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, Social Work PhD Programs' policies**



## Appendix C. Dissertation Proposal Planning Form

### Dissertation Proposal Planning Form

#### FROM PRELIMINARY EXAM TO DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEFENSE TASKS AND TIMELINE

After successful completion of the Preliminary Exam, the student and advisor are required to complete this form and submit it to the PhD Program Office within one month of completion of the Exam. Although some flexibility is needed regarding individual circumstances and expectations, this form assumes that the dissertation proposal will essentially be the first 3 chapters of the dissertation (not to exceed 50 pages):

1. Introduction (Statement of the topic/problem to be studied)
2. Literature review
3. Research methodology.

If selecting the Multiple Article Option (MAO), the proposal will include the following (see the MAO policy on pages 48-51):

1. The introductory chapter as outlined in the MAO policy.
2. Copies of any completed articles, whether published or not (if applicable).
3. An outline of any articles in progress, including major research question(s) addressed, methods, and any preliminary results if available.
4. A list of proposed journals.
5. A timeline for completion of the work.
6. IRB approval and research procedures, if required.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Target date for dissertation proposal defense** (usually 3 months after completion of the Preliminary Exam):

#### **Tasks and target dates for completion**

1. **What are the Research Questions?** Ideally, this will stem from the research questions identified in the Preliminary Exam.

Date to complete:



2. With the Research Questions in mind, what parts of the Preliminary Exam remain relevant, and what additional literature needs to be reviewed and summarized?

Date to complete new literature review:

3. With the Research Questions in mind, what methodological literature needs to be reviewed?

Date to complete this literature review:

4. What is the specific methodology for the study? (sample, data collection, measurement, data analysis: outline each paper separately if selecting the MAO dissertation).

Date to complete methodology:

Timeline for Drafts of Proposal:

Date draft to chair:

Date first draft to full committee:

Date final draft to full committee (2 weeks before proposal defense):

X  
Student Signature

X  
Dissertation Chair Signature

DATE submitted to PhD Program Office (within one month of Exam completion)



## Appendix D. Mentor Agreement

### Mentor Agreement

This agreement is to support an effective mentor relationship between graduate research assistants and their faculty/research staff mentors. Please complete the following and submit a signed copy to the PhD program office before the start of the fall semester.

**Academic Year Goals:** (Please specify learning goals for the student and work productivity goals for the mentor.)

***Student Goals:***

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

***Mentor Goals:***

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Commitments of Graduate Students:** (Please add/edit as needed)

- I acknowledge that I have the primary responsibility for the successful completion of my degree. I will be committed to my graduate education and will demonstrate this by my efforts in the classroom and research settings. I will maintain a high level of professionalism, self-motivation, engagement, curiosity, and ethical standards.
- I will meet regularly with my research advisor and provide them with updates on the progress and results of my activities and experiments.
- I will work with my research advisor to develop a thesis/dissertation project. This will include establishing a timeline for each phase of my work. I will strive to meet the established deadlines.
- I will work with my research advisor to select a thesis/dissertation committee. I will commit to meeting with this committee at least annually (or more frequently, according to program guidelines). I will be responsive to the advice of and constructive criticism from my committee.
- I will be knowledgeable of the policies and requirements of my graduate program, graduate school, and institution. I will commit to meeting these requirements, including teaching responsibilities.
- I will attend and participate in relevant group meetings and seminars that are part of my educational program.
- I will comply with all institutional policies, including academic program milestones. I will comply with both the letter and spirit of all institutional research policies (e.g., safe laboratory practices and policies regarding animal use and human research) at my institution.
- I will participate in my institution's Responsible Conduct of Research Training Program and practice those guidelines in conducting my thesis/dissertation research.



- I will be a good research citizen. I will agree to take part in relevant shared research group responsibilities and will use research resources carefully and frugally. I will be attentive to issues of safety and courtesy, and will be respectful of, tolerant of, and work collegially with all research personnel.
- For use in relevant fields: I will maintain detailed, organized, and accurate records of my research, as directed by my advisor. I am aware that my original notes and all tangible research data are the property of my institution, but I can take a copy of my notebooks with me after I complete my thesis/dissertation.
- I will discuss policies on work hours, sick leave, and vacation with my research advisor. I will consult with my advisor and notify any fellow research group members in advance of any planned absences.
- I will discuss policies on authorship and attendance at professional meetings with my research advisor. I will work with my advisor to submit all relevant research results that are ready for publication promptly.
- I acknowledge that it is primarily my responsibility to develop my career following the completion of my doctoral degree. I will seek guidance from my research advisor, career counseling services, thesis/dissertation committee, other mentors, and any other resources available for advice on career plans.

### **Commitments of Research Advisors: (Please add/edit as needed)**

- I will be committed to mentoring the graduate student. I will be committed to the education and training of the graduate student as a future member of the scholarly community.
- I will be committed to the research project of the graduate student. I will help to plan and direct the graduate student's project, set reasonable and attainable goals, and establish a timeline for completion of the project. I recognize the possibility of conflicts between the interests of my own larger research program and the particular research goals of the graduate student and will not let my larger goals interfere with the student's pursuit of their thesis/ dissertation research.
- I will be committed to meeting with the student regularly.
- I will be committed to providing resources for the graduate student as appropriate or according to my institution's guidelines, for them to conduct thesis/dissertation research.
- I will be knowledgeable of, and guide the graduate student through, the requirements and deadlines of their graduate program as well as those of the institution, including teaching requirements and human resources guidelines.
- I will help the graduate student select a thesis/dissertation committee. I will help ensure that this committee meets at least annually (or more frequently, according to program guidelines) to review the graduate students' progress.
- I will lead by example and facilitate the training of the graduate student in complementary skills needed to be a successful researcher; these may include oral and written communication skills, grant writing, lab management, animal and human research policies, the ethical conduct of research, and scientific professionalism. I will encourage the student to seek additional opportunities in career development training.
- I will expect the graduate student to share common research responsibilities in my research group and to utilize resources carefully and frugally.



- I will discuss authorship policies regarding papers with the graduate student. I will acknowledge the graduate student's contributions to projects beyond their own, and I will work with the graduate student to publish their work on time.
- I will discuss intellectual policy issues with the student concerning disclosure, patent rights, and publishing research discoveries when they are appropriate.
- I will encourage the graduate student to attend professional meetings and try to help them secure funding for such activities.
- I will provide career advice and assist in finding a position for the graduate student following their graduation. I will provide honest letters of recommendation for their next phase of professional development. I will also be available to give advice and feedback on career goals.
- I will try to provide for every graduate student under my supervision an environment that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe, and free of harassment.
- Throughout the graduate student's time in graduate school, I will be supportive, equitable, accessible, encouraging, and respectful. I will foster the graduate students' professional confidence and encourage critical thinking, skepticism, and creativity.

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Student Name

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Mentor Name

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Student Signature

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Mentor Signature

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Date