



**Samford University**

School of Public Health

Social Work

# Master of Social Work Program Student Handbook

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# Welcome from the Chair

Dear Students,

Welcome to the Samford University MSW Program. On behalf of the faculty and staff, I want to say that we are delighted that you've chosen to pursue the MSW degree at Samford. We are excited to get to know you better and to be a part of this next step in your journey.

As our mission statement says, we strive to be a distinctively Christian learning community that prepares students for lives of service as social workers. As such we believe that education happens best where people are committed to learning and growing together. We also believe that our faith leads to special opportunities for the development of community and for personal and professional growth. However, we also recognize that people are at different points in their faith journey, therefore people from all faith backgrounds (or none at all) are welcome.

Social work is a distinct discipline in that we are intervening on multiple levels in the emotional, behavioral and spiritual lives of people through work with individuals, families, groups and communities, especially those who are marginalized, oppressed or abandoned. Social work is more than simply a career, and whether you believe that your pursuit of social work is a call from God or simply a desire to serve others the MSW program at Samford is committed to engaging students in an educational experience that will prepare you for competent practice.

I am hopeful that you will find an environment at Samford that allows you to pursue your passion and call to service. There are many opportunities to be involved not only in the program, but also throughout the campus, community and globally. We look forward to being with you on this part of your journey and hope that your time in the MSW program is both challenging and enriching.

I welcome you to reach out to me if you have questions, concerns or suggestions along the way, or if you simply want to stop by and say hi! May God bless you as you learn and grow at Samford.

Warmest thoughts,

*Lisa Baker*

Lisa Baker, Ph.D., L.C.S.W.

Department Chair/Professor

# Section I: Background Information

## History of Samford University

Samford University, the 87<sup>th</sup> oldest university in the United States, was founded as Howard College on January 3, 1842 in Marion, Alabama. The campus was moved to Birmingham, Alabama in 1887 and the name was changed to Samford University in 1965. Samford University is accredited by the [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges](#) (SACS-COC) to award bachelors, masters, educational specialists, and doctoral degrees. The most recent reaffirmation of accreditation action was taken by SACS-COC in 2007. In addition to SACS-COC accreditation, professional schools at Samford University are accredited by such organizations as the American Bar Association, American Council on Pharmaceutical Education, National Association of Schools of Music, Association of Theological Schools, Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs, Council for Interior Design Accreditation, National Association of Schools of Music, and Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

## History of the MSW Program

On December 3, 2013, the Samford University Board of Trustees approved the development of a new Department of Social Work, to be housed in the School of Public Health and the College of Health Sciences. The Trustees also approved the MSW Program as the first academic program to be developed by the new Department of Social Work.

The addition of a Department of Social Work and an MSW Program was a logical extension of Samford University's mission and its long history of service to humanity. Samford's mission *is to nurture persons in their development of intellect, creativity, faith, and personhood. As a Christian university, the community fosters academic, career, and ethical competency while encouraging social and civic responsibility and service to others.* The university was originally founded in 1841 as Howard College, named in honor of John Howard, an Eighteenth-century, English social reformer whose Christian faith led him to devote his life to visiting, and advocating for, individuals who were being held in inhumane prison conditions. Over its nearly two hundred years of existence, Samford has sought to emulate Howard's commitment to serve humanity in the name of Christ. The MSW Program affords the Samford community an additional avenue to pursue its mission of providing service to humanity in the name of Christ.

## **MSW Program Mission**

The mission of the Samford University Master of Social Work (MSW) Program is to be a distinctively Christian learning community that prepares graduates for lives of service as advanced social workers who promote healing, wholeness, and reconciliation. In order to prepare its graduates for ethical and competent service, the MSW Program:

- Is academically rigorous and emphasizes mastery of the core knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession; application of the person and environment construct; and integration of research and practice.
- Emphasizes promotion of human rights and social and economic justice, as a reflection of God's desire for justice and love for all of humanity.
- Promotes interdisciplinary collaboration, in order to address the complex and multifaceted nature of human needs and concerns.
- Understands human diversity as a reflection of God's creativity and imagination and prepares advanced social work practitioners who value diversity and practice with cultural sensitivity.

The MSW Program prepares students for service as advanced social work practitioners by offering concentrations in Clinical Social Work and Global Community Development. The program's unique context, location, and mission combine to offer students opportunities to develop advanced social work skills in rural, urban, and international practice settings in both faith-based and secular organizations.

## **MSW Program Goals**

The Samford University Master of Social Work Program will:

1. Prepare ethical and competent social work practitioners who integrate practice and research, promote human rights and social justice, practice with cultural sensitivity, and display a commitment to service.
2. Create opportunities for interdisciplinary and interprofessional collaboration and learning.
3. Prepare graduates to ethically integrate faith and social work practice.
4. Maintain a global perspective that balances sensitivity to local issues and concerns with opportunities for national and international service, collaboration, and learning.

## **MSW Program Overview**

The MSW Program consists of two sequences of courses: the initial Foundation Sequence, which emphasizes the development advanced generalist social work knowledge, values, and skills, and the Concentration Sequence, which emphasizes the development of additional advanced social work knowledge, values, and skills related to a specific area of concentration. The program

currently offers concentrations in clinical social work and global community development. Completion of the curriculum requires two years of full-time study. Part-time study options allow students to complete the MSW curriculum in three or four years. An advanced standing option, which allows the MSW curriculum to be completed in one year of full-time study (or two years of part-time study), is available for students who have earned a baccalaureate degree in social work and met additional eligibility criteria.

## **Section II: Policies**

### **Samford University Non-Discrimination Policy**

Samford University complies with applicable laws prohibiting discrimination, including applicable provisions of and amendments to Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Executive Order 11246, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or services. Inquiries and concerns regarding this policy may be directed to the vice president for business affairs or general counsel, Office of Business and Financial Affairs, 200 Samford Hall, Birmingham, AL 35229, 205-726-2811. This notice is available in alternative formats upon request.

### **Students with Disabilities**

The MSW Program endorses the university's commitment to students with disabilities. The MSW Program will provide accessible programs, services, and activities and reasonable accommodations for any student with a disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

To be eligible for program accommodation, students must self-identify to the Office of Disability Resources (DR), who will determine eligibility for services. Once eligibility for accommodations is determined by DR, it is the students' responsibility to request appropriate accommodations.

Social work is a practice discipline with cognitive, sensory, affective, and psychomotor performance requirements. Qualified individuals are those who satisfy admission requirements and who can practice in compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics, as well as applicable state and national ethics codes. If a student is unable to practice within the parameters established by such ethical codes, the faculty reserves the right to withdraw the student from field placement courses.

### **Department of Social Work Affirmative Action Policy**

As an outgrowth of its Christian orientation and professional social work values base, the Samford University Department of Social Work affirms the importance of diversity among its faculty, staff, and students. The Department of Social Work is committed to recruiting and retaining faculty, staff, and students from under-represented groups. In order to do so, the Department of Social Work will identify and remove barriers that negatively affect members of under-represented groups and develop policies and practices that respect the dignity and worth of all people consistent with the university's policies on nondiscrimination.



## Admission Criteria

### **Individuals who do not possess a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work must meet the following criteria:**

- Applicants must hold an earned bachelor's degree from a college or university accredited by a recognized regional accrediting association. Please note: A completed bachelor's degree, as evidenced by an official college/university transcript, is required prior to enrollment in the MSW Program. Applicants may receive conditional acceptance into the MSW Program by submitting a transcript that demonstrates that they are enrolled in their final semester of undergraduate coursework. The conditional status is removed upon receipt of an official transcript demonstrating that the baccalaureate degree has been completed.
- Applicants must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.00 on a 4.0 scale or a minimum of a 3.2 GPA during their last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework. Applicants who have a GPA of at least 2.8 may submit an application for consideration with an MAT or GRE score. Potential applicants who have a GPA lower than 2.8 may request an exception to the GPA requirement. Such requests must be made in writing to the MSW Program Director. All requests will be reviewed by the search committee. GRE or MAT scores and additional supporting documentation of the applicant's potential for success as a graduate student must be submitted with the request for an exception to the GPA requirement.
- The GRE or MAT is not required; however, an applicant who does not meet the GPA requirement may submit an acceptable GRE or MAT score for admission consideration. Acceptable scores are as follows:
  - MAT: 402
  - GRE: Verbal: 153; Quantitative: 144; Analytical: 4.0
- Candidates who do not meet the GPA requirement (i.e., a 3.0 cumulative GPA or a 3.2 GPA for the final 60 hours of undergraduate coursework) are admitted conditionally and must earn a grade of B- or higher in their first semester of MSW Program courses in order to move from conditional status to full acceptance status. Students who earn a grade lower than a B- in any of their first semester MSW Program courses will be terminated from the social work program. Students who are terminated from conditional admission status may follow the grievance procedure outlined in the student handbook to appeal their termination.

### **Individuals who have earned a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work and are applying for Advanced Standing status must meet the following criteria:**

- Applicants must hold a baccalaureate social work degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), recognized through CSWE's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service, or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors. Please note: A completed bachelor's degree in social work, as evidenced by an official college/university transcript, is required prior to enrollment. Applicants may receive

conditional acceptance into the MSW Program by submitting a transcript that demonstrates that they are enrolled in their final semester of undergraduate coursework. The conditional status is removed upon receipt of an official transcript demonstrating that the baccalaureate degree has been completed.

- Applicants must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.00 on a 4.0 scale or a minimum of a 3.2 GPA during their last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework.
- Applicants must have received a grade of B- or higher in all required undergraduate social work courses. Please note: Applicants with a grade lower than B- in no more than two social work courses may apply for Advanced Standing. If accepted, these students will be required to complete analogous courses in the Samford University MSW Program with a grade of B- or higher. These courses will be required in addition to all courses required for Advanced Standing and may not be substituted for required MSW courses or for required MSW Program electives. Applicants who have more than two courses with grades lower than B- are not eligible for Advanced Standing, but may apply for admission to the full MSW Program if they meet the admission criteria.

**All applicants must:**

- Submit three letters of reference through the Centralized Application Service for Social Work (SocialWorkCAS). The three required reference letters should be from a current or previous professor, a work supervisor and a professional colleague.
- Have completed an undergraduate level statistics class with a grade of C or higher. Applicants who have not completed a statistics course may receive conditional acceptance. Such applicants will be required to submit evidence of completion of a statistics course prior to enrollment in the program.
- Academic Writing Sample: Please upload an academic paper that you have written in the past. If possible, submit a research paper in which you have cited books or journal articles. The paper you upload should demonstrate your ability to collect information from multiple sources and synthesize it into a coherent product. If you do not have access to an academic paper you have written in the past, please write and submit a 3-5 page paper about a topic of your choice related to the social work field. Please be sure to cite academic sources in the paper.
- Personal Statement: Please write a personal statement (3-5 double spaced pages) that discusses your interest in the social work profession and your reasons for pursuing the MSW degree. Please address the following points in your statement:
  - The reasons you are pursuing the MSW degree at this time
  - Your field of career interest within social work and the ways that you envision the MSW degree preparing you to work effectively in that field
  - Your career goals following graduation
  - Your reasons for choosing Samford's MSW program

**Advanced Standing Applicants must also submit:**

- Field Evaluation: Please submit the final evaluation from your undergraduate social work field placement experience. This evaluation should be completed by the social worker who supervised your field placement and/or the faculty member who oversaw the field placement. If you don't have a copy of your field evaluation, please have your field supervisor write a letter that discusses the nature and quality of the work that you performed during the field placement, then upload that letter.

### **English Proficiency Requirement**

International applicants or American citizens who learned English as a second language must score at least 550 (paper), 213 (computer), or 80 (internet) on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

### **Non-Repetition of BSW Program Content**

The Samford University MSW Program avoids having BSW graduates repeat content that has been mastered in their undergraduate programs by awarding advanced standing status to qualified individuals.

### **Advanced Standing**

The criteria for advanced standing are as follows:

- Applicants must hold a baccalaureate social work degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), recognized through CSWE's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service, or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors. Please note: A completed bachelor's degree in social work, as evidenced by an official college/university transcript, is required prior to enrollment. Applicants may receive conditional acceptance into the MSW Program by submitting a transcript that demonstrates that they are enrolled in their final semester of undergraduate coursework. The conditional status is removed upon receipt of an official transcript demonstrating that the baccalaureate degree has been completed.
- Applicants must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.00 on a 4.0 scale or a minimum of a 3.2 GPA during their last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework.
- Applicants must have received a grade of B- or higher in all required undergraduate social work courses. Please note: Applicants with a grade lower than B- in no more than two social work courses may apply for Advanced Standing. If accepted, these students will be required to complete analogous courses in the Samford University MSW Program with a grade of B- or higher. These courses will be required in addition to all courses required for Advanced Standing and may not be substituted for required MSW courses or for required MSW Program electives. Applicants who have more than two courses with grades lower than B- are not eligible for Advanced Standing, but may apply for admission to the full MSW Program if they meet the admission criteria.

### **Transfer Policy**

The MSW Program policy regarding the transfer of credits is as follows:

*External Transfer of Credits:* Students may transfer up to 12 credits of Foundation Sequence coursework from another CSWE-accredited MSW program. Students must submit the course syllabus for the actual course they completed (a syllabus from the same course offered in a different term or format is not acceptable) via an online submission form. The course syllabus and request for transfer credit will be reviewed by the instructor of the analogous Samford MSW

Program course and by the MSW Program Director, who will make the final decision regarding awarding transfer credit. Students who are requesting transfer credit may make this request during the application process or immediately after they are admitted to the program. Transfer credit may be requested for any course in the Foundation Sequence.

*Internal Transfer of Credits:* Students who are enrolled in the final year of an undergraduate program of study at Samford University may be permitted to complete courses from the Foundation Sequence of the MSW Program in place of undergraduate elective courses and/or in lieu of similar courses required by their undergraduate program of study. Such students retain their undergraduate status and are not admitted to the MSW Program, nor are they guaranteed admission to the MSW Program in the future. These students may apply for entry into the Samford University MSW Program by following the standard application procedure required of all prospective students. After their undergraduate degree has been awarded, qualified students may be admitted into the MSW program. These students may be permitted to transfer up to 30 Foundation Sequence MSW course credits completed during the final year of undergraduate studies into the MSW Program. In order to be eligible for this internal transfer program, students must have received a grade of “B-” or higher for each course they wish to transfer. Students must be pre-approved by the directors of both their undergraduate program of study and the MSW Program prior to enrolling in graduate-level courses. The pre-approval of both directors is necessary in order to ensure that students who participate in this program have the academic ability and background necessary to succeed in the courses.

### **No Credit for Life Experience or Work Experience**

The Samford University MSW Program does not award academic credit for life experience or previous work experience.

### **Grading Policies**

MSW Program students are evaluated using the following grading scale:

<b>A</b> 93-100%	<b>B+</b> 87-89.9%	<b>C+</b> 77-79.9%	<b>D+</b> 67-69.9%	<b>F</b> 59.9% and below
<b>A-</b> 90-92.9%	<b>B</b> 83-86.9%	<b>C</b> 73-76.9%	<b>D</b> 63-66.9%	
	<b>B-</b> 80-82.9%	<b>C-</b> 70-72.9%	<b>D-</b> 60-62.9%	

#### **Grading policies for field placement:**

MSW Program students are assigned a grade from the grading scale (see above) for each Field Placement course. The grade includes both assignments graded by the field instructor (such as process recordings, field logs, and journal article reviews), as well as a grade for Field Placement Performance. The Field Placement Performance Grade is based on the following criteria:

- a. Professionalism in communication, dress, appearance, and behavior
- b. Adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics and other applicable ethical codes
- c. Effectiveness in performing assigned professional tasks
- d. Completion of Student Learning Contract Goals
- e. Progress toward mastery of the 11 Competencies and attendant practice behaviors as specified in the Student Learning Contract

At the end of the semester, the Field Instructor (the agency-based staff person who provides on-site supervision for the field student) recommends a Field Placement Performance Grade for the student. The final Field Placement Performance Grade is determined by the Field Liaison (the Samford University faculty member who oversees the field placement experience).

Students are expected to behave in an appropriate and professional manner at all times. This expectation requires students to dress modestly and professionally, to use professional language, to show appropriate respect for administrators, faculty, staff, students, and clients, to abide by all policies of Samford University, the MSW Program, and the field agency, and to be punctual. Inappropriate behavior will be addressed by the Field Instructor, who will discuss the behavior with the student and report it to the Field Liaison. If the behavior continues despite this informal intervention, or if the behavior is extremely inappropriate, a formal remediation process will be utilized. This process requires the student, the Field Instructor, and the Field Liaison to develop a written behavioral contract that specifies the behavioral changes that the student must make, as well as the consequences that will occur if the changes are not made. Consequences may include termination of the field placement or a grade reduction. All behavioral contracts must be reviewed and signed by the Director of Field Education and the MSW Program Director. The student retains the right to utilize the Grievance Procedure if he/she is dissatisfied with the outcome of the process outlined above.

### **Grievance Procedure**

Samford University's student complaint process is outlined in the university's student handbook. The policy (which is reproduced below) shall serve as the MSW Program's grievance process.

#### **Samford University Student Complaint Process**

Samford University is a community that respects individuals and their rights. The campus judiciary process is designed to afford fundamental fairness to students involved in violations of campus rules and regulations. The values violation process is well defined and is followed as a means of assuring fairness.

Issues occasionally arise outside the areas governed by the campus judiciary process. In the spirit of community, individuals should discuss candidly with those most directly involved their complaints, disagreements or misunderstandings, since those most directly involved deal best with most issues. It is a fact of group life that no individual can have his or her way in all circumstances. In cases where matters seem difficult to resolve, students may resort to this official student complaint process.

If a student has a complaint about an academic matter, the student should confer with the professor(s) or individual(s) involved. Should the concern persist, the student should speak with

the chair or supervisor of the department. If resolution is not found, the student should confer with the dean of the school or college involved. If the issue cannot be resolved at the levels mentioned above, the student may take the concern to the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President. If the issue remains unsettled, the student may present the concern in writing to the president of the university.

If a student has a complaint about a nonacademic matter, the student should confer with the individual(s) involved. If resolution is not found, the student should speak with the supervisor of the office or unit involved. If the issue cannot be resolved at the levels mentioned above, the student may appeal to the vice president who is responsible for oversight of the area at issue. If the issue remains unsettled, the student may present the concern in writing to the president of the university.

### **Termination for Reasons of Academic and/or Professional Performance**

MSW Program students are required to abide by the Samford University Academic Integrity Policy, the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, and the Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners Standards of Professional Conduct and Ethics. Students who are completing field placement assignments in other states or countries are required to abide by the ethical codes of the jurisdictions in which they are practicing.

#### **Samford University Academic Integrity Policies (From the Samford University Student Handbook)**

A degree from Samford University is evidence of achievement in scholarship and citizenship. Activities and attitudes should be consistent with high academic standards and Christian commitment and should be in keeping with the philosophy and mission of the University. At Samford, academic integrity is expected of every community member in all endeavors and includes a commitment to honesty, fairness, trustworthiness, and respect.

The University Statement on Academic Dishonesty is as follows: students, upon enrollment, enter into a voluntary association with Samford University. They must be willing to observe high standards of intellectual integrity, respect knowledge, and practice academic honesty. Those who cheat on an examination or class assignment are not only academically dishonest, but also are deficient in the scholarly maturity necessary for college study. Those who engage in academic dishonesty are subject to severe punishment. The more dependent, the more inevitable becomes ultimate failure, often accompanied by public disgrace. Any act to obtain an unfair academic advantage is considered dishonest.

Academic integrity violations are acts of academic misconduct. The term academic integrity violation includes, but is not limited to, the following acts:

- (1) Offering for course credit as one's own work, in whole or in part, the work of another.
- (2) Plagiarism, that is, incorporating into one's work offered for course credit passages taken either word for word or in substance from a work of another, unless the student credits the original author and identifies the original author's work with quotation marks, footnotes, or another appropriate written explanation.

- (3) Offering for course credit one's own work, but work that one has previously offered for course credit in another course, unless one secures permission to do so prior to submission from the instructor in whose course the work is being offered.
- (4) Obtaining an unauthorized copy of a test or assignment in advance of its scheduled administration.
- (5) Taking an examination for another student or knowingly permitting another person to take an examination for oneself.
- (6) Giving, receiving, or obtaining information pertaining to an examination during an examination period, unless such action is authorized by the instructor giving the examination.
- (7) Divulging the contents of an essay or objective examination to a student who has not taken the exam.
- (8) Taking, keeping, misplacing, or tampering with the property of Samford University, a faculty member, or another student, if one knows or should reasonably know that one would, by such conduct, obtain an unfair academic advantage. This section is intended to include, but not be limited to, material in a university library.
- (9) Failing to follow the instructions of a professor in completing an assignment or examination, if one knows or should reasonably know that one would, by such conduct, obtain an unfair academic advantage.
- (10) Witnessing conduct which one knows or should reasonably know is dishonorable and failing to report it.
- (11) Altering or falsifying academic or student record documents such as transcripts, change of grade forms, University excuses, and add/drop forms.
- (12) Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on an examination, assignment, project, or other academic assignment.
- (13) Making a false report of academic dishonesty.
- (14) Fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data, results, analyses, or other studies, presenting the results of research or studies not actually performed, or manipulating or altering data to achieve a desired result, including the failure to report or suppression of conflicting or unwanted data.

Please go to the Student Records web site to view more information about the procedures and possible sanctions involved with a violation of academic integrity.

Students may be sanctioned by the MSW Program for violations of the academic integrity policy and violations of professional ethical standards (including the NASW Code of Ethics, the Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners Standards of Professional Conduct and Ethics, and other relevant policies established by regulatory agencies). MSW Program faculty have the right and the duty to impose sanctions for academic integrity policy violations. In most cases, academic integrity policy violations result in the student being assigned a grade of "F" for the course and being administratively withdrawn from the course. The MSW Program reserves the right to impose other sanctions based on the specific details of each situation. The MSW Program reserves the right to terminate a student's enrollment in the program for multiple (i.e., more than one) violations of the academic integrity policy. Students who are terminated from the program due to academic integrity policy violations have the right to appeal their termination by following the grievance procedure outlined in the MSW Program Student Handbook.

Students may not receive any grades lower than B- for social work courses or electives. Social work courses with grades lower than B- may be re-taken one time. Electives may be re-taken or replaced or satisfied with another elective. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher and may not re-take more than 2 courses during their MSW studies. When a course is retaken, both grades remain on the transcript and both are used in calculating the student's Grade Point Average (GPA). Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation and will be able to take no more than 3 courses. Students who remain on academic probation for more than two semesters and students who receive a grade lower than B- in more than two courses will be terminated from the MSW program. Students retain the right to appeal termination decisions via the grievance procedure outlined in the MSW Program Student Handbook.

Students may also be terminated from the program for violating professional ethical standards as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics, the Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners Standards of Professional Conduct and Ethics. Students are also required to obey relevant ethical codes and laws, including those of other states or countries in which they may be practicing during the course of a Field Placement experience or similar practice experience.

If a student is accused of a professional ethics code violation, the following process will be followed:

1. The Director of Field Education (or other member of the social work faculty, as designated by the MSW Program Director) will meet with the individual who has lodged the accusation. The purpose of this meeting will be to document the nature of the alleged violation and to gather the information necessary to begin an investigation of the accusation.
2. The Director of Field Education (or designee) will meet with the student, in order to give the student an opportunity to respond to the allegations.
3. The Director of Field Education (or designee) will collect additional information as needed to make a recommendation as to the disposition of the complaint.
4. The Director of Field Education (or designee) will recommend a resolution to the MSW Program Director. Whenever possible and appropriate, the resolution will allow the student a chance to remediate the situation. However, some types of severe misconduct allegations, if substantiated, will result in immediate termination from the program.
5. The Director of Field Education (or designee) and the MSW Program Director will meet with the student and will present the decision. If the decision is to terminate the student's involvement in the MSW Program, the student will receive written notice of the decision and the reasons for it. If the decision involves remediation of the problem, a written remediation plan will be developed with the student and will be signed by the student, the MSW Program Director, and the Director of Field Education (or designee).
6. The student retains the right to follow the grievance procedure outlined in the Samford University Student Handbook.

In addition to programmatic sanctions, the MSW Program Director, MSW Program Faculty and Staff, and/or the MSW Field Instructor may be required by law to report certain types of ethical violations to the proper authorities.



Students may also be terminated from the program if they test non-negative for the use of illegal substances or abuse of legal substances, as determined by random drug testing procedures. Failure to comply with drug testing protocols and procedures will also result in sanctions, which may include termination from the program. The student retains the right to appeal the termination decision via the grievance procedure outlined in the MSW Program Student Handbook.

#### Students who Experience Impairment

Section 4.05 of the NASW Code of Ethics (2008) requires social workers to be diligent in addressing impairment that may have a negative effect on their clients. Section 4.05 states:

- (a) Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.
- (b) Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.

An MSW Program student who believes that s/he is experiencing an impairment that has the potential to disrupt the treatment of clients, the job performance of field placement staff, and/or the education of fellow students has an obligation to take appropriate remedial steps. Such students should contact their advisor, the Director of Field Education, or the MSW Program Director to discuss their concerns. The MSW Program will help the student to develop a plan to resolve or manage the impairment. The MSW Program will also help the student to come to a decision about the appropriateness of continued participation in the MSW Program. The MSW Program strongly urges students to be proactive in dealing with issues of impairment. Presenting impairment as a reason for an ethical violation after the fact does not relieve the student of responsibility for the violation.

Of course, professional impairment may be recognized by someone other than the student him/herself; for example, faculty, field instructors, and/or field agency staff may notice or come to believe that a student is dealing with an impairment that prevents him/her from performing at the requisite level of professionalism. The following procedure will be utilized when addressing such concerns:

- a. Concerns will be reported to a Samford University MSW Program Faculty member. Concerns related to field placement performance will be reported to the student's faculty field liaison. Concerns observed in an academic setting will be reported to the student's academic advisor.
- b. The faculty member who is the initial contact will document the concern in writing and submit the documentation to the MSW Program Director.
- c. The MSW Program Director will convene a meeting with the faculty member who documented the concern and additional faculty members who may be involved in working with the student (for example, the student's advisor, field

- liaison, and/or the Director of Field Education). At the meeting, the faculty will develop a plan for addressing the concern.
- d. The MSW Program Director and other faculty members as designated by the Program Director will meet with the student to inform him/her of the nature of the concerns and the proposed plan. When possible and appropriate, the proposed plan will involve an opportunity for the student to remediate the concern that has been raised. However, in some situations of extreme impairment and/or inability of the student to perform within expected professional standards, the plan may involve termination from field placement and/or termination from the MSW Program. In such cases, the procedures describes above related to termination from the program for ethical violations will be followed.
  - e. If the plan involves remediation, the student is given an opportunity to give input into the plan and the final plan is then signed by the student, the Program Director, and other faculty as applicable. The original plan is retained in the records of the Program Director, with a copy provided to the student. Copies are also provided to other faculty members on an as-needed basis. The Program Director or his designee are responsible for monitoring the student's compliance with the plan.

### **Academic Advising**

The Samford University MSW Program provides both academic and professional advising for its students through multiple mechanisms. Faculty advising consists of consultation and guidance provided to students related to their courses and choice of a concentration. Faculty advising also includes professional advising in the form of consultation and guidance regarding professional development, career planning, identification of appropriate employment opportunities, application for employment, and other issues related to a student's professional career or employability.

MSW Program students are assigned a full-time MSW Program faculty member as a Faculty Advisor upon admission to the program. The advisor is typically selected based on the student's areas of interest and choice of concentration. Advisors are available to meet with their advisees on an as-needed basis throughout the academic year. Meetings can take place in person or via telephone or other communication technologies, such as Skype or FaceTime. The MSW Program strongly recommends that students schedule at least one meeting per semester with their advisors. It is the responsibility of the student to seek academic and professional advising as necessary.

In addition to the faculty advisor students are assigned an Academic Advisor through the College of Health Sciences. All course registration, course of study planning and scheduling are handled by the office of the Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management and Student Services. Unless previous arrangements are made, students will be enrolled in the courses necessary for them to remain on schedule with their chosen plan of study (e.g., Full Program, Full-time; Full Program, Part-Time; Advanced Standing Full-Time; or Advanced Standing, Part-Time). Questions about the technical aspects of course registration should be directed to the office of the Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management and Student Services. When students are scheduled to enroll in

elective courses, a staff member from the office of the Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management and Student Services will contact them to obtain instructions regarding which elective course(s) the student plans to enroll in.

Although Faculty advisors are assigned by the MSW program administration, students may request to be transferred to a different advisor. Such requests must be made in writing and addressed to the MSW Program director.

Faculty and Academic Advisors who have concerns about a student's progress and/or fitness to continue in the program are able to address these concerns with the MSW Program Director, in order to develop a plan for remediation with the student.

## **Substance Abuse Policies and Procedures**

### **Drug Screen**

The MSW Program strictly prohibits the illicit use, possession, sale, conveyance, distribution and manufacture of illegal drugs, intoxicants, or controlled substances in any amount or in any manner and the abuse of non-prescription and prescription drugs. Any student who tests non-negative for illegal, controlled, or abuse-potential substances and who cannot produce a valid and current prescription for the drug is at risk of being in violation of the NASW Code of Ethics and Alabama law. Furthermore, the NASW Code of Ethics requires social workers to take action if they have reason to believe that another social worker is engaging in impaired practice, including practicing while using illegal drugs and/or abusing legal substances. An MSW Program student who is aware that another MSW Program student is using or is in possession of illegal drugs, intoxicants, or controlled substances is obligated to report this information to an MSW Program faculty member. Additional information on drug screening can be located in the Master of Social Work Program Student Handbook.

### **Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure**

#### **Statement of Purpose**

The intent of the Substance Abuse Policy is twofold: to identify students who are chemically impaired and help them to return to a competent and safe level of practice. Emphasis is on deterrence, education, and reintegration. All aspects of the policy are conducted in good faith and with compassion, dignity, and confidentiality.

#### **Testing Procedures**

**When.** The Samford Social Work department requires the student to submit to drug testing under any or all of the following circumstances:

- Random testing as required by the field education sites for the Samford MSW program
- For cause (see Testing for Cause Statement); and
- Part of a substance abuse recovery program.

**Failure to comply.** Failure to comply with random drug testing at the specified time without administrative permission will result in suspension from field education attendance until testing is complete.

**Cost.** The cost for random testing is included in the student's program fee. If the student is tested for cause, the student will be responsible for paying the cost for the urine drug screen at the time the test is administered.

**Facility.** The Samford MSW program will utilize Employment Screening Service (ESS) for collection of specimens, and ESS will perform testing, utilizing the laboratory's policies.

**Sample Collection.** The collection techniques will adhere to the guidelines in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation 49 CFR Part 40 following chain of custody protocol. ESS will collect urine samples at the discretion of the Samford MSW program director. The process and procedure for sample collection will adhere to the contract between ESS and the Samford College of Health Sciences.

**Substances.** Substance-related disorders are listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fifth edition, (DSM-5). Substances of abuse are grouped into ten classes: alcohol, caffeine, cannabis, hallucinogens, inhalants, opioids, sedatives, stimulants, tobacco, and other (unknown). Testing may include any of these drug categories. The Department of Social Work shall have the authority to change the panel of tests without notice to include other substances as suggested by local and national reports or circumstances.

**Non-negative Results.** If a non-negative result is obtained, the urine sample will be sent to a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) certified laboratory. If the specimen results are non-negative after the screening process at the laboratory, the urine samples will be sent for Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectrometry (GCMS) confirmation. All positive results will be reported to the Medical Review Officer (MRO). After review by the (MRO), positive results will then be reported to the Field Director and Program Director. All non-negative urine samples will be frozen in a secure and locked freezer compartment at the (SAMHSA) laboratory.

### **Testing for Cause**

Any social work student suspected of abuse related to the use of drugs, including but not limited to alcohol, may be subjected to testing. The decision to drug test for cause will be drawn from those facts in light of the experience of the observers and may be based on, but not limited to:

- Observable phenomena such as direct observation of drug use and/or physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug.
- Erratic behavior, slurred speech, staggered gait, flushed face, dilated/pinpoint pupils, wide mood swings, absenteeism, tardiness, and deterioration of work performance.
- A report of drug use provided by reliable and credible sources which have been independently corroborated.
- Information that a student has caused or contributed to an accident that resulted in injury requiring treatment by a licensed healthcare professional.

- Evidence of involvement in the use, possession, sale, solicitation or transfer of drugs while on a field site premise.
- Conviction by a court, or being found guilty of a drug, alcohol or controlled substance in another legitimate jurisdiction.

Testing for cause will be conducted using the following procedure:

1. The faculty member or designated field instructor will have another healthcare provider confirm the suspicious behavior.
2. The student will be asked to leave the area and go with a faculty member or individual designated by the faculty and a witness to discuss the situation in a location ensuring privacy and confidentiality. The discussion will be documented, and the decision to drug test will be made after conferring with the Field Director, Department Chair and/or Dean.
3. If warranted, the student will submit appropriate laboratory specimens in accordance with the Substance Abuse Policy and field site policies.
4. The student will be suspended from all field education activities until the case has been reviewed by the appropriate personnel or committee designated by the dean of the School of Public Health.
5. If the lab test is negative for substances classified in the current Diagnostic and/or Clinical Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, the student will be allowed to return to class and field education activities without penalty. Arrangements to make up missed work must be initiated by the student on the first day back to class.
6. If any part of the lab test is non-negative for substances classified in the current Diagnostic and/or Clinical Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, the student is in violation of the Department of Social Work Substance Abuse Policy and the Samford University Drug and Alcohol Policy. As provided in this policy in the section entitled, “Non-negative Drug Screen, Sanctions, Treatment, Referral, Re-application, Opportunity for a Re-Test”, violations will result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion of the student (Samford University Student Handbook).
7. Confidentiality will be maintained.
8. Failure to comply with “for cause” drug testing will result in immediate administrative withdrawal and a course grade of “F”.

### **Confidentiality**

All testing information, interviews, reports, statements and test results specifically related to the individual are confidential. Drug test results will be sent to the Field Director in the Department of Social Work. Records will be maintained electronically in a secured location. While the issues of testing are confidential within the University community, the information regarding substance abuse and rehabilitation may be shared with a parent or legal guardian as provided in the following paragraph. Pursuant to the Family Educational Responsibility and Privacy Act (20 USC 1232g) Samford University may disclose, to a parent or legal guardian of a student,

information regarding any violation of a Federal, State or local law, or of any rule or policy of the institution, governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance, regardless of whether that information is contained in the student's education records, if (A) the student is under the age of 21; and (B) the institution determines that the student has committed a disciplinary violation with respect to such use or abuse.

### **Non-Negative Drug Screen, Sanctions, Treatment, Referral and Re-application, Opportunity for a Re-Test**

A non-negative drug screen will result in three different actions.

#### *1. The Samford Department of Social Work*

Field education sites cannot afford to compromise on patient safety, health and welfare. Violations of the Samford University Drug and Alcohol Policy will result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions by the Samford Department of Social Work up to and including expulsion of the student. ("Drug and Alcohol Policy" as printed in the Samford University Student Handbook). In order to assure patient safety at clinical sites, a positive drug screen will be considered evidence of drug use/abuse by the student. A non-negative drug screen of any of the following substances will result in immediate dismissal: amphetamines or similarly acting sympathomimetic, cannabis, cocaine, hallucinogens, inhalants, phencyclidine (PCP) or similarly acting arylcyclohexylamines. Action taken under the Drug and Alcohol Policy will be independent of action taken, if any, through the Student Values Process. Dismissal from the social work department is not automatically a dismissal from Samford University. The student will be ineligible to receive a letter of good standing from the dean of the program.

#### *2. Samford University*

Violations of the Samford University Code of Values will result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion of the student, ("Code of Values" as printed in the Samford University Student Handbook). Results of a non-negative drug screen will be referred by the MSW Program Director to the Associate Dean for Student Services and Values Advocacy. Action taken through the Student Values Process will be independent of action taken, if any, under the Substance Abuse Policy of the Department of Social Work.

#### *3. Referral to a Substance Abuse Treatment Program.*

A student with a non-negative drug screen will be referred to a Substance Abuse Treatment Program.

### **Opportunity to Request a Re-Test**

If a test result is non-negative, the student may request a re-test of the original urine sample. A student who desires to have the original sample re-tested must file a written request with the MSW Program Director within three (3) business days following notification of a positive drug test result. The student will be responsible for all costs of the re-test. If the re-test is negative the student will be reinstated.

### **Incidence of Recurrence**

If a non-negative test for substance abuse is found once a student is re-admitted to the MSW program, the student will be dismissed from the program and will be ineligible to return.

Furthermore, the student will be ineligible to receive a letter of good standing from the social work program.

### **Student Release Form**

As a condition of progression, each student will sign the following “Substance Abuse Policy Release Form” agreeing to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure.

Some field placement sites will require students to repeat screening measures such as an additional drug screen and background check or to meet additional requirements. In some cases, the student will be responsible for the costs of additional screenings. A list of sites that require additional screenings will be provided to students. A non-negative result on a drug screen that cannot be resolved will be communicated to the Director of Field Education.

### **Background Check**

The Samford University MSW Program requires background checks for all MSW students. Students selected for admission to the Samford University MSW Program are admitted pending the results of a background check. Each student is required to have a background check, and submit to, as requested, any additional checks once enrolled in the MSW program. The Samford University MSW Program must certify to all field placement sites that each student has had an acceptable background check. Students are required to follow the procedures established by the Samford University MSW Program.

Students must report any arrests or legal convictions that occur prior to or during their education. Reportable offenses include, but are not limited to, misdemeanors, felonies, sexual offender convictions or governmental sanctions. The Samford University MSW Program reserves the right to release information regarding the student’s criminal history to appropriate field placement organization representatives. Failure to report arrests or legal convictions will result in dismissal from the MSW Program. A student’s admission may be withdrawn or the student may be dismissed from the MSW Program due to findings from the background check. Even if a student with a criminal history is admitted to the MSW program, field sites reserve the right to deny field placements to such students. Students dismissed will be considered for readmission on a case-by-case basis depending on the particular situation.

Background check forms are sent to each student. The student is responsible for the cost of the background check. For additional information on policies related to background checks, consult the Master of Social Work Program Student Handbook.

## **Health Data and Immunization Requirements**

MSW students are responsible for maintaining health requirements. The student must have a complete Samford University Health Form and evidence of having met the health requirements, which include:

- Mantoux Tuberculin skin test or annual TB chest x-ray, completed within the last year
- Completed Hepatitis B Vaccination series
- Chicken Pox immunization (either year of disease or evidence of Vaccination series), and
- MMR and TdP

Upon acceptance to the Samford MSW program, the student should submit one completed copy of the Health Form to Student Health Services and a second completed form to the Department of Social Work.

Field placement sites may place additional health requirements for students affiliating with that agency. The student must have completed and submitted all necessary health documentation required by the University and the Department before registering for practice courses.

Students in the MSW program are responsible for keeping current all immunizations as stated in our Affiliation Agreement with field placement agencies (requirements listed above). The student shall turn in a copy of each immunization/vaccine. The student shall keep original documentation for his/her personal records for future use. The Department will not provide copies of file contents for employers, etc.

Before registration in November and April, the student must be certain the required health information is on file and current to the end of the term in which you plan to enroll.

## **Liability Insurance**

Personal liability insurance for field education practice is required for all graduate students. Samford University has coverage for liability arising from the rendering or failure to render professional social work services. Faculty and students are covered while working within the scope of their duties as faculty or as currently enrolled students. The policy is on a “claims made” form that means any claims must occur and be recorded while the policy is in force. If the coverage is discontinued, the University may arrange an extended reporting endorsement.



## **Progression Policy**

In order to progress in the MSW Program, the student must:

- Have a completed Health Data Record (with all required immunizations) updated annually and on file in University Health Services and the Department of Social Work.
- Carry health insurance while enrolled at Samford. MSW students are required to provide proof of current personal health insurance coverage. Each semester, MSW students are automatically enrolled in the University sponsored student health insurance plan. There is a charge for this coverage. To have the charge removed from his/her Samford account, a student must provide proof of insurance by completing the insurance waiver at <http://www.studentinsurance.com/Schools/AL/SU/?CollegeID=217>

*International Students:* Based upon federal regulations and University policy, all F and J visa holders are required to carry insurance that meets certain coverage requirements. Information about specific policy carriers, minimum coverage, and premium costs is available from the International Studies Office at (205) 726-4334.

- Adhere to the Code of Ethical/Professional Conduct as specified in the Samford University Catalog.
- Submit to background check and random drug testing
- Earn a grade of “B-” or better in each required or prescribed course in the MSW program. NOTE: a grade of “C,” “D,” or “F” constitutes a failure in any prescribed or required course in the MSN program.
- Maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA and may not earn a grade below B- in any course to progress in the curriculum.

## **Withdrawal Policy**

The decision to withdraw and the process of withdrawal from any course is the responsibility of the student. A student desiring to withdraw from the University must complete an official withdrawal form with the Office of Student Records (205-726-2911). This policy applies to all terms, including summer. See the current Samford University Catalog for more information on course withdrawal.

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA] is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. The rights of the FERPA heretofore assigned to parents are now transferred to their college students. These rights are:

1. Eligible students have the right to inspect and review all of the student's educational records maintained by the school. The student must contact the dean of academic services and registrar office to make an appointment to view their academic record.
2. Eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school refuses to change the records, the eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still refuses the correction, the eligible student has the right to place a statement in the records commenting on the contested information in the records.

3. Generally, Samford University must have written permission from the eligible student before releasing any information from a student's record. However, the law allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties: school employees who have a need to know, other schools to which a student is transferring, parents when a student over 18 is still a dependent, certain government officials in order to carry out lawful functions, appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student, organizations doing certain studies for the school, accrediting organizations, individuals who have obtained court orders or subpoenas, persons who need to know in cases of health and safety emergencies, state and local authorities to whom disclosure is required by state laws adopted before November 19, 1974.

Schools may also disclose, without consent, "directory type" information, such as a student's name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number. Samford University has designated the following as directory information: student name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, enrollment status, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, honors, degrees and awards received, most recent previous school attended, and photograph. An eligible student who does not wish for this information to be released without prior written consent must notify in writing the Office of the Dean of Academic Services and Registrar by the last day to Drop/Add without financial penalty in a semester or term.

### **Sexual Harrassment Policy**

As a Christian institution of higher education, Samford University has a moral commitment to the worth and dignity of all individuals. Consequently, sexual harassment is deemed unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Samford's policy of opposition to sexual harassment is not only a legal responsibility and practical utility, but stems from the university's profound commitment to Christian and moral values as expressed in its mission and purpose.

A student who believes he or she has been sexually harassed should report the incident(s) to the Assistant Dean for Student Services and Values Advocate. The Assistant Dean will advise the student of the procedures to be followed to resolve a complaint.

In all cases, the offended student will be given the option of resolving the issue informally or formally. The formal resolution of a complaint of a student toward another student will be processed through the value violation procedures as described in this handbook. Student-to-student informal resolution will be referred to and administered by the Vice President for Student Services and Enrollment Management or a designee.

### **Readmission Policy**

A student who has been dismissed from the MSW Program may apply through the office of Graduate Student Services for readmission after an intervening period of not less than one semester. The appropriate graduate admission committee will consider such requests for readmission on presentation of substantial evidence of a responsible and successful period of work or study during the intervening period. There is no guarantee, however, that a student will

be readmitted. The decision regarding readmission rests with the MSW Program Director and is based upon the faculty's evaluation of the likelihood of the applicant's successful performance in graduate coursework.

### **Format for Written Work**

The Department of Social Work uses the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Sixth Edition (2010).

### **Full-time and Part-time Status**

For Financial Aid purposes, students must register for a minimum of six credits to be considered full-time. Four credits is full time for summer term. Students who enroll in fewer than six credits spring or fall, or four credits in the summer will be considered part-time. Please note that assignment of students to full-time or part-time status for financial aid purposes does not affect rates of program completion. Because the MSW program requires 60 credits of coursework, even part-time students often complete six or nine credits per semester. Thus, a student could be considered to be a full-time MSW student for financial aid purposes, even if he or she is enrolled in the part-time study program. If a student fails to register for one semester, that student will be considered inactive.

### **Independent Study**

Guidelines for graduate students' independent study are available online. Independent study should be discussed with the faculty advisor and a written contract completed in advance of enrollment. Student's registering for an Independent Study must submit an Independent Study Contract to the faculty member overseeing the independent study.

### **Graduation and Commencement**

Commencement Exercises are held at the end of the Fall Semester and at the end of the Spring Semester. A student is required to meet all requirements for graduation as set forth in MSW Program Handbook and the Samford University Catalog in effect at the time of entrance into the program, assuming there is no interruption in enrollment of a year or more. Later changes in the requirements for graduation are not applicable to students who proceed without interruption through their chosen program of studies.

It is the MSW Program's responsibility to notify Student Records of the candidates for graduation each term. The candidate will then receive information regarding graduation via email directly from the MSW Program. It is the responsibility of the graduate student to see that all requirements for graduation are met. Students must have a 3.0 GPA to graduate

## **Student Participation/Representation in MSW Program Policy Development**

As an inclusive Christian learning community, the MSW Program seeks to integrate students into nearly all aspects of the program, including encouraging student participation in the formulation and modification of academic and student affairs policies. Student participation in policy formulation and modification can occur via informal or formal processes. Informally, students are welcome to approach faculty members and administrators with suggestions regarding MSW Program policies and practices. In order to encourage such informal participation, the faculty spend a significant amount of time during the program orientation discussing the program's desire to be a Christian learning community. Openness to input and opportunities for consensus and shared decision-making are discussed as defining features of such a community and students are encouraged to give feedback and share ideas with faculty and staff.

In addition to informal participation in policy-related decisions, students also have the right and responsibility of formal involvement in policy formulation and modification. Formal involvement occurs in the following manners:

- 10 The President and Vice-President of the Graduate Social Work Student Organization (GSWSO) may meet each month with the MSW Program Director. During this meeting, the President and Vice-President are able to present student concerns to the Director and to discuss whether policy formulation and/or modification is necessary. The President and Vice-President are elected by their peers and serve as representatives of the MSW Program student body. These officers may relay concerns that have been addressed to them by other students. They may also relay concerns that they have noticed personally and/or in their roles as student leaders.
- 11 The GSWSO President and Vice-President are also invited to attend monthly meetings of MSW Program faculty, in order to present the student point of view on policies and issues being addressed by the faculty. The President and Vice-President attend only the first part of each meeting, in order to allow the faculty time to address sensitive issues outside the purview of the GSWSO (for example, issues related to confidential student information or disciplinary actions).
- 12 The GSWSO appoints a student representative to the following standing committees:
  - a. Curriculum
  - b. Assessment
- 13 When appropriate, GSWSO is also invited to appoint a student representative to ad hoc committees that have been formed to address specific issues related to the MSW Program.

## **Student Organization**

The MSW Program encourages and provides opportunities for student organization by sponsoring the Graduate Social Work Student Organization (GSWSO). The GSWSO represents the student body in official interactions with the faculty and administration of the MSW Program. GSWSO officers, including a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, are elected during the first two weeks of the fall semester. The President, with the assistance of the Vice-President, leads regular meetings of the GSWSO officers, as well as open meetings. The President and Vice-President also attend monthly meetings with the MSW Program Director and with the MSW Program faculty, in order to represent the student body and to participate in policy formulation and modification. The GSWSO Secretary is responsible for communicating

with the student body about the work of the GSWSO officers and about GSWSO events. The MSW Program provides meeting space for GSWSO open meetings and officer's meetings and also provides a small budget for the GSWSO. The GSWSO is also free to assume additional functions and roles, such as planning educational and social events for students, organizing around political, social, and/or community issues of interest to social workers, and raising funds (for the organization itself and/or for charitable causes). The faculty encourage the GSWSO to be actively involved in the life of the program and to be creative in developing new opportunities for MSW students.

## **Section III: Campus Services and Information**

### **Books and Supplies**

All books and supplies are available online or at the Samford University Bookstore located on the first floor of the University Center. Required books are identified on a shelf card listing the course name, number and professor's name. Used books are sometimes available.

The Bookstore is open from 7:45 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. on Monday and Thursday from 7:45 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. Students can view a list of required textbooks and materials prior to each term at [www.bookstore.samford.edu](http://www.bookstore.samford.edu).

### **Campus Safety**

The Department of Campus Safety is staffed 24 hours a day, providing immediate availability for emergency response, performance of security patrols, monitoring of persons on campus, lockouts, dead batteries, and providing other services to the campus community. Campus Safety may be reached at 726-2020.

### **Inclement Weather**

Announcements of the closing of the University campus are recorded on the University switchboard, 726-3673 (SAM-FORD). In addition, the Public Relations Office of the University notifies local television and radio station of the closing.

### **Emergency Notification**

Text Message/RAVE ALERT System: University faculty, staff, and students may sign up to receive emergency-related text messages via the RAVE alert registration link at [www.ops.samford.edu](http://www.ops.samford.edu).

Fire Alarm: When a fire alarm is activated, evacuation is mandatory.

All-Hazards Warning Bells: When the All-Hazards Warning Bells are activated, shelter in place.

E-mail: Emergency-related e-mails are sent to everyone with a samford.edu address.

Residence Life: University Residences have specific procedures for alerting people in individual halls via Resident Assistants, phones, and signage.

Local Media: The University works with the news media (radio, TV, newspapers, and Internet) to help spread the word.

Samford Cable Television: The Bulldog Cinema Channel (30) and the Information Channel (36) may broadcast emergency information.

Samford Homepage: Emergency updates are posted on [www.samford.edu](http://www.samford.edu).

## **Smoking Policy**

Effective March 1, 2013, the smoking policy states:

To protect and promote the health and welfare of its faculty, staff, and students, Samford University is committed to promoting an environment conducive to health promotion by limiting smoking areas on its campus. In so doing, the following guideline applies to all university owned, leased, and operated facilities and vehicles. Samford University has designated “Smoking Areas” outside University facilities. Smoking is prohibited in all other interior and exterior areas of campus.

Students violating the smoking policy will be subject to disciplinary action as stipulated in the Student Handbook.

Designated smoking areas are indicated below and can be identified by a pad and smoking urn that will be in place for ashes.

### **Designated smoking areas (smoking areas are identified by signage and smoking urn):**

#### Residential areas

- West Campus – North side of parking deck across from Mountainview residence hall; and south side of Neal Road at crosswalk
- Central Campus – North side of Vail and Smith Halls near parking deck
- Beeson Woods – Area between Ralph and Orlean Halls; and the south parking lot between Evergreen and Treetop Halls

#### Non-residential areas

- East side of Ingalls Hall in the parking lot median
- North side of the Center for Healing Arts, west of the main entrance 24
- North West corner of parking lot next to Hodges Chapel; currently there is a concrete pad that can be used
- North side of Beeson University Center away from the building next to fence area
- West side of Law Library across from Law Student patio area
- North side of Brooks Hall

Students with questions should contact Garry Atkins, Assistant Dean for Student Services.

## **Computer Labs**

Academic buildings at Samford house general access computer laboratories for student use. Popular software titles in areas such as word processing, spreadsheet analysis and presentation preparation are provided in these laboratories. Information about the location and hours of the labs is available from the Computing Laboratories Manager or on Samford’s Web page at

<http://www.samford.edu/labs/>. The Computer Lab Manager, Davis Library, (205) 726-2106, schedules use of these labs, and a schedule of open times is published each term.

### **Remote Access Service (Citrix)**

Citrix is a remote access service which allows Samford University to make certain software applications available from a web browser. Applications that were formerly only accessible in a Samford University computer lab or workstation will be available anywhere! All you need to access these application is a web browser and the Citrix Receiver.

Only current students and employees with a valid Samford user name and password can log into <https://apps.samford.edu> If a student is not enrolled and registered for the current term, he/she will not have access.

Operating Systems that are supported through Citrix include Windows, Apple OSX, Linux, and Chrome OS. Software that is available through the service includes Microsoft Office, ArchMap, Mathematica, SPSS, and MiniTab. More information regarding Citrix usage can be found on the Technology Services website at [www.samford.edu/ts](http://www.samford.edu/ts)

### **Samford Email Account**

Every Samford student is assigned an email account. Students are required to read their Samford email every day. The School does not use personal email accounts to communicate with enrolled students. For information on how to forward your Samford Bulldog email account to your personal email account, contact Technology Services. ([www.samford.edu/ts](http://www.samford.edu/ts))

### **Samford University Campus Portal**

Students are encouraged to take advantage of all the services offered through the campus portal. By clicking on the Banner button, students may obtain important information such as: transcripts, grades, class schedules, and financial aid information.

### **Library Services**

Samford offers a wealth of library resources featuring extensive print and electronic collections, as well as multimedia resources that include microfilm, music scores, and audio and video recordings. The online catalog and other full-text electronic resources are available to students 24/7 via the Internet. Other libraries in the Birmingham area cooperate with Samford on a 26 reciprocal basis, increasing the variety of resources directly available to the Samford community.

The Samford University Library is the primary library for all students, faculty, and staff. In addition to books, ebooks, periodicals, unique collections, and full-text electronic resources, the library houses a large government documents collection—serving as an official repository. Individualized and group instruction in the use of library resources is provided on a regular basis by librarians. A computer laboratory, computer classroom, individual and group study rooms,

multimedia viewing and listening rooms, meeting rooms with advanced presentation and conferencing capabilities, and a lounge area are available for use.

For more information about the library, see the Library Web page at <http://library.samford.edu/> and for more information about specific library resources just for nursing students see the Nursing Research Guide at <http://samford.libguides.com/nursing>. For assistance with any research endeavors, just ASK US!  
<http://samford.libanswers.com/index.php>.

### **Mailing Address and Name Changes**

Students must notify Samford should their address and/ or name change. In the event that a student does not change their address, important information may not be received. Changes are the student's responsibility and should be made via the Samford Portal. Change of name requires a copy of the marriage certificate or other legal document and must be completed by the Financial Aid Office. It is also the student's responsibility to notify the Department of Social Work of any changes.

### **Parking**

Vehicles must display a Samford University parking decal if parked on campus. Decals may be obtained for a nominal fee from the Hub located in the University Center.

### **University Health Services**

Conveniently located in F. Page Seibert Hall, University Health Services has three examination rooms, a treatment room, triage area and on-site CLIA-certified lab and x-ray. The clinic entrance is located on the east side of Seibert Hall, adjacent to the commuter parking lot. The clinic provides primary medical care services, including acute care for illness and injuries, health maintenance and management of stable, chronic conditions.

### **Professional Liability Insurance**

Personal liability insurance for clinical practice is required for all graduate students. Samford University has coverage for liability arising from the rendering or failure to render professional social work services. Faculty and students are covered while working within the scope of their duties as faculty or as currently enrolled students. The policy is on a "claims made" form that means any claims must occur and be recorded while the policy is in force. If the coverage is discontinued, the University may arrange an extended reporting endorsement.

### **Course Evaluations**

Formal evaluation forms are available online near the end of each course to all graduate students. The purposes of these evaluations are to foster student contributions to the planning



and revising of curriculum and to indicate areas of change that would enhance the learning environment. These evaluations provide a mechanism for direct communication with administration regarding the curriculum. After completion, evaluations are submitted on-line. In the past, input from these evaluations has made it possible for the faculty to document changes that are requested by students.

Additionally, faculty responsible for a course may administer informal course evaluations. Students are encouraged to thoughtfully complete these forms. The course faculty utilize student input in the ongoing development and refinement of courses.

### **Exit and Graduate Evaluations**

Prior to graduation, student should receive an Exit Evaluation Form on-line. On this evaluation form, students will be asked to evaluate their entire program of study and their achievement of the goals and competencies of their particular program. A year after graduation, a one-year follow-up evaluation form will be sent to MSN graduates. This form and an employer survey will be similar to other evaluations, but they will allow the faculty to gain graduates' and employers' perspectives about the programs of study after graduates have had time to apply the knowledge and skills obtained during the educational experience.

## **Section IV: Releases and Permissions**

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY RELEASE FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the Samford University MSW Program Substance Abuse Policy and agree as an MSW Program student to comply with all aspects of the policy as written including urine testing.

I agree that ESS, a drug testing facility, is authorized by me to provide the results of this test to the MSW Program Director (or the Director's designee) for use in enforcing the Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure.

I agree to indemnify and hold ESS and its directors, officers, employees and agents harmless from and against any and all liabilities or judgments arising out of any claim related to 1) compliance of Samford University with federal and state law and 2) Samford University's interpretation, use and confidentiality of the test results, except with ESS is found to have acted negligently with respect to such matters.

I agree to indemnify and hold Samford University and its trustees, officers, employees and agents harmless from and against any and all liabilities or judgments arising out of any claim related to 1) compliance of ESS with federal and state law and 2) ESS's interpretation, use and confidentiality of the test results.

I further understand, acknowledge and agree that my failure to adhere to the conditions specified in this policy will result in my dismissal from the Samford University MSW Program.

Furthermore, I agree to abide by the provisions for determining dismissal and to follow the conditions of re-acceptance as outlined.

I acknowledge that under the Family Education Responsibility and Privacy Act, 20 USC Section 1232g, Samford University may disclose, to a parent or legal guardian of a student, information regarding any violation of any Federal, State or local law, or of any rule or policy of the institution, governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance, regardless of whether that information is contained in the student's education record, if (A) the student is under the age of 21; and (B) the institution determines that the student has committed a disciplinary violation with respect to such use or possession. I agree that a positive drug screen will be considered a determination by Samford University that I have committed a disciplinary violation with respect to such use or possession and if I am under the age of 21 years Samford University may disclose such information to my parent(s) or legal guardian.

I represent and certify that as of the date of my execution of this document I am \_\_\_\_\_ years of age. Failure to comply with random drug testing at the specified time without administrative permission will result in suspension from clinical attendance until testing is complete. Failure to comply with random drug testing at the specified times without administrative permission will result in suspension from clinical attendance until testing is complete. Failure to comply with "for cause" drug testing will result in immediate administrative withdrawal and a course grade of "F".

Student printed name/signature/date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness signature/date \_\_\_\_\_

Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure

Modified from: Burriss, R. 2002. Arkansas Tech University. SREB Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing (CCEN). 37

**SAMFORD UNIVERSITY MSW PROGRAM CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT**

I hereby agree to hold in confidence any information that I am made aware of pertaining to patients and/or their families during all of my clinical experiences while I am a student in the Samford University MSW Program. I recognize that client records and information are confidential and private and that I will share information only with those authorized to have the information as necessary to care for the client. I will not disclose any information to any unauthorized person, or permit any person to examine or make copies of any report or document prepared by me, coming into my possession or to which I have access. I will not use client names or other identifying information on assignments that I submit to fulfill course requirements. I further agree never to use any information for my advantage or personal gain.

I realize that the unauthorized disclosure of information by me may violate state or federal laws, and that unauthorized release of information may result in my dismissal from school and legal action against me.

I have read this agreement, understand it, and agree to abide by it.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**RECEIPT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK**

I, (please print) \_\_\_\_\_, am aware the **Samford University MSW Program Handbook** is online and acknowledge responsibility for reviewing the contents contained therein. I will clarify with my advisor, any part(s) I do not understand. I further understand that failure to follow these rules and regulations contained in the handbook may result in various consequences, according to the infraction.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERMISSION TO PROVIDE REFERENCES**

I, (please print) \_\_\_\_\_, realize that in the future, references will be requested by potential employers. I give permission to the Samford University MSW Program administration and/or faculty to provide the requested information. A copy will also be directed to the Student File.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERMISSION TO DISPLAY/PRESENT WORK**

I, (please print) \_\_\_\_\_, hereby give the Samford University MSW Program permission to display and/or present examples of my work as part of a program review process by accrediting or approving organizations and their designated personnel.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_