

STUDENT ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Professional Conduct, Discipline, and Appeals

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity University Policies of Academic Integrity

A university, by its nature, strives to foster and recognize originality of thought. Originality can only be recognized, however, when people acknowledge the sources of ideas and works that are not their own. Therefore, students must maintain the highest standards with regard to honesty, effort, and performance. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on exams, and false authorship and destruction of library materials. This policy will be rigorously enforced and without discrimination.

Violations of Academic Integrity

Plagiarism occurs when individuals attempt to present as their own what has come from another source. Plagiarism takes place whether such theft is accidental or deliberate. Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to:

- Using the ideas of another person, whether or not such ideas are paraphrased, from whatever source including oral, print, broadcast, or computer-mediated communication.
- Rewriting borrowed material by simply dropping a word here and there, substituting a few words for others, or moving around words or sentences.
- Presenting borrowed material without placing quotation marks around borrowed material in the approved style. It is no defense to claim that one has "forgotten" to do so.
- Presenting as one's own an assignment, paper or computer program partially or wholly prepared by another person, whether by another student, friend, or by a business or online service that sells or distributes such papers and programs.

Cheating occurs when individuals share course materials or information when it is unauthorized or prohibited. Examples of cheating include but are not limited to:

- Having or using unauthorized material at an examination, test, or quiz, or copying another student's assignment or laboratory report
- Permitting another student to copy an assignment, paper, computer program, project, examination, test, or quiz
- Obtaining and/or using an examination, test, or quiz prior to its administration
- Having another person act as proxy and take an examination, test, or quiz

Additional violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to:

- Theft, destruction, or tampering with library materials, audio and videotapes, computer hardware or software, or other materials necessary for a course

- The submission or presentation of a falsified excuse for an absence from a course requirement, examination, test, or quiz
- The presentation of false identification or credentials in order to gain admission to a course, examination, test, quiz, or degree program
- Submission of a paper or project to more than one course during the time in which a student is attending Fordham University, without explicit permission from the instructors

Fundamental to academic integrity are the values embraced by the NASW professional code of ethics—honesty and truth. Students of the Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service are expected to adhere to the standards of professional ethics as defined in the NASW Code of Ethics and the Core Performance Standards.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Limited usage of generative AI tools may be allowed for specific assignments in this course, enabling exploration of ideas, complex data analysis, and creative solution development, when explicitly permitted by the instructor. When using these tools, it is mandatory to clearly indicate the sections of your work that were generated using them for proper attribution and transparency, and indicate the prompts and software versions that were used. It is critical to adhere to ethical standards by refraining from activities like plagiarism or creating misleading content. Additional guidelines or restrictions will be provided for specific assignments.

All forms of academic dishonesty and plagiarism represent a violation of the School's Performance Standards. Any student found submitting plagiarized work, or submitting fraudulent or misrepresentative documents as academic assignments or as field documentation, is subject to disciplinary actions, which may include immediate termination from the program.

Ph.D. Students

Because of the diverse definitions of plagiarism, the faculty member, in consultation with the doctoral program director, will make the determination if plagiarism has occurred. If plagiarism occurs, the student will receive an F for the course if it involves course work, an F in the examination if it involves the comprehensive examination, and a rejection of the dissertation if the plagiarism occurs in the dissertation. The director makes a determination if plagiarism occurred and the seriousness of this incident and applies appropriate sanctions such as suspension or expulsion. The student can bring the charge of plagiarism to the Doctoral Curriculum and Policy Committee for final review.

Academic Standing and Discipline

GSS Dismissal Policy

A student may be dismissed from GSS for the following reasons:

1. Failure to maintain a 3.0 grade point average
2. Failure to meet performance requirements of Field Placement
3. Two final grades of "F"
4. Violation of Academic Integrity
5. Violation of University Code of Conduct

Student Review Procedures (M.S.W. Students)

Consultation with Academic Adviser or Field Adviser

If a student has a concern about an academic course or field instruction, the first step is to consult with one's academic or field adviser. If the concern is related to field instruction, after an assessment of the situation with the student and the field instructor, the field adviser would consult with the administrators in the field education department. Depending on the situation, a contract for change may be developed, or in extreme cases, a field instructor or field placement setting might be changed. In non-field academic concerns, the adviser would consult with the assistant dean of student services if a revision of the student's plan of study is indicated. This is often precipitated by a change in a student's health or financial situation.

Administrative Review Committee

Administrative Review for Academic Course Concerns

These reviews are indicated when a student fails a course, falls below the minimum required cumulative grade point average of 3.0, or there is a concern about academic integrity. It consists of a meeting with a dean, the student and a faculty member. The outcome of the review may lead to a reduced course load, a leave of absence from the program, a recommendation that a student withdraw from the program or be referred to the Committee on Academic Progress (CAP).

Administrative Review for Field Instruction

These reviews are held when concerns regarding a student's performance in field instruction are viewed as serious in nature. It consists of a meeting with the student, a dean, a member of the field education team, the field advisor and the field supervisor.

Committee members may recommend a new educational agreement, a change of field placement, withdrawal from field instruction or withdrawal from the program, or be referred to the Committee on Academic Progress (CAP).

Committee on Academic Progress (CAP)

There is an established procedure to determine if a student is experiencing academic difficulty in academic course work and/or field instruction should continue enrollment in the MSW program. This frequently takes place following the outcome of an Administrative Review. In certain circumstances a student can request a CAP to review the circumstances of the decision of the Administrative Review Committee.

The CAP is convened and chaired by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs after receiving a request in writing. The committee has three members, including the associate dean for academic affairs, two faculty members, and a member of the field education department if the CAP is related to field issues. No one participating in the CAP process should have any personal interest in the outcome of the CAP. Possible outcomes of the CAP are dismissal from the program, a recommended leave of absence, and if related to field instruction a replacement of the field site may be recommended. After the committee deliberates and comes to a decision, the decision will be communicated to the student both verbally and in writing. The student has 10 days to appeal the decision to the dean of GSS.

Failure to Maintain a 3.0 Grade Point Average

Students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) to remain in good academic standing. Student Services is responsible for

monitoring students' academic progress at the end of each semester. When a student's cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0, these steps are followed:

1. Student is placed on academic probation. Students are notified of this in writing. The student will be notified that they are given one semester to improve their GPA. This communication will take place by email. Recommendations such as reducing course load or accessing the resources of the University supports, including the writing center or counseling center may be indicated.
2. The student's progress is monitored by the Office of Student Services.
3. If the student does not have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above in the following term, the student will be notified in writing that they are dismissed from the program.

Violation of Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold academic integrity at all times. The policy on academic integrity is attached to every master syllabus.

Criteria:

- Plagiarism
- Cheating
- Other (e.g., theft, destruction or tampering with library materials, submission or presentation of a falsified excuse for an absence from a course requirement, presentation of false identification or credentials to gain admission to a course, exam, or degree program, submission of a paper or project to more than one course)

Violations of academic integrity that are identified by the professor or other members of GSS are handled in the following manner:

1. Notification is made to the Office of Student Services. The student's overall performance of the program and alleged violation is then reviewed in detail.
2. If appropriate explanation and resolution is reached in the meeting then a letter summarizing the meeting and the outcome is sent to the student and kept on file.
3. If no resolution is reached then an Administrative Review takes place.

All decisions and communications with the student are documented and placed in the student's file.

Initiating a Grievance

If a student believes that they have been treated unfairly as to treatment in the classroom, final course grades, or academic probation, suspension or dismissal, they have the right to seek a formal review.

Procedures

The student is instructed by the Office of Student Services to make a complaint to the faculty member or administrator responsible for the treatment regarded as unfair, and to request a formal meeting to discuss the problem. If a satisfactory resolution of the complaint is not reached, the student is then expected to appeal promptly to the chairperson of the curriculum area pertinent to the academic area in written form. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached after conferring with the appropriate chairperson, the student has the option of further appeal to the associate dean for academic affairs. The chairperson, the faculty member and the associate dean for academic affairs have a responsibility to act upon the appeal.

Violation of the University Code of Conduct

As a member of the larger Fordham University community, M.S.W. students must also meet the Code of Conduct standards of Fordham University. If an M.S.W. student from GSS has been found responsible for violating a University rule under the Code of Conduct the University may impose a sanction or combination of sanctions. Violations include, but are not limited to harassment of another person, whether physical, sexual or verbal, either oral or written; physical abuse, sexual abuse, threats, intimidation, coercion, and/or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person; and the unauthorized selling, purchasing, producing, or possession of any lethal weapons, explosives, fireworks, or incendiary device.

When a Code of Conduct violation is alleged, a process begins with the Fordham University dean of students, and the Graduate School of Social Service. The following steps are taken by the University dean of students:

1. There is a preliminary investigation to determine whether the situation can be handled informally by mutual consent without the initiation of a formal hearing.
2. When a hearing is indicated the process is as follows:
 - a. The student accused is notified in writing by the dean of students and shall have the opportunity for a hearing to discuss the violation(s).
 - b. The hearing is a meeting with the dean of students or designee and the student who will present his or her full and final version of the facts.
3. An accused student shall be free from student conduct sanctions pending conclusion of the hearing unless the dean of students determines there is a risk to the student or the University community.
4. When a student has been found responsible for violating a rule under the University Code of Conduct, the sanction imposed can range from disciplinary reprimand, suspension from the University, to expulsion from the University. The dean of students informs the student of the sanction verbally and in writing.
5. The assistant dean of student students works closely with the University dean of students in such incidents.

Non-Academic Grievances

Social work students are encouraged to inform the Office of Student Services if such incidents occur. The office will facilitate the students communication with Fordham University Dean of Students, Dr. Jennifer Campbell. Complaints of discrimination or harassment by students against other students should be brought to the Office of Student Services.

Appeals and Grievances (Ph.D. Students) Overview

If a student believes they have been aggrieved by a program practice or policy or by an action of a faculty member or staff member, they should:

1. Present their complaint in writing to the director of the Ph.D. in social work program.
2. At the director's discretion, they will attempt to resolve or bring it before the faculty members of the Doctoral Curriculum and Policy Committee.
3. If the student disagrees with the decision of the Doctoral Curriculum and Policy Committee, the student may bring the grievance to the

dean of the Graduate School of Social Service. The dean's decision is final.

General Procedures

All grievances must be clear and succinct. They must include:

- A statement specifying the specific action that is being grieved
- The grounds for the grievance
- The requested action or relief that the student is seeking
- All grievances must be made in writing. All decisions will be reported to the student in writing. Copies of the student's grievance and the decisions will be placed in the student's academic file.

Grade Appeals

Grades may be appealed when a student believes that a faculty member has used unfair or capricious practices to arrive at a grading decision or has miscalculated a grade.

- The student should appeal the grading decision first with the faculty member.
- If the student disagrees with the results of the meeting with the faculty member, the student may appeal the decision to the director of the Ph.D. in social work program. The appeal must be made in writing.
- If the student disagrees with the director's decision, the student appeal the decision to the faculty members of the Doctoral Curriculum and Policy Committee.
- If the student disagrees with the decision of the Doctoral Curriculum and Policy Committee, the student may appeal the decision to the dean of the Graduate School of Social Service. The dean's decision is final.

Grade Appeal Procedure

All appeals must be clear and succinct. They must include:

- A statement specifying the specific action that is being grieved
- The grounds for the grievance
- The requested action or relief that the student is seeking

All appeals must be made in writing. All decisions will be reported to the student in writing. Copies of the student's appeals and the decisions will be placed in the student's academic file.

Comprehensive Examination Result Appeals

A student must appeal any grading decisions related to the Comprehensive Examinations in writing directly to the director of the Ph.D. in social work program, who will present the appeal to the faculty members of the Doctoral Curriculum and Policy Committee.

If the student disagrees with the decision of the Doctoral Curriculum and Policy Committee, the student may appeal the decision to the dean of the Graduate School of Social Service. The dean's decision is final.

All appeals must be clear and succinct. They must include:

- A statement specifying the specific action that is being grieved
- The grounds for the grievance
- The requested action or relief that the student is seeking

All appeals must be made in writing. All decisions will be reported to the student in writing. Copies of the student's appeals and the decisions will be placed in the student's academic file.

Other Appeals

- Students should present appeals related to any other program matter in writing directly to the director of the Ph.D. in social work program.
- If they disagree with the director's decision, they may appeal the decision to the faculty members of the Doctoral Curriculum and Policy Committee.
- If the student disagrees with the decision of the Doctoral Curriculum and Policy Committee, the student may appeal the decision to the dean of the Graduate School of Social Service. The dean's decision is final.

Timeframes for Filing Appeals and Grievances

1. All grievances and appeals must be filed in writing within thirty (30) academic calendar days of the aggrieved action. Appeals of grades must be filed within thirty (30) academic calendar days of a grade's posting.
2. All appeals of the faculty's decisions must be filed within thirty (30) academic calendar days of the date on which the letter outlining the decision was posted.
3. The dean and doctoral program director must respond to a student's appeal or grievance within thirty (30) academic calendar days of their receipt of the grievance or appeal.
4. The Doctoral Curriculum and Policy Committee must respond to an appeal or grievance at its next scheduled meeting. Appeals and grievances to the Committee must be received by the doctoral program director at least five working days before the Committee's next scheduled meeting to be eligible for consideration at that meeting.