Introduction

The School of Social Service Administration (SSA) faculty, staff, and returning students join in welcoming you to SSA and the University of Chicago. We hope that your time with us will be both satisfying and rewarding.

This handbook provides current information about the School and its policies and practices. It should be used as a supplement to the Student Manual: University Policies and Regulations (Student Manual | The University of Chicago). The SSA Student Handbook does not repeat material in the University's Manual, nor information on curriculum, degree requirements, and other matters described in the School's Announcements. Doctoral students will also receive the Manual for Doctoral Students.

In Autumn Quarter, an SSA Directory will be published and the new Announcements will be available.
# School of Social Service Administration Student Handbook

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The Mission of the School

This statement of purpose, adopted in 2007 by the faculty of the master's degree program at the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration, establishes the commitment and direction of the School.

The University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration is dedicated to working toward a more just and humane society through research, teaching, and service to the community. As one of the oldest and most prestigious graduate schools of social work, SSA prepares working professionals to handle society's most difficult problems by developing new knowledge, promoting a deeper understanding of the causes and human costs of social inequities, and building bridges between rigorous research and the practice of helping individuals, families, and communities to achieve a better quality of life.

All helping professions attract individuals who are committed to taking action on behalf of others. Two characteristics combine to distinguish graduates of the School of Social Service Administration from those trained in other helping and administrative disciplines:

1. SSA graduates have learned that the foundation of effective service is an understanding of the person-in-environment. Individual distress occurs in a social context involving the interaction of biological, psychological, familial, economic, and cultural factors. Effective helping requires a broad and imaginative perspective on the context and dimensions of need and on the range of possible responses. In most cases, alleviating distress requires an emphasis on helping individuals and families acquire the resources, skills, and authority to secure adequate solutions to their own problems. Some cases require an emphasis on individual and intra-familial dynamics calling for brief interventions or for sustained emotional support and psychotherapy.

2. SSA graduates understand that whatever the focus of their practice—direct service, community development, agency management, policy analysis or research—their activities are informed by an appreciation of service in society. Social workers and social administrators must have a critical awareness of the web of institutional relationships linking efforts to promote individual well-being with the formation and evolution of social policy. The organizational, political, economic, and social forces that shape their work are, in turn, potential avenues by which they can influence social policy decisions. Social welfare professionals must be able to
scrutinize the assumptions, values, theoretical frameworks, and evidence on which service delivery and social policy are based, and from this analysis develop strategies to promote social well-being. SSA graduates are thus agents of social change, as well as advocates for the alleviation of individual distress.

This level of achievement in understanding and skills necessary for successful careers challenges both teacher and student. Yet the continuously changing nature of careers in clinical social work and social administration requires the adoption of such ambitious educational goals. Historically, social welfare professionals have been motivated by a commitment to help those in greatest distress through public and private welfare systems. The concepts of vulnerability and need have come to encompass the poor and those in precarious circumstances; the mentally and physically disabled; children and families with impaired capacities for successful growth and development; elderly people whose capacities for independent living are similarly impaired; young people with problems at home, school, or in their communities; individuals whose behavior is self-destructive or harmful to others; those who lack skills for any but the most rudimentary jobs; victims of crime, discrimination, violence, and serious illness; and residents of deteriorating, poorly-served communities and neighborhoods. The concept of alleviating need has also been broadened to include prevention as well as treatment. Graduates of SSA engage in the prevention of distress and the promotion of well-being on several levels: through education and direct service to individuals, families, and groups in public and private agencies and community organizations; through assistance to communities in acquiring resources and authority; through supervision, management, and leadership of social organizations; through the design and implementation of public policies at federal, state, and local levels; and through research on issues of social practice and social policy.

Most graduates assume positions of increasing responsibility and opportunity for leadership. Breadth of perspective, adaptability to change, and conceptual, analytical, and organizational skills are critical to their success. The School seeks to attract students who desire positions of responsibility and leadership in social welfare and to equip them for effective work toward achievement of a just and humane society.
Governance of the School

The University's structure provides the context within which governance of SSA takes place. The structure set forth in the University Statutes describes the responsibilities delegated by the Board of Trustees to the University President, the several deans, and the various faculties on campus. A copy of the Statutes is available for reference at the Office of the Dean of Students.

Governance and policy formation require the participation of those who by virtue of their position, perspective, or expertise can be expected to make valuable contributions. Particularly important to policy formation and decision making at SSA are the contributions of the School's faculty, administrative officers, and students.

The accomplishment of these functions requires the development of mechanisms capable of performing them. At SSA, a carefully planned committee structure provides such a mechanism. SSA committees are therefore the major instruments for securing joint participation and communication among faculty and students on policy matters. Membership in school standing committees dealing with issues of concern to faculty and students is open to both faculty and students.

Policy decisions referred from the individual committees to the faculty body for final enactment are those which:

- Affect the welfare of the entire School or involve the functioning of several committees in major ways;
- Require long-term policy directly affecting future generations of participants; or
- Contain major differences of opinion that remain unresolved.

For such matters, the faculty, as the statutory ruling body of the School, is empowered to enact policy. Student attendance at faculty meetings is limited to those occasions when a standing committee is presenting a report to the faculty. Student members of committees transmitting recommendations regarding policy decisions to the faculty are invited to attend and participate in that portion of faculty meetings during which those recommendations are discussed.
Standing Committees of the School

A list of the School's standing committees, including a statement about their duties, is available on the SSA website.

The Dean appoints committee chairs and members, which can include faculty, staff, and/or students. Committee appointments are typically made promptly at the beginning of the academic year and committee work begins immediately. Committees that include students are: the Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity Committee, and the Curriculum Committee. Students appointed to these committees are either appointed by the committee chairs, or selected through a process deemed appropriate by the committee membership. Please contact the office of the Dean of Students if you have questions or concerns about Standing Committees.

Standards of Behavior

Standards of behavior expected of SSA students include the standards set forth by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics as well as the Essential Abilities and Attributes for Performance at SSA.

NASW CODE OF ETHICS

Students at SSA are expected to demonstrate a commitment to the behavioral and ethical standards of the social work profession. The student must be committed to the constellation of core values of social work which include service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. The complete NASW Code of Ethics may be found at this link: Code of Ethics.

Essential Abilities and Attributes for Performance at the School of Social Service Administration

The following standards, distinguished from academic standards, describe the cognitive, emotional, and character requirements necessary to provide reasonable assurance that students can complete the entire course of study and participate fully in all aspects of social work education and practice. Acquisition of competence as a social worker is a lengthy and complex process that will be undermined by significant limitations of the student's ability to participate in the full spectrum of the experiences and the requirements of the curriculum.
Students at the School of Social Service Administration (SSA) are expected to possess the following abilities and attributes. They are expected to meet these standards in the classroom, in their practice, and elsewhere.

**COMMUNICATION SKILLS:** The social work student must communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, clients and other professionals. Students must express their ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and ability to listen to others. They must have sufficient skills in spoken and written English to understand the content presented in the program.

**SELF-AWARENESS:** The social work student must know how their values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and past experiences affect their thinking, behavior and relationships. The student must be willing to examine and change their behavior when it interferes with work with clients and other professionals and must be able to work effectively with others in subordinate positions as well as with those in authority.

**PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT:** The social work student must have a strong commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession. The student must be committed to the essential values of social work, which are the dignity and worth of every individual and their right to a just share of society's resources.

**KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE:** The professional activities of social work students must be grounded in relevant social, behavioral, and biological science knowledge and research. This includes knowledge and skills in relationship-building, data-gathering, assessment, interventions, and evaluation of practice.

**OBJECTIVITY:** The social work student must be sufficiently objective to systematically evaluate clients and their situations in an unbiased, factual way.

**EMPATHY:** The social work student must endeavor to comprehend another individual's way of life and values. They must be able to communicate empathy and support to the client as a basis for a productive professional relationship.

**ENERGY:** The social work student must be resistant to the undesirable effects of stress, exercising appropriate self-care and developing cooperative and facilitative relationships with faculty, field educators, administrators, colleagues and peers.

**APPRECIATION OF DIVERSITY:** The social work student must appreciate the value of
human diversity. They must serve in an appropriate manner all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person's age, class, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation (or lack thereof), gender, ability, sexual orientation, and value system.

**INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:** The social work student must demonstrate the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty, staff, clients, and other professionals. These include compassion, altruism, integrity, and the demonstration of respect for and consideration of others.

**PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR:** The social work student must behave professionally by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, adhering to the profession's code of ethics, respecting others, being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, and completing assignments on time.

Students who are not able to consistently demonstrate the above-mentioned standards of behavior may be asked to participate in SSA's Collaborative Problem-Solving Process (see pg. 35). This process is designed to increase students' successful participation at the School of Social Service Administration and better prepare students for future careers in social work/social welfare. Upon receiving such support, if the student is still not able to consistently uphold these standards of professional behavior, the student may be advised to re-consider pursuing a career in social work/social welfare.

**Required and Elective Courses**

Once students are accepted into a program (Full-time Day, Part-time Day, Extended Evening Program, Accelerated A.M., or a recognized Dual/Joint degree program) the student must follow that program's requirements with regards to field hours (including the days and times that the student is at practicum) as well as coursework (including the number of classes expected to be carried in any given quarter).

**REQUIRED COURSE SECTION ASSIGNMENT**

The Office of Field Education, in conjunction with the Office of the Dean of Students, makes section assignments for certain core courses. Students are given the opportunity to indicate section preference in some concentration courses. The student's section preference is respected whenever possible. The Office of the Dean of Students makes the final assignment of sections at registration. Any student who wishes to have their course section assignment reviewed must request such a review in writing from the Office of the
Dean of Students.

WAIVERS OR COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS OF REQUIRED COURSES

Core courses and concentration courses are an integral part of the SSA curriculum and are required for graduation. For most required courses, it is not possible to waive out of the course requirement or to request a course substitution for the required course. Because of varied academic backgrounds, some students may have mastered the content of certain required courses prior to matriculation at SSA. Although the student would not be permitted to waive out of the course requirement entirely, in some instances, students may request a course substitution for the required course to fulfill the 18 course requirement for the Master’s degree.

Requests for a course substitution must be made in writing to the Deputy Dean for Curriculum. The Deputy Dean for Curriculum will evaluate the student's request and forward their recommendation for a course substitution to the Office of the Dean of Students. The Office of the Dean of Students will then notify the student if the course substitution has been approved.

CORE COURSES

- SSA 30000 – no waivers and no course substitutions
- SSA 30100 – no waivers and no course substitutions
- SSA 30200 – advanced course substitution available through placement testing
- SSA 32700 – advanced course substitution available with approval from the Deputy Dean for Curriculum
- Human Diversity Course Selection – course substitution available with approval from the Deputy Dean for Curriculum

CONCENTRATION COURSES

Clinical Practice

- SSA 44500 – no waivers and no course substitutions
- Advanced HBSE – course substitution available with approval from the Deputy Dean for Curriculum
- Clinical Practice Methods Sequence – no waivers and no course substitutions
- Second Clinical Practice Methods Sequence – no waivers and no course substitutions
Social Administration

- *SSA 45400 – course substitution available with approval from the Deputy Dean for Curriculum
- SSA 46700 – no waivers and no course substitutions
- SSA 46800 – no waivers and no course substitutions
- *SSA 48500 – no waivers and no course substitutions

*Students in the joint degree program with Harris or Booth may substitute specific Harris/Booth courses for these SSA course requirements. Such substitutions must be approved by the area Chair. Even with an approved course substitution, joint degree students are required to take 13 SSA courses toward the joint degree.

Students must be registered for three quarters of the first year field practicum and three quarters of the second or concentration field practicum. Registration for field practica is managed by the Office of the Dean of Students. Please note that Core and Concentration field practica may not be waived.

ELECTIVE COURSES

Students may choose up to 3 elective courses from any department or school within the University if they are eligible to register for specific courses and if each course is graduate level and relevant to their program at SSA. Exception: Accelerated and Transfer students may choose 1 elective course from any department or school within the University as per the guidelines above. Eligibility relates to matters of prerequisites or other restrictions that may be attached to specific courses. Any such restrictions will be noted in the official University Class Search available online at coursesearch.uchicago.edu. Questions regarding relevance should be discussed with one's academic advisor or the Office of the Dean of Students.

TRANSFER OF CREDITS

Students are permitted to transfer one full year of course work from another accredited master's program in social work if the work was done within three years of the application for transfer. Applications for transfer must include successful completion of the first year core required courses and the first year practicum. Such students will be required to complete the Clinical Practice or Social Administration concentration requirements while enrolled at SSA.

Students are permitted to transfer up to 3 SSA courses that were taken prior to matriculation in a degree program at SSA.
Individual courses from other institutions or other parts of the University prior to matriculation at SSA are not accepted for credit toward the master's degree at SSA. SSA neither awards nor transfers life experience credit.

**Grading and Evaluation**

**GRADING POLICY FOR SSA MASTER’S STUDENTS**

Students must take letter grades (A, B, C, D, or F) in at least 17 of the 18 courses required for graduation. One course may be taken on a Pass/D/Fail basis, provided the P/D/F system is available for the course in which the student wishes to use it. Note: Students interested in the School Social Work’s Program of Study (leading to Type 73 certification) are not permitted to take any course on a Pass/D/Fail basis. Link to Pass/D/Fail Policy OR include it here.

Fieldwork grades are non-credit bearing and do not impact GPA. All fieldwork grades are Pass/D/Fail and are exempt from the P/D/F limit stated above. Students must receive a minimum passing grade (Pass/D) in their Core and Concentration fieldwork programs to receive the degree. Students who receive a D grade in fieldwork may be asked to participate in SSA’s Collaborative Problem-Solving Process (see pg. 35).

Students who previously withdrew from the School and are now resuming their studies are subject to the current policy.

The student must achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.70 to graduate from the School, and a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.50 upon completion of the first year of full-time study, or the completion of nine courses, to continue in the School. Computation of the grade point average is based on assigned values to the letter grades as follows: A = 4, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.3, C = 2, C- = 1.7, D+ = 1.3, D = 1, D- = 0.7, F = 0, I = 0. The grades P and R are not included in computation of the grade point average.

**GRADING POLICY FOR SSA DOCTORAL STUDENTS**

*(FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE THE MANUAL FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS)*

Doctoral students are expected to maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (on a four point scale). A student whose grade point average falls below 3.0 in any three
consecutive quarters will be terminated from the program. Grades of P (Pass) will not be counted in the calculation of grade point averages.

The choice of grading system, which will apply to a specific course, is the student's. The student must inform the instructor of their decision to take the course for a letter grade or P/D/F no later than the fourth week of the quarter. Grading policies in other professional schools and departments of the University vary and are not always consistent with those of SSA, particularly with regard to the use of Pass/D/Fail. Students taking courses outside of SSA are advised to check the relevant grading policy with the course instructor before registering. It should be noted that grading is limited to Pass/D/Fail in certain courses in other units of the University.

DEFINITION OF THE USE OF GRADES

The following course marks are used at SSA: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F, P, S/U, I, W, UW, and R. The use of the plus or minus denotes somewhat more or less of the relevant grade as defined below. Pluses or minuses may be assigned to all letter grades at the instructor’s option.

A  Denotes superior performance that is both consistent and outstanding.

B  Denotes good, steady, adequate performance, with some of the plus values that make for an A. The B student shows understanding and ability to integrate learning and ends the course with a comprehensive grasp of the material.

C  Denotes acceptable performance that indicates grasp of the essentials of the course and probable ability to complete the next course in the sequence. The mark C denotes lack of the comprehensive grasp and understanding of the B student. The C mark may represent uneven work or steady performance at no more than an acceptable level.

D  Denotes minimum passing grade. The work is marginal, neither clearly acceptable nor clearly unacceptable. The student's grasp of the essentials is in question. The mark D denotes serious doubt that the student can complete the next course in the sequence.

F  Denotes failure, i.e., unacceptable performance. An F grade clearly demonstrates inability of the student to grasp the essentials or to integrate learning. A grade of F, once recorded, cannot later be changed. Receiving an F grade necessitates
registration and payment for an additional course; required courses must be repeated.

A student may not register for a succeeding quarter or graduate if they have received F's in two courses or two quarters of field work, with the following exception and condition: two F's received from the same instructor in two interrelated, concurrent courses will be treated as one F; two F's in field work must be in two different field placements with two different field instructors. The faculty liaison may be the same for both field experiences.

P Denotes “Pass” and indicates a satisfactory performance (that is, within the A to C range).

S/U Grades of S (“Satisfactory”) or U (“Unsatisfactory) are assigned by the faculty adviser to doctoral students registered for SSAD 7000 Advanced Study upon completion of coursework but before being admitted to candidacy.

I Denotes “Incomplete” and indicates that the student who desires course credit has not submitted all the evidence required for a qualitative grade and has made satisfactory arrangements with their instructor to complete the remaining portion of the work. A mark of “I” can be given only when the requirements of the course have not been completed due to circumstances beyond the student's control; it cannot be used in lieu of F when the work has not met the standards and requirements set by the instructor.

The student who is not able to complete requirements for the course due to unusual circumstances may request an incomplete by filing a "Request for Grade of Incomplete" form (available on MySSA) with the instructor prior to the end of the quarter. The reason for requesting an incomplete and a plan for meeting the course requirements must be given. Approval of the “Request for Grade of Incomplete” is given at the discretion of the instructor. Once the work for an “I”-graded course has been completed, the University Registrar will record the new qualitative grade but leave the initial “I” as a qualifier, indicating that the work was completed late (e.g. IA or IB+).

Incomplete grades must be made up by the first Friday of the next autumn quarter or the first Friday of the quarter in which the student will graduate, whichever comes first. If an incomplete is not made up within this timeframe, it will be changed to an F. Students on an approved Leave of Absence (LOA) must make up any
incomplete grades before returning to fieldwork and/or coursework from the LOA. (For more information about Leave of Absence procedures see page 24.)

W Grades of W indicate “Withdrawn” (albeit not “dropped”). Grades of W either are assigned by the instructor or administratively by the University Registrar should the SSA Dean of Students approve dropping a course with an effective date after the third week of the quarter.

UW Grades of UW indicate “Unofficial Withdrawal”. Grades of UW are assigned by the faculty when they are unable to grade a student because the student has ceased attending the course and has not officially withdrawn.

R A mark of R (registered) is used only when the student has not submitted evidence of the quality and quantity of their work. Tuition fee is charged for an R, and the course is listed on the student's permanent record. Courses in which the student received the mark R have no credit value in the University. No stigma is attached to the mark R.

The student who wishes to take a course for an R must obtain the consent of the instructor and must register for an R by the fourth week of the quarter. An R, once entered on the student’s record for a course, may not be changed.

A student may register for an R only for a course taken in addition to those courses required for the degree.

COURSE AUDITING

Courses may be audited under the following conditions:
- The student must already be registered and active in a degree-granting program, for which tuition is being paid.
- The student must have the consent of the instructor in the course to be audited.

There are two primary differences between auditing a course and taking it for an R:
1. No tuition fee is charged for an audit.
2. No official University record of auditing is kept, and no grade is posted by the Registrar for an audited course.
TIME LIMIT FOR WITHDRAWING FROM A COURSE

A student may not withdraw a course after the third week of the quarter without the consent of the Dean of Students.

USE OF DUPLICATE PAPERS FOR MORE THAN ONE COURSE

Students are strictly prohibited from submitting for credit the same (or essentially the same) paper (or other such assignment) in more than one course without prior written consent from all instructors involved.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

“The University of Chicago is a community of scholars dedicated to research, academic excellence, and the pursuit and cultivation of learning. Every member of the University – student, faculty, and staff – makes a commitment to strive for personal and academic integrity; to treat others with dignity and respect; to honor the rights and property of others; to take responsibility for individual and group behavior; and to act as a responsible citizen in a free academic community and in the larger society” (from The Student Manual of University Policies and Regulations).

The School of Social Service Administration aspires to be a community in which the commitments of a free academic community are upheld and in which students, staff, and faculty cultivate mutually supportive relations. From time to time questions or complaints about an academic, professional, or interpersonal matter may arise that needs to be resolved. Examples of these include (but are not limited to) topics such as teaching assignments, publication rights, timely feedback on academic work, appropriate use of original research, responsiveness to outreach efforts, and equitable application of policies and practices. The Grievance Policy may be used to address such issues.

There are times when it may be appropriate to engage a process separate from, or working in conjunction with, the Grievance Policy. Some examples of other processes include (but are not limited to):

University-wide Disciplinary System (Office of the Provost): for all matters involving unlawful discrimination and harassment, sexual misconduct, and sexual assault

Bias Education and Support Team (Office of the Dean of Students in the University): any actions that are motivated by bias against protected characteristic, even if they do not
include the elements required to prove a hate crime or a violation of University policy

**Area Admissions Review Systems (Office of the Dean of Students, SSA):** addresses violations of University policy and other breaches of the standards of behavior expected of University students by those who have accepted admission but have not yet matriculated

**Office of the Student Ombudsperson (Office of Campus and Student Life):** a resource for all University of Chicago students to assist in the resolution of conflicts, concerns, and other problems that they may encounter through the course of University life

Any registered student (Master’s or Doctoral) may engage the Grievance Policy when their ability to freely navigate their educational environment has been compromised by the actions or decisions of individuals or groups within the SSA community with whom they interact. It is necessary that students come forward in a timely manner when they have been impacted negatively and discuss their concerns with the Dean of Students. If the Dean of Students is unavailable, or if the complaint involves the Dean of Students, then the student should discuss their concern with the Dean of SSA. Through conversation with the Dean of Students, impacted students will come to understand the full breadth of campus resources available to them, discuss the processes involved with the Grievance Policy, and retain agency in determining how best to resolve their concerns.

With all grievances, it is expected that students will first try to resolve the matter informally. This will typically involve communicating directly with the faculty, staff, or student(s) who has impacted the complainant. If resolution is not reached through informal discussion, then it is up to the complainant to engage the formal Grievance Policy and/or seek additional supports available to students.

It is readily understood that engaging a formal grievance process could be intimidating for all involved. Building on the best practices of SSA and the social work profession, students, staff, and faculty involved with a formal grievance should engage each other with timely responsiveness, high levels of professionalism, honesty, and with openness to direct conversations about different and potentially complex views, opinions, and experiences.

The following sections will address the processes for resolving grievances in more detail.

**Types of Grievances**

The Grievance Policy is intended to address both academic and non-academic complaints. Examples of these different academic and non-academic areas include, but are not limited to:
• Academic policies related to grades, course procedures, use of data, and timely responsiveness to submitted work
• Financial Aid decisions, including scholarships, fellowships, research assistantships, and stipends
• Interpersonal conflicts that negatively or unfairly impact the student’s academic environment
• Field Education
• Co-curricular offices (e.g. Career Services, Production Room, SSA IT)
• SGA and other student organizations
• Disrupting or preventing free expression of ideas

In all cases, students are expected to make attempts to resolve their grievance informally through direct communication with the other individual(s) involved. Students who are unable to resolve their grievance informally should consult with the Dean of Students regarding next steps that are appropriate to the given situation. Examples of next steps that the student could determine are appropriate include additional informal attempts at working individually with the other party/parties involved, engaging in a mediated conversation with the other party/parties involved, or beginning the formal grievance process.

At the request of the student, an independent faculty advocate may be called upon by either the student or the Dean of Students to advise and support the complainant. This individual will be appointed annually and trained in SSA and campus resources, institutional policies, and grievance procedures.

**Formal Grievance Process**

Students who are unable to resolve their complaints through informal engagement with other person(s), and who have consulted with the Dean of Students, may choose to begin a formal grievance procedure. To do this, students must submit a written statement to the impacting party describing in detail the nature of the grievance and the expectation, policy, or practice that it violates. The statement should include why the student believes the grievance occurred, and what the student believes is the more reasonable outcome. Any supporting documents that can be included are allowed and encouraged.

The Dean of Students is to be copied on all communications between the grieving student and the person(s) with whom they have a complaint.

Grievances that involve grades must be received within twenty (20) business days of the
posting of the grade.

Once a formal grievance has been received, the person(s) to whom it is addressed will have five (5) business days to review the submitted material and respond to the grieving student with a written explanation of their decision and/or behavior. If it is determined that an error was made, it is the obligation of the impacting person(s) to correct that error.

If a grievance involves grades, final decisions rest with the instructor(s) of record and only they can change the grade.

For matters that are not resolved with the other person(s) or if the other person(s) does not respond in writing within five (5) business days, the student may pursue the grievance further by submitting a formal written appeal (explained in more detail below) along with copies of their correspondence to the Dean of Students. If the Dean of Students concludes that the other person(s) did not fully review the student’s grievance, the Dean of Students will contact the other person(s) to discuss the grievance and ensure that the student’s concerns receive due attention and a fair review.

If a student wishes to remain anonymous to the person(s) against whom they are filing a grievance, and if the nature of the grievance permits such anonymity, the student may submit their grievance to the Office of the Dean of Students, and the Dean of Students will forward the grievance to the impacting person(s). Note: not all grievances will permit the student to remain anonymous.

It is readily understood that all matters pertaining to grievances should be addressed in a timely manner and always within the timeframe where it is specifically listed.

**Grievance Appeals**

If the student has completed the formal grievance process – that is, the student has both filed a grievance and received a formal written response to that grievance or has not received a response within the allotted timeframe – and the student is not satisfied with the outcome, the student may file a formal written appeal with the Dean of Students. The formal written appeal should restate the initial grievance and specify the aspects of the resolution that are unsatisfactory.

Upon receipt of a formal appeal, the Dean of Students and the Dean of SSA will review the complaint together except in the case of grievances that involve one or the other administrator. They will have five (5) business days to respond to the appeal with information on next steps to be taken. This response will be in writing and addressed to all
person(s) involved. One of three actions may be taken:

- The appeal may be denied and the outcome is upheld.
- The appeal may be accepted and the new outcome is determined by the Dean of Students and the Dean of SSA in consultation with each other.
- The appeal may be accepted and determining a new outcome requires consideration by an advisory committee. In this cases, the Dean of Students and/or the Dean of SSA will consult with the complainant to convene a standing committee comprised of:
  - A faculty chairperson,
  - Three additional faculty members,
  - Three students (optional at the discretion of the student filing the appeal), and
  - The Dean of Students or the Dean of SSA who serves ex-officio.

The Appeal Advisory Committee will consider the written statement submitted by the student and any supporting evidence that may be presented. Written documentation and/or in-person testimony could be asked of both the student and the other person involved in the grievance proceedings. The Committee will consider all statements, supporting documents, and testimony received and meet to determine its recommendation for resolving the appeal within one month of the appeal being sent to the committee. Within two (2) business days of the committee meeting, the faculty chairperson will submit a written recommendation to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students makes a final determination based on the committee recommendation and the student is notified in writing by the Dean of Students of the outcome of the appeal.

Once the outcome of the appeal has been determined, that will be considered the final decision and the Grievance Process will be concluded.

**Reporting**

Quarterly reports of grievances will be developed and recorded by the Office of the Dean of Students and shared within the Dean’s senior leadership team of SSA. Reports will remove identifying information about individual complainants, but the type and number of complaints will be reported. The Dean of Students is expected to use these reports to identify patterns and/or trends and use that data to inform strategic thinking that can help prevent recurrences of harmful behaviors within the SSA community.
Leaves of Absence

From time to time, circumstances compel students to interrupt enrollment. These breaks in enrollment are formally recognized as leaves of absence (LOA). Master’s and Doctoral Degree students who suspend work toward a degree, but who expect to resume their studies at SSA, may request a leave of absence. Suspension from enrollment may be granted to help students facing challenging personal circumstances, academic difficulties, difficulties in field education, medical conditions, caring for a new child, or to allow them to take advantage of opportunities for intellectual development that open up elsewhere. Leaves of absence should not be considered for reasons of convenience or leisure. Students are required to request in advance for an LOA.

DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Leaves of absence can be requested by and granted to students in PhD programs during either the Scholastic Residence or the Advanced Residence stages, subject to the conditions and procedures described in the Student Manual: University Policies and Regulations (Student Manual | The University of Chicago) as well as the SSA Manual for Doctoral Students. Doctoral students who become parents while pursuing their graduate education may apply for an academic modification which includes a one quarter leave of absence through the University’s Graduate Student Parent Policy (Graduate Student Parent Policy | Student Manual | The University of Chicago).

A leave of absence does not extend a doctoral student's eligibility for full-time status in Scholastic and Advanced Residence beyond the total of nine years from entry in the PhD program.
MASTER’S STUDENTS

The University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration (SSA)’s Master’s program requires concurrent participation in field and coursework. The Leave of Absence policy, in keeping with the program philosophy, requires a student to take a leave from both field and coursework. In rare instances, a student may have a disruption in fieldwork while continuing coursework. Approval for any disruptions in fieldwork must be approved by the Director of Field Education and the Dean of Students.

Once students are accepted into a Master’s program (Full-time Day, Part-time Day, Extended Evening Program, Accelerated A.M., or a recognized Dual/Joint degree program), the student must follow that program’s requirements with regards to field hours (including the days and times that the student is at practicum) as well as coursework (including the number of classes expected to be carried in any given quarter).

Master’s students may take an LOA from the program for up to 4 quarters (including summer). A request for a leave must be made to the Dean of Students office and include the reason for the leave, the anticipated length, and plans for completing the work upon return. A leave beyond four quarters may be granted for medical reasons with the approval of the Dean of Students. Notification will be sent to students on leave at the conclusion of the leave of absence period inquiring about their plans for return. If they do not respond or do not request an extension of the leave, they will be administratively withdrawn from the program and will have to reapply if they wish to be readmitted.

Tuition is only fully refunded if the leave of absence is arranged either at the end of the quarter prior to the leave or by the Friday of first week of the quarter in which the leave is to begin. SSA will not assess student’s additional institutional charges and the student is not eligible for additional Federal Student Aid. For the refund schedule, please contact the Bursar's Office or refer to Office of the Bursar | The University of Chicago.

Availability of student health insurance, financial aid, access to University facilities, and other issues are covered below.
CATEGORIES OF LEAVES OF ABSENCE

- Leave of absence while in good standing (Voluntary)
- Leave of absence while on academic warning (Voluntary)
- Leave of absence for medical reasons (Voluntary)
- Administrative leave of absence (Involuntary)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE WHILE IN GOOD STANDING (VOLUNTARY)

Most SSA students wishing to take an LOA may do so only after completing their first quarter of enrollment. It is required that students meet with and then submit a Leave of Absence Request to the Dean of Students. Students in good standing will normally receive permission to take a leave of absence for up to four quarters (including summer). The length of the LOA will be determined as per the “Return from Leave of Absence” procedures (see page 30). Petitions may be granted to extend the leave for medical reasons.

Students are responsible for contacting the University Housing Office and the office of Graduate Financial Aid if applicable.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE WHILE ON ACADEMIC WARNING (VOLUNTARY)

Students placed on academic warning are eligible to apply for a leave of absence under the same conditions as those seeking a leave of absence while in good standing. Students returning on academic warning who fail to meet the minimum expectations will be withdrawn from SSA and restricted from further registration for at least one year. If a bar from further registration for an additional year results in a student exceeding the maximum four quarters of cumulative leave from SSA, the student will need to apply for readmission.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR MEDICAL REASONS (VOLUNTARY)

Students may be granted leave for medical reasons at any time. A medical leave of absence is approved with documentation from a physician or therapist, which must be submitted to the Office of the Dean of Students in order for the leave to be processed. Resumption of studies is contingent upon the medical condition being resolved or managed successfully, and documentation from a physician or therapist.
attesting to the readiness of the student to successfully resume studies. (For more information regarding returning from a Leave of Absence see page 30.)

If a leave of absence for medical reasons lasts more than four quarters, the student’s status will be changed to withdrawn. However, before a student is withdrawn, the Dean of Students will seek input from the student to determine whether an additional quarter or two (at most) of leave will enable the student to resolve their medical issues enough to successfully resume studies.

**ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE OF ABSENCE (INVOLUNTARY)**

As a community, our first concern is always the health and well-being of each student. To help students achieve their fullest potential and participate successfully in University life, the University provides students with a host of services, including the Student Counseling Service. Sometimes, a student’s health or behavior raises concerns about the safety and well-being of the student or others or causes significant disruption to the functioning of the University. Such circumstances may require a decision to place the student on an involuntarily leave of absence. See the *Student Manual: University Policies and Regulations* for information concerning an Involuntary Leave of Absence.

**POLICIES FOR LEAVES OF ABSENCE (VOLUNTARY OR INVOLUNTARY)**

While on a leave of absence, students are placed on inactive status. Students should review the following guidelines to understand the implications involved.

**Registering for Classes**

Students should not register for classes for the quarter(s) they will be on leave. Students who have registered for classes for the upcoming quarter should immediately drop all classes. Tuition penalties are incurred for dropping a course after the drop/add period.

**Tuition**

For full tuition refund, a leave of absence must be arranged either at the end of the quarter prior to the leave or by the Friday of first week of the quarter that a student is going to be on leave. For the refund schedule, please contact the Bursar's Office and/or refer to Office of the Bursar | The University of Chicago.
Students are not charged tuition or fees while on a leave of absence, unless a previous balance remains unpaid and incurs additional late payment fees. Exception: Students beginning an approved medical leave of absence may elect to remain on the student insurance and will be charged the insurance premium and the Student Life Fee for the duration of the plan year (August 31st).

Financial Aid
Students receiving financial aid should review their awards with the Student Loan Administration before deciding on a leave of absence. In some cases, eligibility for aid or loans may be affected by a leave of absence. If they are recipients of Title IV loans, they are advised that their grace period for loan repayment may be exhausted should their leave of absence exceed a twelve-month period. A student who has exhausted their grace period and is unable to begin repayment may apply for a deferment or forbearance of payment. Failing to return from an LOA may affect the student’s loan repayment terms, including the expiration of the student’s grace period. Students should contact their loan servicer and the Student Loan Administration for more information.

Field Placement
Students on LOA do not attend the field placement or the field seminars. The student may receive credit for the hours completed prior to the leave. In such cases these hours will be applied to the total fieldwork hours required to graduate. Students preparing to return from an LOA may begin searching for their next placement in consultation with the Field Education Office after obtaining clearance from SSA’s Dean of Students and the Director of Field Education.

Retaining the University Student Health Insurance Plan (U-SHIP)
Plan participants who go on leave for medical reasons may remain enrolled in U-SHIP at the registered student rate through the remainder of the plan year in which their medical leave of absence was granted (August 31). They are also eligible to utilize the Student Health Service and Student Counseling Service pending payment of the Student Life Fee. For more information, please visit Student Health Insurance | Student Health and Counseling Services | The University of Chicago.

University Facilities and Computer Use
Athletic facilities are available to students on leave of absence for a fee.

UCHicagoGRAD resources are generally available to students on leave of absence.
Library book borrowing privileges are available for a fee.

The SSA computer lab will be available to people on leave, though there may be printing restrictions.

Email access continues for two quarters.

Student Life Fee
Students do not pay the Student Life Fee while on leave of absence. The only exception is for students taking an approved medical leave of absence. In this instance, if they elect to maintain and pay for the University Student Health Insurance Plan (U-SHIP), they are required to pay for the Student Life Fee in the same quarters.

Graduation
Students on leave of absence may graduate in any quarter provided they have met all graduation requirements, informed the Dean of Students, and applied for their degree via MyUChicago by the appropriate deadline.

Special Considerations for International Students
International students must complete a leave of absence form with the Office of International Affairs in addition to with the Dean of Students. They should inquire about documents that will be required from the Office of International Affairs before confirming a leave, and upon resumption of studies.

Specific Considerations for Students Receiving VA Benefits
Students receiving VA benefits should speak with the designated Advisor to Veterans in the Office of the Registrar for the University.

Taking a Leave of Absence without Approval
Students absent from the program for less than five years, who have not been granted a leave of absence, will need to reapply for admission to SSA to complete requirements for the degree. Courses will be evaluated for credit toward meeting existing requirements.

Students absent from the program for five years or more will be required to reapply for admission to SSA and repeat all course work and internships. No credit will be given for previous work toward the degree.
RETURNING AFTER A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Students on leave of absence are encourage to reach out to the Office of the Dean of Students to indicate their plans for return to SSA. Students who indicate their desire to return to SSA will need to complete a “Request to Return from Leave of Absence” form 6 weeks prior to the beginning of the intended quarter of return and obtain approval from the Office of the Dean of Students. A meeting with the Dean of Students and Director of Field Education (or their designees) may be scheduled in order to answer questions regarding course load, financial obligations and field work. During the meeting, students may be asked to discuss their readiness to return to fieldwork. Students who were granted a leave for medical reasons may be required by the Dean of Students to submit a statement from a physician or therapist attesting to the readiness of the student to successfully resume fieldwork.

The Dean of Students may also initiate the Collaborative Problem-Solving Process (see pg. 35) Once a student indicates their desire to return from a medical or non-medical leave of absence in an effort to determine the student’s readiness to resume courses and field.

Students on an approved leave of absence must make up any incomplete grades before returning to fieldwork and/or coursework from the LOA.

Once approved to return from a LOA, the student will work with the Field Education Office to search for a new placement or to resume work at the former placement, whichever is appropriate given the student’s circumstance(s). The timing for resumption of field work will depend on availability of placement sites and the student’s ability to meet placement responsibilities.

Core First Year

If a student returns from a leave of absence with 2 or more quarters to complete in the core first year, the student must re-enter SSA in the quarter in which the LOA began and participate in the Core First Year Field Seminar and concurrent coursework. Example: If a student goes on LOA winter quarter of their first year, they will return to SSA the next winter quarter. Exception: Master’s students who become parents while pursuing their graduate education may apply for an academic modification which includes a one quarter leave of absence through the University’s Graduate Student Parent Policy (Graduate Student Parent Policy | Student Manual | The University of Chicago).

If a student returns from a leave of absence with one quarter or less to complete in the first year, the student may return to SSA in any quarter pending the approval of the Dean of
Students. The student will work with the Field Education Office to search for a new placement or to resume work at the former placement, whichever is appropriate given the student’s circumstances. The student’s first year core field hours must be completed prior to the start of the concentration placement. Due dates for field reflection logs and evaluation schedules will be determined on an individual basis.

**Clinical or Social Administration Year(s)**

Students returning from a leave of absence who have completed the first year of field and coursework but have not yet started second year coursework and field will resume in Autumn Quarter. Exception: Master’s students who become parents while pursuing their graduate education may apply for an academic modification which includes a one quarter leave of absence through the University’s Graduate Student Parent Policy ([Graduate Student Parent Policy | Student Manual | The University of Chicago](https://www.ssa.uchicago.edu)).

For second year Clinical or Social Administration students returning from a leave of absence, who have completed the first year of field and have begun their second year placement, there are two possible starts:

1. Students with less than half of their required second year field placement hours completed would re-enter field in Autumn Quarter and would be expected to participate in Clinical or Social Administration Field Seminars. They would resume coursework in the Autumn or Winter quarter, depending on course credits earned prior to the LOA. Exception: Master’s students who become parents while pursuing their graduate education may apply for an academic modification which includes a one quarter leave of absence through the University’s Graduate Student Parent Policy ([Graduate Student Parent Policy | Student Manual | The University of Chicago](https://www.ssa.uchicago.edu)).

2. Students with more than half of their required second year field placement hours completed would re-enter field and coursework in the appropriate quarter, as determined by the Dean of Students, given time left to graduation, field hours completed, and course credits earned prior to the LOA. Reflection logs and evaluation schedules will be determined on an individual basis.

Students who are approved by the Office of the Dean of Students to resume their program at SSA are also advised to:

- Contact the office of [Graduate Financial Aid](https://www.ssa.uchicago.edu) at least six weeks before matriculation to determine financial aid eligibility.
- Contact the Office of Facilities Services, [Residential Properties](https://www.ssa.uchicago.edu) to apply for residential housing if applicable.
- Clear all account holds and restrictions.
Withdrawal Policy

VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL

Master’s and doctoral students who decide not to return to SSA must formally withdraw. To do so, students should contact the Office of the Dean of Students prior to the end of the first week of the quarter the withdrawal is to begin and complete a Request to Withdraw form. All withdrawals are assumed to be permanent. To resume study after a withdrawal requires reapplication to SSA. A student who is readmitted after a withdrawal should not expect that funding will be reinstated at the same level as previously.

International students must inform the Office of International Affairs of their plans to withdraw.

Withdrawing students must complete an exit interview with the Office of Graduate Financial Aid (if applicable).

ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL (INVOLUNTARY)

Leave of Absence Leading to Withdrawal

Notification will be sent to students at the conclusion of the year that they are on leave inquiring about their plans for return. If they do not respond or do not request an extension of the leave, they will be administratively withdrawn from the program.

Students who have exceeded the time limit of their approved leave, or who failed to meet with the Dean of Students to formally request the leave, will be withdrawn from SSA and must apply for readmission.

Students who fail to clear all restrictions and officially register by the end of that same quarter will be administratively withdrawn from the University. Restrictions may result from a student’s failure to fulfill financial obligations to the University or to comply with University rules and regulations. Whenever possible, students are warned of an impending restriction and are notified when one has been imposed. In order to resume studies in subsequent quarters, students need to clear the restriction with the administrative or academic office that imposed it. If a student anticipates being unable to clear the restriction in a timely manner, she or he should meet with the Dean of Students as soon as possible to request an approved leave of absence.
RETURNING AFTER A WITHDRAWAL

Master’s and doctoral students who have been withdrawn from SSA are required to reapply for admission. The application will be reviewed by the admissions committee. Upon return, students are expected to complete the requirements for the degree without further interruption.

Doctoral students in Advanced Residence (typically years 5-10) who have been administratively withdrawn from the PhD program and later wish to resume study must apply for readmission. If readmitted, the student will be required to register retroactively for three of every four of the intervening quarters from the time of withdrawal until the time of resumption of study and will be charged tuition at the rate current at time of reentry. In addition, the student will be required to pay a reinstatement fee of $150 per quarter for each of those quarters, plus a one-time continuous registration penalty fee of $250.

All students who intend to resume their studies are advised to:
- Contact the office of Graduate Financial Aid at least six weeks before matriculation to determine financial aid eligibility.
- Contact the Office of Facilities Services, Residential Properties to apply for residential housing, if applicable.

Upon return, students are expected to complete the requirements for the degree without further interruption.

Student Supports

Students are encouraged to utilize existing supports at SSA and within the larger University. SSA staff and/or faculty are available through the following mechanisms to partner with students to resolve many concerns including those related to academic and performance-related issues.

SSA SUPPORTS

Office of the Dean of Students
The Dean of Students and Assistant Dean of Students are both available and may be of particular assistance regarding financial or other personal concerns, or special needs. The Office of the Dean of Students also assists students with advising, advocacy, programming, student involvement, transition programs, and career development.
**Academic Advising**
All enrolled first-year graduate students at SSA are assigned a faculty advisor with whom they are encouraged to discuss their academic program and career plans. Throughout their attendance at SSA, students are encouraged to engage any faculty member for advice or information regarding their interests or concerns.

**Writing Tutor**
SSA offers tutoring for students who wish to increase their skills in academic writing. Several writing associates are available to meet with students to provide one-on-one assistance with academic and professional writing. Please contact the Office of the Dean of Students ([dos@ssa.uchicago.edu](mailto:dos@ssa.uchicago.edu)) or MySSA if you would like to be connected to a writing tutor.

**Writing Workshops**
All incoming students attend a workshop during orientation on professional writing. The workshop includes a grammar refresher, an overview of rules for style and punctuation, a suggested organization for writing academic papers, and an overview of the rules of citation.

**Field Education Problem-Solving Process**
Students experiencing problems in their field placement engage in the Field Problem-Solving Process in an effort to resolve concerns. See the Field Manual for details.

**Collaborative Problem-Solving Process**
The Dean of Students has the authority and discretion to implement the Collaborative Problem-Solving Process when a student is showing signs of difficulty in multiple areas of the program (e.g., classes and field work), repeated challenges in one or more areas, or in matters that are being investigated informally as part of the disciplinary process (see pg. 52). At their discretion, the Dean of Students may also implement the Collaborative Problem-Solving Process prior to a student’s return from a Leave of Absence in order to determine the student’s readiness to re-engagement in classes and field.

Collaborative meetings involve the student, an Academic Dean-appointed SSA faculty member serving in the role of Student Advocate, and a team of professionals appointed by the Dean of Students. Normally, the team will consist of a representative from the Office of the Dean of Students in addition to other relevant parties such as a representative from the Field Education Office, a member of the Office of Student Disability Services, and/or a faculty member. The student will be consulted about the composition of the team, including whether the student would like to bring a support person, in addition to the
Academic Dean-appointed Student Advocate.

Through the Collaborative Problem-Solving Process, the student works with the team of professionals to address challenges the student is facing. During the initial meeting, team members convene with the student in an attempt to gain a better understanding of the student’s needs. Members of the team then meet separately and if necessary, gather additional information regarding the issue(s) at hand. The team will then reconvene with the student to discuss next steps.

Possible outcomes of the Collaborative Problem-Solving Process may include an action plan to assist the student in overcoming challenges the student is facing, a recommended Leave of Absence from SSA for the purpose of obtaining necessary support or resources for successful resumption of studies, a Performance Agreement in field education, or the team may recommend that the student reconsider their readiness to pursue the profession of social work. As warranted, the team will follow-up with the student and other parties regarding progress achieved. If the student is not able to achieve and sustain the necessary improvements, the team may advise the student to consider leaving SSA.

*Note: At their discretion, the Academic Dean may convene a disciplinary committee without first invoking the Collaborative Problem-Solving Process.

**UNIVERSITY SUPPORTS**

In addition to the supports provided through SSA, the following University supports are available to all registered students. Note: Some services require payment of the quarterly Student Life Fee.

**Student Disability Services**

A student who wishes to request an academic modification or adjustment should contact the Director of Student Disability Services (disabilities@uchicago.edu) or phone (773) 702-6000 to initiate the disability determination process. The process of determining eligibility and considering what is a reasonable modification or adjustment is an interactive and collaborative process. Reasonable efforts are to be made both by the student requesting reasonable accommodation and the representative from Student Disability Services to complete the disability determination process and the consideration of any reasonable academic modification or adjustment expeditiously.

**Student Counseling Service**

The Student Counseling Service (SCS) provides mental health care to University students who pay the quarterly Student Life Fee. This care includes needs assessment,
psychotherapy, psychiatric consultation, medication management, support groups, referrals, emergency services, and health promotion and wellness programs. The SCS also offers an Academic Skills Assessment Program for students who would like help in evaluating their academic needs and in finding solutions. Individual appointments can be made by calling (773) 702-9800.

**Student Health Service**
The Student Health Service provides general health care to all students who pay the quarterly Student Life Fee. The Student Health Service is located in the University of Chicago Medical Center and is staffed by faculty physicians, nurse practitioners, a registered dietitian, as well as specialists in sports medicine, travel health, reproductive health, physical therapy, movement and ergonomics, and health education. Individual appointments can be made by calling (773) 702-4156.

**Student Ombudsperson**
The Office of the Student Ombudsperson investigates specific grievances brought to the Office by students when the existing channels of communication or dispute resolution have proven unsatisfactory. The specific duties of the Ombudsperson are: to determine the facts in each case; to refer complaints to the appropriate departments of the University; to suggest remedial steps in the settlement of a complaint; to work with the student and the administrator or faculty member in seeking a satisfactory resolution; and to call attention to any injustices and abuses of power or discretion. To make an appointment, email ombudsperson@uchicago.edu or call (773) 702-8422.

Other student supports provided by the University may be found at Get Help | Campus & Student Life.

**Financial Aid: Educational Loans and Scholarships**

**LOANS**

Student loans administered by the University of Chicago are available to all students with financial need who are registered for at least two courses per quarter or one course and practicum (fieldwork). Under special circumstances, a student registered for only practicum (fieldwork) may be eligible for student loans. Information and applications for University loans may be obtained online at [http://sla.uchicago.edu](http://sla.uchicago.edu) or in the Office of Graduate Financial Aid.
There are several kinds of limited emergency loans available through the Office of the Dean of Students or through the University. The Student Loan Administration a short-term emergency loan. This loan voucher may be cashed on the same day at the Bursar's Office. Repayment is due in 30 days.

SSA has several limited emergency loan accounts. These loans may either be short-term (to be repaid in 90 days) or long-term (to be repaid after leaving the University). Interest is charged for long-term emergency loans and sometimes a co-signer is needed. These loans are available through the Office of the Dean of Students and take up to 10 working days to process.

**MASTER’S STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS: PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

Scholarship funds administered by the School are available to both full-time and part-time students. Scholarship awards are made on the basis of the student's financial need, scholastic achievement, and promise for the field of social work. Interested students must request consideration for an SSA Scholarship directly on the application for admission to SSA. Financial need has no bearing on the admission decision; rather, the student’s financial need is taken into consideration specifically for the purpose of scholarship determination. The student's financial need is computed by applying all financial resources of the student (including imputation of summer savings, academic year earnings, external funding, and student loans) against a standardized budget.

Financial support is considered solely in relation to anticipated expenses while the student is at this School. Consumer debt is not considered in determining financial need. A student who has accepted a scholarship with work commitment, but subsequently rejects that scholarship, is not given priority consideration for an SSA scholarship. Students are asked to avail themselves of the scholarship aid that requires work commitment.

Evidence of financial responsibility for dependents not part of the student's household will be required. Income tax returns for the preceding year are acceptable for evidence.

It is incumbent upon the student to inform the Office of the Dean of Students of any income supplementation from whatever source (that is, earnings, field work stipends, gifts, loans, inheritances, etc.). The Office of the Dean of Students reserves the right to request and review copies of students' income tax returns. Where previously unrecorded income is evident, scholarship aid may be adjusted.

Financial need resulting from unanticipated crises must generally be met by emergency loan funds.
Certain limited awards are based upon merit as determined by Admission Committee ratings. These merit awards are made irrespective of financial need.

Scholarships and loans are awarded for one academic year only. Applications for financial aid for the second year of study will be reviewed in the Spring Quarter of the student’s first year. In order to maintain eligibility for continuing scholarship aid beyond the first year, the student is required to show evidence of need and remain in good academic standing which is defined as:

- Achieving a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 after completion of the first 9 courses in the Master’s program;
- Having received no course grades of I (incomplete) unless the I grade is completed by the start of the next autumn quarter.

Additional factors lowering the priority given to a scholarship renewal application include:

- An SSA course grade of F;
- Two or more D grades in field practicum;
- Two or more disruptions of field placement due to performance issues.

Scholarships may be limited to two academic years for full-time students and three academic years for part-time students and joint-degree students.

**DOCTORAL STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS**

Doctoral students receive funding for the first 5 years of the program in conjunction with their admission to SSA’s PhD program. This funding includes a full tuition scholarship, payment of the quarterly student life fee and student health insurance (student-only), as well as a yearly stipend. For more information about doctoral student funding, please see the Manual for Doctoral Students.

**SCHOLARSHIP AID AND NON-SSA SCHOLARSHIPS**

Full-time students receiving tuition scholarship aid from SSA will be allowed to receive non SSA scholarships or other awards up to the following amounts without a reduction in their SSA scholarship award:

- Master's students ...........................................$5,000 per year
- Ph.D. students ..................................................$8,000 per year
Field Instruction

Field Instruction is an integral component of social work education. At SSA, the field placement is designed to engage students in practice activities that provide opportunities to reinforce and integrate the knowledge, values and skills learned in the classroom in the service of developing the competencies required for social work practice.

SSA’s Field Instruction Manual is available for review through the SSA website (Information for Students | University of Chicago - SSA), and the Office of Field Education. Students are expected to review this document and are responsible for following policies and procedures pertaining to field education.

FIELDWORK PERFORMANCE

If the performance in the field is not satisfactory, the Dean of Students may require that the student participate in the SSA Collaborative Problem-Solving Process (see pg. 35). This may occur even though a student’s classroom performance is satisfactory. The major grounds for this decision may be any of the following actions which are subject to review by the Director of Field Education and the Dean of Students. Student participation in the Collaborative Problem-Solving Process may be required as a result of the following, non-exhaustive list of actions:

- Violation of the NASW Professional Code of Ethics;
- Personal problems which significantly and consistently prevent a student from functioning adequately and professionally in the field;
- Lack of commitment to the values of the social work profession;
- Refusal to accept and follow through on a field placement assignment;
- Receiving a marginal passing grade of “D” in one or more quarters of field instruction;
- Receiving a grade of “F” in any quarter of field instruction;
- Being terminated from a field placement by the field instructor due to performance issues in two or more placements.

Furthermore, a student who is experiencing difficulty in multiple areas of the program (e.g., field and coursework) or repeated challenges in one or more areas may be required to participate in the Collaborative Problem-Solving Process. For more information see pg. 35.

A field instructor can request a student be immediately removed from the premise or terminated from a placement if the student’s behavior seriously places at risk the quality of
services delivered to clients and/or to the reputation of the organization.

**RE-ENTRY AFTER AN ABSENCE FROM FIELD**

Students on an approved leave of absence or students who received approval from the Field Office to temporarily discontinue fieldwork must make up any incomplete grades before returning to fieldwork. If a medical condition was being managed during the absence from fieldwork, resumption of fieldwork is contingent upon the medical condition being resolved or managed successfully. In such cases, the Dean of Students will require information from a physician or therapist attesting to the readiness of the student to successfully resume fieldwork. A meeting with the Dean of Students and the Director of Field Education (or their designees) may be scheduled to discuss the student’s readiness to return to fieldwork.

Once the Dean of Students and Director of Field Education approve resumption of fieldwork, the student will work with the Field Education Office to search for a new placement or to resume work at the former placement, whichever is appropriate given the student’s circumstance(s). The timing for resumption of field work will depend on availability of placement sites and the student’s ability to meet placement responsibilities. Additional information may be found in the Field Manual under “Leave of Absence and Disruptions from Field Placement.”

**REQUESTING A FIELD PLACEMENT CHANGE**

It is a serious request to seek a change in field placement. Students need exposure to a variety of experiences to become master level social work practitioners. Field placement agencies are chosen carefully. The Office of Field Education approaches all challenges as opportunities to enrich learning and to manage and problem-solve difficult situations. Because of this, field placements will be changed only after efforts at resolution have been attempted.

Students are expected to spend at least four weeks in the field prior to requesting a change in placement. This allows time for the student to become oriented and settle into the agency, as well as begin to develop a relationship with their field instructor. Issues of concern that arise during this time should be addressed with the student’s field instructor and field consultant.

A field placement may be changed sooner if the field instructor/agency is unable to assume the responsibilities of the field instruction role as outlined in their agreement with the School. Field Placements will not be changed due to a student’s disinterest in a particular
field setting or population, or because the geographic location is felt to be inconvenient.

PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS REQUESTING A FIELD PLACEMENT CHANGE

In the event a situation arises whereby a student feels there is a reason to request a change of field placement, the following steps should be taken:

Students should discuss their concerns with their field instructor first, and then with their SSA Field Consultant. Students are expected to let the Field Consultant know of any concerns so that a problem-solving process may occur.

The SSA Field Consultant will contact the appropriate person in the Office of Field Education and keep them informed.

The SSA Field Consultant will assess the situation and guide the student accordingly. This would include contacting the field instructor to discuss the situation and determine whether or not the issues can be resolved. This may entail a meeting with the Field Consultant, field instructor, and student and a performance agreement may be developed. Most often these meetings result in workable resolutions to the student’s concerns. A follow-up meeting or phone contact is scheduled to ensure that what was decided in that meeting was implemented.

If it is deemed that the placement issues are such that they are not resolvable and a change will occur, a meeting MUST take place between the appropriate SSA Field Education staff person, the Field Consultant, Field Instructor, and student to properly terminate the placement in accordance with agency needs.

Once the placement is terminated, the appropriate person in the Office of Field Education will meet with the student and if the student is ready to engage in another field placement, arrange another placement. The time between terminating a placement and arranging a new one may vary depending on availability of placement sites and the student’s ability to meet placement responsibilities. Arrangements for making up any time lost by the student will be discussed.

Students may also seek support through the utilization of other reporting processes as needed or appropriate, which includes (but is not limited to): SSA Grievance Policy, UChicago Disciplinary Process, and the Bias Education and Support Team.

A STUDENT SHOULD NEVER INITIATE OR TERMINATE A FIELD PLACEMENT WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE AND INVOLVEMENT OF THE SSA FIELD CONSULTANT AND THE OFFICE OF
FIELD EDUCATION. SHOULD THIS OCCUR, IT CAN RESULT IN RECEIVING A GRADE OF “F” FOR THE PRACTICUM.

DISCLOSURE OF STUDENT STATUS TO CLIENTS

For ethical and legal reasons, it is the policy of SSA to require students to disclose their student status at their agency. This ensures that their representation to their clients, agency, and public is an accurate reflection of their professional qualifications and credentials. This policy reinforces social work’s ethical responsibility to client’s right to self-determination. It is expected that field instructors will guide their student(s) on:

- How to introduce themselves to clients, e.g., social work intern, trainee, etc.
- Ways to help the student deal with their feelings of confidence and competence as a beginning social worker
- How to anticipate, think about, and respond to questions that clients might raise about their student status
- Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries with clients

CRIMINAL OFFENSE RECORD INVESTIGATION AND FIELD PLACEMENT ASSIGNMENTS

The National Child Abuse Protection Act of 1993 and the Jacob Wetterling Act of 1994 allow for the use of national criminal background checks for people working or volunteering with children, the elderly, or disabled individuals. Most states now have laws and regulations requiring criminal background checks for employees and volunteers who plan to work in these settings.

Increasing numbers of field placements require background checks prior to accepting interns. Students are asked to self-report any history of criminal convictions to the Director of Field Education so that appropriate field practicum planning can occur. It is not relevant or necessary for a student to share criminal background information with a field agency if the agency does not require it, and we want to be sure you are aware of all opportunities for field placements, professional licensing, and/or employment. Failure to report criminal convictions truthfully may result in withdrawal from the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago.
Students with Disabilities

The University of Chicago is a community of scholars, researchers, educators, students, and staff members devoted to the pursuit of knowledge. We strive to be supportive of the academic, personal, and work-related needs of each individual. We are committed to doing our best to help those with disabilities become full participants in the life of the University.

Students with disabilities should, in as timely a fashion as possible, contact the University Student Disability Services Office as well as involve the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students, Director of Field Education, faculty, or other University representatives as necessary and appropriate. The University Student Disability Services Office may request appropriate documentation of the disability or professional review. A member of the University Student Disability Services Office may meet with the student to discuss their needs and what accommodation might be reasonable. Once accommodations are determined, Student Disability Services will communicate this to the Office of the Dean of Students. Our office will then communicate directly with the students’ faculty, and/or Field Education when appropriate. The student and the Office of the Dean of Students will maintain contact as appropriate for ongoing efforts to accommodate the student.

In keeping with its traditions and long-standing policies and practices, the University, in admissions, employment, and access to programs, considers students and employees on the basis of individual merit and without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sex, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, or other factors irrelevant to study or work at the University.
Advising System

Each student at SSA is assigned a faculty advisor who provides assistance in curriculum planning and course selection. Students are also encouraged to seek out any member of the faculty for consultation.

Advice, counsel, and referrals on academic requirements, orientation, graduation, student engagement, and more is available through the Office of the Dean of Students. Please see the Office of the Dean of Students’ website for a listing of our current staff and advising support structure.

Student Involvement

All registered master’s students are members of SSA Student Government Association and all registered doctoral students are members of SSA Doctoral Student Association.

Student participation in School government is through the SSA Student Government Association. This organization provides the mechanism for appointment of students to School committees and acts as a communications center for cohorts, student organizations, students involved in these committees. The SSA Student Government Association is a major vehicle for policy and curriculum changes within SSA. Participation is open to all registered students and procedures for becoming involved are presented via email each quarter.
**Career Services**

**SSA OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES**

The Office of Career Services provides career and professional development programs for master’s and doctoral students, including skills-building workshops, individual career counseling, job-search strategies, an alumni contact database, and posting of jobs primarily in the Chicago area.

Quarterly workshops provide students with the skills needed to develop efficient job-search strategies, to convey transferable skills, to write effective resumes and cover letters, and to learn sound interviewing techniques.

To help provide networking opportunities, Career Services offers a database of more than 2,000 recent alumni who have volunteered to be contacts, offering advice and guidance for job seekers. Several of these alumni also serve on quarterly career panels sponsored by Career Services to discuss their transitions from SSA and their current career paths, and to offer advice to graduating students. Alumni and students also participate in a shadow program during the summer to provide one-on-one direct workplace experiences.

On-campus recruiting, held each spring, offers diverse employers in the Chicago area with full-time jobs and/or paid summer work the opportunity to meet our students. Throughout the year, Career Services will send notices electronically via the Career Services Digest to students alerting them to internships, fellowships, and recruiting opportunities.

During spring break, students can participate in SSA’s Washington Week. This program brings together SSA alumni in the Washington, DC, area with currently enrolled students. Often meeting at alumni work sites, students learn about careers in the public and non-profit sectors, as well as about careers in research, advocacy, lobbying, and program management.

**UChicago GRAD**
(Located in the 3rd floor of the University Bookstore)

UChicagoGRAD is a one-stop shop of integrated services to help graduate students and postdocs navigate their academic and professional careers. UChicagoGRAD staff are committed to serving the graduate and postdoc community, focusing on recruitment; skills and experience; career development; and alumni engagement.
University Policies

The Student Manual: University Policies and Regulations (Student Manual: University Policies and Regulations) includes the University-wide policies pertaining to all members of the University community. SSA students should become familiar with these policies so as not to jeopardize their academic standing nor their ability to remain a member of the SSA community. The policies listed below are University-wide policies and are available here http://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/university:

- Civil Behavior in a University Setting
- Statement of Nondiscrimination
- Policy on Unlawful Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct
- Hazing Policy
- Campus Violence Prevention Policy & Threat Assessment Team
- Disability Accommodation Protocol
- Graduate Student Parent Policy
- Domestic Partnership Policy
- Student Employment
- Alcohol and Other Drugs
- Networking and Information Technology Policies
- Inventions and Discoveries
- Safety and Appropriate Use of Facilities

University Disciplinary Systems

The University student disciplinary procedures are published in the Student Manual: University Policies and Regulations (http://Studentmanual.uchicago.edu/Disciplinary).

PREAMBLE

The University of Chicago is a community of scholars dedicated to research, academic excellence, the pursuit and cultivation of new knowledge, and the robust intellectual exchange among faculty and students. In support of this mission, every member of the University - student, faculty, and staff - makes a commitment to strive for personal and academic integrity; to treat others with dignity and respect; to honor the rights and property of others; to take responsibility for individual and group behavior; and to act as a responsible citizen in a free academic community and in the larger society. Any student conduct, on or off campus, of individuals or groups, that threatens or violates this commitment may become a matter for action within the University's system of student
The University believes that students must take responsibility for their own conduct. Under some circumstances, students also must take responsibility for the conduct of a group, or individual members of the group of which they are part. The group may be informal, such as a study group, or formal, such as a student organization.

Groups are often bound by shared interests, values, and a mutual trust. Trust is also a critical underpinning of our community—trust between and among peers as well as trust between and among individuals of different rank or status.

Every student bears responsibility for their misconduct, regardless of whether the misconduct takes place in a group setting or as a member or a group. However, individual misconduct may also be, at least in part, the responsibility of other members of the group and the group leadership. Misconduct by individual members of a group thus may become a matter for disciplinary action against the individual, the group, and the group leadership.

The goal of the student disciplinary systems is to ensure a fair and orderly proceeding on questions of possible student misconduct. A disciplinary proceeding enjoys neither the advantages nor the limitations inherent in an adversarial proceeding of a court of law.

The University's disciplinary systems and the legal-judicial structures of the general society differ and are distinct in principle. Students who are subject to or involved in University discipline do not automatically abdicate any of the rights that are guaranteed to them by the civil society and, indeed, they remain at all times free to claim and assert those rights through the institutions, presumably judicial, of that society. At the same time, however, students must recognize that the University is a private enclave, dedicated to a purpose that imposes additional and special obligations while, at the same time, granting privileges to its members.

Student misconduct therefore may be simultaneously subject to external legal or administrative proceedings and the University's disciplinary system. Under those circumstances, the University's disciplinary system normally will proceed independently and notwithstanding the pendency of external processes. Furthermore, University disciplinary committees are not bound by external findings, adjudications or processes, and thus they make independent judgments about the extent to which (if at all) to consider such matters.

The University's disciplinary procedures therefore should not be confused with the processes of law: the University's regulations are applied to incidents that are not "cases," the bodies that hear and dispose of incidents are not "courts," individuals who may
accompany a student in the course of a disciplinary proceeding are not "counsel" advocating on behalf of the student and scrutinizing procedures for compliance with "rules of evidence," and requests for review of disciplinary decisions are not "appeals." As a leading illustration of the sense of this statement, it should be understood that the relation of collegiality and trust that binds all members of the University community entails an obligation of truthfulness and candor on the part of everyone who participates in a disciplinary proceeding. An accused student, the accuser, and others must appear before a disciplinary committee if summoned and participate in a manner that helps the committee reach a complete and fair understanding of the facts of the incident at issue.

THE UNIVERSITY HAS FOUR STUDENT DISCIPLINARY SYSTEMS:

*Area Admission Review Systems* in the College, graduate divisions, professional schools, and the Graham School of General Studies address violations of University policies and regulations and other breaches of the standards of behavior expected of University students who have accepted admission but have not yet assumed the role of a student at the University. Area Admission Review Systems are described here: https://studentmanual.sites.uchicago.edu/page/area-admission-review-system

*Area Disciplinary Systems* in the College, graduate divisions, professional schools, and the Graham School of General Studies address violations of University policies and regulations and other breaches of the standards of behavior expected of University students. Area Disciplinary Systems are described here: https://studentmanual.sites.uchicago.edu/area

*University-wide Disciplinary System* is a procedure for student offenses that involve unlawful discrimination or sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking). The University-wide Disciplinary System is described here: http://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/university_dicip_system.

*College Housing Discipline* applies to offenses within or against The College Houses (e.g. vandalism, disruption, excessive noise). Serious offenses within The College Houses are referred to an appropriate Area Disciplinary System. The rules and disciplinary procedures for the House System are described here: https://studentmanual.sites.uchicago.edu/house.

DISCIPLINARY SYSTEM OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

The Disciplinary System of the School of Social Service Administration follows the Disciplinary Systems outlined in the University’s Student Manual: University Policies & Regulations at https://studentmanual.sites.uchicago.edu/area.
In addition to these procedures, the Dean of Students of the School of Social Service Administration may choose to informally resolve complaints through the School’s Collaborative Problem Solving Process (see pg. 35).

For more information about the area disciplinary process refer to:
https://studentmanual.sites.uchicago.edu/area.

For information about the disciplinary review process refer to:
https://studentmanual.sites.uchicago.edu/review

For information about the admission review system refer to:
https://studentmanual.sites.uchicago.edu/page/area-admission-review-system
Miscellany

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

Students pay a mandatory Student Life Fee which in part covers services through the Student Health Service and the Student Counseling Service (Student Health and Counseling Services | The University of Chicago). Brochures describing the University’s Student Health and Counseling Service and the University Student Health Insurance Plan (U-SHIP) are available in the Office of the Dean of Students or at Student Health and Counseling Services | The University of Chicago. All students are required by the University to have adequate health insurance and are automatically enrolled in the University’s student insurance plan. (Exception: Extended Evening Program students are not automatically enrolled in U-SHIP but may opt-in and pay a higher premium.) Students who have appropriate insurance from another provider may request a waiver of the University coverage at Student Health and Counseling Services | The University of Chicago.

CHICAGO CARD

The UChicago Card is the official University student identification card. Students must present the card when asked by designated University officials. The card is used to enter and borrow materials from all University libraries. It is used for identification in cashing checks at the Bursar’s Office, accessing Student Health and Counseling Services, and entering University facilities such as the gym and field house. University cards are issued throughout the year at Regenstein Library, 100F.

The Card Office hours are:
- Monday through Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

At this office University community members can:
- Obtain a Chicago Card or replace a lost or stolen card;
- Have passport photos taken;
- Obtain International Student ID cards;
- Obtain or update library privileges; and
- Pay library fees or fines and clear library-related restrictions.
CNET IDs AND EMAIL ACCOUNTS

Your unique CNET ID is your account name in the University’s Information Technology Service (ITS) system. You will use your CNET ID as your email address (cnetid@uchicago.edu). You will also use it to log on to a number of University services, including online registration, registrar services, and proxy services.

Information will be communicated to students by way of your CNET e-mail. Each student is provided an e-mail account and is required to activate this account. Students are held responsible for all official University communication sent by CNET email; consequently, it is important for students to read their CNET e-mail regularly. Staff and faculty will use CNET email to send information to students. Students are invited to communicate with members of the Office of the Dean of Students via e-mail addresses located at Dean of Students Celia Bergman | University of Chicago - SSA. Other staff and faculty e-mail addresses can be found in the SSA Directory (Directories | University of Chicago - SSA).

SSA LIST-HOST POLICY

SSA students may post to the various SSA List-hosts (students@ssa.uchicago.edu, staff@uchicago.edu, faculty@ssa.uchicago.edu). We believe that all members of the SSA community should have the ability to disseminate relevant information within the community. So as not to inundate members of the community with too many e-mails the following policy has been developed.

- All authors must clearly be affiliated with the University, i.e. faculty, staff, administrators or students at the University.
- List-host moderators have the right to withhold any message that does not meet the guidelines set forth in this policy.
- The proposed email message should be related to the business and mission of SSA.
- The message should be of significant importance to a large segment of the SSA community.
- Emails of a personal nature, such as notices of items for sale, lost or found items and solicitation of goods or services are not allowed.
- Emails soliciting employment opportunities are not allowed. Please send employment listings to mjogerst@uchicago.edu.
- Messages that publicize or endorse causes (even a very good cause), such as relief efforts for victims of natural disasters or organizations seeking assistance that are not already associated with the University are not allowed.
• Alternative posting options include the bulletin boards in the lobby and outside of the SSA café as well as the SSA Dean of Students or Student Government Association Facebook page.
• Students are not permitted to unsubscribe from official SSA student listhosts.

PHOTO/VIDEO/AUDIO RELEASE POLICY

SSA’s Office of Communications often takes and films professional photographs and videos of events and activities that occur at SSA. Any and all photographs, video, or audio taken or recorded are used for the website, recruiting and development publications, and for other promotional materials. By visiting or registering at SSA and being present in public settings, students give permission to the University of Chicago to use their name and photographic/video/audio likeness in any and all official University promotional material in print, online, or any other medium designed for the purpose of promoting the University of Chicago and the School of Social Service Administration. Students who do not wish to have their likeness or name reflected in promotional materials must notify the Dean of Students office in writing no later than the first Friday of autumn quarter.

U PASS

Effective spring 2014, SSA has engaged in a U Pass contract with the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA). As per the conditions of the contract, all full-time SSA students (Master’s and PhD students) are issued a U Pass for unlimited rides on CTA trains and buses during the academic school year (not including break periods). The pass carries a $100/quarter mandatory fee assessed to the student’s Bursar account. The fee is non-refundable. For more information about the U Pass, contact the Office Manager in the Office of the Dean of Students.