



# **Social Work Diploma Student Handbook**

*Transformative Education for  
Exceptional Social Work Practice*

**2021/2022**

**Oki, Amba'wastitch, Danit'ada, Tansi**

Mount Royal University is situated in an ancient and storied place within the hereditary lands of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Îyârhe Nakoda, Tsuut'ina and Métis Nations. It is a land steeped in ceremony and history that, until recently, was used and occupied exclusively by peoples indigenous to this place.







## Social Work Diploma Program Outcomes

Students will demonstrate an introductory understanding of:

### Foundational Knowledge

Understand the historical, philosophical, ethical, and theoretical perspectives of social work practice.

### Practice Skills

Skills to engage, assess, advocate, and intervene at the micro, mezzo, macro level in an inclusive manner.

### Critical Thinking/Analysis

Understand and articulate the multiple causes and impacts of social issues.

### Academic Skills

Organize written materials and oral presentations to communicate effectively for academic and professional purposes.

### Personal & Social Responsibility

Engage in reflexive practice through active involvement with diverse communities and contemporary social issues.

## Social Work Diploma Curriculum

### Social Work Diploma Summary of Course Prerequisites

Course	Required Prerequisite
SLWK 1287 – Social Work Practicum I	A grade of C or higher in all of INTS 1240, SLWK 1114, and SLWK 1187.
SLWK 2217 - Leadership and Interprofessional Practice in Social Work	SLWK 1287 with a minimum grade of C.
SLWK 1215 – Social Work Assessment and Documentation	A grade of C or higher in SLWK 1114.

SLWK 1216 – Counselling Skills	A grade of C or higher in both of INTS 1240 and SLWK 1114
SLWK 2218 – Social Work Knowledge and Skills for Group Work	A grade of C or higher in SLWK 1216
SLWK 2221- Social Work Practice with Communities	A grade of C or higher in both of SLWK 1114 and SLWK 1187
SLWK 2222 – Social Work with Families	A grade of C or higher in both of SLWK 1215 and SLWK 1216.
SLWK 2223 – Social Work Practice in Addictions and Mental Health	A grade of C or higher in SLWK 1215
SLWK 2297 – Social Work Practicum II	A grade of C or higher in all of SLWK 1287, SLWK 2218, and SLWK 2222 and a grade of C or higher in SLWK 2221.
PSYC 2235 – Life Span Development	Psychology 1104 or 1105 with a grade of C or higher

## Social Work Diploma Summary of Required Courses Per Year

The following courses are required to meet the program outcomes. In order to earn a diploma in Social Work, students must successfully complete the following courses within six years of being accepted into the program.

Year 1	Year 1 - Fall Term	Year 1 – Winter Term	
	Required Social Work Courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INTS 1240 – Fundamentals of Professional Communication</li> <li>• SLWK 1114 - Introduction to Social Work History, Philosophy, and Theory</li> <li>• SLWK 1187 - Social Welfare Policies and Issues</li> <li>• SLWK 2224 - Indigenous</li> </ul>	Required Social Work Courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLWK 1215 - Social Work Assessment and Documentation</li> <li>• SLWK 1216 - Counselling Skills</li> <li>• SLWK 1287 Social Work Practicum I</li> </ul>	<b>Spring /Summer Practicum, Field School, GNED</b>

	Knowledges in the Helping Professions		
	Required Non-Social Work courses: • PSYC 1105 - Introduction to Psychology	Required Non-Social Work courses: • PSYC 2235 - Life-Span Development • English requirement – GNED 1401/1403/1404	
<b>Credits</b>	15	18	

Year 2	Year 2 - Fall Term	Year 2 – Winter Term	Spring /Summer Practicum, Field School, GNED
	Required Social Work Courses: • SLWK 2218 - Social Work Knowledge and Skills for Group Work • SLWK 2221- Social Work Practice with Communities • SLWK 2222 - Social Work with Families	Required Social Work Courses: • SLWK 2217 - Leadership and Interprofessional Practice in Social Work Organizations • SLWK 2223 - Social Work Practice in Addictions and Mental Health • SLWK 2297 - Social Work Practicum II	
	Required Non-Social Work courses: • GNED Cluster 1 • GNED Cluster 2	Required Non-Social Work courses: • GNED Cluster 3 • GNED Cluster 4	
<b>Credits</b>	15	18	

In addition to Social Work (SLWK) course requirements the Social Work program also requires students to complete 4 General Education Courses, 2 Psychology courses and a foundation cluster 4 course (English). The General Education program at Mount Royal is organized around four thematic clusters which constitute groups or streams of courses. These include:

- Cluster 1 Numeracy and Scientific Literacy
- Cluster 2 Values, Beliefs and Identity
- Cluster 3 Community and Society
- Cluster 4 Communication

Specific information about these clusters is available in the [MRU Academic Calendar](#).

Except for GNED 1401, Diploma students are not required to take foundation level General Education courses. For students planning to complete their degree at other universities, tier 2 or 3 courses generally have established transfer agreements. Students applying to the University of Calgary BSW must ensure all General Education courses transfer to the university.

The Social Work Diploma at Mount Royal University is eligible for transfer credits at the following educational institutions: The University of Calgary, Thompson Rivers University, the University of Victoria, Dalhousie University, “Students are responsible for ensuring that the courses they take are transferable for the program to which you may apply.” Upon completion of the Diploma, MRU students may apply for third year entry into the BSW at MRU.

## Social Work Diploma: Core Course Descriptions

### **SLWK 1114 Introduction to Social Work History, Philosophy and Theory**

This course provides an introduction to the historical, philosophical, ethical, and theoretical perspectives of social work practice. Factors distinguishing social work practice will be introduced, including social work values, ethics, theories, and models of practice. This course also examines the impact of oppression and marginalization on individuals, children and families, and communities, including the role of social work in contributing to colonization and decolonization in Canada.

### **SLWK 1187 Social Welfare Policies and Issues**

This course is designed to help students become critically aware of the economic, social, and political environment within which they will eventually practice. It will examine the process by which social policy is developed in Canada and encourage reflection upon the ways social workers are influenced by, and in turn can influence, that process. A review and analysis of social problems, policies, and issues as they relate to the delivery and development of appropriate social services will occur. Students will be invited to examine their own values, as well as dominant ideologies present within Canada today.

### **SLWK 1215 Social Work Assessment and Documentation**

This course provides students with an opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to gather and evaluate information using a variety of evidence-informed approaches and tools. Integrating an intersectional approach to trauma, family violence and mental health, students will explore topics including assessment, case planning, goal setting, intervention, evaluation and documentation.

*Prerequisite(s): A grade of C or higher in SLWK 1114.*

### **SLWK 1216 Counselling Skills**



This experiential course concentrates on the development of interviewing and counselling skills with an emphasis on social work practice with individuals, and children and families. Students will have the opportunity to develop an introductory therapeutic skill set through simulated counselling interviews.

*Prerequisite(s): A grade of C or higher in both of INTS 1240 and SLWK 1114.*

### **SLWK 1287 Social Work Practicum I**

Social Work Practicum I provides students with an opportunity to experience direct practice with individuals, groups, or communities. Practicum is intended to expose students to the complexity of practice issues related to work in human services and to view social issues from a social work perspective. During this first practicum experience students are expected to integrate learning from their first year courses with a focus on the application of social work skills, values and ethics. Students are challenged to examine how their social location influences their assessments of client situations and their work with clients or client groups. Students are expected to demonstrate a beginning understanding of social work as a distinct profession. Practicum seminars will be delivered using a blended delivery format, including both in-person and online meetings. Accreditation standards require that students are supervised by a Registered Social Worker resulting in tutorials that may be scheduled outside of regular class time.

*Prerequisite(s): A grade of C or higher in all of INTS 1240, SLWK 1114, and SLWK 1187.*

### **SLWK 2217 Leadership and Interprofessional Practice in Social Work Organizations**

Social work organizations require strong and effective leadership. This course will provide students with an understanding of how to lead social service agencies and programs in order to provide a healthy working environment that promotes effective service provision focused on client empowerment. Students will explore topics related to organizational development, program planning, and leadership in nonprofit organizations.

*Prerequisite(s): SLWK 1287 or 1297 with a minimum grade of C*  
provision focused on client empowerment.

### **SLWK 2224 Indigenous Knowledges in the Helping Professions**

This course provides social work students with an introductory understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing and helping. Topics covered include, traditional Indigenous life-ways, worldviews, the role of spirit, significance of relationships, connection to the past, emphasis on community, respect for cultural practices, and the role of Elders within Indigenous helping practices. Students will gain an understanding of the history of social work interventions with Indigenous peoples, including residential schools, the sixties scoop, and strategies for effective engagement and collaboration with Indigenous children, families, and communities.

### **SLWK 2218 Social Work Knowledge and Skills for Group Work**

This course introduces and provides an overview of social work practice with groups through a combination of lectures, observation, and experiential learning. The stages of group development, group roles and norms, facilitation, group design, implementation and evaluation will be addressed. Students will have the opportunity to develop their facilitation skills through participation in group simulations.

*Prerequisite(s): A grade of C or higher in SLWK 1216*

### **SLWK 2221 Social Work Practice with Communities**

This course provides students with an introduction to community social work practice. The course will address the role of community social work practice in the context of diversity, social change movements, and activism. Students will explore a range of theoretical frameworks for community change and develop skills to work in partnership with diverse communities to create change.

*Prerequisite(s): A grade of C or higher in both of SLWK 1114 and SLWK 1187*

### **SLWK 2222 Social Work with Families**

This course will focus on social work with family systems. Students will develop an understanding of the interactive, ecological, socioeconomic, and cultural influences on families. Attention will be paid to the impacts of current and historical trauma, engaging families and assessing for strengths, sources of resilience and support, and pathways to change. Students will be introduced to strategies and methods to enhance resilience, safety, connection to community and culture utilizing both formal and natural supports.

*Prerequisite(s): A grade of C or higher in both of SLWK 1215 and SLWK 1216*

### **SLWK 2223 Social Work Practice in Addictions and Mental Health**

This course provides students with an understanding of the intersectional factors that affect mental health. Students will explore the interactions between mental health, trauma and substance abuse. This will include the impact of intergenerational trauma. Students will explore theories related to addiction and mental health and develop competencies in collaborative case management and intervention across the range of environments in which social workers engage with these areas of practice.

*Prerequisite(s): A grade of C or higher in SLWK 1215*

### **SLWK 2297 Social Work Practicum II**

Social Work Practicum II builds on the skills and knowledge from Social Work Practicum I with a goal of exposure to and involvement in more complex practice situations. Students integrate social work theories and methods in work with individuals, families, groups, and/or communities. Students are expected to demonstrate social work practice skills related to assessment, shared participation in the client change process, and interventions with a variety of client groups. Reflective practice and a focus on professionalism, social work ethics, and the standards of practice contribute to the continued development of social work identity. Practicum seminars will

be delivered using a blended delivery format, including both in-person and online meetings. The Social Work diploma is governed by accreditation standards set by the Alberta College of Social Workers. Accreditation standards require that students are supervised by a Registered Social Worker resulting in tutorials that may be scheduled outside of regular class time.

*Prerequisite(s): A grade of C or higher in all of SLWK 1287, SLWK 2218, and SLWK 2222 and a grade of C or higher in one of SLWK 2221 or INTS 3331.*

*Community Service Learning*

### **INTS 1240 - Fundamentals of Professional Communication**

This course provides an introduction and overview to aspects of professional communication. Utilizing a mix of theory and application, the course provides students with opportunities to gain an understanding of the elements of professional communication and demonstrate a foundational level of knowledge and skill of the application of professional communication for use in a variety of settings.

## **Social Work Diploma Program: Student Leadership Opportunities**

To develop leadership skills and contribute to the social work community please consider volunteering for one of the many opportunities available to students in the Social Work Program. Your service within these leadership opportunities helps to ensure the student voice and perspective is heard throughout the university. Interested students are encouraged to contact the Program Coordinator.

### **Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW)** (multiple student opportunities)

The ACSW is the professional body for social work in the province of Alberta. Periodically, there are times when the ACSW calls for student members to serve on its committees. For example, each year the ACSW requires student volunteers to assist at the ACSW annual conference.

### **Faculty of Health, Community and Education, Faculty Council** (1 student)

The Council normally meets four times each academic year. Among other things, the Council meets to approve new courses, programs, and calendar submissions from the Faculty. Council also devotes some of its meetings to panel discussions on topics of major interest and concern to offer guidance to the Dean and other committees for possible further action. One student from each department within the Faculty of Health & Community Studies is appointed by the Dean.

### **Faculty of Health, Community and Education Scholar's Council** (1 student)

The council's mission is to foster a culture of scholarship among faculty, staff and students by developing and funding activities such as the Research and Scholarship Showcase and by supporting and funding conferences, workshops and symposia. Committee members meet two to three times a year to plan events and review funding applications.

### **Social Work Advisory Committee (2 students)**

The purpose of this working committee is to help guide the work of the Social Work Program. The committee meets two times per year to discuss course development plans, employment needs from the community, issues and trends impacting the profession, and generally support the social work program and its students. This committee consists of social work agency representatives from across the social service sector, students, an alumni member, the Dean of the Faculty of Health & Community Studies, the Chair of Child Studies and Social Work and the Social Work Program Coordinator.

### **Social Work Students' Society**

The social work students' society is an official club of the Students' Association of Mount Royal University (SAMRU). The 3SW organizes activist events for social work students as well as social activities. There are five elected/appointed positions including: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Events Organizer. In addition, the 3SW general membership is open to all members of the social work program.

## **Mount Royal University – Important Policies**

Students should ensure they are familiar with the policies that govern their participation at MRU and in the Social Work Program. In order to ensure relevance and accuracy, a list of important policies is provided as part of this handbook.

Online links to each policy are provided to assist students in easily and effectively locating the information required. A searchable [Policy and Procedures](#) website is also available.

The following are general policies that apply to Social Work students in all courses:

### **MRU Academic Regulations**

Academic regulations are detailed in the [MRU Academic Calendar](#). These policies and regulations govern all staff, faculty, and students at the university. Policies related to grading, exams, assignments, grade appeals etc. can be located here.

## MRU Student Code of Conduct

The [Office of Student Community Standards \(OSCS\)](#) is a resource for students, faculty and staff at Mount Royal University that helps define community standards for academic and personal conduct.

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Code of Conduct and academic regulations and policies as stated in the Calendar. Faculty may use anti-plagiarism software to detect incidents of academic misconduct. All incidents of potential academic and non-academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

Students should familiarize themselves with the Mount Royal University [Student Code of Conduct Policy](#) including the reporting, penalties, and process for dealing with academic misconduct and non-academic misconduct.

[Academic Misconduct](#) All MRU students are expected to consistently submit original work, give credit to other peoples' ideas and work and complete all submissions independently and honestly. Academic misconduct occurs when a student/s misrepresents facts or information and gains an unfair academic advantage over other students. It is the policy of the program to report all instances of academic misconduct. Students should ensure that they are familiar with the policies and processes related to breach of this policy.

[Non-Academic Misconduct](#) MRU students are held accountable for their personal conduct at all times including when off campus or in practicum. Broadly, non-academic misconduct would include behaviours that potentially threaten the safety or well-being of any member of the MRU community. The Student Code of Conduct policy defines the violation of the ethical standards set by a professional association as a form of non-academic misconduct. As such, MRU holds Social Work students responsible to the Social Work Code of Ethics (CASW) and Standards of Practice (ACSW). Violation of either code could result in being required to withdraw from the program.

Students will find more information on these policies and processes at the [Office of Student Community Standards \(OSCS\)](#).

## MRU Human Rights Policy

Mount Royal University is committed to creating and maintaining a supportive working and learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. In keeping with efforts to establish and maintain an environment in which the dignity and worth of all members of the Mount Royal community are respected, it is the policy of Mount Royal that discrimination and

harassment of students, employees and visitors, to our campus is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The fundamental objectives of this [Human Rights Policy](#) are to prevent discrimination and harassment on grounds protected by the Alberta Human Rights Act and to provide procedures for handling complaints and remedying situations.

If you encounter or witness discrimination and harassment of any form while at MRU or in practicum please speak to a faculty member immediately or contact [Access and Inclusion Services](#).

### **MRU Personal Harassment Policy**

Mount Royal University is committed to creating a supportive working and learning environment that is free from personal harassment. The MRU [Personal Harassment Policy](#) applies to all members of the MRU community and provides resources for defining, reporting and managing situations related to personal harassment.

If you encounter or witness personal harassment of any form while at MRU or in practicum please speak to a faculty member immediately or contact the [Access and Inclusion Services](#).

### **MRU Sexual Violence Response and Awareness**

Mount Royal University condemns all acts of violence. Because of the unacceptable prevalence of gender-based violence, we have chosen to take a strong and explicit position against dating, domestic and sexual violence. We recognize that many students, faculty and staff have had experiences with dating, domestic and/or sexual violence and we strive to be a support for our community members. The [Sexual Violence Response Policy](#) identifies MRU's response to sexual violence, resources for support, and investigation procedures. Resources are available through the Dating, Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Coordinator and resources are available on the [The Office of Safe Disclosure](#) website.

### **MRU Academic Accommodation for Students Experiencing Disabilities**

MRU is committed to access, diversity and equity. Access and Inclusion Services assists the University in creating an accessible learning environment that encourages full participation in academic courses for students experiencing disabilities. Students should familiarize themselves with the [Academic Accommodation for Students Experiencing Disabilities Policy](#).

Accommodations are available to registered students with documented conditions who face barriers in the post-secondary environment. Students experiencing a disability are responsible to facilitate an accommodation by contacting a student advisor in the [Access and Inclusion](#)

[Services](#) office. It is the student's responsibility to register with Access and Inclusion Services early in the term and to request academic accommodations if required.

## **MRU Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy**

The personal information that you provide to Mount Royal University including instructors and staff of the social work department is collected under the authority of the Post-Secondary Learning Act and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act – Section 33(c). The information will be used for the routine administration of the department including reviewing student progress in the social work program and determining or verifying a student's suitability or eligibility for practicum and other benefits. Additionally, disclosed information may be used for the routine administration of Mount Royal academic support services including but not restricted to the Office of Students Community Standards, Student Learning Services, Access and Inclusion Services, Student Counseling, Iniskim Centre, and Academic Advising. Collected personal information is protected from unauthorized access, collection, use and disclosure in accordance with the FOIP act and can be reviewed upon request subject to the provision of the Act. Questions regarding the collection of personal information can be directed to the Chair of the Department of Child Studies and Social Work.

## **Social Work Code of Ethics**

Social work students are responsible for being familiar with, understanding, and adhering to the values and standards outlined in the Canadian Association of Social Workers' [Code of Ethics](#) (2005) and the Alberta College of Social Workers [Standards of Practice](#) (2019).

Student misconduct and/or a violation of the Code of Ethics or Standards of Practice could result in a formal referral to the [Office of Student Community Standards \(OSCS\)](#), the failure of a course or expulsion from the program.

## **Social Media and Social Work Practice - Social Work Program Policy**

### **Preamble**

Students in the social work program, including in practicum, are considered to be practicing social work with the same obligations to the profession, staff and colleagues, practicum agencies and, particularly, to clients. The use of social media is common, but students need to understand and acknowledge that there are ethical limitations that must be honored.

It is impossible to cover all aspects of personal presence on social media. Be guided by the notion that your public presence is part of who you are as a social worker. If you have questions about this policy, please direct them to the Program Coordinator.

Students should review and be familiar with the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) guidelines on [Social Media Use and Social Work Practice](#). The CASW guidelines include the core social work values of:

- *Respect for the inherent dignity and worth of persons*
- *Pursuit of social justice*
- *Service to humanity*
- *Integrity of professional practice*
- *Confidentiality of professional practice*
- *Competence of professional practice*

Familiarity with The Alberta College of Social Workers [Standards of Practice](#) is encouraged and will assist in ensuring professional behavior.

Social media includes, but is not limited to, platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, LinkedIn, Reddit, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest and dozens of other similar sites. It can also include messenger services such as FaceTime, Facebook Messenger and Whatsapp.

Your personal online presence is part of your professional presence, image and ethical behavior. Content shared on social media enters the public forum and becomes a public record of events, circumstances and information about people, yourself and others.

When entering agency practice for practicum, take time to review and understand the policies and practices your agency has regarding the use of social media. You should engage in discussions with your supervisor around any restrictions that the university has with respect to social media use and explore any areas of concern. Your practicum instructor at MRU is a source of support and guidance.

MRU and practicum agencies are bound by Information and Privacy laws and Human Rights Legislation in Alberta. If in doubt about whether information can be shared, it is recommended to not share it until you have clarified that it is permissible to do so. For your purposes as a student, MRU standards and expectations apply even if something is permitted by the agency.

## Guiding Principles

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

Client and colleague confidentiality must never be compromised and the posting of any information about a client on social media is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to



1. names or any other potentially identifying information;
2. photographs that may include a client, information about a client, including their physical location or a client's involvement with an agency;
3. reference to attending an event that may link to a client; and
4. having photographs with you, taken by a client for possible publication on their social media.

## **Professional Boundaries**

5. You may not friend a client on any social media platform. This includes the client's family and friends.
6. You may not use social media to search for information about a client.
7. You may not enter into a social relationship with a client or former client including through social media.
8. It is vital to maintain professional boundaries with your online presence.
9. You must take steps to block your personal information such as your phone number if you are using personal communication devices for contact with clients. .
10. The privacy policies of agencies must also be respected. This may include such concerns as not posting locations, photos of interiors of facilities or other information that could compromise the privacy and security of clients.
11. Posting anything that you think is non-identifying data about an agency, colleague or client may have sufficient information to allow someone to figure out who you are speaking about. Case information should never be posted on social media.
12. Your colleagues also deserve to have their privacy protected. Remember that they too are connected to clients. Refrain from sharing any information about your colleagues via social media.
13. Avoid discussion of the behaviors of clients or colleagues in general or specifically.
14. Posting about student colleagues is also not permitted, and shows a lack of professionalism. What occurs in class, class assignments, course group work or other course related materials should not be shared via social media.
15. Sharing photographs or recordings of students or class activities are subject to requirements of formal consent, for which you do not have authority. Students have the right to anticipate privacy of their information when shared in class and course situations. Refrain from sharing any information about your students or class activities via social media.

## **Taking Proactive Steps**

1. Ensure that your privacy settings on social media are such that it is unlikely that a client will be able to search and find your personal information.

2. Review your content in public forums to remove information that would compromise your position as a social worker.
3. Be cautious about what you post and share. As a social worker, you need to be careful about posting information via social media.

### **Breaches of Policy**

Breaches of this policy will be brought to the attention of the Chair, Child Studies and Social Work. Students breaching these policies may be reported to the Office of Community Standards.

## **Social Work Program – Academic Performance Requirements**

Additional policies related to continuance in the Social Work Program are outlined in the MRU [Academic Calendar](#).

In matters of progression and continuance, there are instances in addition to institutional processes when a student may be required to withdraw from a program. These circumstances are:

- Violations of a professional code of ethics and/or standards of practice. A committee established by the program will assess violations of relevant codes and standards and whether the student will be required to withdraw from the program based on the seriousness of the violation.
- Students who are unsuccessful after two registrations in the same core course (as defined by the program) will be required to withdraw from the program. This includes, but is not limited to, the following examples of unsuccessful registration:
  - Students who do not achieve the minimum required grade (as defined by program) in one or both registrations;
  - Students who earn a grade of “F” in one or both registrations; and
  - Students who withdraw from the course with a “W” in one or both registrations.
- Students who are denied a practicum placement by an external stakeholder because of an assessed detrimental impact on the client, client group, or community being served. Students who are unable to meet clinical or field course requirements on this basis will be required to withdraw from the program.

## Social Work Program – Practicum Requirements

Policies related to practicum requirements in the Social Work program are outlined in the MRU [Academic Calendar](#) and the [Social Work Diploma Practicum Manual](#).

All students will be selected for practicum on the basis of academic performance, professional suitability, and availability of practicum sites.

A student may be prohibited from attending or completing a practicum if there is evidence to suggest that the student's physical and/or psychological health may be detrimental to client care.

At the time of practicum, students will be required, at their own expense, to obtain a Police Information Check. It is each practicum agency's decision to accept or reject a student for placement or observation experience based upon the results of police information or other background checks. Students must have their police information check approved by their practicum agency.

Since both completion of course requirements and eventual employment in a field of study may be dependent upon the results of such checks, students who have concerns should discuss the matter with the department chair or designate prior to applying for admission.

## Academic Performance Requirements

In matters of progression and continuance, there are instances when institutional processes do not fully address concerns related to student continuance in a program. This applies in the following circumstances:

1. Violations of a professional code of ethics and/or standards of practice (i.e. Canadian Association of Social Work Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Ethical Practice, and the Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice). A committee established by the program will assess violations of relevant codes and standards and whether the student will be required to withdraw from the program based on the seriousness of the violation.
2. Students who are unsuccessful after two registrations in the same core course (as defined by the program) will be required to withdraw from the program. This includes the following examples of unsuccessful registration:
  - Students who do not achieve the minimum required grade (as defined by the program) in one or both registrations;
  - Students who earn a grade of "F" in one or both registrations; and
  - Students who withdraw from the course with a "W" in one or both registrations.

3. Students who are denied a practicum placement by an external stakeholder because of an assessed detrimental impact on the client, client group, or community being served. Students who are unable to meet clinical or field course requirements on this basis will be required to withdraw from the program. An appeal process is available, see the Bachelor of Social Work Handbook and the Practicum Manual.

This information is available in the Academic Calendar as [Academic Performance Requirements](#).

## Appeal Process for Requirement to Withdraw From the Program

Students may appeal a “Requirement to Withdraw from Program” decision on two grounds:

- a) medical illness or severe emotional distress which was not previously known, or
- b) extenuating circumstances not previously known.

### Appeal Process for the “Requirement to Withdraw from Program” (RTWP)

Complete an appeal form for the “Requirement to Withdraw from Program” (RTWP) which is available from the Chair’s Office. The appeal form must include a letter describing the reason/grounds for appeal. If the reason is medical illness or severe emotional distress, the appeal must be accompanied by documentation from a Mount Royal counsellor or other certified health care professional. If the reason is other extenuating circumstances, then relevant information must be attached. An appeal will not be considered without supporting documentation.

- At the end of the semester or course, in which the student meets the conditions to be required to withdraw from the program, the Coordinator, Practicum and Advising, will send an email alerting the student of the requirement. A letter from the Chair will follow confirming the requirement to withdraw from the program.
- The letter from the Chair will be considered the official notification of the requirement to withdraw from the program. The letter will be sent by registered mail/courier and by email.
- Students have two weeks (10 business days) from the date on the Chair’s letter to file the appeal.
- Students may continue to attend classes until a decision is made regarding the appeal, except in the following circumstance. Students will not be permitted to remain registered in program specific courses pending the outcome of the appeal, if the reason for appeal was:
  - a. Violations of a professional code of ethics and/or standards of practice
  - b. Denial of a practicum placement by an external stakeholder because of an assessed detrimental impact on the client, client group, or community being served.

- The Dean or Director, who is the Chair of the Appeal Committee, will decide based on the documentation whether to convene a committee to review the appeal.
- The Appeal Committee will review the documentation and determine the need for further information from the student, faculty, or other relevant sources.

## Appeal Deadlines “Requirement to Withdraw from Program (RTWP)”

- Students must submit the appeal within 10 business days of the date on the Chair’s letter.
- The Chair of the Appeal Committee will determine within one week (5 business days) of submission of the appeal if a committee will hear the appeal. Notification of this decision will be sent to the student by email.
- If the Appeal Committee is convened, they will meet within two weeks or 10 business days of the submission of the appeal.
- Students will be informed of the outcome of the appeal within one week (5 business days) of the Appeal Committee’s meeting regarding their decision. Notification will be by email to the student’s MRU account, followed by a letter sent by registered mail or courier.

## Appeal Committee Membership

- A representative from the Dean’s or Director’s office will act as chair of the Appeal Committee
- Two (2) faculty members, appointed by the Chair of the Appeal Committee, from the Department or School
- One (1) faculty member from the Faculty of Health and Community Studies
- One (1) student from programs belonging to the Faculty of Health and Community Studies, but not from the same program as the student who is appealing the RTWP
- One (1) student representative from SAMRU executive or designate
- A representative from clinical practice will serve as a resource when the case involves professional/ethical issues
- Academic advisors will serve as resources

## Student Resources

There are times in your university career that can be made better by accessing some of the free services provided to students. Listed below are a few of the key programs that will benefit you. Links to each of these programs are embedded in the title to make it easy for you to connect to the services you need quickly and effectively:

### [Students’ Association of Mount Royal University \(SAMRU\)](#)

The Students’ Association is a student government body that represents and serves MRU students. In addition to student leadership, SAMRU also organizes helpful services for students including student advocates, a Good Food Box program, and free breakfasts!

## [Student Counselling and Mental Health Services](#)

Student Counselling is here for you so you can continue to enjoy your activities, live well, and have a great MRU experience. Student Counselling can be reached at 403.440.6362

## [Student Learning Services](#)

Creating integral learning experiences to develop self-directed learners. Located in T143, Student Learning Services offers many programs to students including a Peer Tutor Program, Writing and Learning Services, and career mentorship.

## [Iniskim Center](#)

The Iniskim Centre is an academic support centre for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. Iniskim Centre offers a wide range of programs and services including counseling, tutoring, and advising programs

## [Pride Centre](#)

The Pride Centre is dedicated to fostering a safe, inclusive, and celebratory environment for people of all genders and sexual orientations. Services available in the Pride Centre include community support resources, a library, free prophylactics as well as referrals and in-centre expertise on topics related to relationships, identity and sexual health. The Pride Centre also hosts events and programs that promote education and awareness on campus.

## [Applying For Registration As A Graduate](#)

Graduates of Social Work educational programs in Alberta are eligible to apply for provisional registration. As a regulated profession, registration is required to use the title or identify as a Social Worker or to work within the scope of practice. Complete information is available on the Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW) website under [Registration](#).

## [Closing Comments](#)

We hope that your experience with the Mount Royal Social Work Program provides you with a strong foundation to work effectively as an ethical social worker. We encourage you to make use of the many programs and services available at Mount Royal. These services are provided to help you achieve academic and personal success. Please do not hesitate to contact members of your faculty and staff with any questions. We are here to ensure you have a ***transformative***

*educational experience for exceptional social work practice.* Welcome to the Social Work Program at Mount Royal!