

School of Social Work

Attendance Statement

(June 24 2018; revised Jan 21, 2019; Nov 14, 2023)

Below, we outline the School of Social Work's expectations regarding students' attendance in classes. This Attendance Statement is rooted in the School's commitment to the academic integrity of its BSW and MSW Programs. While the Statement does not supersede individual faculty members' attendance guidelines included in their course syllabi, it is endorsed by the School.

The School of Social Work is committed to a socially just teaching and learning community that is inclusive and supportive of different learning experiences. Community members can take responsibility for the teaching and learning community by gaining and sharing knowledge in a respectful way, where people can make mistakes and learn from them. As in any community, we may need to find our way through difficult experiences and tensions through discussion and compromise.

Central to all teaching and learning communities is participation. The School of Social Work expects full attendance; it is expected that students will physically attend all classes except in the case of serious circumstances. Full participation means arriving on time and staying for the entire class; speaking regularly, carefully, and with respect for one another; listening attentively and with an open-minded respect for one another's perspectives; and contributing responsibly and creatively to the work of building relationships that support a socially just teaching and learning community. Technology should be used appropriately (i.e., not used for texting, engaging in social media, watching videos, etc.). In the case of missed classes because of serious circumstances we encourage students to inform instructors as soon as possible, and to seek appropriate supports.

The School of Social Work is a professional school that is guided by the accreditation standards and policies of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) and the Canadian Association of Social Work's (CASW) Code of Ethics. The School's expectation of full attendance in class is intended to facilitate and support the professional development of students as critical social workers with philosophies of critical social work practice that are strongly embedded in principles of social justice, community, and relationships.

As such, we emphasize that:

- Students must inform course instructors of all absences, and when appropriate may be asked to provide documentation.
- If a student misses three or more classes a course instructor may request to meet with the student to discuss their absences. The course instructor may include the Undergraduate Program Director, Graduate Program Director, or School Director in this meeting. Please note: For the integrative seminars related to the placement course (SOWK 4000, SOWK 4001, SOWK 5350 or SOWK 5310), please refer the Policy For Missed Integrative Seminars in your practicum manual or course syllabus.
- If a student misses more than 1/3 of classes in a single course they may risk failing the course.
- A course instructor may deduct marks including a percentage of the total grade in response to a determined number of missed classes. This information must be provided to students in the course syllabus.
- A course instructor may refuse to evaluate all or part of a student's work where attendance has not been regular.
- The School of Social Work does not allow participation in class through programs such as Zoom.