



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA
GRACE ABBOTT
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Governance Academic Year 2024-2025

The Grace Abbott School of Social Work operates under the guidance of standing and ad hoc committees, which include social work faculty, staff, students, and community representatives. These committees are tasked with initiating, monitoring, and evaluating all policies and procedures within the school. Policy planning and decision-making begin within these committees and progress through the appropriate channels before final presentation to the Faculty Staff Roundtable. Our committee structure promotes democratic faculty involvement in program planning and governance, goal setting, decision-making, and achieving the school's mission, goals, and objectives. The director appoints ad hoc committees as necessary.

Updated August 16, 2024

Grace Abbott's Roundtable

The committee meets in the fall and spring semesters.
The first Wednesday of the month from 10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The Faculty Staff Roundtable committee has the responsibility and authority to make final decisions on school policies. The committee consists of full and part-time faculty, staff, and graduate assistants. The Faculty Staff Roundtable meets monthly during the academic year for comprehensive communication and decision-making regarding all program-related issues. Recommendations from all school committees are brought to the Faculty Staff Roundtable and decisions are made democratically.

1. Shannon Adamsick
2. Theresa Barron-McKeagney
3. Kersten Borer
4. Sonia Carbonell
5. Deb Circo
6. Sandy Cook-Fong
7. Darian Draft, GA
8. Henry D'Souza
9. Alisha Olson
10. Liam Heerten-Rodriguez
11. Theori Kenny
12. Konnie Kirchner
13. Michelle Manning
14. Whitney Medlock, GA
15. Michelle Nelsen
16. Susan Reay, chair
17. Hannah Rethmeier, GA
18. Alea Reifenrath, GA
19. Ellen Rice, co-chair
20. Katie Robbins
21. Heidi Rueda
22. Anvar Sadath Vakkayil
23. Laurel Sariscsany
24. Lisa Smith
25. Emily Soener
26. Peter Szto
27. Lequisha Turner
28. Sharilyn Tuttle, GSW
29. Aislyn Tyler, GA
30. Nazaneen Rahmanzai
31. Ciara Warden
32. Meghan Witte, GA
33. Yiwei Zhang

Admissions Committee

The committee meets in the fall and spring semesters as needed.
The third Wednesday of the month from 9:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.

By delegation from the College of Graduate Studies and Research, the school's Program Committee, and subject to the approval of its Dean, the Admissions Committee has responsibility for the selection of graduate students. It has similar selection responsibility for undergraduate majors, under delegation from the College of Public Affairs and Community Service (CPACS). The Admissions Committee recommends admission policies, procedures, and standards to the Faculty Staff Roundtable.

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| 1. Shannon Adamsick | 6. Nazaneen Rahmanzai |
| 2. Kersten Borer, chair | 7. Susan Reay, ex officio |
| 3. Sonia Carbonell | 8. Ellen Rice, ex officio |
| 4. Liam Heerten-Rodriguez | 9. Lequisha Turner |
| 5. Alisha Olson | 10. Ciara Warden |

Assessment Committee

The committee meets in the fall and spring semesters.
Fourth Wednesday of the month from 9:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.

The Assessment Committee is primarily responsible for linking the GASSW's mission statement to the program goals and linking these goals to elements within the curriculum structure that can be assessed. The Committee devises strategies for assessment at the classroom, community, and statewide levels for the MSW and BSW programs.

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| 1. Sandy Cook-Fong | 7. Laurel Sariscsany |
| 2. Henry D'Souza | 8. Emily Soener |
| 3. Konnie Kirchner | 9. Peter Szto |
| 4. Susan Reay, ex officio | 10. Aislyn Tyler, GA |
| 5. Ellen Rice, ex officio | 11. Yiwei Zhang, chair |
| 6. Anvar Sadath-Vakkayil | |

BSSW Committee

The committee meets in the fall and spring semesters.
Second Wednesday of the month from 9:30 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.

The BSSW Committee aims to improve the student experience in the BSSW program by monitoring BSSW curriculum, program policies, and advising to make appropriate recommendations for change. The BSSW committee will support students through partnership with GASSW faculty and staff. Additionally, the BSSW committee will welcome and solicit feedback from BSSW students regarding the BSSW program.

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| 1. Michelle Manning | 6. Emily Soener, chair |
| 2. Nazaneen Rahmanzai | 7. Peter Szto |
| 3. Susan Reay, ex officio | 8. Ciara Warden |
| 4. Ellen Rice, ex officio | 9. BSSW student rep |
| 5. Lisa Smith | |

Community Engagement and Impact Committee (CE/IC)

The committee meets in the fall and spring semesters.
Second and fourth Wednesday of the month from 1:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.

The committee oversees all community-facing events such as WBGB, scholarship reception, alumni celebration, booths/tables at conferences, and holiday card signing. This committee maintains the community contact list and the Community Engagement and Impact Committee folder in SharePoint.

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| 1. Liam Heerten-Rodriguez | 6. Katie Robbins, co-chair |
| 2. Theori Kenny | 7. Rueda Heidi |
| 3. Michelle Nelsen, chair | 8. Laurel Sariscsany |
| 4. Susan Reay, ex-officio | 9. Lequisha Turner |
| 5. Ellen Rice, ex-officio | |

Digital Outreach and Departmental Engagement Committee (DO/DE)

The committee meets in the fall and spring semesters.
First and third Wednesday from 1:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.

The committee oversees all student-centered and departmental (internal) events such as the spring and fall student get-togethers (pizza, donuts), graduation celebrations, student research fairs, and others. The committee oversees all internal departmental, social, and celebratory events that are sunshine-y in nature such as planning departmental celebrations, collecting departmental research accomplishments, the annual report, and the management of social media. Specific engagement activities are determined by the committee in collaboration with the director. This committee collaborates with other UNO departments for events such as a welcome week, pride parade, homecoming contest, decorating office for holidays, and representation for on-campus UNO events such as booths and fairs. When appropriate, the committee enlists support from others within the department and across campus. The committee maintains the Digital Engagement and Connections folder in SharePoint.

1. Darian Draft, co-chair and director's GA
2. Hailey Edwards, SSWO president
3. Whitney Medlock, GA
4. Hannah Rethmeier, co-chair and asst. director's GA
5. Aislyn Tyler, GPC's GA
6. Sharilyn Tuttle, GSW
7. Phi Alpha president
8. Alea Reifenrath, GA
9. Meghan Witte, GA

Faculty and Staff

1. Kersten Borer
2. Sonia Carbonell, support to co-chairs
3. Michelle Nelsen
4. Alisha Olson
5. Susan Reay, ex officio
6. Ellen Rice, ex officio
7. Katie Robbins
8. Ciara Warden
9. Yiwei Zhang

Field Committee

The committee meets in September, October, November, February, March, and April.
Second Wednesday of the month from 3:00 P.M. – 4:30 P.M.

The Field Committee consists of the field director, three field specialists, two student representatives (undergraduate and graduate), one-two faculty members appointed by the director of the school, and 4-6 community members who generally have experience as field instructors (appointed by the director of the school). The Field Committee is responsible for both graduate and undergraduate field program-related policies. Policy issues are presented to the Program

Committee and the Faculty Staff Roundtable for endorsement. The Field Committee reviews procedures and considers decisions based on student requests for practice in place of employment, practice outside of our region, and other special requests.

1. Konnie Kirchner, chair
2. Theori Kenny
3. Alisha Olson
4. Michelle Manning
5. Susan Reay, ex officio
6. Ellen Rice, ex officio
7. Laurel Sariscsany
8. Meghan Witte, GA

Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy (GATSA) Committee

The committee meets in the fall and spring and other times as determined by the chairs.
Third Wednesday of the month from 11:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

The Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy (GATSA) Committee oversees and advances the professional development, continuing education, and supervision opportunities provided through GATSA. The committee works collaboratively with GASSW faculty and staff and the larger UNO community and extends externally to the university. The committee supports the GASSW mission and vision by implementing a lifespan career model.

1. Hailey Edwards, SSWO president
2. Michelle Manning
3. Whitney Medlock, GATSA GA
4. Michelle Nelsen, co-chair
5. Susan Reay, ex officio
6. Alea Reifenrath-BHECN East GA
7. Ellen Rice, ex officio
8. Katie Robbins, chair
9. Sharilyn Tuttle, GSW (Fall only)
10. Ciara Warden

Graduate Program Committee

The committee meets during the fall and spring semesters as needed.
Fourth Wednesday of the month from 10:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

The Graduate Program Committee (GPC) oversees MSW program planning, admissions, policies, and curriculum. The committee oversees MSW students' progression toward the degree and readiness for graduation. While the UNO College of Graduate Studies gives the Graduate Program Committees authority for graduate program decisions, GASSW's Graduate Program Committee also presents key decisions to the Faculty/Staff Roundtable for endorsement. The Graduate Program Committee comprises at least three graduate faculty members, one of whom is the chair. The Graduate Program Committee must include the MSW Coordinator and representation from the practicum office, academic office, and MSW student body if at least two-thirds of the Committee are graduate faculty members. The director recommends the GPC chair and members to the UNO Graduate Studies dean, who makes the final appointments.

1. Shannon Adamsick
2. Deb Circo
3. Sandy Cook-Fong
4. Henry D'Souza, chair
5. Liam Heerten-Rodriguez
6. Konnie Kirchner
7. Susan Reay, ex officio
8. Ellen Rice, ex officio
9. Aislyn Tyler, GA
10. Anvar Sadath Vakkayil
11. Ciara Warden

Reappointment, Appointment, and Tenure (RPT) Committee

The committee meets as needed during the fall and spring semesters.

The RPT Committee, which consists of tenured faculty members, has the singular task of annually reviewing and making recommendations on all faculty applications for reappointment, promotion, and tenure.

1. Sandy Cook-Fong, chair
2. Henry D'Souza
3. Susan Reay, ex officio
4. Heidi Rueda
5. Peter Szto
6. Anvar Sadath Vakkayil

Scholarship Committee (ad hoc)

The committee meets as needed during the spring semesters.

The Scholarship Committee communicates annually the availability of scholarships to social work students, receives and evaluates applications, and makes and announces decisions on awards. Typically members include the BSSW director, MSW director, faculty assigned by the GASSW director, and the school's administrative staff or others named by the GASSW director. The committee coordinates with the engagement committees on scholarship and donor related events.

1. Shannon Adamsick
2. Sonia Carbonell
3. Deb Circo, chair
4. Theori Kenny
5. Nazaneen Rahmanzai
6. Susan Reay, ex officio
7. Ellen Rice, ex officio
8. Lisa Smith