

Requirements to meet the FLO

Abolitionist Social Work

Requirements and Description – Students must complete the Coursework component, in addition to *any two* of other *distinct* components *of their choice*, while enrolled at the GCSW:

Field Education Component – A field placement in a non-carceral agency or organization that involves advocacy, policy development, or direct action to dismantle carceral systems. This might include working on a public awareness or advocacy campaign in an advocacy or justice-oriented agency (e.g., Texas Civil Rights Project, Texas Organizing Project, ACLU). It also could include working in a community-based organization that is working to prevent contact with carceral systems or mitigate the harm caused by carceral systems. Guiding questions for an abolition social work field placement include:

- * Does the work shift power, give voice, mobilize, and include leadership of impacted people?
- * Does it dismantle dichotomies of good vs. bad, violent vs. nonviolent, and/or deserving vs. undeserving?
- * Does it work against the expansion and legitimization of carceral systems, or the narratives that fuel them?
- * Does it provide financial relief for impacted people without comprising their agency?
- * Is the work trauma-informed and rooted in a historical analysis of oppression?

(Guiding questions adapted from K. A. James (2020). Black Lives, Mass Incarceration, and the Perpetuity of Trauma in the Era of COVID-19: The Road to Abolition Social Work).

Research Component – Sustained participation via a research assistantship, independent study, or volunteer opportunity with a community or academic research project focused on dismantling carceral systems, which may include examining the harms that result from carceral systems, strategies for divesting from carceral systems, alternatives to responding to social problems in lieu of carceral systems, upstream strategies that prevent the need for carceral systems, etc.

Community Engagement – Sustained participation as part of a real-world effort to dismantle carceral systems at an organizational, community, or governmental level, e.g., involvement in an advocacy effort by a non-carceral social service or advocacy organization, engagement in or implementation of a public awareness campaign, providing testimony to a governmental body, publication of an op-ed, or other community engagement effort.

Co-Curricular Activities – Sustained participation in a GCSW co-curricular activity promoting awareness of abolitionist social work or other strategies for dismantling carceral systems as a means of achieving social, racial, economic, or political justice. This may include participation in one of GCSW's current event series (e.g., Policy Insiders, Amplify Your Voice, Social Justice Solutions) or a stand-alone educational opportunity for GCSW students and community members.

Training – Completion of at least one social work-associated training regarding abolitionist social work or other aspects of abolitionist theory and praxis.

Coursework – Successful completion of Abolitionist Social Work Practice or an Independent Study focused on abolitionist theory and praxis. This is a required element for successful completion of this FLO. (Independent Studies can be taken with any GCSW faculty member.)