Welcome to the Online MSW program! In order for us all to deliver a successful online program, meet our academic standards and support student expectations in their learning journey, it is important that administrative and faculty teaching staff are aligned in approach. These best practices and expectations for all online teaching faculty are required to meet those goals. Course Leads are assigned to provide you support in meeting these goals.

By signing on as an Online MSW Program Teaching Faculty, you agree to:

**Fordham University and our Mission**
Congratulations and welcome to the Fordham GSS Faculty! See the link below to become familiar with Fordham University and our mission statement.

**Institutional Knowledge**
Please review GSS Academic and Administrative policies such as knowledge of the Graduate School of Social Service, the Online MSW Program, the curriculum and field practicum requirements, academic and administrative contacts, your course lead, school-wide events, policies and procedures that impact your classroom, course start and end dates, exam schedule and procedures, semester holidays, etc.

In addition, please review the University and School Academic and Administrative Policy such as FERPA Guidelines, Student Privacy, Academic Integrity, Copyright, Conduct, Academic Freedom, and Resources for Faculty and Students such as Library, Writing Tutor Service, Wellness, Office of Disability Services (ODS), Career Development, etc. See university-wide information for faculty and staff here.

Please see the Graduate School of Social Service webpage to learn more about our school. Information about the Online MSW program can be found here and the Dean's message here.
Technology
To effectively participate within an course, faculty teaching online are expected to have immediate and predictable access to the same technology that is required for students. Computer hardware and software must be up-to-date and compatible. There must also be consistent and reliable internet access. Instructors are required to use all the tools within the LMS platform (currently 2For) that students are expected to engage in. The program department, 2U technology faculty support and the university ITAC will provide necessary training and support. Instructors are expected to maintain their skill level and classroom equipment each teaching semester. See general technical specifications here.

Use of the Fordham University Brand
Any display of your teaching title (Instructor, Online MSW Program, Graduate School of Social Service) must remain consistent in any mention of your relationship with Fordham University. Your mention of Fordham University and use of any branding material must follow university branding guidelines.

Student Ready Course
Course Leads prepare the course before the course site is copied to your section and access is assigned to you as the section instructor. Upon receiving access, prepare your course to be “Student Ready” no later than two weeks prior to the course start date. “Student Ready” includes: updated syllabus and all course materials, welcome announcement (video or text) completed and posted, refreshed dates, exam specs (including those to ProctorU), maintain working web links and augmented instructional content to meet current trends. Cross-reference dates and instructions for accuracy. As the section instructor of the course, be sure you are familiar with all the content within your course section for proactive planning.

Intellectual Property
As a section instructor, you are authorized to teach from a copy of the Online MSW Programs’ Master Course Site for your particular course. All instructional materials contained within this master course site are owned by Fordham University, GSS, and/or the course developer and may not be copied, reused or distributed in any fashion. These materials are strictly for the sole use at Fordham University and within the Online MSW program. In regard to the instruction materials that you may add to the teaching section of your course, follow the IP guidelines of the university. Please see and understand the University's' IP policy located here.
Teaching
Although the core content is pre-populated, as the section instructor in the online course, be sure to “own” the content and help students in their learning of applying what is taught. Feel free to add important instructional material as well as teaching strategies to navigate difficult concepts. Your course lead is available to support you in adding relevant material and strategies in supporting the learning environment.

Practice the Three Pillars of Interaction: Faculty to Student, Student to Student and Student to Content
Remember - you are there to guide the engagement and provide an environment for learning. Allow the students to contribute to their learning process through their engagement and contributions of content. Include diverse perspectives in a respectful manner and consider all learning styles. Create activities that allow active participation from each of your students.

Communication
Always use your Fordham EMAIL and University approved tools such as the 2For LMS, Google Mail, etc … These steps protect data privacy and a host of other potential issues.

Online section instructors are asked to immediately contact us at the program department with any student concerns/issues. Be especially aware of students who may not be logging in (at minimum every other day) and engaging consistently with you and the course. It is important for our student services team to be updated so that our office can collaborate with you to assist and support students’ needs.

Set an interaction policy and add to your course site - when you are available for virtual office hours and a range of time that you can be expected to answer an inquiry (example 12-24 hours). Immediately alert the program office of any time you may need to be out of contact with your course.

Consistent Course Contact
Online section instructors are expected to maintain regular and consistent contact with their students and be present in the virtual classroom. Monitor activity and show your presence at minimum every other day. If an instructor needs to cancel a synchronous session for any reason, they must do so two weeks in advance when possible, notify the
Course Lead, online department and the students. Section instructors must make arrangements for an approved replacement to teach during that session and/or schedule a make-up session within a timely manner. Note, a student must engage with the course content and faculty for approximately 45 contact hours plus homework within the 8 week schedule.

**Online Attendance Policy**

Students are responsible to attend and participate in all async and sync weekly sessions within the online program. Students who miss two concurrent and/or non-concurrent classes (mix of two synchronous live sessions and/or two asynchronous modules) will be in jeopardy of failing the course or being withdrawn from the course. If a student is academically withdrawn, they remain financially responsible for the class. Students should reach out directly to their instructor if they will need to miss a class or are unable to submit coursework on time. Section Instructors can check in with the department regarding any excused absences such as those for religious observances.

**Feedback**

Grading, assignment and discussion feedback must be often, consistent and timely. Lack of communication and individualized feedback is one of the leading complaints of online students. Meaningful feedback is essential to the success of an online learning environment - provide feedback often, as it is important that students feel what they spend time on is valued, reviewed, relevant and impactful to their learning and expectations of the course.

**Course Delivery**

To insure that all necessary content is included, the master course syllabi, as developed by area curriculum committees, are to be used in all sections of the same course. Section instructors are expected to use the master syllabus. Each generalist and specialist course, with the exception of an elective, has a “common assignment”, in the form of a term paper or final exam, used to assess student competencies across all sections of a particular course. In the case of a final exam, this test will be facilitated online and manned by proctor software. **Note:** Your course lead will have “read only” access to all area sections of a course to support your delivery of the course. The course lead and the program department must be notified if any changes are requested to course delivery policies such as exam dates and major content changes. Students are able to preview all asynchronous modules for the course two weeks prior to the official start date of the course launch. Prior to this time, it is good practice for
instructors to review the upcoming module in “student view” mode to ensure content, dates and links are all accurate.

Course Management
Know your student population. Our adult students usually engage with their course material on weeknights and weekends. Send your students a forum prompt to find out about them. Consider this in your planning and communication schedule. Read the Best Practices for Your MSW Online Course to learn more about preparing for launch and during your teaching schedule.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
Help prevent academic integrity issues by reminding students of the University’s Academic Integrity and Plagiarism policies within your syllabus and course content. Be informed of these existing policies yourself and add any additional requirements to your course syllabus. Educate your students about what constitutes academic integrity and plagiarism and what instances may breach these policy such as unauthorized collaboration on papers and assignments, using online resources during testing, etc. Proctor Track/ProctorU is the manned proctor service used to monitor online exams. See a small listing of faculty resources here.

Office of Disability Services
A Notice of Accommodations may be sent to you by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) via email or hard copy regarding a student enrolled in your course section. This notice will contain specific instructions on how to support a student who is registered with their office. Instructors are required to comply with the notice of accommodation as they are written. Contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) if you have questions on how to carry out such accommodations. It is against FERPA law to ask a student what their disability is or to share any student information such as accommodations with any other persons such as classroom students. In the instance of exam accommodations, instructors are expected to contact Student Services to relay exam accommodation requirements for a particular student with their Notice of Accommodations.

Grading
Timely grading is essential for our fast-paced curriculum calendar. Provide assignment and exam grading and feedback no later than 24-48 hours after close of each module. Online section instructors are expected to post assignment/project grades and final
grades according to the university schedule - no later than 48 after you last scheduled session date. Note any delay in final grade submissions can greatly impact a student's ability to graduate on time! Immediately inform the Online MSW program department of any grades below B- and any requests for Incompletes.

Be sure to follow your posted rubrics in your syllabus to avoid any confusion or issues. Please keep in mind while peer review can be a useful tool during some class sessions, students should never be asked to grade their peers. Grading is a faculty responsibility only.

**Policy on the Use of “Incomplete”**
A grade of “incomplete” is generally to be discouraged and only employed when faculty conclude that a student is unable to complete assigned course work due to extenuating circumstance. An “incomplete” is a grade given at the request of the student in writing to the course instructor. Students must request the course extension in writing to the instructor at least 2 weeks prior to course end date. If approved by the faculty, a time frame acceptable to both the student and faculty must be agreed upon. A course extension cannot extend beyond four weeks after the formal course end date. All assignments and due date extensions that the student will need to complete in order to fulfill the course requirements must be specified in writing to the student. An INC will convert to an “F” if the INC is not removed.

An instructor is under no obligation to accept work from a student after the mutually agreed upon timeframe. It is the instructor’s decision whether to renegotiate the extension agreement. As in all matters related to grading, an instructor’s decision about a grade-related matter is final.

**Tk20 Assessment**
Tk20 is the Assessment Management System used by GSS administration to collect aggregate student data for coursework and fieldwork. As a faculty member teaching a required course in the GSS program you must complete the assessments related to Social Work Competencies listed for the course you are teaching. Complete the assessment no later than 48 hours after the end date of your course. To do so, log into Tk20 and fill out a grading rubric for each student for the common assignment in your course. Step by step instructions are included here.
Course Evaluations
Section instructors are asked to encourage students to complete their end-of-semester evaluations. Sending reminders at the end of the semester is good practice to support the completion of these evaluations.

Reflect and Refresh
Contribute to the improvement of the online master course. Provide the Online MSW program department, as well as the Course Leads, with feedback on course content, activities, and your experience teaching the course. Recommend tweeks and identify any issues with links, technology or inaccurate information.

University Policies regarding Faculty Conduct
As a representative of Fordham University, all teaching faculty are required to follow university guidelines regarding policy and conduct. The items listed within this school-wide document augment those of the university. See the Information for Faculty webpage to learn more about university-wide policies.

Thank you for being an essential part of the OMSW program and the success of all our students!