**Semester/Year:** Spring 2019  
**Course Title:** Forensic Social Work  
**Course Prefix/Number/Section:** SOCW 4371/5371 (formerly SOCW 4329/SOCW 6329)-002  
**Instructor Name:** Anne Nordberg, PhD, MSW  
**Faculty Position:** Assistant Professor  
**Faculty Profile:** N/A  
**Office Number:** 208B  
**Phone Number:** N/A  
**Email Address:** annenordberg@uta.edu  
**Office Hours:** by appointment  
**Day and Time of Class (if applicable):** Online  
**Location:** Online  
Equipment: A laptop computer with wireless capability or equivalent is required for all SSW classes. Blackboard: https://elearn.uta.edu

### A. Description of Course Content

This course develops the understanding of the role of social workers with clients within the criminal justice system and the legal system. This course will focus on theory, intervention, and advocacy with diverse forensic populations including juveniles, adults, people accused of crimes, victims of crimes, and related systems. Forensic practice in family and social services, juvenile justice and criminal justice, child welfare, and mental health and substance abuse will be explored. This course assumes a justice oriented multisystems and interdisciplinary approach. Prerequisites: For 4329 – SOCW 3301, 3302, 3317, 2313, and 3304. For 6329 – SOCW 5301, 5317, and 5304.

### B. Student Learning Outcomes

SOCW 4329/6329 addresses the following foundation educational objectives:

1. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.  
2. Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients’ age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.  
3. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.  
4. Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.  
5. Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions.
Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors

SOCW 4329/6329 addresses the following Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) requirements for Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors:

Educational Policy 2.1.2—**Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.** [Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers:]

(a) Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.
(b) Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Social Workers.
(c) Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts; and
(d) Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

Educational Policy 2.1.3—**Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.** [Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers:]

(a) Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.

Educational Policy 2.1.4—**Engage diversity and difference in practice.** [Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers:]

(a) Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.
(b) Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.
(c) Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences; and
(d) View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.

Educational Policy 2.1.5—**Advance human rights and social and economic justice.** [Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers:]

(a) Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
(b) Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice; and
(c) Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

Educational Policy 2.1.6—**Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.** [Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers:]

(a) Use practice experience to inform research.
(b) Design and implement intervention studies and evidence-based practices.
(c) Evaluate their own practice.
(d) Use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery.
workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers:

(a) Use research evidence to inform practice.

Educational Policy 2.1.7—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. [Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in promoting and maintaining health and well being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Social workers:]

1. utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation; and
2. critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

By the end of the semester, students should be able to demonstrate the following knowledge areas through their course assignments, papers, examinations, and group projects:

This course aims at enabling students to:

1. Identify theoretical, policy, and practice issues related to justice-involved people. (EP 2.1.4 (a-d), 2.1.5 (a-c), 2.1.7 (a & b); Achieved through: DB, Final Exam, Paper)
2. Identify historical, political, socioeconomic forces that contribute to mass incarceration and justice-related disparities (EP 2.1.4 (a-d), 2.1.5 (a-c), 2.1.6, & 2.1.7 (a & b); Achieved through: DB, Final Exam, Paper)
3. Identify how sociopolitical, interpersonal, and socio-cultural processes promote/block optimal health and well being for justice-involved people. (EP 2.1.3(a), 2.1.4 (a-d), 2.1.5 (a-c), & 2.1.7 (a & b); Paper, DB)
4. Develop strategies to counter discriminatory policies and practices in social institutions. (EP 2.1.4 (a-d) & 2.1.5 (a-c); DB)
5. Develop specific strategies that promote economic and social justice for populations at risk. (EP 2.1.3 (a), EP 2.1.4 (a-d) & 2.1.5 (a-c); DB, Paper)

C. Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials

All course materials will be posted online.

D. Additional Recommended Textbooks and Other Course Materials

Materials will be posted online weekly.

E. Descriptions of Major Assignments and Examinations

Note. Much of what students learn in the classroom is affected by two sources: the level of effort contributed by the individual, and the learning community that is created through the shared ownership and contributions of the collective whole. Everyone is asked to participate to her/his fullest extent in the learning environment, and to facilitate others’ ability to participate at the same time. This means that we come prepared to join in the classroom learning experience by having our readings and other work completed, we respect ourselves and others who are posting on the discussion boards, and we take responsibility for completing assignments in a competent and timely manner. But much more than this, it also means that we each take a shared responsibility for the growth and professional development of each of the individuals in our learning community. The assignments for this course have been designed with these ideas in mind.

NOTE: Please refer to our online course shell for weekly readings, course materials, discussion topics, and assignment details.

Assignments:
Discussion Board (DB) 20 points

Submitted online

The purpose of this assignment is to pose and answer interesting questions about the topics we cover. It will also stimulate conversations between students and allow us to leverage our differences in thoughtful and professional exchange of ideas. There will be 4 DB’s (each worth 5 points). For full marks, you must respond to 2 other student posts.

Media Critique Paper (40 points)

Due May 6, 11:59 pm, submitted online

The purpose of this 7-10 page paper is to allow you critically assess a story in the media (likely an article from a major news site like Fox or CNN that I will provide) that relates to the criminal justice system. The paper will be an academically informed critique of that article, using all you have learned in the class to assess the article and discuss bias and social justice related to mass incarceration in the United States.

Final Exam (40 points)

Available for completion May 10, 2019

There will be a Final Exam in this course. It will be administered online and will be worth 40 points. It will be a combination of multiple choice, T/F, and short answer questions. It will cover the whole semester and any readings, videos, or other materials may be included.

F. Attendance

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients "begin attendance in a course." UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Blackboard. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients. As the instructor of this section,

I expect that all students will log into the class shell weekly for readings, other materials, and to submit assignments (when applicable).

G. Grading

Final Grade Calculation

Total maximum pts. = 100 pts.

A = 90+
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69
Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see "Student Support Services," below.

**H. Make-Up Exams**

There are no make-up exams for this class.

**I. Course Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Mass incarceration in the US</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Overview of Penalty and Inequality</td>
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<td>Jan 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Social Justice, Human Rights, &amp; Structural Violence</td>
<td>DB 1 (5%)</td>
<td>Feb 4, 11:59 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 28</td>
<td></td>
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<td>online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Race Disparities in the CJ System</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Class Disparities in the CJ System</td>
<td>DB 2 (5%)</td>
<td>Feb 18 11:59 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Policing</td>
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<td>Feb 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Jails and Prisons as Total Institutions</td>
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<td>Feb 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Justice-involved Women and Human Trafficking</td>
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<td>Mar 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Substance Use Problems and the CJ system</td>
<td>DB 3 (5%)</td>
<td>Mar 18 11:59 pm</td>
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<td>Mar 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 19</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Mental Health Problems Among Incarcerated People</td>
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<td>Mar 26</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Carceral Repercussions</td>
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<td>Apr 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Returning Citizens</td>
<td>DB 4 (5%)</td>
<td>Apr 15 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Specialty Courts</td>
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<td>Apr 16</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Restorative Justice</td>
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<td>Apr 23</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 16</th>
<th>Advocacy and Smart Decarceration: Possibilities for Social Change</th>
<th>Media Critique (40%)</th>
<th>May 6 11:59 pm online</th>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 30</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 17</th>
<th>Final Exam (40%)</th>
<th>May 10</th>
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<td>May 7</td>
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As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

J. Expectations for Out-of-Class Study

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional three hours (for each hour of class or lecture per week) of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for assignments and exams, and reviewing online content, etc.

K. Grade Grievances


L. Student Support Services

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php.

The IDEAS Center (2nd Floor of Central Library) offers free tutoring to all students with a focus on transfer students, sophomores, veterans and others undergoing a transition to UT Arlington. To schedule an appointment with a peer tutor or mentor email IDEAS@uta.edu or call (817) 272-6593.

The UT Arlington School of Social Work community is committed to and cares about all of our students. If you or someone you know feels overwhelmed, hopeless, depressed, and/or is thinking about dying by suicide or harming oneself or someone else, supportive services are available. For immediate, 24-hour help call MAVS Talk at 817-272-TALK (817-272-8255). For campus resources, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (817-272-3671 or visit http://www.uta.edu/caps/index.php) or UT Arlington Psychiatric Services (817-272-2771 or visit https://www.uta.edu/caps/services/psychiatric.php) for more information or to schedule an appointment. You can be seen by a counselor on a walk-in basis every day, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM in Ransom Hall, Suite 303. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do - for yourself and for those who care about you.

M. Librarian to Contact

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is Brooke Troutman. Her office is in the campus Central Library. She may also be contacted via E-mail: brooke.troutman@uta.edu or by phone: (817)272-5352 below are some commonly used resources needed by students in online or technology supported courses:

http://www.uta.edu/library/services/distance.php
The following is a list, with links, of commonly used library resources:

- Library Home Page.......................... [http://www.uta.edu/library](http://www.uta.edu/library)
- Subject Guides............................. [http://libguides.uta.edu](http://libguides.uta.edu)
- Subject Librarians.......................... [http://library.uta.edu/subject-librarians](http://library.uta.edu/subject-librarians)
- Course Reserves............................. [http://pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do](http://pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do)
- Library Tutorials .......................... [http://library.uta.edu/how-to](http://library.uta.edu/how-to)
- Connecting from Off-Campus.............. [http://libguides.uta.edu/offcampus](http://libguides.uta.edu/offcampus)
- Ask a Librarian............................. [http://ask.uta.edu](http://ask.uta.edu)

**N. Drop Policy**

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships ( [http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/](http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/) ).

**O. Disability Accommodations**

UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

- The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD) [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364.
- Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

**P. Non-Discrimination Policy**

*The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://uta.edu/eos).*

**Q. Title IX Policy**

The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Michelle*
R. Academic Integrity

Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at https://www.uta.edu/conduct/. Faculty are encouraged to discuss plagiarism and share the following library tutorials http://libguides.uta.edu/copyright/plagiarism and http://library.uta.edu/plagiarism/

S. Electronic Communication

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php.

T. Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/

U. Student Feedback Survey

At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students’ anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit http://www.uta.edu/sfs.

V. Final Review Week

For semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as
required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.