

3. COURSE RELATED POLICIES

EVALUATION PROCESS

At the end of each course, students are asked to complete an anonymous course evaluation. One purpose of the evaluation is to provide information for the instructor to use in improving the course. It may also be used by academic administrators as one measure in determining faculty appointments, raises, promotions and tenure. Charles River and Off-Campus instructors set aside time at the end of the course to complete the course evaluation. Students in the Online Program complete the course evaluation form electronically via the Online Campus system.

The instructor or designee distribute the evaluation forms and give instructions. The instructor should not be present in the classroom when students complete the course evaluation forms. A student will collect and deliver the completed evaluations to the Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or other designee on the Off-Campus or Online programs. For purposes of feedback, periodic informal evaluations may also be requested by the instructor.

COURSE OVERLOAD POLICY

Although 65 credits constitute the minimum degree requirements (with the exception of Advanced Standing Students in the full-time programs), Boston University students paying full-time tuition may take as many as 18 credits per semester for a total of 72 credits over the four semesters. Students wishing to take more than 18 credits in a semester must have a GPA of 3.50 or better, complete the [Course Overload Authorization Form](#), and obtain permission from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or her designee. Students may be responsible for paying for additional credits.

WAIVER EXAMS

First-year and Advanced Standing students who enter the MSW program with a research background are eligible to take a proficiency examination to waive the Research I (SSW SR 743) three-credit course requirement. All first-year students who successfully pass the research proficiency examination are required to substitute a three-credit advanced elective as part of their MSW plan of study. Advanced Standing students who pass the Research I waiver examination (as part of their advanced standing research requirement) are not required to take substitute credits. All students may request additional information about the proficiency examinations from the Research Department at rsch@bu.edu.

Incoming students with exceptional abilities may inquire about other course waiver examinations or procedures (Clinical Practice, Macro Practice, Human Behavior in Social Environment, and Social Welfare Policy) by contacting the respective academic department within the School. *Students who pass a waiver exam must take the equivalent number of advanced electives in the same department.*

For incoming students, waiver examinations must be completed prior to starting classes in September. The waiver examination policy does not apply to the advanced curriculum.

DIRECTED/INDEPENDENT STUDY

A Directed Study or Independent Study is a course of guided learning in which a faculty member provides an opportunity for learning, jointly structured by the faculty member and student, and the student acquires knowledge and skills by studying and working relatively autonomously. Such a course is often more challenging than a standard course because the student meets alone with the faculty member and is responsible for reporting on activities and demonstrating that learning is taking place.

There is wide variation in Directed Studies in terms of the type of work, the amount of reading, the number of assignments, and the number of meetings with the faculty member. However, at least one assignment is required so the student can show mastery of the material. This should be a substantive product and can take whatever form the faculty and student agree upon. Students who want to do a Directed Study should read the [full guidelines](#) and download the student and sponsoring instructor must develop a contract outlining the agreed upon components of the [directed study](#) and give to the SSW Registration Administrator.

AUDIOTAPING OF CLASSES

A Massachusetts statute, MGL c.272 section 99, prohibits the taping of any oral communication without notice to all parties involved. It is important therefore, that any taping of classroom proceedings (e.g., for the benefit of absent students or as a study aid to all students) occur only with effective prior notice to all.

Class lectures at BUSSW are not routinely audiotaped, but occasionally a student or faculty member may wish to do so. In the event that a specific class session is to be taped (e.g., for a student who will be absent for that session), the faculty member should notify students at the beginning of the class that the session will be taped. If a course will be audiotaped throughout the semester (e.g., as an academic accommodation for a student with a documented disability or for other educational purposes) the faculty member will inform students (in the course syllabus or in a written communication) that the class lectures will be taped and the student and faculty member will sign the [SSW Audiotape Permission Form](#) available on the resource page for Faculty and Staff.