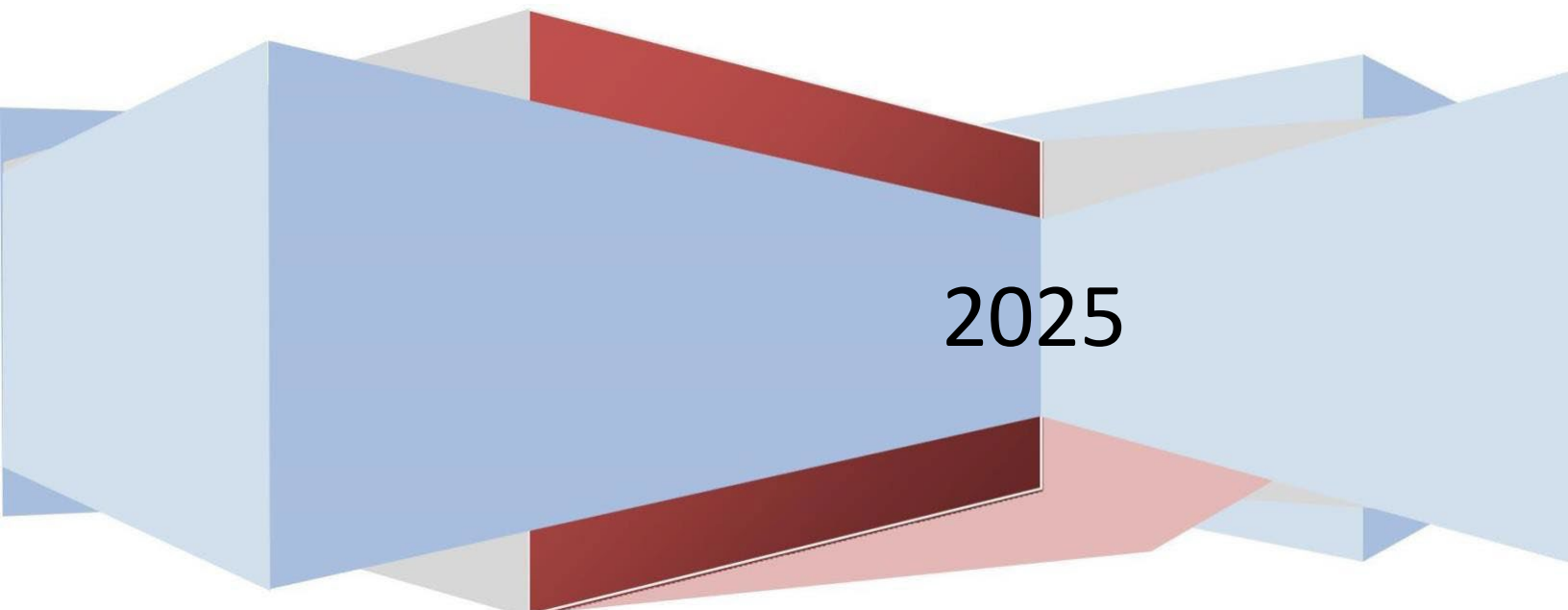


West Texas A&M University

Department of Psychology, Sociology & Social Work

Social Work Student Handbook (BSW)

This handbook provides information to undergraduate Social Work students and to interested persons about the social work program at West Texas A&M University concerning policies and procedures.



2025

For further information, please contact:

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Department of Psychology, Sociology & Social Work
Old Main, Room 414
Main Office: (806) 651-2590

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The mission of the baccalaureate social work (BSW) program at West Texas A&M University is to prepare students for employment as competent and effective entry-level generalist social work practitioners. Graduates will be equipped with the knowledge, values, and skills necessary to assume professional responsibilities as change agents in a culturally diverse, global society within a rural context. With a broad liberal arts foundation, students will be prepared to engage with clients at all levels of practice, enhancing the social functioning and well-being of clients, alleviating human suffering, and improving the quality of life in the rural Texas panhandle region, the state, the nation, and the world.

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WTAMU-

West Texas A&M University, a member of the Texas A & M University System, is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees. Additionally, the University offers programs accredited by the Texas Education Agency, the State Board for Educator Certification, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the National Association of Schools of Music, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Programs, the Mechanical Engineering Program – Engineering Accreditation Commission, the Council on Social Work Education and the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs. The University also holds membership in the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the American Council on Education, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools, the Association of Texas Graduate Schools, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY INSTITUTION

West Texas A&M University offers all of its educational opportunities and extracurricular advantages to students without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, veteran status, genetic information, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity, except where gender, age or disability is a bona fide occupational qualification. WTAMU is an affirmative action/equal employment opportunity institution.

AT A GLANCE 1

Location	Canyon is 15 miles south of Amarillo, TX on Interstate 27-US 87 in the heart of the Texas Panhandle. Ready access to Amarillo provides the advantages of small town living as well as the advantages of a larger metropolitan area.
Environment	More than 9,901 students
Academic Programs	West Texas A&M University is organized into six colleges and two schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paul Engler College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences• Paul and Virginia Engler College of Business• College of Education and Social Sciences• School of Engineering, Computer Science, and Mathematics• Graduate School
Degrees	Ninety eight degrees (58 bachelor's, 39 master's, and 1 doctoral) are conferred by West Texas A&M University. Graduate Students at the University choose from 39 master's level and two doctoral programs.

WTAMU is a member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division II, Lone Star Conference and offers 15 men's and women's programs. School colors are maroon and white, with the buffalo as the school mascot. For more information regarding athletics, access the website at www.gobuffsgo.com

CAMPUS LIFE

West Texas A&M University is located in the friendly university town of Canyon. With a population of approximately 15,000 the town is big enough to fill basic needs of its residents in the quiet atmosphere characteristic of small West Texas towns. Only 15 miles north of Canyon is the city of Amarillo. With approximately 200,000 residents, Amarillo is the metropolitan center of the Panhandle of Texas, offering shopping and employment opportunities as well as popular nightspots and other entertainment centers.

The University is something of an oasis on the wide plains of West Texas with its greenery and large shade trees. The grounds consist of 176 acres in the main campus, 205 acres adjacent and east of campus, 186 acres in the University Farm and Horse Center, and 2,310 acres in the Nance Ranch – a total of 2,816 acres owned and operated by the University.

Forty-five campus buildings include residence halls, academic buildings with classroom and laboratories and offices, the newly-remodeled Jack B. Kelley Student Center, the Virgil Henson Activities Center, the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, the Joseph A. Hill Memorial Chapel and the First United Bank Center. Frank Kimbrough Memorial Stadium, with a seating capacity of 20,000, is located north of the main campus. The Amarillo Center, is located in downtown Amarillo. A new state of the art football stadium was recently completed which is located on the north side of campus.

WTAMU offers students a diversified program of campus activities and organizations. The Virgil Henson Activities Center is a 270,000-square-foot facility that houses a swimming pool, rock-climbing wall, eight-lane bowling alley, racquetball courts, and a 38,000-square-foot all-purpose gymnasium for volleyball and basketball. A weight room with workout equipment is also available. The Activities Center houses the offices of the Department of Sports and Exercise Sciences, the Department of Communication Disorders, Recreational Sports, and the Office of Intercollegiate Athletics.

The Student Success Center (SSC) provides students with support programs and assistance in establishing, planning and accomplishing their academic, personal, and career goals. The SSC is located on the first floor of the recently remodeled Classroom Center. The SSC provides a central location for students to access academic advising, career services, counseling services, tutoring, testing, supplemental instruction, life services, scholarship information, study abroad programs, disability services, the writing lab, and transfer coordination. Additionally, the university's First Year Experience programs are housed in the SSC.

CAMPUS MEDIA

The campus newspaper, *The Prairie*, was published weekly to inform the reader of student activities and voice student opinion. As of October 21, 2019, The Prairie no longer has a print issue but will be producing news and focusing on efforts on publishing on the website for the digital audience. WTAMU owns and operates a non-commercial educational radio station, KWTS-FM 91.1, which allows students hands-on experience in the radio field. KWTS prepares daily newscasts and broadcasts WTAMU sporting events.

CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Formal Art Gallery located in Mary Moody Northern Hall has frequent show of art created by both students and professional artists. Many concerts, recitals, exhibits and theatre performances staged on campus each year, most free to students. The University boasts its own fully endowed Harrington String Quartet. The Harrington Fine Arts Complex, located on the main campus, houses television and radio studios, and provides another venue for the myriad of cultural events held on campus. The campus is also home to the largest natural history museum in Texas, the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum.

DIVERSITY PROGRAMS

Diversity programs provide culturally diverse student programs that promote a strong campus sense of community and an appreciation of diversity, organized by the Office of Engaged Citizenship, First Year Experience, Campus 2 Community, and International Student Services. Monthly programs expose students to a variety of cultures and cultural issues. Events emphasize that diversity is more than just race or ethnicity. The College of Education and Social Sciences has made a special commitment to honoring diversity, incorporating celebrations of Día de los Muertos and encouraging study abroad opportunities. Visit <https://www.wtamu.edu/student-support/engaged-citizenship/index.html> for more information on programs and opportunities.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

More than 100 recognized student organizations are available to students. Quality education is preparation for a lifetime of learning. The University fully supports a well-rounded approach to education and encourages involvement in student organizations. See page 11 for information on social work-related organizations.

SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM – GENERAL INFORMATION

WHAT IS SOCIAL WORK?

Social work is a profession that exists to promote or restore a mutually beneficial interaction between individuals and society in order to improve the quality of life for everyone. Social workers work with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations, whose diverse problems, issues, and needs interfere with adequate social functioning.

The social work profession provides opportunities to work in different practice settings such as mental health, health and rehabilitation, family and children's services, gerontology, criminal justice, hospice, developmental disabilities, schools, and income maintenance.

Social workers focus on the environment as the target of change, and sometimes the target of change is both the client and the environment. As generalist practitioners, social workers facilitate problem solving, obtain or create resources, provide education, influence the development of social policy, and engage in research and practice evaluation.

For more information on the social work profession, please visit <http://www.helpstartshere.org>

GENERALIST APPROACH – THE ROLES OF THE SOCIAL WORKER

1. **ADMINISTRATION** – The term is used as an objective rather than a method. The principal focus is the management of a facility, an organization, a program or a service unit.
2. **ADVOCACY** - Advocacy aims at neutralizing or removing obstacles and barriers that sometimes prevent clients from exercising their rights and receiving benefits for which they are eligible. This involves working with resources to effect policy and procedural changes and/or modifications and resource development.
3. **BEHAVIOR CHANGE** - Here the primary objective is to bring about modification and change in the behavior patterns, habits and perceptions of individuals or groups. The key assumption

is that problems may be alleviated or prevented by modifying, adding or extinguishing discrete bits of behavior, by increasing insights or by modifying the values and perceptions of different systems.

4. CASE MANAGEMENT - Case management is the provision of services over time, as opposed to providing acute services. While there seems to be no general agreement in the field about how roles and functions mesh to form a coherent model of service, social work practitioners must possess diverse skills to fulfill a variety of roles such as advocate, broker, consultant, planner and counselor.
5. COMMUNITY PLANNING - This involves participating and assisting neighborhood planning groups, agencies, community agents or governments in the development of community programs to assure that the human service needs of the community are represented and met to the greatest extent feasible.
6. CONSULTATION- This involves working with other workers and/or agencies to help them increase their skills and solve their clients' social welfare problems.
7. CONTINUING CARE - Care Giver or Case Manager-The primary objective is to provide for persons who need ongoing support or care on an extended and continuing basis. The key assumption is that there will be individuals who will require constant surveillance or monitoring or who will need continuing support and services (i.e., financial assistance, 24-hour care) perhaps in an institutional setting or on a community basis.
8. DETECTION - Outreach Worker -The primary objective is to identify the individuals or groups who are experiencing difficulty (at crisis) or who are in danger of becoming vulnerable (at risk) in social problem areas. A further objective is to detect and identify conditions in the environment that are contributing to the problems or are raising the level of risk.
9. EVALUATION – Evaluator-This involves gathering information pertinent to social work objectives and the use of this information to determine alternatives and priorities for action. This function applies equally in working with individuals, groups, organizations, and communities.
10. INFORMATION PROCESSING - Data Manager or Researcher-This objective is often ignored within social welfare. Its primary focus is the collection, classification, and analysis of data generated within the social welfare environment. Its content would include data about the individual case, the community and the institution.

11. INSTRUCTION – Teacher-Instruction is used in the sense of an objective rather than a method. The primary objectives are to convey and impart information and knowledge and to develop various kinds of skills that may be useful to the client. A great deal of what has been called casework or therapy is, in careful analysis, simple instruction designed to assist in the enhancement of social functioning.
12. LINKAGE – Broker-The primary objective is to link people with services that can be of benefit to them. Its focus is on enabling or helping people to use the service system and to negotiate its pathways. A further objective is to link elements of the service system with one another. The essential benefit of this objective is the physical hook-up of the person with the source of help and the physical connection of elements of the service system with one another.
13. MOBILIZATION – Mobilizer-This involves the mobilization and coordination of existing resources and the development and creation of new resources designed to resolve and alleviate the effects of existing problems. This function applies equally to individuals, groups and communities and may also be aimed toward prevention of potential problems. The principal focus is on existing resources within the community.
14. TEAM MEMBER - Co-worker-Human problems are too large and complex to be dealt with by one person or discipline. The social worker often functions cooperatively with other professions and disciplines including medicine, law, psychiatry, sociology, psychology, nursing, criminal justice, education and the ministry.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student Social Work Organization

Membership is open to all students enrolled at West Texas A&M University. Club meetings are bi-generally weekly. Interested students should contact the organization's advisor, Dr. Meg Dejong-Shier, at mdejong-shier@wtamu.edu for further information.

The club's purpose is to explore the interrelated fields of sociology and social work and promote a spirit of community within the sociology and social work department. Via diverse forums such as field projects, speakers, panel discussions, and group and individual investigations, the club works to gain expertise in individual areas of interest and to acquire a deeper, more precise understanding of social structure, institutions, and approaches to social welfare.

The organization's president generally serves as the representative to the Social Work Advisory Council. All students are encouraged to attend the local NASW chapter meetings.

PHI ALPHA HONOR SOCIETY

The social work program at West Texas A&M University has a chapter of Phi Alpha Honor Society.

Membership is open to all social work majors who meet the honor society's eligibility standards. Interested persons should contact Ms. Kristy Bartlett (kbartlett@wtamu.edu) or Ms. Meg Dejong-shier (mdejong-shier@wtamu.edu), the faculty advisors for the society.

Requirements for induction include:

- (a) declared a major in social work as an undergraduate or graduate;
- (b) achieved junior status (BSW) or have completed two semesters of their graduate program (MSSW);
- (c) completed 9 credit hours in major courses at the undergraduate level or 18 hours of courses at the graduate level;
- (d) achieved an all-college GPA of 3.00; and (e) a 3.25 GPA in social work.

The purposes of Phi Alpha are to:

- (a) Recognize and promote scholastic achievement among students and faculty involved in the undergraduate and/or graduate social work program at West Texas A&M University;
- (b) Recognize, improve, and further the goal of social work in the community, state, nation, and world;
- (c) Stimulate interest in preparation for a career in social work;
- (d) Encourage continued study and research at the undergraduate level, the graduate level, and in professional practice;
- (e) Recognize those professional social workers whose service, contribution, and leadership are held in high esteem.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The Undergraduate Social Work Organization has established the Jane Addams Memorial scholarship for sociology/social work students. The recipient(s) of this scholarship is(are) primarily decided by student representatives on the Jane Addams scholarship committee.

Phi Alpha Nu has established a scholarship to be awarded to an active member of the honor society.

Other departmental scholarships include: Tom Cannon, Joseph Findley, Mahatma Gandhi, Dorothy Gimp,

Sally Ingerton, Mitchell Jones, Marjorie Waddle Kruckeberg, Judith Mathewson Lankford Memorial, Jay Allen Mathis' Memorial, Sibyl Mitchell, Nona L. Moore, Hubert W. Oppe, Dipakben J. Patel, Jimmy D. Pond, Sarah Raffkind and Arvezene Winter, NASW – Amarillo Unit, Prof. K.R. Ramakrishnan, Jack Duncan Rhodes, and the Clark E. Wooldridge Memorial.

SOCIAL WORK ADVISORY COUNCIL

To create an inter-organizational linkage with its various constituencies, the social work program at WTAMU engages constituents in an Advisory Council. The Council is composed of directors of social agencies and field instructors in the Texas Panhandle. Social work students are also represented on the council.

Many agencies represented on the Council provide WTAMU students with a place to complete volunteer hours, service learning projects, and their required field practicum courses (SOCW 4688/4698). The council elects its chairperson and secretary; the number of members on the council varies. The council meets once every regular semester. The council's primary function is to provide advice and guidance in matters relating to the profession of social work and the social work program at WTAMU. The council, through its ad hoc committees, makes recommendations in issues such as eligibility criteria for admission into the social work program, criteria for admission into field placement, and recruiting minority students. The council also advocates for the social work program in the broader community. This inter-organizational relationship helps the social work program maintain a close relationship with the professional community and community at large in the Texas Panhandle.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND LICENSURE

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION - NASW

The National Association of Social Workers is the largest membership organization of professional social workers globally, with approximately 150,000 members worldwide. NASW works to enhance its members' professional growth and development, create and maintain professional standards, and advance sound social policies. NASW has led the way in setting professional practice standards since the Code of Ethics was established in 1955. Texas is a state chapter member of NASW, and Amarillo is a branch member of NASW. Social Work students at WTAMU are highly encouraged to become members, attend NASW meetings, and participate in NASW workshops.

For more information contact:

National Association of Social Workers
750 First Street, NE, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20002-4241
Tel.: 800-638-8799 TDD: 202-336-8396
FAX: 202-336-8310
Website: www.socialworkers.org

NASW Texas Chapter
810 West 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701-2010
Tel.: 512-474-1454
Toll Free: 800-888-6279
FAX: 512-474-1317
Email: naswtex@naswtx.org
Website: www.naswtx.org

Students are also encouraged to explore membership in other social work professional organizations, such as the National Association of Black Social Workers (<http://www.nabsw.org>), North American Association of Christians in Social Work (<http://www.nacsw.org>), or the Latino Social Workers Organization (<http://www.lsw.org>).

TEXAS STATE LICENSING

The Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners regulates the profession of Social Work in Texas, providing protection for social workers and clients through licensure and a restricted title. The TSBSWE is a state agency with rule making authority governed by a nine-member board appointed by the Governor, and is administratively attached to the Texas Department of Health. Students are highly encouraged to get their Social Work License soon after they graduate from the program. For information about social work licensing, application for licensure or licensure upgrade, a list of current social workers or to receive supervision packets contact:

Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners
1801 Congress Ave., Ste. 7.300
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 305-7700
Toll Free: 800-821-3205

Website: <https://bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-social-worker-examiners>

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SOCIAL WORK ADVISING

Advising Services, part of the Student Success Center, provides centralized advice to all freshmen and serves as an initial point of contact for transfer students. The University uses Centralized advising for all first-year students (up to 30 hours) is designed to specifically assist with the transition from high school to college, independent living, and other matters of relevance to this group.

Upon declaration of the social work major, each student who has earned over 30 hours will be assigned to a social work faculty member for advising. At WTAMU, advising occurs every semester, and each student must be greenlighted by a faculty member, ensuring that each student talks to an advisor prior to registering for his or her classes. Advising is done by appointment, and the BSW Program Director assumes the primary responsibility for assigning advisors to students; however, students often approach faculty members who can then determine whether they have openings.

It is the student's right and responsibility to make decisions on course selection. Therefore, the social work advisor's role is to recommend courses in addition to discussing the sequencing of courses with the student. University students must file degree plans (constituting the student's "contract" with the University) prior to completing 45 hours of coursework (including transfer hours) with the Dean of their college. Degree plans, which are specific to a catalog year, are developed through the office of the Dean. Copies are sent to the student and are uploaded to a common, secure drive for access by advisors; degree plans are an integral component of providing guidance in advising sessions. COESS students can request their initial degree plans online at <https://apps.wtamu.edu/forms/degree.php>

Social work advising has the following objectives:

- To guide social work students in the completion of the required courses of the University and the Social Work Major. This involves proper sequencing of the courses so that the student may continuously build on his/her base of knowledge from course to course.
- To help students evaluate their own potential for the profession of social work.
- To provide information and help the students in the selection of career opportunities within the profession of Social Work.
- To assist the student with various educationally oriented problems that may arise and interfere with his/her learning or educational progress, making referrals for tutoring and other services when applicable.

For students that have trouble with writing, mathematics, and/or reading skills, WTAMU has a testing service as well as tutoring available. Testing services are located in the Student Success Center (SSC) on the first floor of the Classroom Center. Tutoring is available free of charge through the SSC as well.

When in need of academic Students have access to a math lab, writing lab, supplemental instruction in core classes, and a science-tutoring lab. Students also have access to a 24-hour tutoring service, Smart Thinking, available online. The University is committed to the success of all students.

Field Advising – Field advising is another way that students receive academic and professional advising. The Field Director begins the placement process by assessing a variety of factors including the student's interests, background, education, and previous experience. Students are provided a list of partner agencies and placements and schedule interviews with agencies with which they are interested in being placed. The student visits the agency and meets with the field instructor, or field education coordinator. The student, Field Director, and prospective agency/field instructor engage in determining the suitability of the placement and the specifics of the educational plan in light of the student's career goals, and the Field Director makes the final decision on placement.

The Field Director maintains contact with the student and the agency throughout the placement process. The Field Director works with the agency, the student, and the field instructor to ensure that the agency is: offering appropriate assignments and supervision, that the field instructor is working with the student to make use of their assignments to achieve competency, and the student is using all the opportunities to learn. Often, it is the Field Director who knows the student's strengths, challenges, interests, and career goals most intimately. It is the Field Director who often, in discussions around the placement, provides on-going professional advising.

Professional Advising – Professional advising is the vehicle by which students receive information and guidance that both reinforces the social work perspective and principles and prepares them for professional social work careers. This advising is done by social work faculty within the classroom setting and in outside discussions. It can be formal or informal, and may occur at the request of either the student or faculty.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Social Work Program is committed to recruiting and retaining minority students. It employs every effort to administer to all students equally and fairly in academic and personal matters. The Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work works closely with the Dean of Student Enrollment to recruit minority students. It is the policy of the department and the social

work program not to discriminate against anyone based on race, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, political beliefs, gender identity/expression, or sexual orientation.

West Texas A&M University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. WTAMU will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines regarding reasonable accommodations as required for equal educational opportunity.

Students with documented special needs should contact the Office of Student Disability Services for assistance. Services provided include books read to tape, interpreters, reading of tests, extended time on tests, secluded location for tests, arrangement for appropriate desks, chairs, or other material, assistance with research, and special computer software needs.

It is the student's responsibility to contact the Office of Student Disability Services at 806-651-2335 and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations. The Office of Student Disability Services is in the Student Success Center, Room CC 106. More information is available at <http://www.wtamu.edu/student-support/disability-services.aspx>

JUDICIAL AFFAIRS

Due process for students involved in judicial/disciplinary situations is provided through the Office of Judicial Affairs. Hearings are assigned to various hearing bodies, such as the Student Judicial Board, the University Judicial Officer and/or area coordinators. The *Code of Student Life* includes rules and procedures for students and is available on the Website at www.wtamu.edu/reports/, or hard copies are available in the Office of Student Services, located in the Jack B. Kelley Student Center, Room 102.

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

All students enrolled in the BSW program will have the same rights and responsibilities granted to all students at West Texas A&M University, as outlined in the Code of Student Life, available online at: <http://www.wtamu.edu/about/university-reports.aspx>

Additionally, the social work program encourages student input both individually and collectively concerning the development, evaluation, and modification of the program. Focus groups are held periodically, and the availability of online surveys has streamlined the process of collecting feedback from students. Students are encouraged to be involved in the hiring process of new faculty through their participation in classroom presentations by prospective candidates, and giving formal feedback

in the form of evaluation forms when a candidate presents to the class. All students are invited to attend these presentations. The social work program has developed a Facebook page where students are able to “like” us and thus receive announcements and give feedback. This page can be found at:

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/WTAMUSocialWorkProgram>

Students may choose to be involved in the Advisory Council, although the President of the Social Work Club generally serves as the liaison between the Council and the Social Work students.

STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Social work practice is based on professional education. The social work educational program expects much more of its students than non-professional programs do of their students. The standards are intertwined with students’ abilities to become effective advanced generalist social work practitioners. The standards provide guidelines about expectations and procedures that address academic performance concerns.

Assessing a student’s overall performance and evaluating whether or not standards are met during a student’s educational career are the responsibilities of those who teach and supervise students including the field coordinator, field liaison, and agency supervisors. The involved faculty members, program coordinators and field supervisors will exercise their professional judgment to determine if standards are being met during a student’s educational career.

All social work students have online access to this Student Handbook, which includes the 10 competencies outlined in the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, the 41 practice behaviors adopted by the program, and the NASW (National Association of Social Workers) Code of Ethics. Students are expected to read this handbook prior to their formal application to the social work program, and affirm on their application that they have downloaded a copy of the handbook, that they have read it, and that they agree to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The program will assess the academic performance of its students in four general areas:

1. Basic abilities to acquire professional skills;
2. Mental and emotional abilities necessary for performance in the program, and professional practice;
3. Performance skills necessary for work with clients and professional practice; and

4. Scholastic performance.

Scholastic achievement of a student mandates that all of the above mentioned criteria are met. However, meeting the criteria alone does not guarantee the student's continued enrollment in the program. Student's professional behavior and his/her ability to follow procedures and rules governing student life and student conduct as prescribed in the Code of Student Life are additional criteria that comprise academic standards and those have to be met as well.

Basic abilities to acquire professional skills include:

- Demonstration of communication skills, which include sufficient written and oral skills
- Demonstration of interpersonal skills to relate effectively to client systems, other students, faculty, staff and other professionals
- Demonstration of sufficient knowledge of social work and clarity of thinking to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in the classroom and in the field.
- Exhibiting sufficient motor and sensory abilities to attend and participate in class and practicum placement, with or without accommodations. For information and detailed explanation of the services provided by Student Disability Services, please see Student Disability Services: Faculty Resource Guide distributed by the Office of Student Disability Service (<https://apps.wtamu.edu/forms/degree.php>)

Mental and emotional capabilities include:

- Demonstration of the ability to deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanism such as self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others.
- Use of sound judgment including the ability to seek and effectively use help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance. Actions that jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the social work student has a professional responsibility (as outlined in the current NASW Code of Ethics) will be a part of student assessment.

Professional performance skills include:

Demonstration of commitment to the goals of generalist social work practice, including the ethical standards as specified by the NASW Code of Ethics, social work values and social justice.

- Behaviors that are in compliance with program policies, institutional policies, professional ethical standards, and societal laws in the classroom, field, and community. Potential for responsible and accountable behavior by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, respecting others, and accepting supervision and criticism in a positive manner.
- Working effectively with others, regardless of the level of authority. Advocating for herself/himself in an appropriate and responsible manner. Using proper channels for conflict resolution.

- Self Awareness: Exhibition of knowledge of how one’s values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and past experiences affect thinking, behavior and relationships. Accurately assessing one’s own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice. A willingness to examine and change own behavior when it interferes in working with clients and other professionals.
- Ethical obligation, which includes adherence to the ethical principles and obligations of professional practice, as noted in the NASW Code of Ethics.

SCHOLASTIC PERFORMANCE

The University policy for academic probation and suspension requires students to maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA to remain in good academic standing. Academic probation results from a semester GPA falling below the required 2.0. If the student fails to maintain a 2.0 GPA the next semester, he or she is suspended from the University. The suspension may be appealed, with consideration for special or extenuating circumstances. The Program follows the University’s procedures and policies on judicial/ disciplinary and academic suspension (see <http://catalog.wtamu.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=268> for details).

The Social Work program requires a 2.5 minimum GPA for formal admittance into the major during the secondary admittance process. Students who have a GPA below 2.50 are not allowed to remain in the program or complete their field internship.

Evidence of meeting academic performance criteria in the social work program may include but is not limited to any of the following:

- Feedback or reference letters from faculty, work supervisors, or supervisors of volunteer human service agencies or other field experiences.
- Feedback from agency-based field supervisors.
- Observations of classroom, volunteer, or field behaviors
- Performance in oral and written assignments, examinations, social work skills labs or other appropriate coursework.
- Student personal statements or self-assessments.
- Taped interview situations (audio-video)

REVIEW OF ACADEMIC OR PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE

A review of a student’s academic and professional performance in the social work program can occur at three levels. The level of review will depend upon the potential severity of the concern. Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty, program coordinators, or administrators will not be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about professional performance. Faculty and/or program coordinators will share pertinent information for the educational purpose of

identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. They will follow university procedures related to student performance issues.

Student reviews can occur under any of the following circumstances:

- Failure to meet or maintain academic requirements as stated under scholastic performance
- Scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, or any act designed to unfair academic advantage to the student. (Faculty must adhere to university guidelines).
- Behavior judged to be in violation of the current NASW Code of Ethics
- Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or someone else.
- Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice, occurring during the course of study or occurring prior to admission to the program and becoming known after admission.
- Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior.
- Failure to meet any of the Standards of Social Work Education.
- Violation of rules and procedures of Code of Student Life.

THREE LEVELS OF REVIEW

LEVEL 1

This review will take place when a faculty member has concerns about a student enrolled in the social work program meeting any of the academic criteria, whether related to professional behavior or scholastic performance.

The faculty member will:

1. Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work to resolve the problems,
2. Apprise the Program Director or Field Coordinator of the concerns in order to identify potential patterns and issues related to the student, and
3. Document dates and content of meetings with the student.
4. Complete a Contract/Action plan with the student when appropriate. The form will be kept in the student's file, but may be destroyed once the student has completed the goals laid out in the action plan. (Please see the form in the appendix of this manual.)

If a problem arises in field, the agency-based supervisor will discuss concerns directly with the student and the faculty liaison. The faculty liaison will apprise the Field Coordinator and the Program Director of the concerns.

LEVEL 2

When concerns have not been resolved at Level 1, a Level 2 review is undertaken. This review involves the faculty member, student, and Program Director. If the problem is related to Field Instruction, the agency supervisor, faculty liaison, and field coordinator will conduct the review with the student.

At this level, the Program Director collects all relevant information, determines the nature of the concern, and, if needed, develops a plan to address that concern. No further action may be required, or the student may be asked, in writing, to modify his or her behavior and/or seek appropriate help. This process is designed to assist students in dealing with identified concerns that impact their performance.

The Program Director or the Field Coordinator will assess the nature of these concerns with appropriate faculty, consult with the student's advisor and the Department Head, maintain documentation, and decide if conducting a more comprehensive review is necessary, pursuant to Level 3.

LEVEL 3

Level 3 review is undertaken when concerns have not been resolved in prior reviews, when issues relate to a student not meeting the criteria for academic performance (often involving professional or ethical behaviors), or when the student is being considered for withdrawal or discontinuance in the program. This review involves the faculty member, student, Program Director, Department Chair, and faculty who have had direct experience with the student in the classroom or field. Appropriate faculty to be involved in a review will include but are not limited to those with direct knowledge of or experience with the student.

The student is in writing of the concerns and meeting date, with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting.

After the review meeting has occurred, the Program Director will consult with the Dean of Education and Social Sciences to discuss the problem and make recommendations regarding the student. The Program Director will inform the student, in writing within ten calendar days, of the decision, which can include one or more of the following:

- Continue the student in the program with no conditions.
- Establish formal conditions for the student's conditions for the student's continuance in the program.
- Consult with and/or refer to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
- Counsel the student to change majors/degree programs.

Reviews will generally progress through the stages (Level I, II, and III); however, at times, circumstances may warrant the institution of a higher level of review without completing the previous levels.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Pursuant to the student grievance procedures for students provided in the Code of Student Life, social work students have the right to redress grievances related to academic matters, including decisions that are the result of reviews outlined in the above Standards of Social Work Education. Students are assured freedom from reprisals for bringing a grievance.

A social work student who has an academic grievance involving a grade dispute shall discuss the matter with the faculty member involved. If the dispute is not resolved, the student can appeal the matter to the Program Director. (If the grievance involves field instruction, the student can appeal to the field coordinator and then to the Program Director.) If the problem is not resolved at the Program, Department, and College levels, then the student can pursue the concern at the University level following the rules and procedures outlined in the Code of Student Life, a copy of which can be obtained from the Office of University Student Affairs or online at www.wtamu.edu/reports.

STUDENT COURSE LOAD

Undergraduates are considered full-time students when enrolled in 12+ semester hours during long semesters. However, students must complete 15 – 18 hours per semester to graduate within four years. Students on academic probation (less than a 2.0 GPA) may not take more than 15 hours. Fewer hours may be recommended if a student has outside pressures such as work or family. Enrollment in more than 18 hours requires the Associate Dean of Education and Social Sciences approval.

The normal course load for summer sessions is 6 – 7 hours per summer session. Full-time enrollment is six hours. The student's dean must approve registration for more hours. A total of 15 hours across both summer sessions is the maximum load.

GRADING SYSTEM

The grade chart below indicates grade symbols and the numerical equivalents for evaluating course work.

Grade Symbol	Explanation	Grade Points
A	Excellent	4
B	Good	3
C	Average	2
D	Passing	1
F	Failing	0
W	Withdrew-only applicable when student withdraws from all courses	0
I	Incomplete	
X	Drop/Withdraw prior to drop date, generally at the end of March or October	
S	Pass in CLEP, SAT, ACT and other specially approved courses	

Incomplete Grade ("I")

A grade of "I" indicates a portion of required course work has not been completed and evaluated in the prescribed time period due to unforeseen but fully justified reasons (i.e., hospitalization, personal injury), and that there is still a possibility of earning credit. It is the student's responsibility to bring pertinent information to the instructor and request the incomplete option. Students electing the incomplete option must normally complete the required coursework within the time designated by the instructor but not to exceed 12 months. If a student fails to complete the required coursework within 12 months, the grade will be changed to an "F." Once the instructor assigns a grade of "I," the student cannot drop the course.

SOCIAL WORK CURRICULUM

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS OF SOCIAL WORK MAJORS

Your career as a social worker begins when you enter the social work program. The social work program is accountable to the profession and society in making sure that graduates demonstrate qualities and abilities suitable to the social work profession. Your professional development involves not only attaining social work knowledge, skills, and values but also attaining and maintaining high

standards of personal conduct guided by the values and code of ethics ascribed to the social work profession.

Professional attitudes and behaviors toward self, clients, student peers, and faculty are influenced by the core social work values of respecting the dignity and worth of each individual, the importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence.

For example, practicing respect for the individual in the classroom can be demonstrated by valuing the experiences, ideas, and work of other students and faculty. A student's responsibility to colleagues and clients can be demonstrated by:

- contributing to the success of each class by regular attendance
- carrying out assignments
- participating in the open sharing of information, ideas, and opinions. ➤ recognizing and practicing appropriate boundaries

Social work students should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues, including demeaning comments about competence, personal characteristics, or status. The cooperation needed for effective social work practice should be exhibited through students' supportive and collaborative behavior in their interaction both in class work and in field placement.

All work in the Social Work program is expected to follow the formatting guidelines of the American Psychological Association's (APA) Publication Manual, 7th ed., even if this is not stated in the course syllabus.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Social Work education at West Texas A&M University (WTAMU) enables students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession into competent practice. WTAMU's undergraduate social work program is built on a liberal arts foundation and is based on the generalist model of social work practice. Systems theory, emphasizing a problem-solving approach, provides the theoretical underpinnings to WTAMU undergraduates.

The educational process for WTAMU's generalist social work practitioner strives to:

1. Prepare students to be competent and effective generalist practitioners within a rural context.
2. Develop in students the critical thinking skills necessary to engage with clients within an ecosystems perspective when working with clients at all levels of practice.
3. Prepare students for their role as social change agents, focusing on social justice and empowerment when working with clients at all levels of practice.

4. Provide a learning environment that models respect for diversity, developing students who will work within the values and ethics of the social work profession, cultivating the self-awareness of personal values required to offer competent services to a diverse population.
5. Educating students to commit to engage in lifelong learning through continuing education and/or graduate school.

CSWE is the accrediting body for all Bachelor and Master's degree programs in social work in the U.S. CSWE accredits the undergraduate social work program at WTAMU. The following competencies and associated practice behaviors are a guiding force for the social work educational curriculum.

EPAS – THE 9 CORE COMPETENCIES & ASSOCIATED PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and

ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand 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 also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and

- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Social workers:

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness.

Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:

- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:

- select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

WTAMU Core Curriculum

University core curriculum requirements apply to all baccalaureate degrees. They are intended to provide students with the basis for establishing broad and multiple perspectives of the individual in relation to the larger society and world in which he or she lives. They are predicated on the belief that basic intellectual competencies in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking are essential to the learning process in any discipline.

The freshman-sophomore requirements outlined below, should ideally be completed by the end of the sophomore year. The courses listed here are the core courses required for the social work program.

Communication (6 hours: English; 3 hours: Communication 3 hours)

ENGL 1301

COMM 1315, 1318, or 1321

Mathematics (3 hours)

MATH 1314, 1324, 1325, 1332, 1350, MATH 2412, 2413 (extra hour of MATH course moves to Code 90)

Life Science (Select two for a total of 6 hours)

BIOL 1406, 1406L & BIOL 1407, 1407L

BIOL 1408, 1408L & BIOL 1409, 1409L

BIOL 2401, 2401L & BIOL 2402, 2402L

Students cannot earn credit for both 1406 & 1408 or 1407 & 1409

Language, Philosophy, and Culture (3 hours)

ANTH 2351, ENGL 2321, 2326, 2331, 2341, 2343; HIST 2311, 2323, 2372; PHIL 1301, 2374; SPAN 2311, 2312, 2313, 2315 (or an equivalent course in foreign language)

Creative Arts (3 hours)

ARTS 1303; 1304, DANC 2303, HUMA 1315, MUSI 1208 **and** 1209; (extra hour moves to Code 90); MUSI 1306, THRE 1310

American History (6 hours)

HIST 1301, 1302, 2301, 2381

Government/Political Science (6 hours)

POSC 2305 and POSC 2306

Social & Behavioral Sciences (3 hours)

PSYC 2301, SOCI 2302

Component Area Option Code 90 (6 hours)

AGRI 2300, BIOL lab hours (from Code 30), BUSI 1304, CHEM lab hours (from Code 30)
CS1301, CIDM 1301, ENGL 1302*, ENGL 2311, FIN 1307, GEOL lab hours (from Code 30), IDS
1071 (1-3 hours), PHIL 2303, PHYS lab hours (from Code 30), Extra MATH hours (from Code
20), Extra MUSI hour from Code 50) *strongly recommended

Total Core Requirements 42 hours

TRANSFERRED CREDITS

Transfer students should contact Advising Services, who will work with Admissions for the appropriate evaluation of credit. While Admissions is primarily responsible for applying transfer credits toward general education requirements, Advising Services or a social work adviser may help students request credit for similar coursework. Standard credits from colleges and universities approved by regional accrediting agencies are accepted. Students must complete a minimum of 39 hours of advanced work (3000/4000 level courses) for which tuition is paid at WTAMU. Thirty of the final 36 hours must be earned at WTAMU. No grade less than a C is accepted if the course is required by the degree (in 2009-2010 and later catalog years).

Students must earn a C or better in all social work courses, and must maintain a 2.5 GPA prior to their entrance into field placement. Students needing one academic course may be admitted into a block field placement; however, the program may refuse entry into field if the student's GPA is marginal, or the remaining course is part of the core requirements.

CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

Credit by examination may satisfy parts of core curriculum requirements. Six hours of appropriate science credit by examination may be used to satisfy the laboratory science requirement. Only three semester hours of credit by examination in political science and three semester hours in history can be counted toward core curriculum requirements. Students earning six hours of credit by examination in American history must take at least one additional course in American history as specified by law.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR BACHELOR OF ARTS AND BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREES

Social work students may choose to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree (B.A.) or a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree. The requirements for these degrees are below.

BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.) ADDITIONAL COURSES:

For the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree, the student must complete, in addition to the core curriculum, a minimum of 12 hours as follows:

- Six hours of foreign language
- Six hours chosen from art, English, history, modern languages, music, philosophy, and theatre.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.S.) ADDITIONAL COURSES:

For the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree, the student must complete, in addition to the core curriculum, a minimum of 12 hours as follows:

- Six hours chosen from biology, chemistry, geology, geosciences, mathematics, and physics in addition to the 8 hours of biology required by the social work program, which is applied toward the students general education (core) requirements.

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION INTO THE UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

All students declaring social work as a major will be considered pre-majors until officially admitted into the Social Work program.

The criteria for admittance into the program are:

- Completion of the University Core Classes
- Completion of the four beginning-level social work courses (SOCW 2315, SOCW 2361, SOCW 3301, and SOCW 3302) with a C or better.
- An overall cumulative GPA of 2.5
- An application for admission to the Social Work program, including the Academic Integrity Pledge and outlined plan of study (see the Program Application for more details).

- Two letters of reference from people who can attest to the student’s desire and commitment to helping people.
- A current transcript, which shows completion of the social work foundation classes listed above (a grade of C or better, or “IP”, indicating “in progress”). It is preferred that students submit applications after the successful completion of these courses. Applications submitted while these courses are pending, may be held until the end of the semester and processed once grades are available.
- A copy of the program evaluation, and an unofficial degree plan.

Exceptions to these requirements must be submitted in writing to the Program Director and must include a plan for meeting these requirements in a timely manner.

Once the student has submitted his or her application to the Program Director by the deadline indicated in each full semester (established by the Program Director and announced in classes and at the Program Conference), the BSW Program Director will check the file for completeness. If documentation is missing (i.e. transcript, degree plan, reference letters, etc.) the file will be considered to be “incomplete” and will not be processed. Students will be contacted via email or letter regarding the items that must be received prior to the application being processed. The Admissions Committee (which is comprised of the faculty teaching BSW-level courses) will review complete applications within one month of submission; however, students who apply while concurrently enrolled in any of the social work foundation courses may have to wait until the end of the semester, after grades are posted, for their file to be processed and reviewed. The disposition of the student’s application (as outlined below) will be communicated to the student via letter.

If students are ready to enroll in practice courses (SOCW 4310: Mezzo Social Work; SOCW 4341: Macro Social Work and SOCW 4383: Micro Social Work), for which being accepted into the program is a requirement, they may be registered for classes pending their application review. Students are allowed into these courses by instructor consent only; either the advisor or the course instructor can register the student. If the student fails to meet the requirements for program admission prior to the start of the class, they will be dropped from the course.

APPLICATION DISPOSITIONS

Several dispositions to the application are possible. Applications may be designated as:

- Full Admittance: All requirements have been met.
- Provisional: Rarely, a student may be admitted provisionally while still having some requirements to be met, such as receiving a degree plan or being enrolled in a core course. Provisional admittance may be granted when students must be enrolled in

SOCW 4310: Mezzo, SOCW 4341: Macro, and SOCW 4383: Micro prior to their field sequence. Students may not, however, be admitted to the field practicum courses (SOCW 4688 & SOCW 4698) while still on provisional status.

- Pending: The student has requirements that must be met, such as finishing a course required for admittance. This designation can be used when students do not need to be enrolled in practice courses.
- Denied: If a student fails to meet the GPA requirements, has not completed the core curriculum or beginning-level social work courses, or if documented concerns have been raised regarding the students' suitability for the field of social work, the students application may be denied.

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BSW PROGRAM

Because social work courses have to be taken in a proper sequence and also because of individual course requirements, students must consult with social work faculty advisors before registering.

An overall GPA of 2.50 is a prerequisite for admission into the Social Work Program, the required practice courses, and the Field Practicum (SOCW 4688/4698) Courses.

Required Social Work courses

Required Social Work Courses		
SOCW 2361	Introduction to Social work	3 hours
SOCW 2315	Human Behavior & Personal Adjustment	
SOCW 3301	Social Welfare: Structure & Process	
SOCW 3302	Critical Thinking and Self-Reflection	
SOCW 3362	Statistics for the Social Sciences	
SOCW 3380	Human Behavior in the Social Environment I	
SOCW 4310*	Mezzo	
SOCW 4321	Practice Methods with Diverse Populations	
SOCW 4341*	Macro	
SOCW 4362	Social Research	
SOCW 4380	Human Behavior in the Social Environment II	
SOCW 4381	Social Policy and Planning	
SOCW 4383*	Micro	
SOCW 4688**	Field Instruction I	
SOCW 4698**	Filed Instruction II	
*Must be admitted into the Social Work Program		
**May be taken concurrently; must be taken the final semester.		
Other Required Courses		
SOCI 1301	Introduction to Sociology	
PSYC 2301	General Psychology	

Elective Courses (pick two)		
SOCW 4303	Social Services to Children and Families	
SOCW 4305	Social Services to the Aging	
SOCW 4320	Perspectives on Loss & Grief	
SOCW 4335	Values, Ethics, & Religion in Social Work	
SOCW 4345	Healthcare Policy and Planning	
SOCW 4370	Go Global (Study Abroad)	
SOCW 4375	Theories in Counseling	
SOCW 4395	Current issues in Social Work	

Students can access degree checklists by catalog year on the WTAMU website at <https://www.wtamu.edu/student-support/degree-checklists.aspx>

CURRICULUM DESIGN

The WTAMU BSW program has attempted to incorporate “structured flexibility” into the curriculum to provide the foundation necessary for generalist practice in social work while allowing students some latitude to concentrate on areas of interest. This provides some flexibility within the necessary sequencing of the curriculum to meet students' needs and interests.

The WTAMU program curriculum is organized into four major groupings, as follows:

Foundation Core:

- University Core Requirements
- Foundation Social Work Courses (SOCW 2315, 2361, 3301, & 3302)
- PSYC 2301 & SOCW 1301

Intermediate Core:

- SOCW 3380: Human Behavior in Social Environment I
- SOCW 4321: Practice Methods with Diverse Populations
- SOCW 4380: Human Behavior in Social Environment II
- SOCW 4381: Social Policy and Planning
- SOCW 4362: Social Research

Advanced Core/Practice Classes

- SOCW 4310: Mezzo
- SOCW 4341: Macro
- SOCW 4383: Micro
- SOCW 4688: Field I
- SOCW 4698: Field II

Special Interest Core:

- SOCW 4303: Social Services with Children and Families
- SOCW 4305: Social Services and Aging
- SOCW 4320: Perspectives on Loss & Grief
- SOCW 4335: Values, Ethics, and Religion Social Work
- SOCW 4345: Healthcare Policy and Planning
- SOCW 4370: Go Global (Study Abroad)
- SOCW 4375: Theories in Counseling
- SOCW 4395: Current Issues in Social Work

To ensure proper sequencing, students are expected to complete the foundation core by the end of the fall semester of their junior year.

Students are advised to take intermediate core courses during their junior year. Field Practicum courses must be taken in the final one or two semesters of the student's senior year after all other requirements have been completed. Students may be enrolled in one course if taking the field courses in a block (with the one exception of SOCW 4383: Micro Social Work). A cumulative GPA of 2.5 is required for admission into SOCW 4688/4698, including at least a "C" earned in each class required by the degree (catalog years 2009 and later). A student taking SOCW 4698 must have met the requirements for graduation in the semester that course is taken.

The student in conjunction with his or her advisor selects elective courses. Electives are based upon educational needs, goals, desires, interests, and future goals. Social work students may elect to declare a second major (such as in Sociology, a closely aligned field) or may choose to declare a minor according to the University requirements.

FIELD PLACEMENT AND FIELD PRACTICUM

STATEMENT ABOUT LIFE EXPERIENCE

The program does not give academic credit for life experience and previous work experience, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or courses in the professional foundation areas.

ADMISSION AND CRITERIA INTO FIELD PRACTICUM

Student selection and assignment includes meeting the minimum standards and requirements for admission for Field Practicum as set out below.

1. The student must have satisfactorily completed all academic prerequisites for Field Practicum. (See Social Work Field Application in Field Practicum Manual). An overall cumulative GPA of 2.5 is required for admission into Field Practicum.
2. The Field Practicum Admission Committee will assess an appraisal of the student's motivation and capacity to meet the goals and objectives of the Social Work program. Whenever questions arise as to the suitability of a given student for field placement, the issue will be resolved by a majority evaluation of the admission committee, with consultation, if necessary from the department head. A recommendation of denial of admittance into Field Practicum will be briefly prepared in writing for confidential inclusion into the student's file.
3. For evaluating potential candidates for entry into Field Practicum, the procedures will focus on the following: (a) protecting the client served by the student from unwitting and unintentional abuse or harm; (b) promoting student success; (c) assurance that Social Work Program at West Texas A&M University and the Social Work profession are well represented.

The undergraduate Field Practicum Program is designed to provide students with practice experiences commensurate with the individual's academic and experiential preparation. Field Practicum 4688 (the first course) provides the student with social work activities that reinforce student knowledge of fundamentals in social work practice. Field Practicum 4698 (the second course) provides the student with the opportunity to build upon the knowledge and experience the first placement and the focus upon the development and deepening of skills in social work practice.

Students are required to complete 450 clock hours of internship in assigned agencies for a total of 12 credit hours. The internships are divided into two 6-credit courses. The program prefers that students complete their field practicum courses in a block, although concurrent practicum (a split field) is allowed based on student needs. Grades for both courses are pass/fail. The flexibility in grading is intended to provide the student freedom to explore personal strengths and weaknesses without risking his/her grade point average. The student receives a written evaluation of each placement that may be used in the provision of references for employment or graduate school.

Internships may be accomplished by either concurrent or block placements. In a concurrent placement the student is required to spend a minimum of two full work days (approximately 16 clock hours) per week for one semester. Block placements assume the student is not taking other classes. The student is expected to spend a minimum of four full workdays (approximately 32 clock hours) per week in the agency.

Field Practicum 4698 may be repeated with the approval of the Coordinator of Field Practicum and the BSW Program Director.

The Social Work Program at WTAMU uses various social service agencies in the Texas panhandle to provide field experience to social work students. The agencies involved with field placement vary from medical and clinical settings to social service and community center settings, offering students a wide range of social work experiences. For detailed information regarding Field Practicum, please see *Social Work Field Instruction Manual*, available at <http://wtamu.edu/academics/social-work-program.aspx>

While the field instruction experience places emphasis on basic fundamental knowledge for social work practice, the overall content of field instruction relates to the total social work curriculum by providing, under direct supervision and classroom seminars, a solid foundation and knowledge of the generalist approach to practice including:

- Social work skills and values;
- Social work practice skills with individuals, families, groups, and communities;
- Social work intervention skills; and
- Communication and relationship skills.

Field experience intensifies in depth as the student progresses through the levels of social work field instruction. The two levels of field instruction provide measurable integrated learning experiences. Students are actively and directly involved in pursuing preparation for a wide range of social work activities and translating these learning experiences to deeper understanding and development. Moreover, field experience provides a viable opportunity for self-awareness and professional relationship development.

The responsibility for the field instruction and education provided to the student in the field placement rests jointly with the agency field instructor, field coordinator, and the field liaison. The student is responsible for making the best possible use of the opportunity provided. Students are assigned to agencies based on agency needs, the student's strengths and growth areas, clients served and the student's interests. Field experience includes the opportunity for meaningful and direct services to clients where the student is expected to develop relationships and to strengthen assessment and service skills.

PROCESS OF OBTAINING A PLACEMENT

Students are required to complete the Application for Field Instruction to provide confirmation of the student's eligibility for field instruction. The Field Coordinator reviews the applications, and determines that all requirements have been met prior to field placement. Students are then required to attend the program Field Fair where agencies discuss their placement opportunities. Students make appointments to interview the minimum number of agencies (generally two or three) established by the Field Coordinator. Field agencies submit the Interview Verification Form indicating 1) their willingness to

accept the student; 2) their determination that the student is not a good fit with their agency; or 3) a desire to discuss the placement further with the Field Coordinator.

Once interviews are complete and all Interview Verification Forms have been submitted, the student makes an appointment with the Field Coordinator. A joint decision by the agency, the Field Coordinator and the student determines the appropriate placement. In the event a student is accepted and accepts the field placement, the process ends with the student informing the agency of their choice and the completion of the disposition form. Students not accepted by agencies, or students with negative feedback from the interview process, may be requested to complete an interview with the Field Coordinator and/or the Program Director to determine if issues need to be addressed prior to the student being placed in an agency. At times, students are requested to complete an action plan prior to being accepted into field practicum.

GRADING OF FIELD PRACTICUM

The grade for all field practicum courses is pass/fail. This allows students the opportunity to grow in areas that cannot be easily evaluated and graded in a letter grade format. In addition, it allows students more freedom in discussing weakness of their work with agency and faculty supervisors.

INSURANCE

Malpractice Insurance: Some agencies require the student to have malpractice insurance. At times, the University has provided this insurance to the student; however, the Field Coordinator will communicate the status of the insurance policy to the student. Prior to the beginning of internship hours, the student is required to complete a Release and Waiver of Liability form that releases the University and the agency from liability for their personal conduct. The purchase of insurance should be considered by the student and may be required by the placement agency.

REMOVAL OF A STUDENT FROM FIELD PLACEMENT

The following are grounds to remove a student from field:

1. Failure to maintain confidentiality about a client as mandated by agency policy and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.
2. Failure to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics.
3. An attempt to harm oneself.
4. An attempt to harm someone else.
5. Repeated tardiness at the agency and/or tardiness without notification.
6. Repeated absences from the agency and/or tardiness without notification.
7. Repeated change in schedule field hours without prior approval.
8. Inappropriate behavior in connection with the field placement. Inappropriate behavior as listed in the official Code of Student Life.

9. Failure to exhibit adequate knowledge, communication and interpersonal skills.

The final decision regarding removal from field will be made by the field coordinator, with documentation from the field instructor, field liaison, and agency. The student may appeal the decision following the guidelines in the official Code of Student Life.

More information regarding the field placement process can be found in the Field Placement manual.

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Full-Time Social Work Faculty**

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CODE OF ETHICS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

OVERVIEW

The *NASW Code of Ethics* is intended to serve as a guide to the everyday professional conduct of social workers. This Code includes four sections. The first section, "Preamble," summarizes the profession's mission and core values in the field of social work. The second section, "Purpose of the *NASW Code of Ethics*," provides an overview of the *Code's* main functions and a brief guide for dealing with ethical issues or dilemmas in social work practice. The third section, "Ethical Principles," presents broad ethical principles, based on social work's core values, that inform social work practice. The final

section, "Ethical Standards," includes specific ethical standards to guide social workers' conduct and to provide a basis for adjudication.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest organization of professional social workers in the world. NASW serves social workers in 55 chapters throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and abroad. NASW was formed in 1955 through a merger of seven predecessor social work organizations to carry out three responsibilities:

- *strengthen and unify the profession*
- *promote the development of social work practice*
- *advance sound social policies.*

Promoting high standards of practice and protecting the consumer of services are major association principles.

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Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of vulnerable, oppressed, and poor people. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in life is fundamental to social work.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance people's capacity to address their own needs. Social workers also aim to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The social work profession's mission is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- service

- social justice
- dignity and worth of the person
- importance of human relationships
- integrity
- competence.

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values and the principles that flow from them must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

Purpose of the *NASW Code of Ethics*

Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession has an obligation to articulate its fundamental values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. The *NASW Code of Ethics* sets forth these values, principles, and standards to guide social workers' conduct. The *Code* is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

The *NASW Code of Ethics* serves six purposes:

1. The *Code* identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.
2. The *Code* summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide social work practice.
3. The *Code* is designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.
4. The *Code* provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable.
5. The *Code* socializes practitioners new to the field to social work's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards.
6. The *Code* articulates standards that the social work profession itself can use to assess whether social workers have engaged in unethical conduct. NASW has formal procedures to adjudicate ethics complaints filed against its members. * In subscribing to this *Code*, social workers are required to cooperate in its implementation, participate in NASW adjudication proceedings, and abide by any NASW disciplinary rulings or sanctions based on it.

*For information on NASW adjudication procedures, see *NASW Procedures for the Adjudication of Grievances*.

The *Code* offers a set of values, principles, and standards to guide decision-making and conduct when ethical issues arise. It does not provide a set of rules that prescribe how social workers should act in all situations. Specific applications of the *Code* must take into account the context in which they are being considered and the possibility of conflicts among the *Code's* values, principles, and standards. Ethical responsibilities flow from all human relationships, personal and familial to the social and professional.

Further, the *NASW Code of Ethics* does not specify which values, principles, and standards are most important and ought to outweigh others in instances when they conflict. Reasonable differences of opinion can and do exist among social workers concerning how values, ethical principles, and ethical standards should be ranked when they conflict. Ethical decision-making in a given situation must apply the informed judgment of the individual social worker. It should also consider how the issues would be judged in a peer review process where the profession's ethical standards would be applied.

Ethical decision-making is a process. In situations when conflicting obligations arise, social workers may be faced with complex ethical dilemmas that have no simple answers. Social workers should consider all the values, principles, and standards in this *Code* that are relevant to any situation in which ethical judgment is warranted. Social workers' decisions and actions should be consistent with the spirit and the letter of this *Code*.

In addition to this *Code*, many other sources of information about ethical thinking may be useful. Social workers should consider ethical theory and principles generally, social work theory and research, laws, regulations, agency policies, and other relevant codes of ethics, recognizing that among codes of ethics, social workers should consider the *NASW Code of Ethics* as their primary source. Social workers also should be aware of the impact on the ethical decision-making of their clients and their own personal values and cultural and religious beliefs and practices. They should be aware of conflicts between personal and professional values and deal with them responsibly. For additional guidance, social workers should consult the relevant literature on professional ethics and ethical decision-making and seek appropriate consultation when faced with ethical dilemmas. This may involve consultation with an agency-based or social work organization's ethics committee, a regulatory body, knowledgeable colleagues, supervisors, or legal counsel. Instances may arise when social workers' ethical obligations conflict with agency policies or relevant laws or regulations. When such conflicts occur, social workers must make a responsible effort to resolve the conflict in a manner that is consistent with the values, principles, and standards expressed in this *Code*. If a reasonable resolution of the conflict is not possible, social workers should seek proper consultation before making a decision.

The *NASW Code of Ethics* is to be used by NASW and by individuals, agencies, organizations, and bodies (such as licensing and regulatory boards, professional liability insurance providers, courts of law, agency boards of directors, government agencies, and other professional groups) that choose to adopt it or use it as a frame of reference. Violation of standards in this *Code* does not automatically imply legal liability or violation of the law. Such determination can only be made in the context of legal and judicial proceedings. Alleged violations of the *Code* would be subject to a peer review process. Such processes are generally separate from legal or administrative procedures and insulated from legal review or proceedings to allow the profession to counsel and discipline its own members.

A code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Moreover, a code of ethics cannot resolve all ethical issues or disputes or capture the richness and complexity involved in striving to make responsible choices within a moral community. Rather, a code of ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be

judged. Social workers' ethical behavior should result from their personal commitment to engage in ethical practice. The *NASW Code of Ethics* reflects the commitment of all social workers to uphold the profession's values and to act ethically. Principles and standards must be applied by individuals of good character who discern moral questions and, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments.

With the growth in the use of communication technology in various aspects of social work practice, social workers need to be aware of the unique challenges that may arise concerning maintaining confidentiality, informed consent, professional boundaries, professional competence, record keeping, and other ethical considerations. In general, all ethical standards in this *Code of Ethics* apply to interactions, relationships, or communications, whether in person or through technology. For this *Code*, "technology-assisted social work services" include any social work services that involve the use of computers, mobile or landline telephones, tablets, video technology, or other electronic or digital technologies; this includes the use of various electronic or digital platforms, such as the Internet, online social media, chat rooms, text messaging, e-mail, and emerging digital applications. Technology-assisted social work services encompass all aspects of social work practice, including psychotherapy; individual, family, or group counseling; community organization; administration; advocacy; mediation; education; supervision; research; evaluation; and other social work services. Social workers should keep apprised of emerging technological developments that may be used in social work practice and how various ethical standards apply.

Ethical Principles

The following broad ethical principles are based on social work's core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These principles set forth ideals to which all social workers should aspire.

Value: *Service*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.*

Social workers elevate service to others above self-interest. Social workers draw on their knowledge, values, and skills to help people in need and to address social problems. Social workers are encouraged to volunteer some portion of their professional skills with no expectation of significant financial return (pro bono service).

Value: *Social Justice*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers challenge social injustice.*

Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers' social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.

Value: *Dignity and Worth of the Person*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.* Social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers promote clients' socially responsible self-determination. Social workers seek to enhance clients' capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs. Social workers are cognizant of their dual responsibility to clients and to the broader society. They seek to resolve conflicts between clients' interests and the broader society's interests in a socially responsible manner consistent with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards of the profession.

Value: *Importance of Human Relationships*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.* Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.

Value: *Integrity*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.*

Social workers are continually aware of the profession's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

Value: *Competence*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.*

Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.

Ethical Standards

The following ethical standards are relevant to the professional activities of all social workers. These standards concern (1) social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients, (2) social workers' ethical responsibilities to colleagues, (3) social workers' ethical responsibilities in practice settings, (4) social workers' ethical responsibilities as professionals, (5) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the social work profession, and (6) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the broader society.

Some of the following standards are enforceable guidelines for professional conduct, and some are aspirational. The extent to which each standard is enforceable is a matter of professional judgment to be exercised by those responsible for reviewing alleged violations of ethical standards.

1. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Clients

1.01 Commitment to Clients

Social workers' primary responsibility is to promote the well-being of clients. In general, clients' interests are primary. However, social workers' responsibility to the larger society or specific legal obligations may on limited occasions supersede the loyalty owed clients, and clients should be so advised. (Examples include when a social worker is required by law to report that a client has abused a child or has threatened to harm self or others.)

1.02 Self-Determination

Social workers respect and promote the right of clients to self-determination and assist clients in their efforts to identify and clarify their goals. Social workers may limit clients' right to self-determination when, in the social workers' professional judgment, clients' actions or potential actions pose a serious, foreseeable, and imminent risk to themselves or others.

1.03 Informed Consent

- (a) Social workers should provide services to clients only in the context of a professional relationship based, when appropriate, on valid informed consent. Social workers should use clear and understandable language to inform clients of the purpose of the services, risks related to the services, limits to services because of the requirements of a third-party payer, relevant costs, reasonable alternatives, clients' right to refuse or withdraw consent, and the time frame covered by the consent. Social workers should provide clients with an opportunity to ask questions.
- (b) In instances when clients are not literate or have difficulty understanding the primary language used in the practice setting, social workers should take steps to ensure clients' comprehension. This may include providing clients with a detailed verbal explanation or arranging for a qualified interpreter or translator whenever possible.
- (c) In instances when clients lack the capacity to provide informed consent, social workers should protect clients' interests by seeking permission from an appropriate third party, informing clients consistent with the clients' level of understanding. In such instances social workers should seek to ensure that the third party acts in a manner consistent with clients' wishes and interests. Social workers should take reasonable steps to enhance such clients' ability to give informed consent.
- (d) In instances when clients are receiving services involuntarily, social workers should provide information about the nature and extent of services and about the extent of clients' right to refuse service.
- (e) Social workers should discuss with clients the social workers' policies concerning the use of technology in the provision of professional services.
- (f) Social workers who use technology to provide social work services should obtain informed consent from the individuals using these services during the initial screening or interview and

prior to initiating services. Social workers should assess clients' capacity to provide informed consent and, when using technology to communicate, verify the identity and location of clients.

- (g) Social workers who use technology to provide social work services should assess the clients' suitability and capacity for electronic and remote services. Social workers should consider the clients' intellectual, emotional, and physical ability to use technology to receive services and the clients' ability to understand the potential benefits, risks, and limitations of such services. If clients do not wish to use services provided through technology, social workers should help them identify alternate methods of service.
- (h) Social workers should obtain clients' informed consent before making audio or video recordings of clients or permitting observation of service provision by a third party.
- (i) Social workers should obtain client consent before conducting an electronic search on the client. Exceptions may arise when the search is for purposes of protecting the client or other people from serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm, or for other compelling professional reasons.

1.04 Competence

- (a) Social workers should provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, consultation received, supervised experience, or other relevant professional experience.
- (b) Social workers should provide services in substantive areas or use intervention techniques or approaches that are new to them only after engaging in appropriate study, training, consultation, and supervision from people who are competent in those interventions or techniques.
- (c) When generally recognized standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, social workers should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps (including appropriate education, research, training, consultation, and supervision) to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm.
- (d) Social workers who use technology in the provision of social work services should ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide such services in a competent manner. This includes an understanding of the special communication challenges when using technology and the ability to implement strategies to address these challenges.
- (e) Social workers who use technology in providing social work services should comply with the laws governing technology and social work practice in the jurisdiction in which they are regulated and located and, as applicable, in the jurisdiction in which the client is located.

1.05 Cultural Awareness and Social Diversity

- (a) Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.

- (b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients' cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.
- (c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical ability.
- (d) Social workers who provide electronic social work services should be aware of cultural and socioeconomic differences among clients and how they may use electronic technology. Social workers should assess cultural, environmental, economic, mental or physical ability, linguistic, and other issues that may affect the delivery or use of these services.

1.06 Conflicts of Interest

- (a) Social workers should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. Social workers should inform clients when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the clients' interests primary and protects clients' interests to the greatest extent possible. In some cases, protecting clients' interests may require termination of the professional relationship with proper referral of the client.
- (b) Social workers should not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.
- (c) Social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. In instances when dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable, social workers should take steps to protect clients and are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. (Dual or multiple relationships occur when social workers relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.)
- (d) When social workers provide services to two or more people who have a relationship with each other (for example, couples, family members), social workers should clarify with all parties which individuals will be considered clients and the nature of social workers' professional obligations to the various individuals who are receiving services. Social workers who anticipate a conflict of interest among the individuals receiving services or who anticipate having to perform in potentially conflicting roles (for example, when a social worker is asked to testify in a child custody dispute or divorce proceedings involving clients) should clarify their role with the parties involved and take appropriate action to minimize any conflict of interest.
- (e) Social workers should avoid communication with clients using technology (such as social networking sites, online chat, e-mail, text messages, telephone, and video) for personal or non-work-related purposes.
- (e) Social workers should be aware that posting personal information on professional Web sites or other media might cause boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.

- (f) Social workers should be aware that personal affiliations may increase the likelihood that clients may discover the social worker's presence on Web sites, social media, and other forms of technology. Social workers should be aware that involvement in electronic communication with groups based on race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental or physical ability, religion, immigration status, and other personal affiliations may affect their ability to work effectively with particular clients.
- (g) Social workers should avoid accepting requests from or engaging in personal relationships with clients on social networking sites or other electronic media to prevent boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.

1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality

- (a) Social workers should respect clients' right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from or about clients except for compelling professional reasons. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.
- (b) Social workers may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a client.
- (c) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. The general expectation that social workers will keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or others. In all instances, social workers should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose; only information that is directly relevant to the purpose for which the disclosure is made should be revealed.
- (d) Social workers should inform clients, to the extent possible, about the disclosure of confidential information and the potential consequences, when feasible before the disclosure is made. This applies whether social workers disclose confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or client consent.
- (e) Social workers should discuss with clients and other interested parties the nature of confidentiality and limitations of clients' right to confidentiality. Social workers should review with clients circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. This discussion should occur as soon as possible in the social worker-client relationship and as needed throughout the course of the relationship.
- (f) When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual's right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. This agreement should include consideration of whether confidential information may be exchanged in person or electronically, among clients or with others outside of formal counseling sessions. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.
- (g) Social workers should inform clients involved in family, couples, marital, or group counseling of the social worker's, employer's, and agency's policy concerning the social worker's disclosure of confidential information among the parties involved in the counseling.

- (h) Social workers should not disclose confidential information to third-party payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.
- (i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information, electronically or in person, in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semi-public areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.
- (j) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law. When a court of law or other legally authorized body orders social workers to disclose confidential or privileged information without a client's consent and such disclosure could cause harm to the client, social workers should request that the court withdraw the order or limit the order as narrowly as possible or maintain the records under seal, unavailable for public inspection.
- (k) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media.
- (l) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients' records are stored in a secure location and that clients' records are not available to others who are not authorized to have access.
- (m) Social workers should take reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of electronic communications, including information provided to clients or third parties. Social workers should use applicable safeguards (such as encryption, firewalls, and passwords) when using electronic communications such as e-mail, online posts, online chat sessions, mobile communication, and text messages.
- (n) Social workers should develop and disclose policies and procedures for notifying clients of any breach of confidential information in a timely manner.
- (o) In the event of unauthorized access to client records or information, including any unauthorized access to the social worker's electronic communication or storage systems, social workers should inform clients of such disclosures, consistent with applicable laws and professional standards.
- (p) Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of electronic technology, including Internet-based search engines, to gather information about clients.
- (q) Social workers should avoid searching or gathering client information electronically unless there are compelling professional reasons, and when appropriate, with the client's informed consent.
- (r) Social workers should avoid posting any identifying or confidential information about clients on professional websites or other forms of social media.
- (s) Social workers should transfer or dispose of clients' records in a manner that protects clients' confidentiality and is consistent with applicable laws governing records and social work licensure.
- (t) Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker's termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.
- (u) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients for teaching or training purposes unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information.

- (v) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients with consultants unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information or there is a compelling need for such disclosure.
- (w) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of deceased clients consistent with the preceding standards.

1.08 Access to Records

- (a) Social workers should provide clients with reasonable access to records concerning the clients. Social workers who are concerned that clients' access to their records could cause serious misunderstanding or harm to the client should provide assistance in interpreting the records and consultation with the client regarding the records. Social workers should limit clients' access to their records, or portions of their records, only in exceptional circumstances when there is compelling evidence that such access would cause serious harm to the client. Both clients' requests and the rationale for withholding some or all of the record should be documented in clients' files.
- (b) Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of technology to provide clients with access to their records.
- (c) When providing clients with access to their records, social workers should take steps to protect the confidentiality of other individuals identified or discussed in such records.

1.09 Sexual Relationships

- (a) Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities, inappropriate sexual communications through the use of technology or in person, or sexual contact with current clients, whether such contact is consensual or forced.
- (b) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a close personal relationship when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. Sexual activity or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a personal relationship has the potential to be harmful to the client and may make it difficult for the social worker and client to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Social workers--not their clients, their clients' relatives, or other individuals with whom the client maintains a personal relationship--assume the full burden for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.
- (c) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with former clients because of the potential for harm to the client. If social workers engage in conduct contrary to this prohibition or claim that an exception to this prohibition is warranted because of extraordinary circumstances, it is social workers--not their clients--who assume the full burden of demonstrating that the former client has not been exploited, coerced, or manipulated, intentionally or unintentionally.
- (d) Social workers should not provide clinical services to individuals with whom they have had a prior sexual relationship. Providing clinical services to a former sexual partner has the potential to be harmful to the individual and is likely to make it difficult for the social worker and individual to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

1.10 Physical Contact

Social workers should not engage in physical contact with clients when there is a possibility of psychological harm to the client as a result of the contact (such as cradling or caressing clients). Social workers who engage in appropriate physical contact with clients are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern such physical contact.

1.11 Sexual Harassment

Social workers should not sexually harass clients. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances; sexual solicitation; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact of a sexual nature.

1.12 Derogatory Language

Social workers should not use derogatory language in their written, verbal, or electronic communications to or about clients. Social workers should use accurate and respectful language in all communications to and about clients.

1.13 Payment for Services

- (a) When setting fees, social workers should ensure that the fees are fair, reasonable, and commensurate with the services performed. Consideration should be given to clients' ability to pay.
- (b) Social workers should avoid accepting goods or services from clients as payment for professional services. Bartering arrangements, particularly involving services, create the potential for conflicts of interest, exploitation, and inappropriate boundaries in social workers' relationships with clients. Social workers should explore and may participate in bartering only in very limited circumstances when it can be demonstrated that such arrangements are an accepted practice among professionals in the local community, considered to be essential for the provision of services, negotiated without coercion, and entered into at the client's initiative and with the client's informed consent. Social workers who accept goods or services from clients as payment for professional services assume the full burden of demonstrating that this arrangement will not be detrimental to the client or the professional relationship.
- (c) Social workers should not solicit a private fee or other remuneration for providing services to clients who are entitled to such available services through the social workers' employer or agency.

1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision-Making Capacity

When social workers act on behalf of clients who lack the capacity to make informed decisions, social workers should take reasonable steps to safeguard the interests and rights of those clients.

1.15 Interruption of Services

Social workers should make reasonable efforts to ensure continuity of services in the event that services are interrupted by factors such as unavailability, disruptions in electronic communication, relocation, illness, mental or physical ability, or death.

1.16 Referral for Services

- (a) Social workers should refer clients to other professionals when the other professionals' specialized knowledge or expertise is needed to serve clients fully or when social workers believe that they are not being effective or making reasonable progress with clients and that other services are required.
- (b) Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should take appropriate steps to facilitate an orderly transfer of responsibility. Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should disclose, with clients' consent, all pertinent information to the new service providers.
- (c) Social workers are prohibited from giving or receiving payment for a referral when no professional service is provided by the referring social worker.

1.17 Termination of Services

- (a) Social workers should terminate services to clients and professional relationships with them when such services and relationships are no longer required or no longer serve the clients' needs or interests.
- (b) Social workers should take reasonable steps to avoid abandoning clients who are still in need of services. Social workers should withdraw services precipitously only under unusual circumstances, giving careful consideration to all factors in the situation and taking care to minimize possible adverse effects. Social workers should assist in making appropriate arrangements for continuation of services when necessary.
- (c) Social workers in fee-for-service settings may terminate services to clients who are not paying an overdue balance if the financial contractual arrangements have been made clear to the client, if the client does not pose an imminent danger to self or others, and if the clinical and other consequences of the current nonpayment have been addressed and discussed with the client.
- (d) Social workers should not terminate services to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client.
- (e) Social workers who anticipate the termination or interruption of services to clients should notify clients promptly and seek the transfer, referral, or continuation of services in relation to the clients' needs and preferences.
- (f) Social workers who are leaving an employment setting should inform clients of appropriate options for the continuation of services and of the benefits and risks of the options.

2. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues

2.01 Respect

- (a) Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues.
- (b) Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in verbal, written, and electronic communications with clients or with other professionals. Unwarranted negative criticism may include demeaning comments that refer to colleagues' level of competence or to individuals' attributes such as race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical ability.

- (c) Social workers should cooperate with social work colleagues and with colleagues of other professions when such cooperation serves the well-being of clients.

2.02 Confidentiality

Social workers should respect confidential information shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships and transactions. Social workers should ensure that such colleagues understand social workers' obligation to respect confidentiality and any exceptions related to it.

2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration

- (a) Social workers who are members of an interdisciplinary team should participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the social work profession. Professional and ethical obligations of the interdisciplinary team as a whole and of its individual members should be clearly established.
- (b) Social workers for whom a team decision raises ethical concerns should attempt to resolve the disagreement through appropriate channels. If the disagreement cannot be resolved, social workers should pursue other avenues to address their concerns consistent with client well-being.

2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues

- (a) Social workers should not take advantage of a dispute between a colleague and an employer to obtain a position or otherwise advance the social workers' own interests.
- (b) Social workers should not exploit clients in disputes with colleagues or engage clients in any inappropriate discussion of conflicts between social workers and their colleagues.

2.05 Consultation

- (a) Social workers should seek the advice and counsel of colleagues whenever such consultation is in the best interests of clients.
- (b) Social workers should keep themselves informed about colleagues' areas of expertise and competencies. Social workers should seek consultation only from colleagues who have demonstrated knowledge, expertise, and competence related to the subject of the consultation.
- (c) When consulting with colleagues about clients, social workers should disclose the least amount of information necessary to achieve the purposes of the consultation.

2.06 Sexual Relationships

- (a) Social workers who function as supervisors or educators should not engage in sexual activities or contact (including verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact) with supervisees, students, trainees, or other colleagues over whom they exercise professional authority.
- (b) Social workers should avoid engaging in sexual relationships with colleagues when there is potential for a conflict of interest. Social workers who become involved in, or anticipate becoming involved in, a sexual relationship with a colleague have a duty to transfer professional responsibilities, when necessary, to avoid a conflict of interest.

2.07 Sexual Harassment

Social workers should not sexually harass supervisees, students, trainees, or colleagues. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances; sexual solicitation; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact of a sexual nature.

2.08 Impairment of Colleagues

- (a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's impairment that is due to personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties and that interferes with practice effectiveness should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.
- (b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague's impairment interferes with practice effectiveness and that the colleague has not taken adequate steps to address the impairment should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

2.09 Incompetence of Colleagues

- (a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's incompetence should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.
- (b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague is incompetent and has not taken adequate steps to address the incompetence should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

2.10 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues

- (a) Social workers should take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues, including unethical conduct using technology.
- (b) Social workers should be knowledgeable about established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues' unethical behavior. Social workers should be familiar with national, state, and local procedures for handling ethics complaints. These include policies and procedures created by NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, agencies, and other professional organizations.
- (c) Social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should seek resolution by discussing their concerns with the colleague when feasible and when such discussion is likely to be productive.
- (d) When necessary, social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should take action through appropriate formal channels (such as contacting a state licensing board or regulatory body, the NASW National Ethics Committee, or other professional ethics committees).
- (e) Social workers should defend and assist colleagues who are unjustly charged with unethical conduct.

3. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings

3.01 Supervision and Consultation

- (a) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation (whether in-person or remotely) should have the necessary knowledge and skill to supervise or consult appropriately and should do so only within their areas of knowledge and competence.
- (b) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.
- (c) Social workers should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with supervisees in which there is a risk of exploitation of or potential harm to the supervisee, including dual relationships that may arise while using social networking sites or other electronic media.
- (d) Social workers who provide supervision should evaluate supervisees' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

3.02 Education and Training

- (a) Social workers who function as educators, field instructors for students, or trainers should provide instruction only within their areas of knowledge and competence and should provide instruction based on the most current information and knowledge available in the profession.
- (b) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should evaluate students' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.
- (c) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients are routinely informed when services are being provided by students.
- (d) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student, including dual relationships that may arise while using social networking sites or other electronic media. Social work educators and field instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

3.03 Performance Evaluation

Social workers who have responsibility for evaluating the performance of others should fulfill such responsibility in a fair and considerate manner and on the basis of clearly stated criteria.

3.04 Client Records

- (a) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in electronic and paper records is accurate and reflects the services provided.
- (b) Social workers should include sufficient and timely documentation in records to facilitate the delivery of services and to ensure continuity of services provided to clients in the future.
- (c) Social workers' documentation should protect clients' privacy to the extent that is possible and appropriate and should include only information that is directly relevant to the delivery of services.

- (d) Social workers should store records following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by relevant laws, agency policies, and contracts.

3.05 Billing

Social workers should establish and maintain billing practices that accurately reflect the nature and extent of services provided and that identify who provided the service in the practice setting.

3.06 Client Transfer

- (a) When an individual who is receiving services from another agency or colleague contacts a social worker for services, the social worker should carefully consider the client's needs before agreeing to provide services. To minimize possible confusion and conflict, social workers should discuss with potential clients the nature of the clients' current relationship with other service providers and the implications, including possible benefits or risks, of entering into a relationship with a new service provider.
- (b) If a new client has been served by another agency or colleague, social workers should discuss with the client whether consultation with the previous service provider is in the client's best interest.

3.07 Administration

- (a) Social work administrators should advocate within and outside their agencies for adequate resources to meet clients' needs.
- (b) Social workers should advocate for resource allocation procedures that are open and fair. When not all clients' needs can be met, an allocation procedure should be developed that is nondiscriminatory and based on appropriate and consistently applied principles.
- (c) Social workers who are administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that adequate agency or organizational resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision.
- (d) Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that the working environment for which they are responsible is consistent with and encourages compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics. Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to eliminate any conditions in their organizations that violate, interfere with, or discourage compliance with the Code.

3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development

Social work administrators and supervisors should take reasonable steps to provide or arrange for continuing education and staff development for all staff for whom they are responsible. Continuing education and staff development should address current knowledge and emerging developments related to social work practice and ethics.

3.09 Commitments to Employers

- (a) Social workers generally should adhere to commitments made to employers and employing organizations.
- (b) Social workers should work to improve employing agencies' policies and procedures and the efficiency and effectiveness of their services.

- (c) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that employers are aware of social workers' ethical obligations as set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics and of the implications of those obligations for social work practice.
- (d) Social workers should not allow an employing organization's policies, procedures, regulations, or administrative orders to interfere with their ethical practice of social work. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that their employing organizations' practices are consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.
- (e) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate discrimination in the employing organization's work assignments and in its employment policies and practices.
- (f) Social workers should accept employment or arrange student field placements only in organizations that exercise fair personnel practices.
- (g) Social workers should be diligent stewards of the resources of their employing organizations, wisely conserving funds where appropriate and never misappropriating funds or using them for unintended purposes.

3.10 Labor-Management Disputes

- (a) Social workers may engage in organized action, including the formation of and participation in labor unions, to improve services to clients and working conditions.
- (b) The actions of social workers who are involved in labor-management disputes, job actions, or labor strikes should be guided by the profession's values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. Reasonable differences of opinion exist among social workers concerning their primary obligation as professionals during an actual or threatened labor strike or job action. Social workers should carefully examine relevant issues and their possible impact on clients before deciding on a course of action.

4. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals

4.01 Competence

- (a) Social workers should accept responsibility or employment only on the basis of existing competence or the intention to acquire the necessary competence.
- (b) Social workers should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work. Social workers should routinely review the professional literature and participate in continuing education relevant to social work practice and social work ethics.
- (c) Social workers should base practice on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge, relevant to social work and social work ethics.

4.02 Discrimination

Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical ability.

4.03 Private Conduct

Social workers should not permit their private conduct to interfere with their ability to fulfill their professional responsibilities.

4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception

Social workers should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception.

4.05 Impairment

- (a) Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.
- (b) Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.

4.06 Misrepresentation

- (a) Social workers should make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the social work profession, a professional social work organization, or the social worker's employing agency.
- (b) Social workers who speak on behalf of professional social work organizations should accurately represent the official and authorized positions of the organizations.
- (c) Social workers should ensure that their representations to clients, agencies, and the public of professional qualifications, credentials, education, competence, affiliations, services provided, or results to be achieved are accurate. Social workers should claim only those relevant professional credentials they actually possess and take steps to correct any inaccuracies or misrepresentations of their credentials by others.

4.07 Solicitations

- (a) Social workers should not engage in uninvited solicitation of potential clients who, because of their circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence, manipulation, or coercion.
- (b) Social workers should not engage in solicitation of testimonial endorsements (including solicitation of consent to use a client's prior statement as a testimonial endorsement) from current clients or from other people who, because of their particular circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence.

4.08 Acknowledging Credit

- (a) Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed.
- (b) Social workers should honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others.

5. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Social Work Profession

5.01 Integrity of the Profession

- (a) Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.
- (b) Social workers should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession. Social workers should protect, enhance, and improve the integrity of the profession through appropriate study and research, active discussion, and responsible criticism of the profession.
- (c) Social workers should contribute time and professional expertise to activities that promote respect for the value, integrity, and competence of the social work profession. These activities may include teaching, research, consultation, service, legislative testimony, presentations in the community, and participation in their professional organizations.
- (d) Social workers should contribute to the knowledge base of social work and share with colleagues their knowledge related to practice, research, and ethics. Social workers should seek to contribute to the profession's literature and to share their knowledge at professional meetings and conferences.
- (e) Social workers should act to prevent the unauthorized and unqualified practice of social work.

5.02 Evaluation and Research

- (a) Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.
- (b) Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research to contribute to the development of knowledge.
- (c) Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice.
- (d) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.
- (e) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants' well-being, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.
- (f) When using electronic technology to facilitate evaluation or research, social workers should ensure that participants provide informed consent for the use of such technology. Social workers should assess whether participants are able to use the technology and, when appropriate, offer reasonable alternatives to participate in the evaluation or research.
- (g) When evaluation or research participants are incapable of giving informed consent, social workers should provide an appropriate explanation to the participants, obtain the participants' assent to the extent they are able, and obtain written consent from an appropriate proxy.
- (h) Social workers should never design or conduct evaluation or research that does not use consent procedures, such as certain forms of naturalistic observation and archival research, unless rigorous and responsible review of the research has found it to be justified because of

its prospective scientific, educational, or applied value and unless equally effective alternative procedures that do not involve waiver of consent are not feasible.

- (i) Social workers should inform participants of their right to withdraw from evaluation and research at any time without penalty.
- (j) Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.
- (k) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.
- (l) Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.
- (m) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.
- (n) Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants' confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.
- (o) Social workers should report evaluation and research findings accurately. They should not fabricate or falsify results and should take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.
- (p) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest and dual relationships with participants, should inform participants when a real or potential conflict of interest arises, and should take steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes participants' interests primary.
- (q) Social workers should educate themselves, their students, and their colleagues about responsible research practices.

6. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society

6.01 Social Welfare

Social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels, and the development of people, their communities, and their environments. Social workers should advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfillment of basic human needs and should promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice.

6.02 Public Participation

Social workers should facilitate informed participation by the public in shaping social policies and institutions.

6.03 Public Emergencies

Social workers should provide appropriate professional services in public emergencies to the greatest extent possible.

6.04 Social and Political Action

- (a) Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.
- (b) Social workers should act to expand choice and opportunity for all people, with special regard for vulnerable, disadvantaged, oppressed, and exploited people and groups.
- (c) Social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the United States and globally. Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate for programs and institutions that demonstrate cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people.
- (d) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical ability.

MY CONTRACT/ACTION PLAN

Between Student and Instructor

I, _____ agree to the following terms:

Goals: 1.

2.

Consequences for not adhering to the goals above:

How did/does my negative behavior affect the classroom environment?

Using the Social Work Code of Ethics and the core values of the profession as a guide, explain how your behavior does not fit with the core values, and how you can personally change to reflect and model the values of the profession.

Signatures:

Student:

Date:

Instructor:

Date:
