SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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Kathrina Cicala, Administrative Assistant to the BSW/MSW Field Education Coordinator
TBA, Administrative Assistant to the Chair, BSW Program Coordinator & BSW Field Education Coordinator
Dear Students in the School of Social Work BSW Program:

The faculty and staff of the School of Social Work BSW Program welcome you to the School. We are delighted that you will be joining us and we hope that the time you spend with us will be productive and enriching. We know that you come to us with unique strengths and life experiences, and we hope to help you build on these qualities in order to be the best social workers you can be.

The School of Social Work offers degrees at both the Bachelor (BSW) and Master (MSW) levels. Both programs are fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Commission on Accreditation. This assures you that your degree is recognized as meeting the Council’s stringent national standards for social work education. We are extremely proud of our faculty, their professional expertise, outstanding scholarship and the quality of their teaching. We are also proud of the record of achievement that our graduates have compiled over the years. Graduates of the School are found in every type of social service agency in Massachusetts and are continuing to assume positions of great responsibility. Our goal is to provide each of you with the knowledge, skills, values and practice experience that will enable you to move competently into social work positions upon your graduation. You are the reason we are here. We want to support you and your personal growth as you undertake the rigorous challenges of social work education.

The purpose of this Student Handbook is to describe the BSW Program, as well as the procedures and policies of the School of Social Work. The Handbook is designed to assist you in negotiating the various resources available through the School and University. It is especially important for you to become familiar with this Handbook, because it spells out various expectations that the School has for your academic progress and professional behaviors.

We hope that you will find us readily available to address your questions and concerns as well as appreciate your achievements and successes.

Again, our warmest welcome and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Faculty and Staff
BSW Program
School of Social Work
Salem State University
STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This student handbook has been developed as a reference guide for the students of the BSW Program of the School of Social Work. It includes particularly relevant materials, some of which also exist in the Salem State University Catalog (undergraduate study). Students in the School of Social Work have both rights and responsibilities that are discussed in detail in the University catalog under:

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Students have the responsibility to read, be familiar with and follow all policies incorporated into the respective rights and responsibilities statements including, but not limited to, those listed below. For students in the School of Social Work BSW Program, policies described in the BSW Student Handbook supersede those of the University.

Upon entering the BSW major, each student is asked to sign acknowledgement that they are aware where the Handbook is posted and that they have reviewed the Handbook and the School of Social Work’s Professional Standards and NASW Code of Ethics.
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MISSION STATEMENT
SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

The mission of Salem State University School of Social Work is the education of social work professionals who will contribute to social, economic, and human well-being through culturally competent practice, leadership, and advocacy in local, national, and international communities. The School’s mission encompasses curricula, programming, field education practica, scholarship, and organizational linkages especially designed to sustain meaningful connections between social work education and public sector practice. Through all of its activities, the School strives to create interactive and collegial learning environments that support and promote diversity, knowledge development, professional identities, and a commitment to social work values and ethics.

The mission of the School of Social Work is in keeping with the mission of Salem State University, especially with regard to educating traditional, non-traditional, and diverse student populations who will meet the professional workforce needs of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. To this end, the University and the School of Social Work recognize the centrality of life-long learning, civic engagement, scholarship, research, and global perspectives. The University’s history as a teaching institution creates the foundation for educational programs that are optimally accessible, affordable, rigorous, and committed to the mutual relationship between teaching and learning.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Social work education at Salem State University started as an undergraduate major in 1969. William Vaughn and Dr. Edna McGlynn from the University’s Social Sciences Department were instrumental in creating the social work major. In July 1975, the University established the Social Work Department under the leadership of Chairperson Patricia Roderick. In November 1979, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the accrediting body for all social work programs in the United States, accredited Salem State University Social Work Department, retroactive to 1977. In May 1980, the University’s Board of Trustees, voted to permit the Social Work Department to award the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree.

Following the accreditation of the BSW Program, the University became actively involved in creating a Masters of Social Work (MSW) Program and, in September of 1986, the School of Social Work at Salem State University was established. The School admitted its first class of MSW students in 1987 and graduated its first class of 20 MSW students in 1989. The MSW Program was given initial accreditation status by CSWE in 1991, retroactive to graduating class of 1989. The MSW Program at Salem State was the first CSWE-accredited MSW degree program in Massachusetts’ public higher education system and the first program in the state with an advanced generalist perspective.

The BSW and MSW Programs remain fully accredited by CSWE; current accreditation was granted in June, 2010.
MISSION OF THE BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

The mission of the BSW Program of the School of Social Work is to provide an excellent generalist foundation for baccalaureate students in the knowledge necessary for beginning professional practice and to enable them to learn about and rehearse the skills necessary for that practice. Central to the mission of the program is to ground all students in the values and ethics of the profession and in the fundamentals of social and economic justice, non-discrimination and openness to other cultures. The professional curriculum builds on a rigorous and comprehensive liberal arts core curriculum. Courses in the Social Work major address professional knowledge, skills and values, building to a substantive senior field education experience that emphasizes professional attitudes and behaviors.

Our program is student-centered. In recognition of the needs of many of the students served, the program is committed to both academic rigor and to providing support for students who might otherwise struggle to complete a baccalaureate degree. The program is committed to providing a variety of means of access, including creation of articulation agreements with community University programs and offering our undergraduate courses to working students enrolled in our evening division. The program welcomes a diverse student body and fosters an atmosphere of openness, collegiality and respect between students and faculty.

BSW Program Goals

The BSW Program derives its goals from the mission statement described above.

The goals of the BSW program grow out of the central themes embodied in the BSW Program’s mission statement especially: 1) excellence in generalist practice; 2) practice grounded in values and ethics; 3) social justice; 4) non-discrimination and cultural competence; 5) a field experience that integrates knowledge, skills and values; and 6) evidence of profession attitudes and behaviors.

To this end, the BSW program goals are as follows:

1. Building upon a broad liberal arts education, implement and continuously evaluate a social work curriculum defined by the core content areas of the profession (practice, HBSE, policy, research, field, values & ethics, social & economic justice, diversity).

2. Provide multiple opportunities to learn about and practice social work skills at various system levels.

3. Infuse the NASW Code of Ethics into all aspects of our curriculum with the expectation that students will incorporate these values and ethics into their professional practice.

4. Provide a structured field education program where students integrate social work content, theory and practice.

5. Facilitate a supportive learning environment that consistently responds to the various needs of our diverse student body.
BSW Program Objectives

1. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
2. Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.
3. Practice w/o discrimination and with respect, knowledge and skills related to client’s age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
5. Understand and interpret the history of the social work practice and its contemporary structures and issues.
6. Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with systems of all sizes.
7. Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.
8. Analyze, formulate and influence social policies.
9. Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions.
10. Use communication skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities.
11. Use supervision and consultation appropriate to social work practice.
12. Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.
13. Develop professionalism and a professional identity.
14. Foster continued self awareness.
15. Explore social work as a career choice.
16. Value diversity and work effectively with diverse populations.

BSW CURRICULUM

The undergraduate degree program in Social Work provides a balanced mixture of liberal arts courses with a heavy concentration in the behavioral and social sciences, combined with the major courses in social work and a minimum of 425 hours in a field work agency (16 hours per week for two semesters). The curriculum prepares students for entry level social work competencies in a variety of helping skills.

The BSW curriculum provides in-depth knowledge of social work values, methods, skills and practice areas. The flow sheet for the Bachelor of Social Work curricula is included in this handbook.

The curriculum is built on an incremental learning model. This means that certain core concepts are introduced early in the curriculum and reintroduced at different points in the program in increasingly sophisticated ways. Courses in the curriculum are meant to build on one another, with material learned in earlier courses used as foundation material in later courses. To proceed sequentially, all majors must take SWK101 “The Profession of Social Work” during the first semester of their freshman year or their first semester at the University.

After having successfully completed The Profession of Social Work, students must take the following required courses in the designated sequence:

1. **SWK102, Social Welfare Past and Present**  
   (first or second semester, freshman/first year)

2. **SWK200, Social Service Volunteer Practicum**  
   (usually first semester, sophomore/second year)
3. **SWK261, Human Behavior and the Social Environment I**  
   (usually, sophomore/second year.)

4. **SWK270, Understanding Diversity**  
   (usually sophomore/second year.)

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<th>BSW Milestone: Student applies for BSW Program Continuation (See “BSW Program Continuation”)</th>
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| 5. **SWK301, Generalist Practice I**  
   (usually first semester, junior/third year.) |
| 6. **SWK302, Generalist Practice II**  
   (usually second semester, junior/third year or the Summer prior to beginning Fieldwork.) |
| 7. **SWK404, 405: Field Work I and II**  
   **SWK406, 407: Field Work Seminar I and II**  
   (senior year) |

While taking these foundation courses, students are also taking required courses in Human Behavior & the Social Environment, Research Methods I and II, and Social Policy.

Upon completion of their theoretical study, students receive practical experience through the field education component of the curriculum. Students must apply for and successfully complete a minimum of 425 hours of practicum in a professional setting under the supervision of a qualified social work practitioner. Field education is required of all students graduating from the School, including those transferring from other programs. **Terms of the CSWE accreditation prohibit the School from awarding field education credit for previous life experience, previous professional experience, or field instruction completed at another school of higher education.**

**DIRECTED STUDY IN THE GENERALIST APPROACH**

Students who come into the major with previous employment and/or volunteer experience in a social service agency may enroll in the course **SWK510: Directed Study in the Generalist Approach**, in lieu of the **SWK 200: Social Service Volunteer Practicum**. Students enrolling in **SWK 510**: Directed Study in the Generalist Approach must supply supportive documentation of their previous social service experience to the Baccalaureate Program Coordinator or Chairperson. Upon acceptance of the supportive documentation, the student will be assigned to a faculty advisor who will supervise the student's analysis of his/her previous experience within the framework of the generalist approach to social work. Students taking SWK510 will be expected to produce a substantial paper to fulfill the requirements of this course but will not be required to do any additional volunteer work.

**CONTINUATION IN THE BSW PROGRAM**

Students are typically accepted into the BSW Program in one of three ways: freshman admission; transfer; or change of major. Beginning on January 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2011, a BSW student will first enter the social work program, then will advance to the practice phase of the social work program through a multi-step process, outlined below:

**STEP 1:** A student is accepted into the **major** via one of three routes: (1) freshman admission to Salem State, with social work as a chosen major; (2) the change of major process; or (3) transfer from another two- or four-year institution. Students with a 2.3 GPA or higher will be accepted into the social work program through change of majors or transfer.

**STEP 2:** The student must have completed, or have received BSW program-approved TCE equivalency for, **SWK 101, SWK 102, SWK 200 (or 510), SWK 261, and SWK 270.** At the same point, the student must have completed, or have TCE equivalency for 45 total SSU credits, including at least 30 credits of SSU core curriculum credits and 6 credits in cognate
STEP 3: When the milestone Steps 1 and 2 are satisfied, the student may make application to continue in the BSW major. By either of two designated dates in the academic year (one date by May, the other in early December), the student will submit:

A. An Application Form

B. A Personal Statement (2 typed pages, double-spaced, 12 font; one paragraph apiece, addressing these 4 topics):
   1. reason for choosing social work as a major and career
   2. assessment of personal strengths and challenges
   3. assessment of life experience and their integration with career choice
   4. assessment of personal values and their alignment with social work’s professional value system

C. Instructors’ Review Forms, from at least 2 instructors in pre-social work courses.

D. Evidence of at least a 2.3 Salem State University overall GPA, a minimum 2.7 average among BSW courses taken to date, and at least a 2.0 in every social work course taken to date (or transferred into SSU pre-social work program).

STEP 4: The BSW Program Continuation Committee will consider the data in A through D, above. The Committee will look for evidence of solid written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills, as determined by faculty input and student writing. The Committee will also glean from those sources evidence of emotional stability sufficient to safely and effectively practice social work, as articulated in the SSU School of Social Work’s Professional Standards.

STEP 5: Within two weeks of the Application due date, the BSW Program Coordinator will inform applicants about their acceptance status into the major. The status could be:

A. Acceptance, with notification of the student’s new social work advisor.

B. Conditional Acceptance (with specific written reasons for the decision and criteria for full acceptance, with clear timelines on meeting those criteria). A conditionally accepted student will be informally advised by the BSW Program Director, during the timeline for change/completion. A the end of that timeline, the Program Director will consult with the Admissions Committee, who will subsequently issue a new Announcement of Status for that student.

C. Rejection

STEP 6: A rejected student is welcome to re-apply if and when factors in the rejection have been ameliorated. A student who has not submitted a Continuation Application packet within time frame or who is not approved may not enroll in SWK 301, Generalist Practice I.

STEP 7: A student accepted in field to continue in the SWK major, will prepare in Junior year to apply for Field Education placement to be completed in the Senior, Academic year.
# SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY BSW PLAN

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## FIELD EDUCATION READINESS - ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Ideally students proceed sequentially in the major by taking SWK 101 and SWK 102 in freshman year and SWK 200, SWK 261, and SWK 270 in sophomore year and SWK 301 and SWK 302 in junior year. Regardless, students in the BSW program are required to take seven Social Work courses prior to beginning field education. These are:
SWK 101 - The Profession of Social Work

SWK 102 - Social Welfare Past and Present

SWK 200 - Social Services Volunteer Practicum

SWK 261 – Human Behavior and the Social Environment I

SWK 270 – Understanding Diversity

SWK 301 - Generalist Practice I

• SWK 302 - Generalist Practice II

The student must achieve a cumulative grade point average of at least "B-" (2.7) in these six Social Work courses prior to being considered for field education placement assignment. In addition to the B- cumulative grade point average the student must earn a B- or better in GP-I and a B- or better in GP-II. Students who earn below a B- in GP-I or GP-II are permitted to repeat the course one time to improve their grade. If they earn below a B- a second time, they must withdraw from the Social Work major.

Social Work majors and pre-majors must earn a grade of C or higher in all other Social Work courses (these courses include, but are not limited to SWK 261, SWK 361, SWK 381, SWK 382 and SWK 410). A student may repeat a Social Work course only once. A second grade below a C in the same course mandates withdrawal from the Social Work major.

Additionally, Field Education I and II (SWK 404 / 405) and Field Education Seminar I and II (SWK 406/407) are co-requisites. In order to successfully pass one course a student must pass the other. Therefore, a student must earn a “P” in Field Education I and a B- or better in Field Seminar I in order to continue into Field Education II and Field Seminar II. If a student does not earn a “P” in Field Education I and a B- or better in Field Seminar I, then he/she must retake both Field Education I and Field Seminar I. A second grade of lower than a “P” in Field Education I and/or a grade of B- in Field Education Seminar mandate that a student withdraw from the Social Work major. Likewise if a student does not earn a B- or better in Field Education Seminar II and a “P” in Field Education II then he/she must retake both Field Education II and Field Education Seminar II. A second grade of lower than a B- in Field Seminar and/or grade of “P” in Field Education II mandates that a student withdraw from the Social Work major.

At the end of his/her field education experience, the student may have no more than 12 credits to complete his/her degree.

**Criminal Record Check**

The Application for Field Education Placement requests that a student reveal to the Field Office any criminal record history. There are many social services agencies that do a criminal offense record information check of all paid or volunteer employees or students. This information is only shared with the agency when necessary and students are encouraged to take charge of this informing process. This is intended to assure an appropriate and fully informed student-agency match and is also intended to protect the students as well as clients and field agency.

**Student Responsibility To Obtain Professional Liability Insurance**

All students entering Field Education Practicum must obtain professional liability (malpractice) insurance. This insurance may be obtained at a reasonable cost through the American Professional Agency, Inc., the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) agent.

The BSW Program requires that students obtain a student membership in NASW in the amount of $1/3 million aggregate coverage. NASW membership involves a group eligibility insurance plan. Joining NASW is part of the student’s field education application process avoids delays later in processing the requisite insurance application.
Application forms for both NASW membership and the insurance may be obtained in the BSW Program’s administrative assistant. Before entering the initial field education semester (prior to 9/1), students must show proof by a copy of their liability insurance coverage to the Field Education office to be kept in their student file. If the Liability Insurance proof is not submitted, students are not permitted to begin active involvement in their placement agency.
BSW ADVISING PROGRAM

SCHEDULE OF APPOINTMENTS

Faculty Advisors are posted on the BSW bulletin board on the 1st floor. Each student is encouraged to utilize his/her faculty advisor regularly. On “Meet Your Major” day in fall, all entering freshmen, transfers and change of major BSWs must attend a group meeting led by the Baccalaureate Program Coordinator. Each student is required to print a personal hardcopy of this BSW Student Handbook and to bring it to the mandatory “Meet Your Major” day event. During this meeting, the Coordinator will discuss the objectives of the program, distribute flow sheets, advise students concerning the required departmental academic and non-academic standards, and answer students’ questions about the curriculum. At that time, or at the earliest time possible, the Coordinator will assign each student a faculty advisor who will guide and engage the student through the student’s matriculation at Salem State. The faculty advisor will:

1. Provide assistance in assessing the student's aptitude and motivation for a career in social work;
2. Assist in evaluating periodically the student's total educational performance and experience;
3. Assist the student during the early registration process in the selection of courses, in following the appropriate sequence, and with the actual registration materials;
4. Provide ongoing evaluation of field education readiness and assist the student in the selection of a field education population and/or setting.

Students are required to meet with their faculty advisors according to the following schedule:

1. During each registration cycle, to review the flow sheet, to choose appropriate courses, and to evaluate the student's progress and readiness to begin professional practice;
2. Prior to junior year to assist the student in understanding the requirements of Program Continuation application, having reached the milestone of completing Social Work foundation courses.
3. During junior year, to review the flow sheet, to complete the GPA Verification Form, and to discuss field education readiness and the selection of a field education placement.

Students must arrange to meet with their faculty advisor immediately upon notification of academic probation, or of failure to maintain departmental academic and non-academic standards.

A field education faculty liaison will assist the student in integrating the field and classroom experiences during the senior year. The expectations of the field education student and field education faculty liaison are stated in the BSW Field Education Curriculum Guide, which is available online, and which must be individually printed as a hard copy and brought to Field Education Orientation Day by each incoming senior.

FLAGGING

The BSW Program has initiated a Flagging System in order to identify any academic or non-academic problem(s) that a student is encountering, and to bring those problems to the student’s attention. Further, the Flagging System prompts the BSW student’s instructor, as well as her or his advisor, to talk with that student about the noted problem. It gives the student and faculty a focus for naming the issue(s) and for putting a strategy in place to improve the situation, maybe including individual help or services that the student needs. Sometimes students are unaware of the kinds of support services - not to mention the personal strengths and resources – that can be mobilized to help overcome or ameliorate difficulties that seem overwhelming, or that previously went unnoticed. The advantage of the Flagging System is the likelihood of catching a problem earlier rather than later, and findings ways to get help (or a wake up call!) soon enough to do something constructive.

A flagging form is (1) given to the student by an instructor, (2) sent to the student's advisor and (3) sent to the BSW Program Coordinator, (4) provided to the Coordinator of Field Education if it involves a field education course, and (5) placed in the student’s file. A copy of the two-page form follows.
The BSW Program uses a Flagging System in order to identify any school-related problem that a student is encountering and to bring it to the student's attention. The Flagging System prompts a BSW student's instructor, as well as her/his advisor, to talk with that student about the noted problem. It gives the student and faculty a way to identify the issue and put a strategy in place to improve the situation, maybe including individual help or services that the student might need. Sometimes students are unaware of the kinds of support services - not to mention their own personal skills and resources- that can be mobilized to help overcome or ameliorate difficulties. The Flagging System increases the likelihood of catching a problem earlier rather than later, and finding ways to get help (or a wake up call!) soon enough to do something constructive.

A flagging form is (1) given to the student by an instructor, (2) sent to the student’s advisor and (3) sent to the BSW Program Coordinator, (4) provided to the Coordinator of Field Education if it involves a field education course, and (5) placed in the student’s file. The form used for this system is on the back of this memo. If you have any questions or input about the form or the system, call (978) 542-6629.
SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY  
School of Social Work

BSW Student Flagging Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student:</td>
<td>Course:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisor:</td>
<td>Semester:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Check one:</td>
<td>BSW Major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasons for Concern (Check all that apply)

| CONCERN** | REASONS FOR CONCERN  
(Consult SSC SSW Student Handbook for guidance regarding specific academic standards.) |
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<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
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<td>Assignments/ Writing Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Communication Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (Specify)</td>
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Optional of Recommendations: ____________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________

CC: Student File, Academic Advisor, Program Coordinator, and Field Education Coordinator if concern is a field education matter.

*Please note that a copy of this form is placed in the student’s file. Additionally, the student may elect to submit a written response to the Flagging Form for inclusion in the student file.
CHANGE OF MAJORS AND TRANSFER STUDENTS

Given the learning model of the curriculum, the sequencing of courses, and the large number of required courses or course categories, students entering the major after their freshmen year are apt to encounter some special challenges. Students, especially those transferring into their junior year, are advised to expect that some of the courses that they have already taken will not fit on the flow sheet. In some cases, students will still receive course credit for these courses and so maintain their class status, but may still need to take additional courses above the 120 credits required for graduation in order to complete all the required courses for the major. Some transfer students or change of majors may need to spend an extra semester completing all the requirements.

Change of Major/Undeclared Majors

Salem State University students who enter the School after the first semester of the freshman year will be assigned a faculty advisor upon notification of acceptance into the major. These students should arrange to meet with their advisors immediately to review the flow sheet, to discuss choice of courses, and to receive information regarding the required sequence of courses and academic standards. After this initial appointment, students must follow the advising and counseling schedule required of all students in School.

Transfer Students

Transfer students should arrange to meet with their faculty advisors as soon as possible after entering the University and must then continue to follow the advising and counseling schedule required of all students.

Terms of the CSWE accreditation prohibit the School from awarding course credit for practice courses or for field education courses taken at non-CSWE accredited programs. Hence, the policy of the BSW program is that credit will not be awarded for the following courses unless a comparable course was taken at a CSWE-accredited BSW program: SWK301 Generalist Practice I; SWK302 Generalist Practice II; SWK404/405 Field Education I and II; and SWK406-407 Field Education Seminar I and II. Furthermore, CSWE standards prohibit awarding field education transfer credit for any previous work or life experience.

Some transfer students have found that there are difficulties in transferring to a large institution from a smaller one. Students encountering any difficulties in making the transition are encouraged to discuss this with their faculty advisor. In the past, some students have found it useful to participate in a support group of transfer students. Possible resources include the Academic Advising Office and The Learning Center. Students are encouraged to make use of informal support networks. Faculty members are available to facilitate the development of such networks.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY & INCOMPLETES

The student is responsible for completing all course requirements and for keeping up with all that goes on in the course, whether or not the student is present. Failure to do this will result in a grade of I (Incomplete) which turns into an F after six weeks. Incompletes will be considered by the instructor of the course only under the circumstances outlined on the following page.
INCOMPLETE GRADES

The grade of incomplete (I) is a temporary grade, which may be assigned to a student only if

1. A substantial portion (usually at least 80%) of the course work has been completed.

2. The instructor is satisfied that circumstances beyond the student’s control prevented the student from completing the required course.

3. The student has requested an I grade, and specific arrangements for completion of the course work have been made with the instructor prior to the assignment of final grades in the course.

4. The incomplete agreement form is completed and signed by faculty, student, and a copy provided to the student.

A student will receive credit for a course graded I only if the course work is completed by the end of the sixth week of the following semester. If the student fails to make up the course work within this prescribed period of time, the I grade will automatically become an F grade. Exceptions to the prescribed deadline may be granted by the instructor only in cases where protracted illness or critical personal problems prevent the student from completing the work. Such extensions must be filed with the Registrar’s Office.

An I grade recorded on a grade report is a temporary grade and does not affect the student’s grade-point average until such time as it is converted to a permanent grade. The initiative for making up the incomplete work within the prescribed time period lies with the student. The instructor who assigned the I grade shall make available to the student suitable opportunities for completing the unfinished course work, and shall file an appropriate Grade Change form when the work has been done. A corrected grade report will be issued to the student at the appropriate time.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR BSW STUDENTS

School of Social Work Committees

Each year, BSW students are invited to become members of various committees of the School of Social Work. Following is a brief description of the School’s committee meetings and open to student participation. If you are interested in serving on any of these committees, please contact the Chairperson, or BSW Program Coordinator.

BSW Curriculum Committee

The BSW Curriculum Committee has, at a minimum, the following members: The BSW Program Coordinator, the BSW Field Coordinator, the Chairperson, and one other member of the faculty primarily associated with the BSW Program, and a BSW student representative. The Committee’s primary responsibility is to review and develop curricula and policies as well as evaluation standards and procedures specific to the BSW Program. The Committee also bears responsibility for ensuring that the BSW Program’s curricula are in keeping with the standards established by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Commission on Accreditation.
**School of Social Work Diversity Committee**

The Diversity Committee is composed of faculty from both the MSW and BSW Programs, and students in either program who are interested in participating in the group. The Diversity Committee recommends and develops strategies for ensuring and enhancing diversity among administrators, faculty, staff and students in the School of Social Work, including efforts for recruiting, supporting and retaining diverse membership in all those groups, as well as cultivating skills and activities that overcome discrimination and oppression. Further, the group monitors, advises, and assists in the development of diversity content in the School of Social Work curricula. The Committee also contributes to increased awareness of and sensitivity to diversity among the various constituencies of Salem State University. A variety of methods, including, but not limited to, the following: educational forums; media; one-to-one contact; seminars, symposia; and workshops are used to accomplish these goals.

**The International Study Committee**

This committee is composed of faculty members from both the BSW and MSW faculty, as well as interested students from either program. The Committee recommends ways for enhancing the BSW and MSW curricula in the area of international study, as well as inclusion of cross-national and global perspectives in existing courses; explores opportunities for students and faculty members to travel to foreign countries for the purpose of study and/or social work practice experience; assists faculty members and students with the practical tasks of preparation and planning that are necessary for a successful study trip abroad; and explores opportunities for visiting scholars and practitioners from abroad and provides guidance and support to visitors to maximize their interactions with the campus community. * There are times when these 2 committees coordinate for combined meetings.

**BSW Student Organization: Student Action Resource Team (START)**

The Student Action Resource Team (START) is the School of Social Work's BSW student organization. START functions as the voice of the BSW social work student body and is involved in a variety of activities to benefit both the students and the community. START is especially active in providing community service in a variety of ways. START has sponsored educational and service-providing trips, as well as discussions, films, and speakers for the entire University community, and has co-sponsored such campus-wide activities as the Human Rights Convocation. In addition, START sponsors the annual BSW Awards Banquet in the spring.
Communications between the BSW Program and Students

Student Mailboxes:
All School of Social Work graduate and declared undergraduate students have a mail folder in the file cabinets located on the first floor in Academic Building. It is requested that students regularly check their mail folder. **Please note that all Salem State University School of Social Work students are required to log onto their Salem State University email accounts, and to regularly check for messages. All undergraduate social work majors must register with the School’s own ListServ; many vital announcements are posted on the ListServ prior to, or instead of, being filed in student “mailboxes.”**

Navigator Accounts and SSU Email:
Salem State University requires students to have a ‘Navigator’ account that is a portal to SSU email, grades, online course registration, course schedules, online courses and other important information. If you did not set up these accounts during freshman or transfer orientations, link to: [http://www.salemstate.edu/current/computing.php](http://www.salemstate.edu/current/computing.php) and follow the appropriate instructions. Salem State University also requires students to have a SSU email address. To set up your email, link to [http://www.salemstate.edu/4420.php](http://www.salemstate.edu/4420.php). Faculty and Administrators can only communicate with you via SSU email. Your Navigator account also enables you to access the University’s on-line educational system, CANVAS.

Listserv:
The BSW Program regularly posts important notices on the School of Social Work ListServ. Please follow the instructions below for access to key information about SSW happenings, class cancellation notices, etc. We require that all students subscribe to the internal School of Social Work listserv. It is through this listserv that we will be announcing special events, notices about advising, class cancellations, and other activities associated with our programs here.
Signing up is very easy. Just type this address into your internet browser: [http://listserv.salemstate.edu/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?join=swkstudents](http://listserv.salemstate.edu/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?join=swkstudents)

You **must** have a Salem State email address to sign up for the Listserv.

Computing Problems:
The IT Help Desk is available to students having computing problems. You can contact [it-helpdesk@salemstate.edu](mailto:it-helpdesk@salemstate.edu), or call 978-542-2036, or visit the Help Desk on the first floor of the Central Campus academic building. Please note that computing problems are not acceptable excuses for late or incomplete assignments. It is your responsibility to be proactive in order to have working equipment, copies of your assignments, replacement printer cartridges, email and Navigator accounts.

**CANVAS:**
Online courses are offered via CANVAS, an online course management system. You can access online courses that you have registered for through your Navigator account.

**Faculty and Professional Staff Mailboxes**
All School of Social Work faculty have individual mailboxes. The full-time and adjunct faculty and professional staff have mailboxes located on the left wall inside Suite AB100. BSW and MSW Administrative staff also have a drop file box outside their offices at AB 104-A.

**Social Work Faculty Appointments**
Faculty post office hours on their office doors. You may also call or email them for an appointment. Adjunct faculty will provide students with information on office hours and means for reaching them.
Writing Skills And Writing Center

As noted in the School’s Professional Standards for Social Work Education (see table of contents for this Handbook), we strongly emphasize that students must develop and maintain basic writing skills. Students who fail to master these basic skills will encounter difficulties in their coursework, field education, and, ultimately, in finding a social work position. We bring to your attention the University’s policy concerning minimum writing standards and information about the Writing Center where you can find help with specific written assignments. We will not accept a written assignment that does not meet the minimum standards established by the University. These policies apply to both BSW and MSW students. In the future the Writing Center will be located in the new Library facility on central campus.

Minimum Writing Standards

No expository writing assignment submitted for a course at SSU will receive a grade of C or above unless it has the following:

1. A clear and readily identifiable thesis statement.
2. A clear and coherent overall structure.
3. Paragraphs with topic sentences and adequate, specific development.
4. Standard but varied sentence structure and expression.
5. Standard usage, punctuation, and spelling.
6. Accurate documentation when necessary.

Note: These standards may be amended by the instructor to meet the specific needs of assignments (such as in science, mathematics, or professional courses) that have more specialized writing requirements.

Within the BSW Program, citations, references and formatting papers should be completed according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 5th edition. This Handbook includes the School’s own guide to this style manual.
The Frederick E. Berry Library and Learning Commons at Salem State University is located on North Campus, in a new facility opening in September 2013. The main entrance is located off the new quad (green space in front of the library, adjacent to Meier Hall). A second, ground floor entrance is located off College Drive. The learning commons brings the Center for Academic Excellence, Academic Advising, TRIO programs, Disabilities Services, the Writing Center, and the Honors Program together and recognizes the synergy between and among these academic support services and the University Library. Visit www.salemstate.edu/library

The library has been designed to take advantage of evolving pedagogies and technologies. Learning spaces have been planned to meet the varied needs of students and faculty, in a fully networked and wireless environment.

The library includes:

- A combined circulation, reserve, interlibrary loan and reference desk where you can check out and return library materials, request resources from other libraries throughout the world, and find research assistance. IT support is also available at this desk during all hours of library operation. For the most current hours, please call the Library hours line at 978-542-6808.

- A collection of over 325,000 high-quality scholarly books, periodicals and media. This is in addition to access to an expanding collection of electronic resources covering the full array of academic disciplines, including over 300,000 electronic books and 57,000 journals.

Disabilities Services Office

Salem State University is committed to providing equal access to the educational experience for all students in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act and to providing all reasonable academic accommodations, aids, and adjustments.

To achieve this goal, the University maintains a Disabilities Services Office. This Office is responsible for assuring that students receive the services and accommodations to which they are entitled. The staff works with students to review documentation, determine reasonable accommodations on the basis of disability, and act as a liaison between students and faculty/administration on concerns relating to those services and accommodations.

The Disabilities Services Office also provides academic support to students with all types of disability including: learning disability; mobility impairments, medical disability, blindness and visual impairments; deafness, psychiatric disability; and traumatic brain injury.

Students are responsible for identifying themselves to the Disabilities Services Office’s staff and informing them of the need for review. Students must present each individual instructor with evidence of their being registered with the Disabilities Services Office. Individual instructors are prohibited from providing accommodations to students who are not registered with the Disabilities Services Office. Students with disabilities must initiate contact with the Office and schedule an appointment to obtain appropriate review and/or services. The Office is located in Meier Hall, first floor. The Disabilities Services Office’s telephone numbers are: Voice: 978-542-6217; TTY: 978-542-7146.

The Writing Center (978) 542-6491

The Writing Center offers individualized assistance in writing to students who are weak in basic writing skills, students who need special guidance for a particular writing task, and students who simply desire some individual help in developing their writing potential. The Center is located in Meier Hall Room 223 and is open approximately thirty hours a week. It is recommended that all students seek assistance from one of the Center’s co-directors or graduate assistants.
• Three fully-equipped high-tech classrooms where professional librarians provide orientation to the library's resources and services, sessions on how to locate and use print and digital information, and subject-specific upper-division and graduate-level research instruction.

• Over 1,000 study seats, in a variety of forms – including collaborative workstations, lounge seating, study carrels, laptop tables, individual and group study tables, and twelve group study rooms where students can collaborate on class projects, gather in study groups, and meet for scholarly purposes.

• More than 150 public access computer workstations networked to printing as well as an adaptive technology workstation near the service desk and in a specialized group study room on the first floor. Copiers are also available.

South Campus satellite study space in Academic Building lounge including computers, tables, lounge chairs, and a printing station. A library book-drop is located just outside the entrance to Harrington Building.
Counseling and Health Services Department

The University’s Counseling Center offers a variety of services to the campus community, including individual and group counseling; alcohol and drug counseling; career counseling and life planning; workshops on contemporary issues in response to students' needs; and consultation to students, staff and faculty. The Counseling and Health Services Department is located in the Ellison Center on North Campus – the telephone number is (978) 542-6410.

Awards and Scholarships

Throughout the year, Salem State undergraduate students are encouraged to apply for appropriate awards and scholarships, given on various bases, and with ranging requirements. Students are asked to gather information at www.salemstate.edu/awards. Social work students are especially encouraged to apply for social work-specific awards and scholarships, which are presented during the spring semester. These social work-specific scholarships and awards include:

The Pharnal Longus Community Service Scholarship

This scholarship was established as a memorial to Professor Emeritus Pharnal Longus who retired from the School of Social Work in 2004. The criteria for this award are a BSW student who has made a substantial contribution in community service and whose efforts contribute to the anti-racism work which was the hallmark of Professor Longus’ legacy.

The Daniel Aaron Collins Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship was established as a memorial to Daniel Aaron Collins, son of Carol and David Collins. The scholarship provides a financial award each year to an eligible BSW student. The criteria for receiving the scholarship are as follows: a strong record of academic achievement; a well-written nomination letter; and demonstrated engagement with the population of persons with developmental/intellectual disabilities, as an employee, volunteer, family member, or some combination of these.

The Linda Joyce Ettinger Award

This award is given in memory of Linda Joyce Ettinger, who was a 1975 graduate of the Social Service Department and who died in 1976 of cancer. Ms. Ettinger's parents established this scholarship to be awarded to a junior in the School of Social Work who has demonstrated a commitment to social work values and ethics, has shown outstanding dedication in service to others, and has changed career and/or academic direction to social work.

The Patricia Roderick Award

This award was established by colleagues, friends and former students of Professor Roderick, who served the School of Social Work from 1972-1999. The award is intended to provide financial assistance to BSW students who are one of the first in their families to go to University and for whom a financial award might help them complete their studies. Professor Roderick modeled the highest commitment to social work values and ethics - hence the prize is awarded to a sophomore or junior student with both financial need and a demonstrated commitment to these values.

National Child Welfare Work Force Development Grant

This highly competitive scholarship annually awards tuition remission to selected BSW students who are committed to child welfare and agree to complete their senior year fieldwork in a child welfare agency.

Phi Alpha Honor Society- Tau Phi Chapter, School of Social Work

The School of Social Work affiliated of Phi Alpha, Tau Phi Chapter of the National Social Work Honor Society as of 2013. Its members are drawn from both undergraduate and graduate programs. In addition to the eligibility requirements bellow, In addition student must demonstrate that they meet the professional standards required of them as outlined in the Professional Standards for the School of Social Work.
As of the Spring Semester of senior year, students in the **BSW Program** who have Senior Status to graduate, a GPA of 3.25 overall GPA (transfer credits not applicable) and 3.7 SWK GPA or better are eligible for induction and lifetime membership. Individual lifetime membership is $20.00. **Phi Alpha** is designed to encourage and recognize scholarship and academic excellence. Both graduate and undergraduate students are eligible. The primary benefit to you is the public recognition of your achievement which is an honor to list on your resume and other career documents, participation in chapter and national honor society activities, scholarships and networking on a national basis.

Students in the **MSW Program's** General Study Plans must have completed all but 11 credits towards their MSW degree (transfer credits not applicable) and a 3.85 cumulative grade point average and be prepared for program completion in May or August of the current year. Students enrolled in the advanced standing study plan must have all but 3 credits towards their MSW degree (transfer credits not applicable) and have a 3.85 cumulative grade point average. For more information go to: [salemstate.edu/academics/schools/5663.ph](http://salemstate.edu/academics/schools/5663.ph)
INFORMATION ESPECIALLY RELATED TO DCE STUDENTS
Although all of the information in this BSW Handbook relates to both day and evening students, there are special situations and needs that evening (Division of Continuing Education, or DCE) students have around advising and other program issues. This section discusses some issues of particular interest to these students.

Admission into the BSW Program
Students are typically admitted into the Evening Program either as transfer students or as change of majors. The process for transfer students is the same as that outlined overall on page 10 of this handbook.

DCE students at the University in another major who wish to change into the social work major fill out a request form and submit it to the BSW Coordinator or Department Chairperson in the Coordinator’s absence. This process is the same as the process for day students: any student may apply for a change of major at any point in time while at the University. These criteria for acceptance into the BSW major are the same as outlined on page 10 of this handbook for students overall.

Advising
The University Academic Advising Office has overall responsibility for advising DCE students and students are encouraged to make use of their services. Because social work majors often have specific advising needs around social work curriculum and careers, every DCE student is strongly encouraged to meet with the BSW Program Coordinator at least once a year. Advising hours can be arranged in late afternoon or early evening to meet the needs of working students. Call (978) 542-6629 or -6638 to make an appointment.

Course schedules
The School of Social Work offers the entire BSW curriculum, except for certain senior-year courses, in the evening. Course offerings rotate on a regular basis to meet the needs of DCE students. The schedule is as follows:

SWK 101 – Every fall semester and summer (session I)
SWK 102 – Every spring semester and summer (session II)
SWK 200 – Every semester and summer – on a directed study basis
SWK 270 – Every fall semester and summer (session I)
SWK 261 – Every fall semester
SWK 361 – Every spring semester
SWK 301 – Every spring semester
SWK 302 – Every summer (entire summer)
SWK 380 – Every fall semester (this course is being phased out)
SWK 381 – Every fall semester
SWK 382 – Every spring semester
SWK 410 – Every spring on Wednesday afternoons, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

Students should recognize that as they approach senior year status and field education courses, they may need to accommodate their schedules outside of the University schedule in order to provide for more day time availability for courses (SWK 410 and some field seminars) and field education itself.
NOTICE OF EQUAL ACCESS AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Salem State University is committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities at the University for all students regardless of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, creed, national origin, age, or disability. Affirmative action is the policy of the University and the School in their recruitment of students, faculty, and staff. All benefits, privileges, and opportunities offered by the University are available to all students and employees on a non-discriminatory basis in accordance with Federal and State legislation.

With regard to disabilities, the University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act in providing all reasonable academic accommodations, aids, and adjustments. Any student with a disability that has been documented by the Salem State University Disability Services Office (SSU DSO) should speak with the instructor immediately. An instructor is not allowed to provide accommodations, aids, and/or adjustments without receiving proper documentation from the OSD. Students who have special needs but do not have documentation from the SSU DSO may wish to schedule an appointment with the DSO. The DSO is located in Meier Hall (Room 102); you may call (978) 542-6217 or TTY (978) 542-7146 or email DSO at disability-services@salemstate.edu. Please see the University's online catalog for details on additional policies pertaining to student rights.

STUDENT ABSENCES FOR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Chapter 151C of the General Laws of Massachusetts permits any student in an educational institution, who because of his/her religious beliefs, is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work on a particular day to be excused and to be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement, provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon the University. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making this opportunity available to the student. No adverse or prejudicial effects upon a student shall result from following the provisions of this section. If you are denied this right, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Human Rights, (978) 542-6106.

Policy Against Sexual Harassment
(Human Resources and Equal Opportunity Policies and Procedures)

Salem State University prohibits any member of the University Community, male or female, from sexually harassing another employee, student or other person having dealings with the institution. The University is committed to providing a working, living and learning environment that is free from all forms of sexually abusive, harassing or coercive conduct.

In response to the issue of sexual harassment, the University provides the following definition which applies to any individual of either sex who participates in the University Community as a student, faculty member, librarian, administrator, staff member or other person having dealings with the institution: Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome verbal, non-verbal and/or physical behavior of a sexual nature which has the effect of interfering with a person's academic, employment or other status, or of creating a sexually intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Sexual harassment incidents can involve a male harasser and a female victim, a male harasser and a male victim, and also same gender harassment.

Codes of ethics for most professional associations forbid professional-client sexual relationships. In this context and for purposes of this Policy, the professor-student relationship is properly regarded as one of professional and client. The respect and trust accorded a professor by a student, as well as the power exercised by the professor in giving praise or blame, grades, recommendations for further study and employment, and other benefits or opportunities diminish the student's actual freedom of choice such that relationships thought to be consensual may in fact be the product of implicit coercion. Many elements of the administrator-student, librarian-student, classified staff member-student and the supervisor-employee relationship are similar to those of the professor/student relationship because of a similar imbalance of power and a similar need for trust. For purposes of this Policy, therefore, these relationships are also discouraged and looked upon with disfavor.

Please consult the University's website and 2010-2012 Undergraduate Catalog (online) for further details on the University's policies and procedures with regard to sexual harassment. In addition, the School
distributes annually the University’s policy statement against sexual harassment as well as the complaint procedures specific to sexual harassment to all members of its community.

**Disruptive Student in the Classroom Policy**

The purpose of this judicial procedure is to provide the University with a method of due process to be used for relieving students in the classroom and their faculty from disruptive and/or potentially hazardous invasions of their time and learning. Please consult the University’s 2012-2013 Undergraduate Catalog online (link to Academic Policies) as well as the School’s Professional Standards for Social Work Education included in this Handbook.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Salem State University assumes that all students come to the University with serious educational intent and expects them to be mature, responsible individuals who will exhibit high standards of honesty and personal conduct in their academic life. All forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, are considered to be serious offenses against the University Community. Definition of Academic Dishonesty: Submitting another person’s work as one’s own. This includes, for example, copying another person’s work during examinations; purchasing papers; copying papers, reports, journal articles or portions thereof; copying material from a website; copying laboratory or computer results; and presenting material from another course or paper without proper acknowledgment, citations and references. Penalties for Academic Dishonesty: Penalties for plagiarism and academic dishonesty can include an automatic grade of F for the course as well as being reported to the Provost, and can lead to suspension or expulsion from the University. See the current Salem State Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs for complete descriptions of University policies on academic dishonesty and the appeals procedures.

**STUDENT FINANCIAL AID (978-542-6112)**

The primary purpose of financial aid is to provide financial assistance to those students who, without such assistance, would be unable to attend Salem State University.

A student must be maintaining satisfactory academic progress in a course of study according to the institution's policies for continued eligibility for student financial aid funds. The satisfactory academic progress policy is in the University Catalog, online.

For the most recent information relevant to financial aid, consult the University's website’s link to the Financial Aid Office: [www.salemstate.edu/finaid](http://www.salemstate.edu/finaid).

**Loans:**

Most financial aid through the University is in the form of low interest federal education loans. In order to apply for these loans, the student must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); apply online at [www.fafsa.gov.edu](http://www.fafsa.gov.edu). Once your form is processed, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR). The Salem State University code is 002188. All forms and applications are available on the University web site at [www.salemstate.edu/finaid](http://www.salemstate.edu/finaid).

**Tuition Remission:**

Full time state employees of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are eligible for 50% tuition remission. Forms to facilitate this process are available through your employer. At the time of registration, you will need to present the completed tuition remission form with signature of the authorizing person from your agency or organization. Please note that a Directed Study is not eligible for 50% tuition remission.
Employer Tuition Reimbursement:
Many employers will reimburse their employees in part or in full for courses considered job related. Students are advised to check with their employer’s Human Resource office for more information about reimbursement.

Other Resources: We strongly encourage you to explore other resources: grants, foundations, community organizations, and tuition reimbursement from your employer. Helpful guides about financial aid are available at our financial aid office or at local libraries. Online listings of financial aid are available as well, e.g. www.fastweb.com. or www.finaid.com.

REMEMBER: Financial aid awards are not renewable. You must reapply each year. AFTER

GRADUATION: LICENSING, JOBS

 LICENSING: As of July, 1980, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts instituted the Social Work Licensure Law. Under this law, persons calling themselves social workers and/or practicing social work, (including social workers in many agency settings), must be licensed by the Commonwealth. BSWs who graduate from a CSWE-accredited School of Social Work (like Salem State) are eligible to register for the LSW, Licensed Social Worker exam, the most basic social work licensure. A written examination is required to attain the LSW.

To obtain more information about eligibility requirements and registration for the examination, go to www.naswma.org

JOBS: The immediate career possibilities for social work graduates vary extensively depending on the geographical area, the general economic trends, and the student's particular field of interest. While the need for trained personnel to assist clients does not diminish, funding in both public and private agencies is often determined by economic factors and the willingness of funding sources to recognize needs.

Graduates of the School of Social Work have had an excellent record of finding social service jobs. Our graduates are employed in a wide variety of settings and, thus, represent the breadth and depth of social work practice opportunities. Their employment settings include inpatient and outpatient health and mental health facilities; substance abuse treatment programs; residential and group care; public social service; child and family welfare; elderly home care; end-of-life care; schools; settlement houses; community development; and political advocacy.

Each year, the BSW Program Coordinator arranges for job opportunities to be posted in convenient locations for students’ review. The social work students’ organization (START) periodically sponsors a “job fair” or information sessions pertinent to students’ future employment. The University’s Career Services Center (978-542-6406) is also available to undergraduate students. In connection with NASW student membership, students have access to the NASW Massachusetts Chapter website and newsletter (“Focus”) job postings.
Salem State University
School of Social Work

Professional Standards for Social Work Students

These Standards include the following:

1) Criteria for Evaluating Academic and Professional Performance
2) Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic and Professional Performance
3) Complaint and Grievance Processes

The Salem State University School of Social Work developed and implemented Professional Standards for Social Work Students that initially became effective in September 2003 for all matriculated and non-matriculated social work students. The Standards were revised in summer 2012 and the revised version is effective for all social work students enrolled in the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) and Master of Social Work (MSW) programs beginning fall 2012. Unless otherwise noted, the standards, criteria, procedures, and policies apply to both BSW and MSW students.

Grateful acknowledgement to the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work (1999) faculty and staff who shared standards which served the basis for this document as well as to the Salem State University School of Social Work faculty and staff who established the 2003 and 2012 editions of this document.
Appendix: Professional Standards for Social Work Students

Salem State University
School of Social Work

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August 26, 2013

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Professional Standards for Salem State University School of Social Work Students

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1.0 Introduction

This document delineates Salem State University School of Social Work Professional Standards for Social Work Students – standards that apply to all students enrolled at the School of Social Work on a matriculated or non-matriculated basis.

Because of the nature of professional social work practice, the School of Social Work has different expectations of students than do non-professional educational programs. The Standards are linked to practice behaviors that demonstrate students’ abilities to perform as competent social work professionals. The Standards are articulated and provided to all students in order to clarify expectations and outline procedures related to the School’s concerns about students’ academic performance. The ultimate goal of the Standards is to insure that expectations and procedures are transparent and, therefore, optimize students’ successful education and experience at the School of Social Work.

The School’s administrators, faculty and staff recognize that becoming a professional is a gradual process and that not all of the criteria articulated in these standards will be demonstrated at all times. However, the delineated professional standards outlined in sections 2.1 and 2.2 will be used to evaluate students’ readiness to enter field education practica. Prior to entering field education, the professional standards outlined in sections 2.1 and 2.2 will be assessed in classroom performance as well as through observations of student to student and student to faculty interactions.

Specific readiness for field education practicum is critical, as a student's overall judgment and ability to engage in competent practice behaviors directly affects clients who are seeking psychosocial support. In addition, a student’s lack of professional readiness for field education affects the organizations and agencies that partner with the School on a pro bono basis in providing field education practica placements. Our partner organizations and agencies have a right to assume that the School’s administrators, faculty and staff have adequately assessed students’ readiness to competently engage and work with vulnerable clients and client systems.

The School’s administrators, faculty (includes field instructors), and staff are obligated to exercise their professional judgment and continually assess students’ competence in order to determine if the standards articulated in this document are being met. Such assessment of students’ competence will occur in a variety of venues including but not limited to the classroom, online coursework, and field education. Professional judgment is the capacity to assess a situation by applying the values and knowledge of the social work profession, combined with a professional’s own experience and practice wisdom. This ongoing assessment of competence and the practice behaviors associated with professional competence occurs as the student progresses through academic and field education courses.

All social work students will be required to stipulate that they have read and understood the School’s Professional Standards for Social Work Students as well as the appropriate student handbook and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics during their orientation meetings at the School. Students will be asked to sign an acknowledgment documenting that they have read, are aware of the contents of, and will abide by the Standards. When students enter field education, they will sign an additional document that states they have read, understood and will abide by the NASW Code of Ethics as well as the BSW or MSW Field Education Curriculum Guide. The signed acknowledgement forms will be kept in students’ files.

2.0 Criteria for Evaluating Professional Competence and Performance During BSW and MSW Education
In order to meet its responsibilities to provide quality professional education and to ensure that its graduates are able to function in a broad variety of professional situations, the School of Social Work evaluates the professional and academic performance of its students in four general areas: basic professional competence and skills; emotional maturity and management of emotions; professional performance specific to practice in agencies and organizations; and scholastic performance. In other words, meeting the criteria for scholastic achievement is necessary but not sufficient to ensure continued enrollment in a social work program. Practice behaviors that demonstrate professional competence and adequate scholastic performance comprise academic standards in a professional social work program.

2.1 Basic Professional Competence and Skills

The presence and absence of the following basic professional skills are evaluated in accordance with undergraduate- and graduate-level educational standards as well as the developmental trajectory of social work education.

2.1.1 Communication Skills

The student demonstrates sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings. All students are required to use the Salem State University email system for sending and receiving messages to and from faculty, staff and administrators. Professional competence encompasses using email in an appropriate manner and responding to email communications from faculty, staff and administrators in a timely manner. Email is considered an official means of communicating University and School of Social Work deadlines, procedures and policies. However, as noted in specific sections of this document, there are circumstances in which students as well as faculty, staff and administrators must use written and signed as well as certified letters for communication purposes.

The following distinctions and similarities are made between written and oral communication skills:

a) Evaluation of Written Communication Skills: The student writes clearly, uses correct grammar and spelling as well as appropriate writing style, including referencing, appropriate source citation, and documentation in accordance with the latest edition of the American Psychological Association Style Manual. The student possesses sufficient skills in written English to demonstrate an understanding of content presented in social work courses and program in which the student is enrolled. The student is able to complete adequately all written assignments, as specified by classroom and field education faculty, and meet the University’s established Minimum Writing Standards for undergraduate and graduate students (see appropriate SSU undergraduate or graduate catalogue).

b) Evaluation of Oral Communication Skills: The student communicates effectively and respectfully with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals from other disciplines. The student expresses ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates a willingness and an ability to listen to others. The student possesses sufficient skills in English to demonstrate understanding of content presented in the course or program in which the student is enrolled. The student is able to complete adequately all presentation assignments, as specified by classroom and field education faculty.

2.1.2 Interpersonal Skills

The student demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals from other disciplines. The student demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to uphold the values of the social work profession and to fulfill the ethical obligations of the profession. These skills include demonstrated compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and respect for others. The student takes appropriate responsibility for his or her actions and considers the impact of these actions on others.

The student works effectively with others, regardless of level of authority. The student advocates for him/herself in an appropriate, respectful and responsible manner. The student uses proper channels for complaints, conflict resolution, and grievances (see Section 3.0 below). The student shows a willingness to receive feedback from faculty (including field instructors), administrators, staff and colleagues in a positive and respectful manner. The student evidences the ability to use such feedback to enhance professional development and appropriately provides feedback to others.
2.1.3 Cognitive Skills
The student exhibits sufficient cognitive skills in order to acquire and critique social work knowledge, research and conceptual frameworks. The student's cognitive skills are sufficient to evidence clarity of thinking and the ability to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in classroom and field education. Information to be processed includes but is not limited to course syllabi, readings, program handbooks and curriculum guides. The student demonstrates appropriate grounding in the liberal arts especially regarding relevant social, behavioral and biological science knowledge and research. The student demonstrates a cognitive understanding of relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, and evaluation in classroom and online curricula as well as field education.

The student understands the meaning and significance of accreditation standards for professional social work education as promulgated by the 2008 Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Commission on Accreditation (COA) Educational Policies and Standards (EPAS), which are presented on the SSU SSW website. The student comprehends the meaning of competence, the measurement of practice behaviors and field education as the discipline's signature pedagogy.

2.1.4 Physical Skills
The student exhibits motor and sensory abilities to attend and participate in class with or without reasonable accommodations. The student exhibits sufficient abilities to perform the essential functions of the field education practica with or without reasonable accommodations. (See section 2.6 on Accommodations for Disabilities for clarification).

2.1.5 Social Skills
The student exhibits behaviors that are in compliance with and respectful of University policies as well as School of Social Work and program-specific policies. The student's appearance, dress, demeanor and behaviors demonstrate and reflect an understanding of professional roles and responsibilities. The student demonstrates accountability by being punctual, attending class as expected, observing deadlines, prioritizing responsibilities, completing assignments on time, responding to requests for information, keeping appointments, and notifying appropriate offices and personnel of changes and circumstances that impact student status. The student takes responsible initiative for explaining limitations in accountability and making appropriate alternate arrangements.

2.2 Emotional Maturity and Management of Emotions during Coursework and Field Education

2.2.1 Stress Management
The student demonstrates ability to deal with past or current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. The student handles stress effectively by implementing appropriate self-care and supportive relationships with appropriate colleagues, peers, family members, and/or professional caregivers.

2.2.2 Self-Efficacy and Use of Professional, Personal and Academic Resources
The student takes responsibility to seek and effectively use help for physical, medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance. The student is willing to make use of resources within and outside of the University when personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, and/or mental health difficulties evidence any of the following:

- compromise scholastic and field education performance;
- interfere with professional judgment and appropriate practice behaviors;
- jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the social work student has a professional responsibility as outlined in the current National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Codes of Ethics and this document.

2.2.3 Self Awareness
The student exhibits knowledge of how one's values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and past experiences affect thinking, behavior and relationships. The student accurately assesses his or her own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice. The student demonstrates an awareness of self and how others perceive him or her. The student is able to reflect on his or her own limitations as they relate to professional abilities and
practice. The student is willing to examine and change behavior when it interferes in working with clients and other professionals.

2.3
Professional Performance Specific to Practice in Social Service Agencies and Organizations

2.3.1 Demonstrated Professional Competence and Emotional Management
All of the professional standards and criteria listed in Sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the Professional Standards for Social Work Students will be used to specifically evaluate students' performance and progress in field education practica as well as performance in classroom and online coursework. While Section 2.3 is specific to professional performance with clients and staff in field education practica, it should be noted that all standards and criteria described throughout Sections 2.0 are also considered required practice behaviors central to competent professional practice with clients and staff in organizational contexts.

2.3.2 Professional Commitment
The student demonstrates commitment to understanding and enacting the essential values of the social work profession as delineated in the 2008 NASW Code of Ethics under section on Ethical Principles. The student also demonstrates an appropriate understanding of the values and principles delineated by the International Federation of Social Workers and International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work and Statement of Principles (2004).

The student demonstrates a commitment to continuing education beyond BSW or MSW degree achievement.

2.3.3 Ability to Apply Social Work Values and Ethics
Social work values inform and support professional social work competence and practice behaviors. The student’s practice behaviors in the classroom, during online coursework and in field education practica demonstrate adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional social work practice standards. The student exhibits an ability to implement social work values, the ethical standards of the profession, and laws governing social work practice as specified in the following:

- National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics as revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts Rules and Regulations Governing Social Workers (258 Code of Massachusetts Regulations [CMR] 1-31.00)
- Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) [aka General Laws of the Commonwealth (GLC)] governing social workers including but not limited to laws regarding the report of child and elder abuse
- Proper and timely disclosure of any convictions or offensives that may have an impact on the ability to practice professionally as well as willingness to engage in responsible collaborative decision-making regarding how this history may impact field education and the practicum setting.

The following social work values are stated in the NASW Code of Ethics and are listed here, along with the Code section number, as examples of the values that are regularly evaluated as evident, or not, in students’ practice behaviors:

- Social workers’ primary responsibility is to promote the well-being of clients (1.01);
- Social workers respect and promote the right of clients to self-determination and assist clients in their efforts to identify and clarify their goals (1.02);
- Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures (1.05);
- Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information (1.07);
- Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with current clients whether such contact is consensual or forced (1.09);
- 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 (1.10);
• Social workers should use accurate and respectful language in all communications to and about clients (1.12);

• Social workers should make reasonable efforts to ensure continuity of services in the event that services are interrupted by factors such as unavailability, relocation, illness, disability, or death (1.15);

• 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 (2.03);

• Social workers should base practice on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge, relevant to social work and social work ethics (4.01);

• 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 disability (4.02).
2.4

Scholastic Performance

2.4.1 Undergraduate Students

Students proceed sequentially in the major by typically taking SWK 101 and SWK 102 in freshman year and SWK 200, 261 and 270 in the sophomore year and SWK 301 and 302 in the junior year. Regardless of difference in study plans, students in the BSW program are required to take the following seven (7) social work courses prior to beginning field education:

SWK 101 - The Profession of Social Work
SWK 102 - Social Welfare Past and Present
SWK 200 - Social Services Volunteer Practicum
SWK 270 - Race, Class & Ethnicity: Their Impact Upon the Social Services
SWK 261 – Human Behavior & the Social Environment
SWK 301 - Generalist Practice I
SWK 302 - Generalist Practice II

The student must achieve a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.75 ("B-") in the five (5) introductory 100 and 200 level social work courses prior to being considered for field education placement assignment. In addition to the 2.75 cumulative grade point average, the student must earn a B- or better in SWK 301 and a B- or better in SWK 302. Students who earn below a B- in either of these courses are permitted to repeat the course one time to improve their grade. If they earn below a B- a second time, they must withdraw from the social work major or they will be administratively withdrawn from the social work major.

Social work majors and pre-majors must earn a grade of C or higher in all other social work courses (these courses include, but are not limited to SWK 361, SWK 380 and SWK 410). A student may repeat a social work course only once. A second grade below a C in the same course mandates withdrawal from the social work major.

Additionally, Field Education I and II (SWK 404 / 405) and Field Education Seminar I and II (SWK 406 / 407) are co-requisites. In order to successfully pass one course a student must pass the other. Therefore, a student must earn a "P" in Field Education I and a B- or better in Field Seminar I in order to continue into Field Education II and Field Seminar II. If a student does not earn a "P" in Field Education I and a B- or better in Field Seminar I, he/she must retake both Field Education I and Field Seminar I. A second grade of lower than a "P" in Field Education I and/or a grade of B- in Field Education Seminar I mandate that a student withdraw or be withdrawn administratively from the social work major. Likewise if a student does not earn a B- or better in Field Education Seminar II and a "P" in Field Education II then he/she must retake both Field Education II and Field Education Seminar II. A second grade of lower than a B- in Field Seminar and/ or grade of "P" in Field Education II mandates that a student withdraw or be administratively withdrawn from the social work major.

At the end of his/her field education experience, the student may have no more than 12 credits to complete his/her BSW degree requirements.

Any student who fails to meet these academic requirements may be referred to the Student Educational Review Committee (SERC) for review and for the Committee's recommendation, as detailed in sections 3.0 and 4.0 of this document. Students are expected to use all appropriate levels of review available to them within the School of Social Work prior to requesting a hearing with any of the University's deans, vice-presidents or the president. In requesting any reviews, it is the student's responsibility to put in writing the specific reasons for requesting the review and provide appropriate evidence. See Section 3 regarding policies and procedures for review of academic performance and Section 4 regarding formal complaints. Students who wish to request a SERC meeting should consult with their academic advisor who will advise them on the process for seeking a SERC meeting.

2.4.2 Graduate Students

MSW students are considered to be in academic difficulty if their GPA drops below 3.0 and will be placed on academic probation. Students in the advanced standing study plans are permitted one grade of "C", a second
"C" grade will result in dismissal from the MSW Program. Students in the any of the general study plans are permitted two grades of "C"; a third "C" grade will result in dismissal from the MSW Program. A Student Educational Review Committee meeting may be called if a student is at risk of academic dismissal due to earned C grades.

Students must have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 to move from the foundation to the concentration curriculum. If a student is having difficulty meeting the GPA standard, they are permitted to repeat one required foundation year course over and may do so only one time (such repetition is not allowed for field education). The option of repeating a required foundation course is not automatic and may be subject to review by the School’s Student Educational Review Committee (SERC).

The receipt of an "F" grade in any course including field education results in the automatic termination of a student from the MSW Program and Salem State University.

A student must have a GPA of 3.0 to graduate. Students who are at risk of completing their course work without a 3.0 average must meet with their academic advisor and the MSW Program Coordinator to discuss the possibility of additional requirements. Such additional requirements must be approved in writing by the Associate Dean of the School of Social Work and subject to the final approval by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

Students are expected to use all appropriate levels of review available to them within the School of Social Work prior to requesting a review or hearing with any of the University’s deans, vice-presidents or the president. MSW students who request a hearing before the University’s Graduate Education Council must demonstrate that the student has previously met with the School of Social Work SERC. In requesting such reviews, it is the student’s responsibility to put in writing the specific reasons for the review and provide evidence for performance evaluations or grades that were not in keeping with the School or program’s articulated academic standards.

The findings of the School’s SERC will be shared with other persons or systems with which the student is seeking review, appeal or grievance. See Section 3 regarding policies and procedures for review of academic performance and Section 4 regarding formal complaints. Students who wish to request a SERC meeting should consult with their academic advisor who will advise them on the process for seeking a SERC meeting.

2.5 Sources of Information on Academic and Professional Performance

Sources of information about whether academic and professional performance criteria are being met by a student in the School of Social Work may include but are not limited to those listed below. Faculty and administrators are obligated to insure that all aspects of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) are properly adhered to in using any of the following sources of information:

- Performance in oral and written assignments, examinations, social work skills labs, and other coursework
- Written or verbal feedback from faculty, field instructors, faculty field liaisons, and supervisors of volunteer human service activity
- Formal feedback from agency-based field instructors through evaluative tools
- Observation of classroom, volunteer, and field education behaviors
- Student’s personal statements and self-assessments
- Interviews with faculty and other professionals involved in the student’s education and/or potential field education placement
- Taped interviews (audio or video) that were designed for educational purposes;
• Educational information including evaluations from faculty and field educators in other social work programs that the student attended or reports to have attended

• Signed agreements between the School and the student, including the Field Education Teaching/Learning Agreement as well as any signed confidentiality or scholastic honesty statements required by program administrators, field educators, classroom faculty and/or the University.

2.6 Accommodations for Disabilities

No otherwise qualified student shall be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the School of Social Work solely on the basis of disability. A student with a disability is eligible for protection under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and may be eligible for a reasonable accommodations that will provide an equal opportunity to meet the academic criteria related to professional behavior and scholastic performance. This current document, the School of Social Work Professional Standards for Social Work Students, represents the essential duties of all social work students. Accommodations cannot override these essential duties.

Any otherwise qualified student with a disability that substantially limits one or more life activities, and who seeks reasonable accommodation, must meet with the University’s Disability Services in order to obtain the proper accommodation form from Disability Services – the form does not include information provided by the student to Disability Services, only the need for a specific accommodation and the nature of the accommodation. Students are required to present the form from Disability Services to each instructor who will sign the form that the student returns to Disability Services. Instructors are advised to retain a copy of the Disability Services form they have signed. It is against School and University policies for individual instructors to provide accommodations that have not been recommended by Disability Services.

In the event of accommodations involving a field education practicum, the student must present documentation from the University’s Disabilities Services to the field education staff. For BSW students, this documentation should be included in the BSW Field Education Readiness application; for MSW students, this documentation should be included in application to MSW Field Education (see Program Handbook and Field Education Curriculum Guides for additional information on these application processes). Accommodations will not be made that are beyond reasonable according to the resources of the field education office, the practicum site, and the essential duties of the student’s practicum role.

Students are required to present accommodation forms to instructors every semester even if the student has previously been enrolled in a class with the same instructor.

For additional information on the University’s Disability Services, visit the University’s website at www.salemstate.edu/3719.php or call 978.542.6217.

3.0 Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic and Professional Performance

Three levels for review of students’ academic performance are available at the School of Social Work. The level of review depends upon the severity of the concern and the potential for termination. Depending on the nature or urgency of a particular problem, all levels of review may not be utilized. For example, there are circumstances in which a student’s immediate dismissal may need to be considered regardless of presence or absence of any previous level of review.

Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty (including field instructors), field education staff, program coordinators, or school administrators will not be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about professional performance. In keeping with FERPA, faculty and educational staff have the right and responsibility to share pertinent information with each other for the professional purpose of identifying educational or professional issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. This is especially important in documenting students’ readiness to engage in field education.
3.1 Performance Relevant for Review and/or Dismissal from the School of Social Work

Salem State University assumes that all students come to the University with serious educational intent and expects them to be mature, responsible individuals who exhibit high standards of honesty and integrity in their personal, academic, and professional conduct. A review of a student’s performance and possible dismissal may occur under any of the following circumstances:

• Failure to meet or maintain criteria and standards as delineated and established in this document, the School of Social Work Professional Standards for Social Work Students (see all criteria under Section 2.0 above);

• 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 School of Social Work and becoming known after admission;

• Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior;

• Behaviors that violate the University's standards and policies specific to plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty

All forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, are considered to be serious offenses against the University community.

Academic Dishonesty includes but is not limited to copying another person’s work during examinations; purchasing papers; presenting as one’s own work material that has been copied from other papers, reports, websites, laboratory or computer results as well as presenting material from another course or paper without proper acknowledgment, citations and references.

Penalties for plagiarism and academic dishonesty may include an automatic grade of F for the course. In addition, faculty are required to report any instances of plagiarism and academic dishonesty to the appropriate Dean and the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, which may lead to suspension or expulsion from the University. See the current Salem State University Undergraduate and School of Graduate Studies' catalogues on the University’s website for complete descriptions of University policies on academic dishonesty and the appeals procedures.

3.2 Levels of Review

Level One – Flagging and Conferencing

A Level One review involves a faculty member and a student. When a faculty member has concerns about a student's ability to meet the academic criteria, whether related to professional behavior or scholastic performance, that faculty member will:

• Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the difficulties.

• Inform the student’s academic advisor, program coordinator (BSW or MSW) and/or field education coordinator of the concerns via use of a “flagging form” in order to identify potential patterns and issues
that are of concern. The student will be provided with a copy of the Flagging Form and a copy of the form will be placed in the student’s file. Concerns to be noted include the following areas:

- Attendance
- Assignments
- Writing Skills
- Oral Communication Skills
- Professional Behavior

If a problem arises in field education, the agency-based field instructor will discuss concerns directly with the student and with the faculty field liaison. It is the responsibility of the faculty field liaison to inform the field education coordinator of the concerns, file the appropriate flagging form, and insure that the student receives a copy of the flagging form.

Faculty will make every effort to meet with a student to discuss the content of a flagging form; in any case, a copy of the flagging form will be sent to the student at his/her address of record. In many instances, meetings between faculty and students resolve the concerns and do not necessarily lead to further reviews, pursuant to this section.

**Level Two – Assisted Conferencing on Student Academic Progress**

A Level Two review involves the faculty member, student, and the BSW or MSW Program Coordinator. The focus here remains on the student learning. Such meetings typically occur under the following circumstances:

- when questions are raised about the student’s compliance with specific program or University standards, policies, and procedures;
- when concerns raised during a Level One review have not been resolved.

If a problem arises in field education, the agency-based field instructor, faculty liaison, and SSW Field Education Coordinator will conduct the review with the student.

During a Level Two review, information is gathered by the appropriate program coordinator who will gather sufficient information to develop a plan to address that concern, if one is needed. If the problem is determined to be a faculty/student conflict, the program coordinator will refer the matter to the School's Chairperson. 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 have a current or potential impact on their performance or progress.

The BSW or MSW Program Coordinator and/or Field Education Coordinator will assess the nature of Level Two concerns with appropriate faculty, consult with the Chairperson or Associate Dean, maintain documentation, and decide if it is necessary to conduct a more comprehensive review, pursuant to Level Three – a Student Educational Review Committee meeting.

**Level Two – Faculty/Student Conflict Resolution**

This Level Two review is distinct from assisted conferencing on academic progress, as the School of Social Work recognizes that instances of faculty and student conflict do occur. These conflicts often include, but are not limited to, conflicts about grades, communication, and evaluation. Faculty/student conflict may range in seriousness from the relatively trivial to significant charges of violations of professional ethics. Each situation must be evaluated on its own merits. Some conflicts are resolvable within the School of Social Work, and some are appropriate to take to the formal complaint level either within or outside the School of Social Work. The conflict resolution process should be followed by students who are experiencing some difficulty with a professor but either do not wish to file a formal complaint or do not believe that grounds for filing a formal complaint exist (see below under Complaint Procedure 4.1).

Sometimes faculty/student conflicts impact the student's progress through the program and, hence, may be confused with issues that might be resolved through a Level Three Review, i.e., a Student Educational Review Committee meeting and review. However, in accordance with University policies, faculty/student conflict
cannot be addressed in a Student Educational Review Committee meeting or review. The resolution of student and full-time faculty conflicts must occur through mediation with the School’s Chairperson and may NOT involve other faculty. In an instance of conflict between an MSW student and an MSW adjunct faculty member, mediation occurs with the MSW Program Coordinator who may consult with the School’s Chairperson.

It is important for students at Salem State University to know that faculty (including academic advisors), in accordance with their respective faculty union contracts, are prohibited from discussing the work or behavior of their colleagues with students.

Procedure for faculty/student conflict resolution:

1. Ideally, a student having a concern or a problem with a faculty member should discuss his or her concern with that faculty member and agree on a mutually satisfactory solution.

2. If the problem is not resolved, or if the student believes there is a compelling reason why she or he does not wish to speak privately with the faculty member concerned, the student should discuss the concern with the Chairperson (in the case of full-time faculty or BSW adjunct faculty) or with the MSW Program Coordinator (in the case of MSW Program adjunct faculty).

3. When the conflict results in a meeting with the Chairperson, the entire conflict resolution process will be conducted orally and no written record of the process will be maintained.

4. The Chairperson or MSW Program Coordinator will attempt to address the issue between the student and the faculty member by a variety of means including but not limited to meeting with both faculty and student singly or together.

5. If the student is not satisfied by the resolution of the conflict resolution process, the student may file a formal complaint if grounds for filing a formal complaint exist (see Complaint procedure 4.1).

6. If the Chairperson is the faculty member with whom the student has a conflict, the Associate Dean of the School shall act as mediator; if the MSW Program Coordinator is the faculty member with whom the student has a conflict, the Chairperson shall act as mediator.

Additional comments about possible areas of conflict:

1) Grades - As a general rule, faculty members’ decisions about grades are accepted as the final word as part of the faculty member's responsibility to exercise his or her professional judgment. It is therefore highly unlikely that an administrator will ask a faculty member to change a grade and the administration itself does not have the authority to change a grade. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss grades, grading standards, and performance expectations with instructors in person. In order to successfully challenge a grade, the student must demonstrate that the grading was not conducted according to the published standards set by the appropriate program (BSW or MSW), the School, or the written criteria of the individual syllabus, course or instructor. See Section 4 on Formal Complaints for additional information on the appeal of earned grades.

2) Insensitivity and discrimination – A student sometimes experiences a faculty member as insensitive to their concerns or as biased against particular groups of which the student may or may not be members. Although faculty strive to be fair with students, difficulties can arise. Conflicts in this area might range from unintentional and relatively mild insensitivity to outright bias, prejudice or discrimination.

Student/faculty conflict growing out of the less intense insensitivity might well be handled at the conflict resolution level. Serious violations of students’ rights by virtue of bias or discrimination based on the student's racial, ethnic, religious, language, age, social class, or sexual preference group violate both University regulations and professional ethics. These situations, while hopefully quite rare, are taken seriously by the School and the University. Complaints about discriminatory practice must be made directly to the University’s Student Life Office and not to the School of Social Work; complaints regarding discrimination should be addressed in writing to the University’s Dean of Student Life or to Director for Student Advocacy. Consult the University’s website for name of persons currently holding these titles. Addressing these issues within the School of Social Work might interfere with due process for either the student or faculty member if the student proceeds to file a formal complaint against a faculty member.
3) Sexual harassment charges are treated equally as serious as discrimination charges by both the School of Social Work and the University. **Reports or complaints of sexual harassment must be made directly to the University’s Student Life Office and not to the School of Social Work; complaints regarding sexual harassment should be addressed in writing to the Dean of Students or to Director for Student Advocacy.** Consult the University’s website for name of persons currently holding these titles. Addressing these issues within the School of Social Work might interfere with due process for either the student or faculty member if the student files a formal complaint against a faculty member. (See the University’s **Policy Against Sexual Harassment** online or in the Undergraduate or School of Graduate Studies Catalog).

4) Faculty also have the right to be protected from the bias, prejudice and discriminatory behavior of students. Should the faculty/student conflict be related to the student's insensitivity or bias against the faculty member in connection with the professor's race, ethnicity, age, social class, gender or sexual orientation, the student's bias or behaviors may be considered in determining the student's appropriateness for the field of social work and a violation of the **Professional Standards for Social Work Students**.

**Level Three Review – Student Educational Review Committee (SERC) Procedures**

The **Student Educational Review Committee** is a standing committee of the School of Social Work. The standing members of the Committee include three members of the School’s full-time faculty with at least one full-time faculty member who represents the BSW Program and one full-time faculty member who represents the MSW Program.

The SERC is used on behalf of students in both BSW and MSW Programs. Its function is to work collaboratively with students to enable them to finish their education while maintaining the standards of the School. The SERC makes recommendations regarding appropriate planning for students who are in academic or other difficulty, and individualizes study plans for unusually well prepared students. Reviews ensure that students meet standards of performance set by the School and the social work profession in addition to providing a forum for discussion and resolution of difficulties. The goal of the SERC is to find a way to balance student needs and the integrity of the School's programs. The Committee meets as requests or demands indicate. **The findings of the School’s SERC will be shared with other persons or systems with which the student seeks additional review, appeal or grievance.**

The SERC should be distinguished from other levels of review as outlined in this document. Concerns brought to the SERC are related to the student's successful progression through the BSW or MSW Programs. The focus of the Committee's work shall be on the student and her or his learning needs. The SERC cannot be a forum to resolve interpersonal student/faculty conflicts, grading and evaluation disputes, or perceived discrimination or sexual harassment. Any difficulties with student/faculty relations must be resolved through the conflict resolution process or the formal complaint procedures as explained in other parts of this document.

**A SERC meeting is often is conducted when concerns have not been resolved in prior reviews. However, Level One and Two Reviews need not necessarily occur in order to proceed to the SERC as a Level Three Review.**

**Grounds for a SERC Meeting**

A SERC meeting is required under the following circumstances:

- for BSW students who have received two “Incomplete”s in social work courses in one semester;
- for Advanced Standing MSW students who have received a C in an academic course other than field education;
- for General Study Plan MSW students who have received a second grade of C in an academic course other than field education;
- for MSW students who are at risk for not maintaining a 3.0 GPA;
- for all students involved in any instance of alleged ethical violations or violation of professional standards delineated in this document.
Guidelines for the Student Education Review Committee (SERC) Process

1) SERC process is triggered by a request (per student handbooks). No effort is made to schedule a SERC meeting until the request plus all appropriate documentations are received by the SERC chair.

   a) A request can be made by
      i) Student*
      ii) Academic advisor
      iii) Current instructor
      iv) Current Faculty Field Liaison
      Field Liaisons are responsible for getting documentation from field instructors when the
      issues are related to field
      v) Program Coordinator
      vi) Field Coordinator
      vii) Any faculty with direct knowledge or concerns about the student

      *Student challenges to received grades are considered “formal complaints” and are not handled by SERC – see section 4.0 on Formal Complaints. In addition, BSW students who want to appeal decisions made the BSW Program Continuation Committee regarding continuation in the BSW program must follow procedures outlined in the BSW Student Handbook. The School’s SERC does not handle appeals on decisions made by the BSW Program Continuation Committee.

   b) Request must be in writing and not by email (per student handbooks)
      i) The request should include
         a) The issue as identified and understood by the requestor
         b) Suggestions as to what other information might be valuable to the SERC process and from
            whom that information should be requested
      ii) SERC chair will pass the information to the SERC member who is responsible for facilitating the
          SERC process as determined by the rotating schedule (referred to below as “facilitator”)

2) Prior to a SERC meeting, the SERC facilitator will

   a) Access and review student file
   b) Determine with input from other SERC members what information will be included in the SERC procedure according to salience, preponderance of past issues, and past progression information
   c) Advise the student’s advisor of the pending SERC
   d) Contact faculty identified by the requestor for information
   e) Contact the student to explain the reason and nature of the SERC meeting
      i) Explains that the student may bring one person as a support to the meeting and makes clear to the
         student that this person is not an active participant in the SERC process but only there for support.
      ii) Notifies the student of when they can expect to see all of the materials that the SERC will be
          receiving and reviewing
      iii) Students should receive these materials at least one week prior to the scheduled SERC, again not
          by email but either hand-delivered or by certified mail
   f) Schedules the SERC meeting at a date/time, including finding a location
      i) Notifies the mandatory SERC attendees:
         a) Student
         b) Requestor
         c) SERC committee
      ii) Notifies optional SERC attendees:
         a) Advisor (if the advisor is not available, the SERC will follow up with the recommendation)
         b) Program Coordinator or faculty member attending in the case of multiple and conflicting roles
   g) Collects written material, makes copies for each attendee and the appropriate program coordinator and
      distributes them confidentially prior to the day of the meeting
3) On the day of the SERC meeting:
   a) SERC facilitator will meet with the student, as planned, for a few minutes before the meeting to clarify the nature and intent of the meeting; the facilitator tells the student that s/he will come get the student and escort her/him to the meeting shortly.
   b) The SERC meeting (minus the student) convenes under the leadership of that meeting’s facilitator, to briefly share an overview of the situation & plan the flow of the meeting.
   c) The facilitator escorts the student to the meeting.

4) During the SERC meeting:
   a) The SERC chair opens the meeting with a statement that clarifies the purpose of the SERC, the meeting’s agenda, and the process going forward after the meeting is finished.

5) At the end of the SERC meeting:
   a) Facilitator attempts to insure that the student feels heard and thanks her/him for attending and repeats the process to follow.
   b) Student and supporter leave the meeting.
   c) SERC meeting continues until a recommended plan of action is agreed upon and a point person has been identified who will follow-up with the student and make sure that resources needed for the completion of the recommendations are in place. If the student agrees with the SERC’s recommendations, the facilitator oversees the student’s compliance with SERC recommendations.

6) After the SERC meeting:
   a) The facilitator shares the recommendation with the appropriate program coordinator and the student’s advisor if s/he is not in attendance.
   b) The facilitator composes a letter to the student, specifying the recommendations and decisions of the SERC, and circulates it among those who participated in the meeting (except the student and her/his support person). A confidential hardcopy of the letter is reviewed by SERC members who offer input or agreement with the letter as written; the facilitator sends the letter that meets consensus, via certified mail, to the student at the most recent address on record at the University. A confidential hardcopy of the letter is initialed by the SERC facilitator and placed in the student’s file. The student’s advisor, appropriate program coordinator, and the School’s Associate Dean are also provided confidential hard copies.
   c) As appropriate, the facilitator will notify the field education coordinator of the SERC meeting and the concerns and recommendations of the SERC if they are relevant to the student’s current or future field education practica.
   d) As appropriate, the facilitator will also notify external University departments of any referrals that have been made to an external University department. This notification will not divulge confidential information, but is to serve as notice that the student has been referred.
   e) The facilitator tracks the timing of the letter, confirmation of delivery, and return (or not) of the signed acknowledgement by the student; confirmation of receipt of letter as well as signed acknowledgement should be placed in student’s file. The facilitator sends copy of signed acknowledgement to the School’s Associate Dean OR notifies Associate Dean of lack of signed acknowledgement by deadline.
   f) In the event that the signed acknowledgement is not received, the SERC chair will send a letter to the student notifying them that the lack of receipt is understood to be agreement with the recommendations and that continuation in the School of Social Work will not be possible until the recommendations are complete.

7) If a student wishes to appeal the SERC recommendations, he or she must do so in writing (not email) within ten working days of receipt of the above letter from the SERC. The student’s letter should be addressed to the Associate Dean for the School of Social Work and must delineate areas of disagreement and/or concern. The Associate Dean will have access to all materials pertinent to the SERC recommendations and may or may not meet with the student who presents an appeal. In any case, the Associate Dean will respond to the student’s appeal in writing and by certified, return receipt mail within ten working days of receiving the letter of appeal. The Associate Dean’s letter will be sent to the most recent address on record at the School.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Associate Dean, the student may address the issue with the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services (for undergraduate students) or the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (for graduate students). Future appeals are directed to the Provost and Vice President of
Academic Affairs and ultimately to the President of the University. It should be noted that the lines of appeal outside of the School of Social Work include the same University personnel involved in responses to students’ formal complaints.

Important notes:
- No recommendation of change of grade should come from the SERC.
- It is possible that a SERC could be called when the student is planning to or has filed a complaint against an instructor. The SERC will use its discretion to determine whether or not the SERC process can move forward simultaneously with the complaint process.
- While it is often preferred, it is not required that a flagging form or an assisted conferencing (meeting with program coordinator) happen prior to the SERC.
- If the SERC is requested by the student, the facilitator will first ensure that all other problem solving steps have been taken by the student, such as meeting with their advisor and exploring opportunities for help throughout the greater University. The facilitator is to ensure that the request is not related to a conflict between the student and a faculty member or to the student wanting a change of grade and/or a change on a field education evaluation. If a SERC is deemed warranted by the facilitator, all other steps will be followed, beginning with a written request being provided by the student detailing the reasons for the request and providing appropriate documentation.

In the Level Three Review, there must be clear, concise documentation of the problem areas as well as verification that these concerns have been discussed with the student and attempted to be ameliorated where appropriate. In most instances, a Level Three Review is sufficient to deal with student performance and is the last decision-making step in the review process at the School of Social Work. If the student believes that a violation of academic regulations has occurred prior to or during the SERC meeting and/or process, she or he may file a formal complaint at any time (See Formal Complaint Procedures 4.1.)

4.0 Formal Complaints and Procedures

The present document, Professional Standards for Social Work Students, delineates the professional standards that are one aspect of the School’s academic regulations. Students enrolled in the School of Social Work have the right to file formal complaints against a faculty member or the School of Social Work per se, when they believe that a violation of an academic regulation or standard has occurred. An “academic regulation” refers to a formal, published policy of the University, the School of Social Work and/or course syllabi. Sources of academic regulations include standards or procedures for grading or evaluating students as published in a course syllabus, the School’s student handbooks and the School’s field education curriculum guides as well as the written documentation of any meetings or hearings as outlined in any parts of Section 3.0 above.

If a complaint moves beyond levels one, two or three as outlined above, the resolution of a formal complaint regarding an academic regulation rests solely with the administration of the School of Social Work or University and may not involve another faculty member unless otherwise specified by University policies and procedures, e.g., faculty who are on the School’s Administrative Committee or the Graduate Education Council, which may agree to hear formal complaints. It should be noted that the only grounds for the consideration of a change of grade is substantiated evidence that an academic regulation or standard was violated by the instructor or record. This evidence must be presented in writing to the School’s Chairperson who will have all materials related to the challenge reviewed by the School’s Administrative Committee, which is chaired by the Associate Dean. The Administrative Committee may or may not meet with the student. was violated if a student can demonstrate that an academic regulation or standard has been violated.

Students also have the right to file formal complaints against a faculty member under the University’s Discrimination Complaint Procedures or, in the case of sexual harassment, the University’s Institutional Complaint Procedures. In order to protect students’ rights in these circumstances, students should not address these issues at the School of Social Work but rather immediately consult the University’s Dean of Student Life.
4.1

Procedures for Handling Formal Complaints

Prior to filing a formal complaint that does not allege discrimination or sexual harassment, the student is encouraged to complete all informal and formal conflict resolution processes available in the School of Social Work, including meeting with the professor and participating in mediation as noted in Section 3.2.

In order to file a formal complaint, the student must submit an accurately dated, written, and signed statement, outlining the complaint and specifying the academic regulation the student believes was violated. The statement must be submitted within 30 days of the alleged violation. In complaints regarding grades, the 30-day period commences at the point in time that the grade was recorded and available to the student through the University Registrar's Office; in the case of a Field Education evaluation, the 30-day period commences at the point in time that the evaluation was reviewed with the student. The student's formal complaint statement should also specify what remedy would be regarded as satisfactory in order to resolve the complaint.

Formal complaints regarding full-time faculty members and BSW program adjuncts are addressed to the School's Chairperson and formal complaints regarding an adjunct teaching in the MSW Program are addressed to the MSW Program Coordinator. The School's current student handbooks list the names of all full-time faculty members and administrators. The Chairperson or, as relevant, the MSW Program Coordinator, will confer with the faculty member who is the object of the complaint and the School's Administrative Committee. The Chairperson or, as relevant, the MSW Program Coordinator will communicate recommendations and/or any findings that an academic regulation or policy was violated and whether the proposed remedy has merit to the student and the faculty member in writing within three weeks of receiving the complaint. All communications between students and administrators regarding complaints must be in writing (not email).

The student who wishes to appeal the ruling on a formal complaint, must do so in writing to the School's Associate Dean within twenty-one calendar days of receiving the Chairperson or MSW Program Coordinator's recommendation. The Associate Dean will respond within three weeks of receipt of the appeal. Subsequent appeals are made to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services (for undergraduates) or the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies who will refer to Graduate Education Council (for MSW students). After review by either dean, any additional appeals are sent to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and ultimately to the President of the University. MSW students should note that appeals to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Education Council must be filed within 14 calendar days of exhausting all processes available at the School of Social Work.

At any point in a formal complaint process, faculty may avail themselves of the protections available to them in the relevant faculty contracts.
Code of Ethics
of the National Association of Social Workers
Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly

Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human wellbeing and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession’s focus on individual wellbeing in a social context and the wellbeing of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

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 the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals’ needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession 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 basic 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.

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 it is being considered and the possibility of conflicts among the Code’s values, principles, and standards. Ethical responsibilities flow from all human relationships, from the 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 with respect to the ways in which values, ethical principles, and ethical standards should be rank ordered when they conflict. Ethical decision making in a given situation must apply the informed judgment of the individual social worker and should also consider how the issues would be judged in a peer review process where the ethical standards of the profession would be applied.

Ethical decision making is a process. There are many instances in social work where simple answers are not available to resolve complex ethical issues. Social workers should take into consideration 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 as well as the letter of this Code.

In addition to this Code, there are many other sources of information about ethical thinking that 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 ethical decision making of their clients’ and their own personal values and cultural and religious beliefs and practices. They should be aware of any 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 does not appear 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.
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 wellbeing 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 standards that follow 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

1.1 Commitment to Clients

Social workers’ primary responsibility is to promote the wellbeing 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.)

1.2 SelfDetermination

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

1.3 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 thirdparty 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 who provide services via electronic media (such as computer, telephone, radio, and television) should inform recipients of the limitations and risks associated with such services.

(f) Social workers should obtain clients’ informed consent before audiotaping or videotaping clients or permitting observation of services to clients by a third party.

1.4 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.
1.5 Cultural Competence 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 disability.

1.6 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.

1.7 Privacy and Confidentiality

(a) Social workers should respect clients’ right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from clients unless it is essential to providing services or conducting social work evaluation or research. 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 other identifiable person. 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. 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 thirdparty payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.

(i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semipublic 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 precautions to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of information transmitted to other parties through the use of computers, electronic mail, facsimile machines, telephones and telephone answering machines, and other electronic or computer technology. Disclosure of identifying information should be avoided whenever possible.

(n) Social workers should transfer or dispose of clients’ records in a manner that protects clients’ confidentiality and is consistent with state statutes governing records and social work licensure.

(o) Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker’s termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.

(p) 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.

(q) 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.

(r) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of deceased clients consistent with the preceding standards.

1.8 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) 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.

1.9 Sexual Relationships

(a) Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities 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 or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

1.12 Derogatory Language

Social workers should not use derogatory language in their written or verbal 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, relocation, illness, disability, or death.
1.16 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

2.1 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 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 disability.

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

2.2 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.

2.3 Interdisciplinary Collaboration

(a) Social workers who are members of an interdisciplinary team should participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the wellbeing 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 wellbeing.

2.4 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.
2.5 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.

2.6 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 additional service is 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.

2.7 Sexual Relationships

(a) Social workers who function as supervisors or educators should not engage in sexual activities or 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.

2.8 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 or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

2.9 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.

2.10 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.
2.11 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues

(a) Social workers should take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues.

(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, an NASW committee on inquiry, 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

3.1 Supervision and Consultation

(a) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation 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 or potential harm to the supervisee.

(d) Social workers who provide supervision should evaluate supervisees’ performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

3.2 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. Social work educators and field instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

3.3 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.

3.4 Client Records
(a) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in 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 state statutes or relevant contracts.

3.5 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.

3.6 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.

3.7 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.

3.8 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.

3.9 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

4.1 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.

4.2 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 disability.

4.3 Private Conduct

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

4.4 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception

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

4.5 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.
4.6 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.

4.7 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.

4.8 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

5.1 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.

5.2 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’ wellbeing, 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 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.

(g) 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.

(h) Social workers should inform participants of their right to withdraw from evaluation and research at any time without penalty.

(i) Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.

(j) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.

(k) 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.

(l) 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.

(m) Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants’ confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.

(n) 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.

(o) 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.

(p) Social workers should educate themselves, their students, and their colleagues about responsible research practices.

6. SOCIAL WORKERS’ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE BROADER SOCIETY

6.1 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.

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

6.3 Public Emergencies

Social workers should provide appropriate professional services in public emergencies to the greatest extent possible.
6.4 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 disability.
Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards

Purpose: Social Work Practice, Education, and Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards

The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person and environment construct, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, social work’s purpose is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons.

Social work educators serve the profession through their teaching, scholarship, and service. Social work education—at the baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral levels—shapes the profession’s future through the education of competent professionals, the generation of knowledge, and the exercise of leadership within the professional community.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate- and master’s-level social work programs. EPAS supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence. It permits programs to use traditional and emerging models of curriculum design by balancing requirements that promote comparability across programs with a level of flexibility that encourages programs to differentiate.

EPAS describe four features of an integrated curriculum design: (1) program mission and goals; (2) explicit curriculum; (3) implicit curriculum; and (4) assessment. The Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards are conceptually linked. Educational Policy describes each curriculum feature. Accreditation Standards (in italics) are derived from the Educational Policy and specify the requirements used to develop and maintain an accredited social work program at the baccalaureate (B) or master’s (M) level.

1. Program Mission and Goals

Educational Policy 1.0—Program Mission and Goals

The mission and goals of each social work program address the profession's purpose, are grounded in core professional values (EP 1.1), and are informed by context (EP 1.2).
Educational Policy 1.1—Values

Service, social justice, the dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, integrity, competence, human rights, and scientific inquiry are among the core values of social work. These values underpin the explicit and implicit curriculum and frame the profession’s commitment to respect for all people and the quest for social and economic justice.

Educational Policy 1.2—Program Context

Context encompasses the mission of the institution in which the program is located and the needs and opportunities associated with the setting. Programs are further influenced by their historical, political, economic, social, cultural, demographic, and global contexts and by the ways they elect to engage these factors. Additional factors include new knowledge, technology, and ideas that may have a bearing on contemporary and future social work education and practice.

Accreditation Standard 1.0—Mission and Goals

The social work program’s mission and goals reflect the profession’s purpose and values and the program’s context.

1.1.1 The program submits its mission statement and describes how it is consistent with the profession’s purpose and values and the program’s context.

1.1.2 The program identifies its goals and demonstrates how they are derived from the program’s mission.

2. Explicit Curriculum

Educational Policy 2.0—The Social Work Curriculum and Professional Practice

The explicit curriculum constitutes the program’s formal educational structure and includes the courses and the curriculum. Social work education is grounded in the liberal arts, which provide the intellectual basis for the professional curriculum and inform its design. The explicit curriculum achieves the program’s competencies through an intentional design that includes the foundation offered at the baccalaureate and master’s levels and the advanced curriculum offered at the master’s level. The BSW curriculum prepares its graduates for generalist practice through mastery of the core competencies. The MSW curriculum prepares its graduates for advanced practice through mastery of the core competencies augmented by knowledge and practice behaviors specific to a concentration.

Educational Policy 2.1—Core Competencies

Competency-based education is an outcome performance approach to curriculum design. Competencies are measurable practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills. The goal of the outcome approach is to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The ten core competencies are listed below [EP 2.1.1–EP 2.1.10(d)], followed by a description of characteristic knowledge, values, skills, and the resulting practice behaviors that may be used to operationalize the curriculum and assessment methods. Programs may add competencies consistent with their missions and goals.

Educational Policy 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession’s history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession’s enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Social workers

These six value elements reflect the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.

• advocate for client access to the services of social work;
• practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development;
• attend to professional roles and boundaries;
• demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication;
• engage in career-long learning; and
• use supervision and consultation.

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

• recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice;
• make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics\(^2\) and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles;\(^3\)
• tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts; and
• apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

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

• distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom;
• analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation; and
• demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.

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

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

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Educational Policy 2.1.5—Advance human rights and social and economic justice.

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

- understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination;
- advocate for human rights and social and economic justice; and
- engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

Educational Policy 2.1.6—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers

- use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry and
- use research evidence to inform practice.

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

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

Educational Policy 2.1.8—Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.

Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know 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

- analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being; and
- collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.

Educational Policy 2.1.9—Respond to contexts that shape practice.

Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers

- continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services; and
- provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.
Educational Policy 2.1.10(a)–(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals; using research and technological advances; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(a)—Engagement

Social workers

- substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
- use empathy and other interpersonal skills; and
- develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(b)—Assessment

Social workers

- collect, organize, and interpret client data;
- assess client strengths and limitations;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(c)—Intervention

Social workers

- initiate actions to achieve organizational goals;
- implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities;
- help clients resolve problems;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients; and
- facilitate transitions and endings.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(d)—Evaluation

Social workers critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

Educational Policy B2.2—Generalist Practice

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person and environment construct. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice. Generalist practitioners incorporate diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice. BSW practice incorporates all of the core competencies.
Educational Policy M2.2—Advanced Practice

Advanced practitioners refine and advance the quality of social work practice and that of the larger social work profession. They synthesize and apply a broad range of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary knowledge and skills. In areas of specialization, advanced practitioners assess, intervene, and evaluate to promote human and social well-being. To do so they suit each action to the circumstances at hand, using the discrimination learned through experience and self-improvement. Advanced practice incorporates all of the core competencies augmented by knowledge and practice behaviors specific to a concentration.

Educational Policy 2.3—Signature Pedagogy: Field Education

Signature pedagogy represents the central form of instruction and learning in which a profession socializes its students to perform the role of practitioner. Professionals have pedagogical norms with which they connect and integrate theory and practice.4 In social work, the signature pedagogy is field education. The intent of field education is to connect the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program competencies.

Accreditation Standard B2.0—Curriculum

The 10 core competencies are used to design the professional curriculum. The program

B2.0.1 Discusses how its mission and goals are consistent with generalist practice as defined in EP B2.2.

B2.0.2 Identifies its competencies consistent with EP 2.1 through 2.1.10(d).

B2.0.3 Provides an operational definition for each of its competencies used in its curriculum design and its assessment [EP 2.1 through 2.1.10(d)].

B2.0.4 Provides a rationale for its formal curriculum design demonstrating how it is used to develop a coherent and integrated curriculum for both classroom and field (EP 2.0).

B2.0.5 Describes and explains how its curriculum content (knowledge, values, and skills) implements the operational definition of each of its competencies.

Accreditation Standard M2.0—Curriculum

The 10 core competencies are used to design the foundation and advanced curriculum. The advanced curriculum builds on and applies the core competencies in an area(s) of concentration. The program

M2.0.1 Identifies its concentration(s) (EP M2.2).

M2.0.2 Discusses how its mission and goals are consistent with advanced practice (EP M2.2).

M2.0.3 Identifies its program competencies consistent with EP 2.1 through 2.1.10(d) and EP M2.2.

M2.0.4 Provides an operational definition for each of the competencies used in its curriculum design and its assessment [EP 2.1 through 2.1.10(d); EP M2.2].

M2.0.5 Provides a rationale for its formal curriculum design (foundation and advanced), demonstrating how it is used to develop a coherent and integrated curriculum for both classroom and field (EP 2.0).

M2.0.6 Describes and explains how its curriculum content (relevant theories and conceptual frameworks, values, and skills) implements the operational definition of each of its competencies.

Accreditation Standard 2.1—Field Education

The program discusses how its field education program

2.1.1 Connects the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practice setting, fostering the implementation of evidence-informed practice.

B2.1.2 Provides generalist practice opportunities for students to demonstrate the core competencies.

M2.1.2 Provides advanced practice opportunities for students to demonstrate the program’s competencies.

2.1.3 Provides a minimum of 400 hours of field education for baccalaureate programs and 900 hours for master’s programs.

2.1.4 Admits only those students who have met the program’s specified criteria for field education.

2.1.5 Specifies policies, criteria, and procedures for selecting field settings; placing and monitoring students; maintaining field liaison contacts with field education settings; and evaluating student learning and field setting effectiveness congruent with the program’s competencies.

2.1.6 Specifies the credentials and practice experience of its field instructors necessary to design field learning opportunities for students to demonstrate program competencies. Field instructors for baccalaureate students hold a baccalaureate or master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. Field instructors for master's students hold a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. For cases in which a field instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited social work degree, the program assumes responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective and describes how this is accomplished.

2.1.7 Provides orientation, field instruction training, and continuing dialog with field education settings and field instructors.

2.1.8 Develops policies regarding field placements in an organization in which the student is also employed. To ensure the role of student as learner, student assignments and field education supervision are not the same as those of the student’s employment.
3. Implicit Curriculum

Educational Policy 3.0—Implicit Curriculum: The Learning Environment
The implicit curriculum refers to the educational environment in which the explicit curriculum is presented. It is composed of the following elements: the program’s commitment to diversity; admissions policies and procedures; advisement, retention, and termination policies; student participation in governance; faculty; administrative structure; and resources. The implicit curriculum is manifested through policies that are fair and transparent in substance and implementation, the qualifications of the faculty, and the adequacy of resources. The culture of human interchange; the spirit of inquiry; the support for difference and diversity; and the values and priorities in the educational environment, including the field setting, inform the student’s learning and development. The implicit curriculum is as important as the explicit curriculum in shaping the professional character and competence of the program’s graduates. Heightened awareness of the importance of the implicit curriculum promotes an educational culture that is congruent with the values of the profession.

Educational Policy 3.1—Diversity
The program’s commitment to diversity—including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation—is reflected in its learning environment (institutional setting; selection of field education settings and their clientele; composition of program advisory or field committees; educational and social resources; resource allocation; program leadership; speaker series, seminars, and special programs; support groups; research and other initiatives; and the demographic make-up of its faculty, staff, and student body).

Accreditation Standard 3.1—Diversity
3.1.1 The program describes the specific and continuous efforts it makes to provide a learning environment in which respect for all persons and understanding of diversity and difference are practiced.

3.1.2 The program describes how its learning environment models affirmation and respect for diversity and difference.

3.1.3 The program discusses specific plans to improve the learning environment to affirm and support persons with diverse identities.

Educational Policy 3.2—Student Development
Educational preparation and commitment to the profession are essential qualities in the admission and development of students for professional practice. To promote the social work education continuum, BSW graduates admitted to MSW programs are presented with an articulated pathway toward a concentration. Student participation in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs are important for the student’s professional development.

Accreditation Standard 3.2—Student Development: Admissions; Advisement, Retention, and Termination; and Student Participation

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Admissions

B3.2.1 The program identifies the criteria it uses for admission.

M3.2.1 The program identifies the criteria it uses for admission. The criteria for admission to the master’s program must include an earned bachelor’s degree from a University or university accredited by a recognized regional accrediting association.

M3.2.2 The program describes the process and procedures for evaluating applications and notifying applicants of the decision and any contingent conditions associated with admission.

M3.2.3 BSW graduates entering MSW programs are not to repeat what has been mastered in their BSW programs. MSW programs describe the policies and procedures used for awarding advanced standing. These policies and procedures should be explicit and unambiguous. Advanced standing is awarded only to graduates holding degrees from baccalaureate social work programs accredited by CSWE, those recognized through its International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service, or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors.

3.2.4 The program describes its policies and procedures concerning the transfer of credits.

3.2.5 The program submits its written policy indicating that it does not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience. The program documents how it informs applicants and other constituents of this policy.

Advisement, retention, and termination

3.2.6 The program describes its academic and professional advising policies and procedures. Professional advising is provided by social work program faculty, staff, or both.

3.2.7 The program spells out how it informs students of its criteria for evaluating their academic and professional performance, including policies and procedures for grievance.

3.2.8 The program submits its policies and procedures for terminating a student's enrollment in the social work program for reasons of academic and professional performance.

Student participation

3.2.9 The program describes its policies and procedures specifying students’ rights and responsibilities to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs.

3.2.10 The program demonstrates how it provides opportunities and encourages students to organize in their interests.

Educational Policy 3.3—Faculty

Faculty qualifications, including experience related to the program’s competencies, and an appropriate student-faculty ratio are essential for developing an educational environment that promotes, emulates, and teaches students the knowledge, values, and skills expected of professional social workers. Through their teaching, scholarship, and service—as well as their interactions with one another, administration, students, and community—the program’s faculty models the behavior and values expected of professional social workers.
Accreditation Standard 3.3—Faculty

3.3.1 The program identifies each full and part-time social work faculty member and discusses her/his qualifications, competence, expertise in social work education and practice, and years of service to the program. Faculty who teach social work practice courses have a master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and at least two years of social work practice experience.

3.3.2 The program discusses how faculty size is commensurate with the number and type of curricular offerings in class and field; class size; number of students; and the faculty’s teaching, scholarly, and service responsibilities. To carry out the ongoing functions of the program, the full-time equivalent faculty-to-student ratio is usually 1:25 for baccalaureate programs and 1:12 for master’s programs.

B3.3.3 The baccalaureate social work program identifies no fewer than two full-time faculty assigned to the program, with full-time appointment in social work, and whose principal assignment is to the baccalaureate program. The majority and no fewer than two of the full-time faculty has either a master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program, with a doctoral degree preferred, or a baccalaureate degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and a doctoral degree preferably in social work.

M3.3.3 The master’s social work program identifies no fewer than six full-time faculty with master’s degrees in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and whose principal assignment is to the master’s program. The majority of the full-time master’s social work program faculty has a master’s degree in social work and a doctoral degree preferably in social work.

3.3.4 The program describes its faculty workload policy and discusses how the policy supports the achievement of institutional priorities and the program’s mission and goals.

3.3.5 Faculty demonstrate ongoing professional development as teachers, scholars, and practitioners through dissemination of research and scholarship, exchanges with external constituencies such as practitioners and agencies, and through other professionally relevant creative activities that support the achievement of institutional priorities and the program’s mission and goals.

3.3.6 The program describes how its faculty models the behavior and values of the profession in the program’s educational environment.

Educational Policy 3.4—Administrative Structure

Social work faculty and administrators, based on their education, knowledge, and skills, are best suited to make decisions regarding the delivery of social work education. They exercise autonomy in designing an administrative and leadership structure, developing curriculum, and formulating and implementing policies that support the education of competent social workers.

Accreditation Standard 3.4—Administrative Structure

3.4.1 The program describes its administrative structure and shows how it provides the necessary autonomy to achieve the program’s mission and goals.

3.4.2 The program describes how the social work faculty has responsibility for defining program curriculum consistent with the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards and the institution’s policies.

3.4.3 The program describes how the administration and faculty of the social work program participate in formulating and implementing policies related to the recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion, and tenure of program personnel.
3.4.4 The program identifies the social work program director. Institutions with accredited BSW and MSW programs appoint a separate director for each.

**B3.4.4(a)** The program describes the BSW program director’s leadership ability through teaching, scholarship, curriculum development, administrative experience, and other academic and professional activities in social work. The program documents that the director has a master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program with a doctoral degree preferred or a baccalaureate degree in social work from a CSWE accredited program and a doctoral degree, preferably in social work.

**B3.4.4(b)** The program provides documentation that the director has a full-time appointment to the social work program.

**B3.4.4(c)** The program describes the procedures for determining the program director’s assigned time to provide educational and administrative leadership to the program. To carry out the administrative functions of the program, a minimum of 25% assigned time is required at the baccalaureate level. The program demonstrates this time is sufficient.

**M3.4.4(a)** The program describes the MSW program director’s leadership ability through teaching, scholarship, curriculum development, administrative experience, and other academic and professional activities in social work. The program documents that the director has a master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. In addition, it is preferred that the MSW program director have a doctoral degree, preferably in social work.

**M3.4.4(b)** The program provides documentation that the director has a full-time appointment to the social work program.

**M3.4.4(c)** The program describes the procedures for determining the program director’s assigned time to provide educational and administrative leadership to the program. To carry out the administrative functions of the program, a minimum of 50% assigned time is required at the master’s level. The program demonstrates this time is sufficient.

3.4.5 The program identifies the field education director.

**3.4.5(a)** The program describes the field director’s ability to provide leadership in the field education program through practice experience, field instruction experience, and administrative and other relevant academic and professional activities in social work.

**3.4.5(b)** The program documents that the field education director has a master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and at least 2 years of postbaccalaureate or postmaster’s social work degree practice experience.

**B3.4.5(c)** The program describes the procedures for determining the field director’s assigned time to provide educational and administrative leadership for field education. To carry out the administrative functions of the field at least 25% assigned time is required for baccalaureate programs. The program demonstrates this time is sufficient.

**M3.4.5(c)** The program describes the procedures for determining the field director’s assigned time to provide educational and administrative leadership for field education. To carry out the administrative functions of the field at least 50% assigned time is required for master’s programs. The program demonstrates this time is sufficient.

**3.4.5(d)** The program provides documentation that the field director has a fulltime appointment to the social work program.
Educational Policy 3.5—Resources

Adequate resources are fundamental to creating, maintaining, and improving an educational environment that supports the development of competent social work practitioners. Social work programs have the necessary resources to support learning and professionalization of students and program improvement.

Accreditation Standard 3.5—Resources

3.5.1 The program describes the procedures for budget development and administration it uses to achieve its mission and goals. The program submits the budget form to demonstrate sufficient and stable financial supports that permit program planning and faculty development.

3.5.2 The program describes how it uses resources to continuously improve the program and address challenges in the program’s context.

3.5.3 The program demonstrates sufficient support staff, other personnel, and technological resources to support itself.

3.5.4 The program submits the library form to demonstrate comprehensive library holdings and/or electronic access and other informational and educational resources necessary for achieving its mission and goals.

3.5.5 The program describes and demonstrates sufficient office and classroom space and/or computer-mediated access to achieve its mission and goals.

3.5.6 The program describes its access to assistive technology, including materials in alternative formats (e.g., Braille, large print, books on tape, assistive learning systems).

4. Assessment

Educational Policy 4.0—Assessment

Assessment is an integral component of competency-based education. To evaluate the extent to which the competencies have been met, a system of assessment is central to this model of education. Data from assessment continuously inform and promote change in the explicit and implicit curriculum to enhance attainment of program competencies.

Accreditation Standard 4.0—Assessment

4.0.1 The program presents its plan to assess the attainment of its competencies. The plan specifies procedures, multiple measures, and benchmarks to assess the attainment of each of the program’s competencies (AS B2.0.3; AS M2.0.4).

4.1.2 The program provides evidence of ongoing data collection and analysis and discusses how it uses assessment data to affirm and/or make changes in the explicit and implicit curriculum to enhance student performance.

4.1.3 The program identifies any changes in the explicit and implicit curriculum based on the analysis of the assessment data.

4.1.4 The program describes how it makes its constituencies aware of its assessment outcomes.

4.1.5 The program appends the summary data for each measure used to assess the attainment of each competency for at least one academic year prior to the submission of the self-study.
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