

Department of Social Work Student Handbook



University of Detroit Mercy
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Accredited by the Council on Social Work Education

Social Work Student Handbook

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Introduction

The University of Detroit and Mercy College of Detroit legally merged in December 1990. Prior to then the University of Detroit and Mercy College of Detroit, each had separate CSWE accredited social work programs. The University of Detroit had been accredited since 1978 and Mercy College had been accredited since 1979. The program has evolved into a unified, quality educational program that prepares beginning social work generalist practitioners to serve the City of Detroit and its surrounding community.

Educational Purpose

Social work majors are prepared as entry-level generalist practitioners who receive a BSW degree from the University of Detroit Mercy. Our students are highly regarded by the human services network in a large metropolitan area. Further, many of our students choose to seek a graduate degree and are well prepared for advanced standing status in local MSW programs.

The Department is dedicated to educating well-prepared students who are able to secure jobs in both traditional and contemporary settings. Some of the traditional settings include foster care services, nursing home services, and residential care for mentally ill or developmentally disabled, and adolescent services as well as some of the more timely public health and substance abuse settings. Further some BSW graduates may secure jobs in hospitals or family services agencies which are settings usually reserved for MSW graduates.

Social Work Policy on Non-discrimination

The Department of Social Work admits and conducts all aspects of the educational program without discrimination based on race, color, gender, marital status, national or ethnic origin, age, creed, handicap, political or sexual orientation.

Mission Statement

The mission of the University of Detroit Mercy Social Work program is to provide academic experience and curriculum that enables students to integrate and apply knowledge, values and skills of the social work profession in order to become competent baccalaureate generalist social workers who engage in ethical practice, provide leadership in service, work with diverse client systems in a variety of settings and are committed to social and economic justice. The social work program's mission statement is an extension of the University's mission statement and provides the framework for program goals.

Social Work Program Goals

1. To prepare students for competent, entry level generalist social work practice.
2. To prepare students to understand the values and ethics of the social work profession that underpin competent professional practice.
3. To prepare students for leadership in service as an entry level social worker.
4. To prepare students regarding the importance of research and its link to best practices in social work service delivery.
5. To prepare students with a commitment to knowledge development and to continuous professional life-long learning.
6. To develop the students understanding of the role of human diversity in a complex, multicultural world.
7. To prepare students in the promotion of social justice.

Social Work Program Objectives

1. Apply the generalist social work perspective to client systems including individuals, families and small groups, organizations and communities.
2. Demonstrate problem solving levels of engagement, assessment, planning, goal setting and termination.
3. Apply knowledge of biopsychosocial variables that affect human development and behavior.
4. Apply critical thinking skills to generalist social work practice.
5. Support and adhere to professional standards, values and ethics.
6. Engage in culturally sensitive generalist social work practice with diverse and oppressed client populations.
7. Use supervision and consultation effectively to support their social work practice.
8. Use best practices when working with clients.
9. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
10. Develop an international perspective for social justice.
11. Understand how social policies influence social and economic justice.
12. Communicate effectively with diverse populations, including clients, colleagues, organizations and communities.
13. Demonstrate knowledge of the history of the social work profession and its response to vulnerable populations at risk who experience discrimination and limited opportunities.
14. Articulate the values of the profession, their own personal values and their relationship to ethical dilemmas and ethical decision making processes.

Definition of Generalist Social Work Practice

Entry level to the profession of social work is considered to be generalist practice. Generalist social work practitioners work with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations in a variety of social work and host settings. The generalist practitioner views clients and client systems from a strengths perspective in order to recognize, support and build upon the capabilities of all human beings. They use a professional problem solving process to engage, assess, broker services, advocate, counsel, educate, and organize with and on behalf of client and client systems. In addition, generalist practitioners engage in community and organizational development. Finally, generalist practitioners evaluate service outcomes in order to continually improve the provision and quality of services most appropriate to client needs. (Adapted from BPD-2006)

Department of Social Work Admission Policy and Procedures

Upon admission to the University of Detroit Mercy, any student may request a pre-social work status by submitting a Declaration of Major form to the Registrar's office.

However, to be formally admitted as a social work major, the student must:

1. Have completed the University English competencies requirements (ENL 131 or equivalent)
2. Complete a social Work Program application along with one letter of reference and submit it to the Chair of the Department (or his/her designee)
3. Satisfactorily complete the SW200-Introduction to Social Work course
4. Complete an interview with the Department Chairperson or their designee.

Once the above requirements have been met the Department of Social Work faculty convenes and makes a recommendation regarding the student's application. The student will receive a formal written acceptance, denial or conditional acceptance via mail.

A student who is not satisfied with the decision made by faculty may grieve the decision through the standard College grievance procedure.

Dismissal Policy and Procedure

Periodically the Department of Social Work encounters a student whose personal issues interfere with their success in the social work program. The following guidelines are used with students who present any of these apparent difficulties and may be the basis for terminating a student or placing a student on probationary status with specific requirements.

- ∞ Severe emotional symptoms
- ∞ Flagrant disregard for clients
- ∞ Bizarre behavior
- ∞ Evidence of substance abuse
- ∞ Impaired social functioning
- ∞ Cheating on exams
- ∞ Overt rejections of social work values and ethics
- ∞ Failure to follow social work program requirements
- ∞ GPA of less than 2.0

If a student presents any of the above issues then the faculty will discuss this at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. Students may also bring concerns about a particular student to the attention of the Chairperson of the Department.

- ∞ The faculty will then gather complete information regarding the concern and a recommended course of action will be proposed
- ∞ The student will be invited to meet formally with the faculty to discuss the concerns and they are free to bring an advocate at this time.
- ∞ The proposed resolution will be communicated in writing to the student.
- ∞ The student has the option of appealing the decision via the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Education and via the standard grievance procedure.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REVIEW
Guidelines for Retention and Termination
Adopted by the Social Work Department July 1, 2009

Social work education has the responsibility of assuring competence of people who enter the social work profession. Consequently, programs sometimes find it necessary to assess and reassess a student's readiness or suitability for a career in social work. To fulfill its obligation, the social work faculty has outlined the following policies and procedures that govern how to handle issues associated with retention and termination when a concern is raised about a student's performance.

Below is a list of possible issues that could result in an academic performance review.

Students who breach the Program's Academic Performance Standards may be subject to performance review for any of the following reasons:

- ∞ The student fails to demonstrate professional responsibility of meeting the objectives of the program and fulfilling all program requirements
- ∞ The student performs at levels of C- and below in course and/or field work
- ∞ The student breaches the standards for academic conduct, including but not limited to plagiarism, giving or falsifying any academic documents or materials, cheating, and the giving or receiving of unauthorized aid in tests, exams or other assigned school work projects.
- ∞ The student is excessively absent from class, as defined in the instructors' syllabus
- ∞ The student is consistently irresponsible in meeting classroom and program requirements (e.g., tardiness, absences on exam days, late assignments)
- ∞ The student does not engage in ethical behavior as described in the NASW Code of Ethics
- ∞ The student is found be in serious violation of UDM Student Disciplinary Rules
- ∞ The student is convicted of a violent crime or other felony
- ∞ The student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs in the classroom or field settings, which causes them to function in an impaired manner, exhibit inappropriate behavior, or demonstrate unprofessional conduct
- ∞ The student is unable to pass a drug screen as required by the field practicum
- ∞ The student interacts inappropriately or ineffectively with faculty, staff, peers, field instructors, or other collegial relationships

Academic Performance Review Committee

The Academic Performance Review Committee will be a committee of the full-time faculty. The Program Director will serve as the chair of the committee.

Responsibility of the Committee

The Academic Performance Review Committee will be concerned with problematic performance situations. Each student has the responsibility for discussing academic performance with his/her instructors, faculty field liaisons, and advisors.

Role of Committee Chair and Complainant

The committee chair is responsible for convening the committee, informing the student in writing that a complaint has come forward, gathering the information, recording the process, and communicating information to the student regarding the committee action and decisions. The complainant is viewed as the person(s) most knowledgeable about the situation under review and therefore responsible for presenting information and facts about the issue.

Student Privacy and Confidentiality

All procedures relating to the performance review shall be carried out in a manner that will protect the student's right to privacy consistent with federal and state privacy law. Members of the committee are expected to observe the confidential nature of the information made available to them.

Procedures and Process

A review meeting should be scheduled as soon as possible following the development of a concern or complaint. The chair will notify the student, the complainant, and the committee of the meeting time and place, as well as the nature of the problem to be discussed.

Attendance at the review meeting will be governed in the following manner:

- ∞ The student whose performance will be reviewed is expected to attend the performance review meeting. If the student has been notified but refuses to attend, the review will be conducted in his/her absence. The student may remain in the meeting until the committee begins its deliberations.
- ∞ The student may invite another student or staff person from within the institution to attend the Academic Performance Review Committee meeting and it is the student's responsibility to notify the chair of the committee ahead of time regarding who is being invited to attend.
- ∞ Other people who have significant knowledge of the problem or of the student's academic performance also may be invited by either the student or the committee chair.

- ∞ The chair has the authority to limit the number of people who can attend the review.

Appeal

The student has the right to appeal the committee's decision. Since an Academic Performance Review is not a student disciplinary hearing, the level of appeal shall be left to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Education.

Adapted from East Tennessee State University – Department of Social Work (2009)

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION, RETENTION AND GRADUATION

Because of the responsibilities inherent in social work and the potential to do harm in positions, academic requirements are necessary in a social work program. In addition to scholastic requirements for successful completion of courses, social work students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the values, ethics and conduct requirements of the profession in their three primary roles in the program: (a) as learners, (b) as students in a professional program, and (c) as future professional helpers. Academic performance standards in the social work program include cognitive, skill, scholastic, behavioral and professional components that are indicators of professional preparedness for practice.

The Academic Performance Standards for the UDM Social Work Program include: scholastic standards, values and ethical standards, self-awareness, interpersonal relationship skills, professional responsibility, critical thinking and problem solving abilities, and communication skills.

Students who are unable, or unwilling, to achieve or demonstrate the essential behaviors identified in this document may come before the Social Work Academic Performance Review Committee, in accordance with the program policies and procedures that govern how issues of student continuation in or termination from the program are handled.

Scholastic Standard: Includes overall GPA, GPA in required social work courses, and course grades.
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Essential Student Behavior:

- ✓ The student must achieve an overall GPA of 2.0
- ✓ The student must achieve an overall GOA of 2.0 in required social work courses
- ✓ The student must earn a C or better in all required social work courses.

Professional Values and Ethics Standard:
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Essential Student Behavior:

- ✓ The student displays judgment and conduct that are consistent with the values and ethics of the profession as described in the NASW Code of Ethics, as well as with established laws, policies, and professional standards of care.
- ✓ The student will demonstrate ethical behavior in working with diverse client populations, validating the dignity and worth of all people.
- ✓ The student will demonstrate professional and academic integrity in meeting the objectives of the social work program and in fulfilling all program requirements.
- ✓ The student will demonstrate respect for the rights of others and uphold the ethical standards of client privacy and confidentiality at all times.

Self-Awareness Standard: Students demonstrate professional preparations through a commitment to the process of self-reflection and self-critique, assuming full responsibility for professional growth and for protecting clients, peers, supervisors, faculty and other relevant parties from the adverse effects of performance problems and unprofessional behavior.

Essential Student Behavior:

- ✓ The student will demonstrate awareness of self and his/her impact on interpersonal and professional relationships.
- ✓ The student will demonstrate a willingness accept feedback and/or supervision in a positive manner and use the feedback to enhance his/her professional development.
- ✓ The student will prepare for, and effectively utilize, supervision and other forms of professional advisement and mentorship.
- ✓ The student will demonstrate a realistic and accurate self-awareness of his/her own strengths, limitations, values, and performance.

Interpersonal Relationship Skills Standard: Interactions with peers, clients, faculty, staff, advisors, supervisors, agency personnel, and field instructors reflect integrity, honesty, and cooperation, as well as an appropriate understanding of professional role and appropriate boundaries.

Essential Student Behavior:

- ✓ The student will relate interpersonally in a manner that is respectful, nondisruptive, nondiscriminatory, and characterized by maturity.
- ✓ The student will use proper channels for conflict resolution.
- ✓ The student will demonstrate appropriate use of self in the professional role.

Responsibility and Professional Preparedness Standard: Appropriate levels of responsibility and professional preparedness are demonstrated over the program course of study.

Essential Student Behavior:

- ✓ The student will demonstrate responsible and self-directed behavior in accordance with the program of student and the sequencing of courses for program completion.
- ✓ The student will demonstrate adherence to agency protocols and policies, dress codes, and documentation requirements.
- ✓ The student will demonstrate behaviors on campus, in the classroom in the field placement, in the community and with peers that are in compliance with program policies, institutional policies and professional ethical standards.
- ✓ Refrains from illegal drug use and demonstrates behavior that is consistent with UDM Student Standards on Drugs and Alcohol.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Abilities Standard: Individual reasoning reflects a comprehensive analysis that distinguishes fact from inference, conclusions that are grounded in relevant data, information, and evidence.

Essential Student Behavior:

- ✓ The student will demonstrate the ability to identify ways in which biological, psychological developmental, spiritual, socioeconomic, and environmental factors may affect an individual, family or groups of various sizes.

Communication Skills Standard: All verbal, nonverbal, and written communication exchanges are in accordance with professional standards.

Essential Student Behavior:

- ✓ The student will speak with dignity, respect, and cultural sensitivity to peers, clients, faculty, staff, advisors, supervisors, agency personnel, and field instructors.
- ✓ The student shows skill in building rapport and engaging clients, applying principles of sound communication.
- ✓ The student follows agency guidelines for recordkeeping.

Adapted from East Tennessee State University – Department of Social Work (2009)

Students in Academic Difficulty

Students, whose cumulative grade point average is below a 2.0, may not enter social work courses and may not be admitted to the program.

Social work students who are in the social work curriculum whose cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0 have one semester to bring their grade point above 2.0. If the student does not bring up their grade point to at least a 2.0 during the next semester then they will not be allowed in any further social work courses until their academic work is satisfactory (2.0 or better).

All social work students are subject to the academic probation process utilized by the College of Liberal Arts and Education.

Curriculum

Courses

The academic and field work components of the Department of Social Work are designed to prepare the student for beginning level professional practice as a BSW, as well as for graduate study. The purpose is to prepare students for beginning generalist practice with individual, families, small groups, organizations, and communities.

Since many of our students are non-traditional, older students with a wealth of life experiences we have attempted to develop a curriculum, which would expand on life experience with a liberal arts foundation and then a series of social work preparation courses. Our courses provide content on social work values and ethics, diversity, population at risk, social and economic justice: and include an emphasis on people of color, women, and those who live with disabilities in all our five (5) professional foundation areas:

Human Behavior and the Social Environment
Social Justice Issues & Policies
Social Work Practice
Research
Field Practicum

The social work curriculum is comprised of 13 required social work courses and 11 required supportive courses. Included in the 13 major requirements are two 5-credit courses in Field Placement. Please consult the Field Instruction Handbook for a complete description of the field component in our program.

College of Liberal Arts and Education Core Curriculum Requirements

Communications Skills (6 credit hours)

Writing Proficiency (Enl 131 or equivalent)
Speech (CST 101)

Math/Computer Skills (6 credit hours)

Math at the Intermediate Algebra level
Computer Literacy

Scientific Literacy – (9 credit hours)

Social Science – 3 hours
Natural Science – 3 hours
Social Science or Natural Science – 3 hours

Meaning and Value – (9 credit hours)

Philosophy – 3 hours
Religious Studies- 3 hours
Philosophy or Religious Studies-3 hours

Diverse Human Experience -(12 credit hours)

History– 3 hours
Literary Experiences – 3 hours
Aesthetic Experiences – 3 hours
Comparative Experiences – 3 hours

Social Responsibility – (6 credit hours)

Ethics – 3 hours
Contemporary Social Problems -3 hours

Full time students generally complete most of their liberal arts courses in their freshman and sophomore years since the social work curriculum encompasses nearly a full-time course load during junior and senior years. A student needs 126 credit hours for graduation.

Social Work Supportive Course Requirements

Academic Writing 131
Introduction to Psychology – PYC 100
Introduction to Sociology – SOC 100
Statistics- PYC 225, SOC 225, or HUS 496
The Science of Life – BIO 108
Intro to Computers- CIS 100
American Government- POL 110
Abnormal Psychology – PYC 342
Introduction to Economics – ECN 100
Fundamentals of Speech – CST 101
Introduction to Substance Abuse – ADS 100
OR
Introduction to Criminal Justice – CJS 130

Social Work Required Courses

SW 200 - Introduction to Social Work - 3 credit hours
English Competency at the ENL 131 level

SW 210 - Social Welfare and Social Justice - 3 credit hours

SW 310 - Social Welfare Policy - 3 credit hours

SW 320 - Human Behavior in a Multicultural Environment I - 3 credit hours

SW 325 - Human Behavior in a Multicultural Environment II - 3 credit hours
(Pre-requisite is SW 320)

SW 370 - Social Research Methods - 3 credit hours
(Pre-requisite same as SW 200)

SW 399 - Social Work Practice I - 3 credit hours
(Pre-requisite is SW 200, SW 210, SW 320)

SW 400 - Social Work Practice II - 3 credit hours
(Pre-requisite is SW 399, and must be taken simultaneously with Field Placement.)

SW 401 - Social Work Practice III - 3 credit hours
(Pre-requisite is SW 400, and must be taken simultaneously with Field Placement.)

SW 470 - Field Instruction I - 5 credit hours
(Pre-requisite is SW 200, SW 210, SW 310, SW 320, SW 325, and SW 399
In addition, students must make application and be accepted for Field Placement- see Field Placement Handbook for complete details)

SW 471 - Social Work Seminar I - 2 credit hours
(Must be taken simultaneously with SW 470 and SW 400)

SW 475 - Field Instruction II - 5 credit hours
(Pre-requisite SW 470)

SW 476 - Social Work Seminar II - 2 credit hours
(Must be taken simultaneously with SW 475 and SW 401)

Senior Year Field Placement

Field Placement is a significant part of your education for professional practice and is specifically designed to run concurrently with the practice and seminar courses. The social work program has a wide array of human services agencies that are utilized as field placement sites. Students are required to successfully complete 400 hours in the field placement. The first 200 hours must be completed senior year in the Fall semester, SW 470 (5 credits), and the second 200 hours be completed during the Winter semester, SW 471 (5 credits). Juniors must make an application for field placement prior Feb. 28, if they are anticipating field placement in the subsequent Fall semester.

Field Internship occurs during the student's senior year in the program. Students are required to spend 16 hours per week for two semesters (minimum 400 hours) in a human service agency where they are supervised by a qualified social worker. An application for Field Internship is to be obtained from the coordinator of field instruction. Personal interests of the student will be considered but placement will be based on the availability of appropriate social work supervision and an agency's conformity with the Social Work program requirements.

Grading

Field Placements are graded on the standard University scale A through F, as well as all social work courses. In addition, any courses in which a student receives less than a C will need to be repeated. In fieldwork, the field instructor recommends a grade, but the Faculty is the one who submits the final grade.

UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
4 -YEAR CURRICULUM PLAN

<u>Freshman Year - Term I</u>	<u>Credits</u>
English (ENL 131)	3
Fundamentals of Speech (CST 101)	3
American Government and Politics (POL 110)	3
Core Curriculum Requirement	3
Elective	<u>3</u>
	15
<u>Term II</u>	
The Science of Life (BIO 108)	3
Introduction to Economics (ECON 100)	3
Introduction to Computers (CIS 100)	3
Introduction to Sociology (SOC 200)	3
Introduction to Psychology (PYC 100)	<u>3</u>
	15
<u>Sophomore Year - Term I</u>	
Introduction to Social Work (SW 200)	3
Abnormal Psychology (PYC 342)	3
Core Curriculum Requirement	3
Math 101	3
Introduction to Substance Abuse (ADS 100) or	<u>3</u>
Introduction to Criminal Justice (CJS 130)	3
	15
<u>Term II</u>	
Social Welfare Policy (SW 310)	3
Core Curriculum Requirement	3
Core Curriculum Requirement	3
Elective	3
Statistics (STA 225)	<u>3</u>
	15

Junior Year - Term I

Social Welfare & Social Justice (SW210)	3
Human Behavior in the Social Environment I (SW 320)	3
Social Work Research Methods (SW 370)	3
Core Curriculum Requirement	3
Core Curriculum Requirement	3
Elective	<u>3</u>
	18

Term II

Social Work Practice Methods 1 (SW399)	3
Human Behavior in a Multicultural Environment (SW 325)	3
Elective	3
Elective	3
Core Curriculum	3
Core Curriculum	3
	18

Senior Year – Term I

Social Work Practice Methods II (SW 400)	3
Field Internship (SW 470)	5
Field Internship Seminar (SW 471)	2
Elective	5
	15

Senior Year – Term II

Social Work Practice Methods III (SW 401)	3
Field Internship (SW 475)	5
Field Internship Seminar (SW 476)	2
Elective	5
	15

Academic Advising Information

Upon admission to the University, the Department Chairperson or his/her designee should meet with all social work majors. The chair/faculty member will provide an orientation to the program, develop a project schedule of courses, and insure that any transferring credits are evaluated to complete the student's file. The student will then be assigned to a regular advisor/faculty from the social work program, which will assist them with registering for classes each semester and serve as a liaison for any academic problems.

UDM Social Work Association

The UDM Social Work Association is a student run organization designed to promote students' interest and cooperative activities within the University and Social Work Department. The Association also serves as a liaison with the Department to facilitate student/program concerns and often represents the social work student body in the University-wide committees as well as Department committees. A department faculty members serves as moderator for the Association.

Student Representation to the UDM Department of Social Work Advisory Board

The Department of Social Work maintains an Advisory Board that provides recommendations on curriculum and policy/procedures matters, which affect the program. Advisory Board members include representatives from various human services agencies in the community as well as liaisons from various interrelated higher education and social work programs in Michigan. The current president of the student association serves on the Advisory Board.

Advisory Board Members

Carol Watson, MSW Professor, Wayne County Community College District

Julie Alter Kay MSW Admissions Director Wayne State University- School of Social
Work

Harriet Saperstein M.A. and Adjunct Faculty, UDM, Community Development Program

Patrick J. Heron, MA, CSW Catholic Social Services of Wayne County

Rita Valade RSM, PhD Director Spalding University MSW Program

Robert Weaver PhD Professor University of Windsor, School of Social Work

Levan Townsel MSW School Social Worker, Redford Union School District

Student Association President & Representative to the Board

SOCIAL WORK TEACHING FACULTY

Billy Blodgett

Associate Professor of Social Work, Dr. Billy Blodgett also teaches sociology. He has an extensive background of practice experience in hospital social work, psychiatric social work and social work administration. He received a BA from Oral Roberts University, a MSW degree from the University of Texas in Arlington and his PhD in Sociology from University of North Texas. Prior to coming to UDM, he was named Professor Emeritus at Northern Michigan University. His areas of specialty are micro and macro practice, HBSE, and social welfare policy.

Karen Waters

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Associate Professor of Social Work, spent more than 20 years as a practicing social worker, including five years as executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters. Her most recent research is in the area of Black student attrition and retention in higher education. Waters received a B.A. in Social Work from Michigan State University and a M.S.W. from the University of Michigan. She received her Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Wayne State University. Waters taught at Wayne State University's School of Social Work before joining UDM in 1995. She served as Associate Dean of UDM's College of Education and Human Services and Chairperson of the Department of Social Work.

Aloha VanCamp

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Associate Professor of Social Work, teaches social work practice and research methods for the department of social work. She has an extensive background in mental health and program evaluation. Her research interests and professional presentations include assessment and evaluation and international social work. She has served as Dean of the UDM Weekend College and Chair of the Social Work program. Currently, she is interim chairperson for the Department of Sociology and Social Work. She holds a B.A. from Michigan State University, an M.S.W. from Wayne State University and a Ph.D. in Education Evaluation and Research from Wayne State University. She joined the University in 1990.

Social Work Faculty Information

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COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards

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Revised June 2003 and October 2004.

Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards Preamble

Social work practice promotes human well-being by strengthening opportunities, resources, and capacities of people in their environments and by creating policies and services to correct conditions that limit human rights and the quality of life. The social work profession works to eliminate poverty, discrimination, and oppression. Guided by a person-in-environment perspective and respect for human diversity, the profession works to effect social and economic justice worldwide. Social work education combines scientific inquiry with the teaching of professional skills to provide effective and ethical social work services. Social work educators reflect their identification with the profession through their teaching, scholarship, and service. Social work education, from baccalaureate to doctoral levels, employs educational, practice, scholarly, interprofessional, and service delivery models to orient and shape the profession's future in the context of expanding knowledge, changing technologies, and complex human and social concerns. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) promotes academic excellence in baccalaureate and master's social work education. The EPAS specifies the curricular content and educational context to prepare students for professional social work practice. The EPAS sets forth basic requirements for these purposes. Beyond these basic requirements of EPAS, individual programs focus on areas relevant to their institutional and program mission, goals, and objectives. The EPAS permits programs to use time-tested and new models of program design, implementation, and evaluation. It does so by balancing requirements that promote comparability across programs with a level of flexibility that encourages programs to respond to changing human, professional, and institutional needs. The EPAS focuses on assessing the results of a program's development and its continuous improvement. While accreditation is ultimately evaluative, in social work education it is based on a consultative and collaborative process that determines whether a program meets the requirements of the EPAS.

Functions of Educational Policy and Accreditation

1. Educational Policy

The Educational Policy promotes excellence, creativity, and innovation in social work education and practice. It sets forth required content areas that relate to each other and to the purposes, knowledge, and values of the profession. Programs of social work education are offered at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. Baccalaureate

and master's programs are accredited by CSWE. This document supersedes all prior statements of curriculum policy for baccalaureate and master's program levels.

2. Accreditation

Accreditation ensures that the quality of professional programs merits public confidence. The Accreditation Standards establish basic requirements for baccalaureate and master's levels. Accreditation Standards pertain to the following program elements:

- Mission, goals, and objectives
- Curriculum
- Governance, structure, and resources
- Faculty
- Student professional development
- Nondiscrimination and human diversity
- Program renewal
- Program assessment and continuous improvement

3. Relationship of Educational Policy to Accreditation

CSWE uses the EPAS for the accreditation of social work programs. The Educational Policy and the Accreditation Standards are conceptually integrated. Programs use Educational Policy, Section 1 as one important basis for developing program mission, goals, and objectives. Programs use Educational Policy, Section 3 to develop program objectives and Educational Policy, Sections 4 and 5 to develop content for demonstrating attainment of the objectives. The accreditation process reviews the program's self-study document, site team report, and program response to determine compliance with the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. Accredited programs meet all standards.

Educational Policy

1. Purposes

1.0 Purposes of the Social Work Profession

The social work profession receives its sanction from public and private auspices and is the primary profession in the development, provision, and evaluation of social services. Professional social workers are leaders in a variety of organizational settings and service delivery systems within a global context. The profession of social work is based on the values of service, social and economic justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, and integrity and competence in practice. With these values as defining principles, the purposes of social work are:

- To enhance human well-being and alleviate poverty, oppression, and other forms of social injustice.
- To enhance the social functioning and interactions of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities by involving them in accomplishing goals, developing resources, and preventing and alleviating distress.

- To formulate and implement social policies, services, and programs that meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities.
- To pursue policies, services, and resources through advocacy and social or political actions that promote social and economic justice.
- To develop and use research, knowledge, and skills that advance social work practice.
- To develop and apply practice in the context of diverse cultures.

1.1 Purposes of Social Work Education

The purposes of social work education are to prepare competent and effective professionals, to develop social work knowledge, and to provide leadership in the development of service delivery systems. Social work education is grounded in the profession's history, purposes, and philosophy and is based on a body of knowledge, values, and skills. Social work education enables students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession for competent practice.

1.2 Achievement of Purposes

Among its programs, which vary in design, structure, and objectives, social work education achieves these purposes through such means as:

- Providing curricula and teaching practices at the forefront of the new and changing knowledge base of social work and related disciplines.
- Providing curricula that build on a liberal arts perspective to promote breadth of knowledge, critical thinking, and communication skills.
- Developing knowledge.
- Developing and applying instructional and practice-relevant technology.
- Maintaining reciprocal relationships with social work practitioners, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Promoting continual professional development of students, faculty, and practitioners.
- Promoting interprofessional and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Preparing social workers to engage in prevention activities that promote wellbeing.
- Preparing social workers to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Preparing social workers to evaluate the processes and effectiveness of practice.
- Preparing social workers to practice without discrimination, with respect, and with knowledge and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
- Preparing social workers to alleviate poverty, oppression, and other forms of social injustice.
- Preparing social workers to recognize the global context of social work practice.

- Preparing social workers to formulate and influence social policies and social work services in diverse political contexts.

2. Structure of Social Work Education

2.0 Structure

Baccalaureate and graduate social work education programs operate under the auspices of accredited colleges and universities. These educational institutions vary by auspices, emphasis, and size. With diverse strengths, missions, and resources, social work education programs share a common commitment to educate competent, ethical social workers.

The baccalaureate and master's levels of social work education are anchored in the purposes of the social work profession and promote the knowledge, values, and skills of the profession. Baccalaureate social work education programs prepare graduates for generalist professional practice. Master's social work education programs prepare graduates for advanced professional practice in an area of concentration. The baccalaureate and master's levels of educational preparation are differentiated according to (a) conceptualization and design, (b) content, (c) program objectives, and (d) depth, breadth, and specificity of knowledge and skills. Frameworks and perspectives for concentration include fields of practice, problem areas, intervention methods, and practice contexts and perspectives.

Programs develop their mission and goals within the purposes of the profession, the purposes of social work education, and their institutional context. Programs also recognize academic content and professional experiences that students bring to the educational program. A conceptual framework, built upon relevant theories and knowledge, shapes the breadth and depth of knowledge and practice skills to be acquired.

2.1 Program Renewal

Social work education remains vital, relevant, and progressive by pursuing exchanges with the practice community and program stakeholders and by developing and assessing new knowledge and technology.

3. Program Objectives

Social work education is grounded in the liberal arts and contains a coherent, integrated professional foundation in social work. The graduate advanced curriculum is built from the professional foundation. Graduates of baccalaureate and master's social work programs demonstrate the capacity to meet the foundation objectives and objectives unique to the program. Graduates of master's social work programs also demonstrate the capacity to meet advanced program objectives.

3.0 Foundation Program Objectives

The professional foundation, which is essential to the practice of any social worker, includes, but is not limited to, the following program objectives. Graduates demonstrate the ability to:

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 without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
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 profession and its contemporary structures and issues.
- B6.* Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with systems of all sizes.¹
- M6.* Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to 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.

* Items preceded by a B or M apply only to baccalaureate or master's programs, respectively.

3.1 Concentration Objectives

Graduates of a master's social work program are advanced practitioners who apply the knowledge and skills of advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. They analyze, intervene, and evaluate in ways that are highly differentiated, discriminating, and self-critical. Graduates synthesize and apply a broad range of knowledge and skills with a high degree of autonomy and proficiency. They refine and advance the quality of their practice and that of the larger social work profession.

3.2 Additional Program Objectives

A program may develop additional objectives to cover the required content in relation to its particular mission, goals, and educational level.

4. Foundation Curriculum Content

All social work programs provide foundation content in the areas specified below. Content areas may be combined and delivered with a variety of instructional technologies. Content is relevant to the mission, goals, and objectives of the program and to the purposes, values, and ethics of the social work profession.

4.0 Values and Ethics

Social work education programs integrate content about values and principles of ethical decision making as presented in the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics. The educational experience provides students with the opportunity to be aware of personal values; develop, demonstrate, and promote the values of the profession; and analyze ethical dilemmas and the ways in which these affect practice, services, and clients.

4.1 Diversity

Social work programs integrate content that promotes understanding, affirmation, and respect for people from diverse backgrounds. The content emphasizes the interlocking and complex nature of culture and personal identity. It ensures that social services meet the needs of groups served and are culturally relevant. Programs educate students to recognize diversity within and between groups that may influence assessment, planning, intervention, and research. Students learn how to define, design, and implement strategies for effective practice with persons from diverse backgrounds.

4.2 Populations-at-Risk and Social and Economic Justice

Social work education programs integrate content on populations-at-risk, examining the factors that contribute to and constitute being at risk. Programs educate students to identify how group membership influences access to resources, and present content on the dynamics of such risk factors and responsive and productive strategies to redress them.

Programs integrate social and economic justice content grounded in an understanding of distributive justice, human and civil rights, and the global interconnections of oppression. Programs provide content related to implementing strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, and economic deprivation and to promote social and economic justice. Programs prepare students to advocate for nondiscriminatory social and economic systems.

4.3 Human Behavior and the Social Environment

Social work education programs provide content on the reciprocal relationships between human behavior and social environments. Content includes empirically based theories and knowledge that focus on the interactions between and among individuals, groups, societies, and economic systems. It includes theories and knowledge of biological, sociological, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development across the life span; the range of social systems in which people live (individual, family, group, organizational, and community); and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being.

4.4 Social Welfare Policy and Services

Programs provide content about the history of social work, the history and current structures of social welfare services, and the role of policy in service delivery, social work practice, and attainment of individual and social well-being. Course content provides students with knowledge and skills to understand major policies that form the foundation of social welfare; analyze organizational, local, state, national, and international issues in social welfare policy and social service delivery; analyze and apply the results of policy research relevant to social service delivery; understand and demonstrate policy practice skills in regard to economic, political, and organizational systems, and use them to influence, formulate, and advocate for policy consistent with social work values; and identify financial, organizational, administrative, and planning processes required to deliver social services.

4.5 Social Work Practice

Social work practice content is anchored in the purposes of the social work profession and focuses on strengths, capacities, and resources of client systems in relation to their broader environments. Students learn practice content that encompasses knowledge and skills to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. This content includes engaging clients in an appropriate working relationship, identifying issues, problems, needs, resources, and assets; collecting and assessing information; and planning for service delivery. It includes using communication skills, supervision, and consultation. Practice content also includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing empirically based interventions designed to achieve client goals; applying empirical knowledge 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.

4.6 Research

Qualitative and quantitative research content provides understanding of a scientific, analytic, and ethical approach to building knowledge for practice. The content prepares students to develop, use, and effectively communicate empirically based knowledge, including evidence-based interventions. Research knowledge is used by students to provide high-quality services; to initiate change; to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery; and to evaluate their own practice.

4.7 Field Education

Field education is an integral component of social work education anchored in the mission, goals, and educational level of the program. It occurs in settings that reinforce students' identification with the purposes, values, and ethics of the profession; fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge; and promotes the development of professional competence. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated on the basis of criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program objectives.

5. Advanced Curriculum Content

The master's curriculum prepares graduates for advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. Using a conceptual framework to identify advanced knowledge and skills, programs build an advanced curriculum from the foundation content. In the advanced curriculum, the foundation content areas (Section 4, 4.0–4.7) are addressed in greater depth, breadth, and specificity and support the program's conception of advanced practice.

Accreditation Standards

1. Program Mission, Goals, and Objectives

1.0 The social work program has a mission appropriate to professional social work education as defined in Educational Policy, Section 1.1. The program's mission is appropriate to the level or levels for which it is preparing students for practice and is consistent with the institution's mission.

1.1 The program has goals derived from its mission. These goals reflect the purposes of the Educational Policy, Section 1.1. Program goals are not limited to these purposes.

1.2 The program has objectives that are derived from the program goals. These objectives are consistent with Educational Policy, Section 3. Program objectives are reflected in program implementation and continuous assessment (see Accreditation Standard 8).

- 1.3 The program makes its constituencies aware of its mission, goals, and objectives and outcomes.

2. Curriculum

The curriculum is developed and organized as a coherent and integrated whole consistent with program goals and objectives. Social work education is grounded in the liberal arts and contains a coherent, integrated professional foundation in social work practice from which an advanced practice curriculum is built at the graduate level.

- B2.0.1 The program defines its conception of generalist social work practice, describes its coverage of the professional foundation curriculum identified in Educational Policy, Section 4, and demonstrates how its conception of generalist practice is implemented in all components of the professional curriculum.
- M2.0.1 The program describes its coverage of the foundation and advanced curriculum content, identified in Educational Policy, Sections 4 and 5. The program defines its conception of advanced practice and explains how the advanced curriculum is built from the professional foundation. The master's program has a concentration curriculum that includes (a) concentration objectives, (b) a conceptual framework built on relevant theories, (c) curriculum design and content, and (d) field education that supports the advanced curriculum. The program demonstrates how the depth, breadth, and specificity of the advanced curriculum are addressed in relation to the professional foundation.
- 2.1 The social work program administers field education (Educational Policy, Section 4.7 and Section 5) consistent with program goals and objectives that:
- 2.1.1 Provides for a minimum of 400 hours of field education for baccalaureate programs and 900 hours for master's programs.
 - 2.1.2 Admits only those students who have met the program's specified criteria for field education.
 - 2.1.3 Specifies policies, criteria, and procedures for selecting agencies and field instructors; placing and monitoring students; maintaining field liaison contacts with agencies; and evaluating student learning and agency effectiveness in providing field instruction.
 - 2.1.4 Specifies that field instructors for baccalaureate students hold a CSWE-accredited baccalaureate or master's social work degree. Field instructors for master's students hold a CSWE-accredited master's social work degree. In programs where a field instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited baccalaureate or master's social work degree, the program assumes responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective.
 - 2.1.5 Provides orientation, field instruction training, and continuing dialog with agencies and field instructors.

- 2.1.6 Develops policies regarding field placements in an agency in which the student is also employed. Student assignments and field education supervision differ from those associated with the student's employment.

3. Program Governance, Administrative Structure, and Resources

- 3.0 The social work program has the necessary autonomy and administrative structure to achieve its goals and objectives.
 - 3.0.1 The social work faculty defines program curriculum consistent with the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards and the institution's policies.
 - 3.0.2 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.
 - 3.0.3 The chief administrator has demonstrated leadership ability through teaching, scholarship, curriculum development, administrative experience, and other academic and professional activities in the field of social work.
 - B3.0.3 At the baccalaureate level, the social work program director who is the chief administrator, or his or her designee, has a master's of social work degree 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.
 - M3.0.3 At the master's level, the social work program director who is the chief administrator, or his or her designee, has a master's of social work degree from a CSWE-accredited program. In addition, it is preferred that the MSW program director have a doctoral degree.
 - 3.0.4 Social work program directors have a full-time appointment to the social work program and sufficient assigned time (at least 50% at the master's level and at least 25% at the baccalaureate level) to provide educational and administrative leadership. Combined programs designate a full-time social work faculty member to administer the baccalaureate social work program.
 - 3.0.5 The field education director has a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and at least two years post-baccalaureate or post-master's social work degree practice experience.

- 3.0.6 The field education director has a full-time appointment to the program and sufficient assigned time (at least 25% for baccalaureate programs and 50% for master's programs) to provide educational and administrative leadership for field education.
- 3.1 The social work program has sufficient resources to achieve program goals and objectives.
 - 3.1.1 The program has sufficient support staff, other personnel, and technological resources to support program functioning.
 - 3.1.2 The program has sufficient and stable financial supports that permit program planning and achievement of program goals and objectives. These include a budgetary allocation and procedures for budget development and administration.
 - 3.1.3 The program has comprehensive library holdings and electronic access, as well as other informational and educational resources necessary for achieving the program's goals and objectives.
 - 3.1.4 The program has sufficient office and classroom space, computer-mediated access, or both to achieve the program's goals and objectives.
 - 3.1.5 The program has access to assistive technology, including materials in alternative formats (such as Braille, large print, books on tape, assistive learning systems).

4. Faculty

- 4.0 The program has full-time faculty, which may be augmented by part-time faculty, with the qualifications, competence, and range of expertise in social work education and practice to achieve its goals and objectives. The program has a sufficient full-time equivalent faculty-to-student ratio (usually 1:25 for baccalaureate programs and 1:12 for master's programs) to carry out ongoing functions of the program.
- 4.1 The program demonstrates how the use of part-time faculty assists in the achievement of the program's goals and objectives.

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.

- B4.2.1 The baccalaureate social work program has a minimum of two fulltime faculty with master's social work degrees from a CSWEaccredited program, with full-time appointment in social work, and whose principal

assignment is to the baccalaureate program. It is preferred that faculty have a doctoral degree.

M4.2.1 The master's social work program has a minimum of six full-time faculty with master's social work degrees 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 have a master's degree in social work and a doctoral degree.

4.3 Faculty who teach required practice courses have a master's social work degree from a CSWE-accredited program and at least two years post-baccalaureate or post-master's social work degree practice experience.

4.4 The program has a faculty workload policy that supports the achievement of institutional priorities and the program's goals and objectives.

5. Student Professional Development

5.0 The program has admissions criteria and procedures that reflect the program's goals and objectives.

M5.1 Only candidates who have earned a bachelor's degree are admitted to the master's social work degree program.

5.2 The program has a written policy indicating that it does not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

5.3 In those foundation curriculum areas where students demonstrate required knowledge and skills, the program describes how it ensures that students do not repeat that content.

5.3.1 The program has written policies and procedures concerning the transfer of credits.

M5.3.2 Advanced standing status is only awarded to graduates of baccalaureate social work programs accredited by CSWE.

5.4 The program has academic and professional advising policies and procedures that are consistent with the program's goals and objectives. Professional advising is provided by social work program faculty, staff, or both.

5.5 The program has policies and procedures specifying students' rights and responsibilities to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs. It provides opportunities and encourages students to organize in their interests.

5.6 The program informs students of its criteria for evaluating their academic and professional performance.

- 5.7 The program has policies and procedures for terminating a student's enrollment in the social work program for reasons of academic and professional performance.

6. Nondiscrimination and Human Diversity

- 6.0 The program makes specific and continuous efforts to provide a learning context in which respect for all persons and understanding of diversity (including age, class, color, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation) are practiced. Social work education builds upon professional purposes and values; therefore, the program provides a learning context that is nondiscriminatory and reflects the profession's fundamental tenets. The program describes how its learning context and educational program (including faculty, staff, and student composition; selection of agencies and their clientele as field education settings; composition of program advisory or field committees; resource allocation; program leadership; speakers series, seminars, and special programs; research and other initiatives) and its curriculum model understanding of and respect for diversity.

7. Program Renewal

- 7.0 The program has ongoing exchanges with external constituencies that may include social work practitioners, social service recipients, advocacy groups, social service agencies, professional associations, regulatory agencies, the academic community, and the community at large.
- 7.1 The program's faculty engage in the development and dissemination of research, scholarship, or other creative activities relevant to the profession.
- 7.2 The program seeks opportunities for innovation and provides leadership within the profession and the academic community.

8. Program Assessment and Continuous Improvement

- 8.0 The program has an assessment plan and procedures for evaluating the outcome of each program objective. The plan specifies the measurement procedures and methods used to evaluate the outcome of each program objective.
- 8.1 The program implements its plan to evaluate the outcome of each program objective and shows evidence that the analysis is used continuously to affirm and improve the educational program.

Program Changes

The EPAS supports change necessary to improve the educational quality of a program in relation to its goals and objectives. The EPAS recognizes that such change is ongoing. When a program is granted initial accreditation or its accreditation is reaffirmed, the program is, by that action, accredited only at the level or levels and for the components that existed and were reviewed at the time of that action. Prior to the next scheduled accreditation review, changes may take place within the program. Although it is not necessary to report minor changes, programs notify the Commission on Accreditation (COA) of changes such as new leadership, governance, structure, and off campus programs. Depending on the nature of the change, the COA may request additional information. Prior to the implementation of a substantive change the program submits a proposal and receives approval. Substantive changes are defined as those that require a waiver of one or more aspects of EPAS.



Code of Ethics

of the National Association of Social Workers

Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 1999 NASW Delegate Assembly

Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. 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.

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

The *Code* offers a set of values, principles, and standards to guide decision making and conduct when ethical issues arise. It does not provide a set of rules that prescribe how social workers should act in all situations. Specific applications of the *Code* must take into account the context in which 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 well-being of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.

Value: *Integrity*

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

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

Value: *Competence*

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

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

Ethical Standards

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

Some of the 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

1.01 Commitment to Clients

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

1.02 Self-Determination

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

1.03 Informed Consent

(a) Social workers should provide services to clients only in the context of a professional relationship based, when appropriate, on valid informed consent. Social workers should use clear and understandable language to inform clients of the purpose of the services, risks related to the services, limits to services because of the requirements of a third-party payer, relevant costs, reasonable alternatives, clients' right to refuse or withdraw consent, and the time frame covered by the consent. Social workers should provide clients with an opportunity to ask questions.

(b) In instances when clients are not literate or have difficulty understanding the primary language used in the practice setting, social workers should take steps to ensure clients' comprehension. This may include providing clients with a detailed verbal explanation or arranging for a qualified interpreter or translator whenever possible.

(c) In instances when clients lack the capacity to provide informed consent, social workers should protect clients' interests by

seeking permission from an appropriate third party, informing clients consistent with the clients' level of understanding. In such instances social workers should seek to ensure that the third party acts in a manner consistent with clients' wishes and interests. Social workers should take reasonable steps to enhance such clients' ability to give informed consent.

(d) In instances when clients are receiving services involuntarily, social workers should provide information about the nature and extent of services and about the extent of clients' right to refuse service.

(e) Social workers 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.

1.04 Competence

(a) Social workers should provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, consultation received, supervised experience, or other relevant professional experience.

(b) Social workers should provide services in substantive areas or use intervention techniques or approaches that are new to them only after engaging in appropriate study, training, consultation, and supervision from people who are competent in those interventions or techniques.

(c) When generally recognized standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, social workers should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps (including appropriate education, research, training, consultation, and supervision) to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm.

1.05 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, age, marital status, political belief, religion, and mental or physical disability.

1.06 Conflicts of Interest

(a) Social workers should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. Social workers should inform clients when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the clients' interests primary and protects clients' interests to the greatest extent possible. In some cases, protecting clients' interests may require termination of the professional relationship with proper referral of the client.

(b) Social workers should not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.

(c) Social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. In instances when dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable, social workers should take steps to protect clients and are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. (Dual or multiple relationships occur when social workers relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business.)

Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.)

(d) When social workers provide services to two or more people who have a relationship with each other (for example, couples, family members), social workers should clarify with all parties which individuals will be considered clients and the nature of social workers' professional obligations to the various individuals who are receiving services. Social workers who anticipate a conflict of interest among the individuals receiving services or who anticipate having to perform in potentially conflicting roles (for example, when a social worker is asked to testify in a child custody dispute or divorce proceedings involving clients) should clarify their role with the parties involved and take appropriate action to minimize any conflict of interest.

1.07 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 third-party 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.

1.08 Access to Records

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

1.09 Sexual Relationships

- (a) Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities 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

2.01 Respect

(a) Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues.

(b) Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in 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, age, marital status, political belief, religion, 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 well-being of clients.

2.02 Confidentiality

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

2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration

(a) Social workers who are members of an interdisciplinary team should participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the social work profession. Professional and ethical obligations of the interdisciplinary team as a whole and of its individual members should be clearly established.

(b) Social workers for whom a team decision raises ethical concerns should attempt to resolve the disagreement through appropriate channels. If the disagreement cannot be resolved, social workers should pursue other avenues to address their concerns consistent with client well-being.

2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues

(a) Social workers should not take advantage of a dispute between a colleague and an employer to obtain a position or otherwise

advance the social workers' own interests.

(b) Social workers should not exploit clients in disputes with colleagues or engage clients in any inappropriate discussion of conflicts between social workers and their colleagues.

2.05 Consultation

(a) Social workers should seek the advice and counsel of colleagues whenever such consultation is in the best interests of clients.

(b) Social workers should keep themselves informed about colleagues' areas of expertise and competencies. Social workers should seek consultation only from colleagues who have demonstrated knowledge, expertise, and competence related to the subject of the consultation.

(c) When consulting with colleagues about clients, social workers should disclose the least amount of information necessary to achieve the purposes of the consultation.

2.06 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.

2.07 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.

2.08 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.

2.09 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

3.01 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 of or potential harm to the supervisee.

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

3.02 Education and Training

(a) Social workers who function as educators, field instructors for students, or trainers should provide instruction only within their areas of knowledge and competence and should provide instruction based on the most current information and knowledge available in the profession.

(b) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should evaluate students' performance in a manner

that is fair and respectful.

(c) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients are routinely informed when services are being provided by students.

(d) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student. Social work educators and field instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

3.03 Performance Evaluation

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

3.04 Client Records

(a) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in 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.

3.05 Billing

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

3.06 Client Transfer

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

(b) If a new client has been served by another agency or colleague, social workers should discuss with the client whether consultation with the previous service provider is in the client's best interest.

3.07 Administration

(a) Social work administrators should advocate within and outside their agencies for adequate resources to meet clients' needs.

(b) Social workers should advocate for resource allocation procedures that are open and fair. When not all clients' needs can be met, an allocation procedure should be developed that is nondiscriminatory and based on appropriate and consistently applied principles.

(c) Social workers who are administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that adequate agency or organizational

resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision.

(d) Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that the working environment for which they are responsible is consistent with and encourages compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics. Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to eliminate any conditions in their organizations that violate, interfere with, or discourage compliance with the Code.

3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development

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

3.09 Commitments to Employers

(a) Social workers generally should adhere to commitments made to employers and employing organizations.

(b) Social workers should work to improve employing agencies' policies and procedures and the efficiency and effectiveness of their services.

(c) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that employers are aware of social workers' ethical obligations as set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics and of the implications of those obligations for social work practice.

(d) Social workers should not allow an employing organization's policies, procedures, regulations, or administrative orders to interfere with their ethical practice of social work. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that their employing organizations' practices are consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.

(e) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate discrimination in the employing organization's work assignments and in its employment policies and practices.

(f) Social workers should accept employment or arrange student field placements only in organizations that exercise fair personnel practices.

(g) Social workers should be diligent stewards of the resources of their employing organizations, wisely conserving funds where appropriate and never misappropriating funds or using them for unintended purposes.

3.10 Labor-Management Disputes

(a) Social workers may engage in organized action, including the formation of and participation in labor unions, to improve services to clients and working conditions.

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

4. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals

4.01 Competence

(a) Social workers should accept responsibility or employment only on the basis of existing competence or the intention to acquire the necessary competence.

(b) Social workers should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work. Social workers should routinely review the professional literature and participate in continuing education relevant to social work practice and social work ethics.

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

4.02 Discrimination

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

4.03 Private Conduct

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

4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception

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

4.05 Impairment

(a) Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.

(b) Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.

4.06 Misrepresentation

(a) Social workers should make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the social work profession, a professional social work organization, or the social worker's employing agency.

(b) Social workers who speak on behalf of professional social work organizations should accurately represent the official and authorized positions of the organizations.

(c) Social workers should ensure that their representations to clients, agencies, and the public of professional qualifications, credentials, education, competence, affiliations, services provided, or results to be achieved are accurate. Social workers should claim only those relevant professional credentials they actually possess and take steps to correct any inaccuracies or misrepresentations of their credentials by others.

4.07 Solicitations

(a) Social workers should not engage in uninvited solicitation of potential clients who, because of their circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence, manipulation, or coercion.

(b) Social workers should not engage in solicitation of testimonial endorsements (including solicitation of consent to use a client's prior statement as a testimonial endorsement) from current clients or from other people who, because of their particular

circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence.

4.08 Acknowledging Credit

(a) Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed.

(b) Social workers should honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others.

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

5.01 Integrity of the Profession

(a) Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.

(b) Social workers should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession. Social workers should protect, enhance, and improve the integrity of the profession through appropriate study and research, active discussion, and responsible criticism of the profession.

(c) Social workers should contribute time and professional expertise to activities that promote respect for the value, integrity, and competence of the social work profession. These activities may include teaching, research, consultation, service, legislative testimony, presentations in the community, and participation in their professional organizations.

(d) Social workers should contribute to the knowledge base of social work and share with colleagues their knowledge related to practice, research, and ethics. Social workers should seek to contribute to the profession's literature and to share their knowledge at professional meetings and conferences.

(e) Social workers should act to prevent the unauthorized and unqualified practice of social work.

5.02 Evaluation and Research

(a) Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.

(b) Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research to contribute to the development of knowledge.

(c) Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice.

(d) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.

(e) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants' well-being, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.

(f) When 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

6.01 Social Welfare

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

6.02 Public Participation

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

6.03 Public Emergencies

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

6.04 Social and Political Action

(a) Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social

workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.

(b) Social workers should act to expand choice and opportunity for all people, with special regard for vulnerable, disadvantaged, oppressed, and exploited people and groups.

(c) Social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the United States and globally. Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate for programs and institutions that demonstrate cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people.

(d) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, or mental or physical disability.

