BSW

PROGRAM MANUAL

2013 - 2014
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

The purpose of this manual is to describe the structures, goals and expectations, the roles and responsibilities, and the policies and procedures that form the basis for, and guide the BSW Program. It was prepared by faculty and students for YOU. The handbook contains information about the BSW Program, the curriculum, admission to and progression through the program and students’ rights and responsibilities. Please refer to it whenever you have questions about the program.
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HISTORY OF THE BACCALAUREATE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Undergraduate social work education has long been associated with the University of Southern Mississippi. Social work courses were included in the curriculum of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology in 1960. Students planning to enter the social work profession were allowed to major in Sociology with an emphasis in social work. The social work courses at that time included Introduction to Social Work, Methods of Social Work, and a Field Work Practicum. When the Council on Social Work Education issued standards for the accreditation of baccalaureate social work programs, careful attention was given to the content of some sociology courses and several were used to support the social work degree.

In the fall of 1987, the University began reorganization. As a result, the undergraduate social work emphasis was carefully examined. The examination revealed that the program was not adequately meeting the needs of the students. Since the program was not accredited, students who graduated with a degree in Sociology with a Social Work emphasis were at a disadvantage. They could not compete with students from accredited programs for entry-level social work positions. They could not apply for licensure scheduled to begin in Mississippi in 1989 and when applying for graduate social work programs students would either lose credits or not be admitted as advanced standing students.

On a recommendation from the Reorganization Committee, the emphasis in social work was transferred from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology to the School of Social Work on July 1, 1988. A proposal requesting accreditation of the Bachelor of Social Work Degree was submitted to the Council on Social Work Education in 1989. The program was accepted into candidacy in 1990. The BSW Program was granted full accreditation in February 1996. The BSW Program has been continuously accredited since this time.

In the Fall, 2005, in response to demand for more social work education and to have an educational presence to address the needs of the employers in Coastal Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama and Northwest Florida, the School of Social Work established a new fully onsite BSW program at the university’s Gulf Park campus. The Gulf Coast BSW program has grown in a few short years to become one the most successful new programs offered at the Gulf Coast campus of the University of Southern Mississippi. Because we are one program with two locations, students may choose to take courses on either campus, based on availability and faculty advisor recommendation.

VISION & MISSION OF THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH

Vision: Advancing health and well-being through excellence and innovation in teaching, research, and service.

Mission: The mission of the College of Health at The University of Southern Mississippi is to create, apply, and transmit expert knowledge, within and across the domains of its constituent disciplines, for the well-being and betterment of individuals, community, state, nation and world.
MISSION OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

The USM School of Social Work develops and transmits social work knowledge and skills consistent with the values of the profession, informed by the culture and history of Mississippi. We are inspired by a vision of social justice and advocacy for the health and well-being of all people. Our graduates engage clients who primarily reside in the increasingly diverse Gulf South to produce dynamic solutions for personal, interpersonal, and system problems—especially those unique to the poor, oppressed, and underserved.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

We prepare students for competent, ethical, and culturally informed social work practice.
   We deliver a dynamic, integrated competency-based curriculum.

   We infuse opportunities across the curriculum for students to demonstrate mastery of social work knowledge, skills, and values.

   We promote a professional social work identity.

We advance knowledge relevant to social work practice and social welfare.
   We engage faculty, staff, and students in research and scholarship.

   We pursue and secure external funding to support research and program activities.

   We translate research findings and critical inquiry into scholarly products that inform practice, policy, and social service delivery.

We inspire realization of human potential.
   We promote healthy human growth and development.

   We develop dynamic strategies and actions to address oppressive social conditions.

   We model leadership and advocacy for social change.

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), a national professional social work education standard setting body, sets guidelines and policies which all accredited BSW and MSW programs must follow in order to attain their status as accredited institutions. The Master of Social Work program has been continuously accredited by/CSWE since 1976. The BSW program has been continuously accredited by CSWE since 1996. Students are also encouraged to review the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards for social work degree programs as set forth by the CSWE. The full text of the CSWE Policies is available at http://www.cswe.org.
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL

The School of Social Work is an autonomous unit within the College of Health. It is administered by the Director, who has delegated authority for certain educational and administrative tasks to individuals and committees within the School.

The administrative team of the School consists of the Director, a MSW Program Coordinator, a BSW Program Coordinator, the Director of Field Instruction and several staff.

The MSW and BSW Coordinators share in the overall management of the School, with emphasis on the MSW and BSW programs.

The Coordinator of Field Instruction oversees the operation of field programs by implementing and enforcing field policies. See the field handbook for current field policies and procedures.

STUDENTS RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES

Nondiscrimination Policy

The University of Southern Mississippi offers to all persons equal access to educational, programmatic and employment opportunities without regard to age, sex, sexual orientation, religion, race, color, national origin, Vietnam era veteran status or disability status. See www.usm.edu/aa-eeo/aaeeo-policies for the University’s AA/EEO policies including sexual harassment.

The School of Social Work program's organization and implementation is conducted without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disabilities, political beliefs or sexual orientation. The program faculty is committed to teach, encourage and promote an appreciation for and understanding of diversity in the School, College, University, community and profession. The School seeks diversity among its faculty, staff and students.

ADA Policy

If a student has a disability that qualifies under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) for information on appropriate policies and procedures. Disabilities covered by ADA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, or chronic health disorders. Students can contact ODA if they are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies.

Hattiesburg: The University of Southern Mississippi
Office for Disability Accommodations
118 College Drive # 8586
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Gulf Coast: The University of Southern Mississippi on the Gulf Coast
Office for Disability Accommodations
730 East Beach Blvd
Long Beach, MS 39560

Voice Telephone: (601) 266-5024 or (228) 214-3232 Fax: (601) 266-6035
Individuals with hearing impairments can contact ODA using the Mississippi Relay Service at 1-800-582-2233 (TTY) or email Suzy Hebert at Suzanne.Hebert@usm.edu.

Safeguarding of Records

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, university students have the right to inspect and review all records, files and data directly related to them. The University will not ordinarily release a student’s record to any outside agency without consent of the student. See www.usm.edu/registrar/southern-miss-and-ferpa-compliance-policy for more information.

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the University that no member of its community shall sexually harass another. Any employee or student who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action including termination. Sexual harassment is illegal under both state and federal law. For further information go to the student survival guide (university student handbook).

SOCIAL ISSUES AND POLICIES

Substance Abuse

The University prohibits the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees on University property or as a part of any of its activities. The University will impose disciplinary sanctions consistent with local, state, and federal laws on students and employees who violate this policy. For further information go the student survival guide (university student handbook).

Smoking

All University buildings are smoke-free.

ADVISEMENT

Advisement is an essential component of the Pre-SWK and BSW Program. The purpose of advisement is to provide guidance and support to the student in his or her efforts to achieve educational and professional goals. When students declare Pre-SWK as a major they are assigned an advisor (faculty and/or staff). The advisor assists PRE-SWK students in preparing for admissions to the BSW program. Once students are admitted to the BSW program, the advisor assists the BSW students in planning the program of study toward the BSW Degree.

Students must meet with their advisors every semester to register for the subsequent semester. During this time, the advisor approves class schedules and assists with the preparation of Applications for Degree. Advisors also discuss how the academic experience is “coming together” for students, the development of the student’s professional identity, and opportunities for professional development such as conference attendance. In addition, advisors provide information on life after the BSW degree (i.e. graduate school and preparation for employment).

When students identify perceived barriers to their academic and professional success, advisors will refer them to campus resources (i.e. writing center). On occasion, the advisor may address personal problems that affect the attainment of their educational and professional goals. However, advisors will not serve as a replacement for professional mental health services. If the advisor believes a student needs services beyond those provided by the school, he or she may be referred to mental health care services.

Each semester a list of students and their advisors is posted in the social work department. This list is updated every semester before pre-advisement for the next semester. Advisors may change throughout a student’s tenure in the program.
The BSW Coordinator and staff provide a form of advisement to the various social work student cohorts:

**PRE-SWK students** go through an orientation in the SWK 301 (Introduction to Social Work) course. This orientation includes, but is not limited to, information about the curriculum, the admissions process to the BSW program, TK20, the advisement process, professional expectations and how to handle potential challenges and/or problems.

**BSW Students:**

**1st semester:** Once students are accepted into the BSW program, they attend an orientation which includes, but is not limited to, information on an overview of the curriculum, student opportunities, TK20, professional expectations and how to handle potential challenges and/or problems as they matriculate through the program.

**3rd semester** (semester before graduation): This orientation provides information on the application for degree process, the licensure exam, how to prepare for graduation, information about graduate school and information about their field practicum.

### CURRICULUM DESIGN

With the newly revised and approved 2008 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), The Baccalaureate Social Work (BSW) Program moved away from a content-driven curriculum to a competency-based outcomes approach. The 2008 EPAS defines 10 competencies, which are considered common to all social work practice (EP 2.1.1-EP 2.1.10). Each of the 10 competencies consists of knowledge, values and skills that define what our undergraduates must know and be able to demonstrate to practice effectively. The school operationalized the 10 competencies through 41 specific practice behaviors. The BSW curriculum is built around these 41 practice behaviors with the overall goal of ensuring that our graduates are prepared to work competently with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

**Organization of Curriculum**

The BSW curriculum is designed to carry out the school’s mission, goals, objectives, by equipping students with the competencies needed to demonstrate the 41 practice behaviors through the provision of sequential and integrated classroom and field experience. Each curriculum component acts to further specify the general program objectives, builds on content of what has been previously learned and is linked with other components of the program and to the liberal arts base. The organization and sequencing of the social work curriculum provides students with an educationally sound progression of learning experiences, building proficiency for entering the profession as beginning generalist practitioners.

Our BSW curriculum is grounded in the problem solving, ego systemic perspective and general systems theory approach that provides an orientation from which
the social worker views client systems from a person-in-environment perspective. This theoretical framework for understanding human behavior, choosing interventions and evaluating practice provides the necessary underpinning for emphasizing a holistic approach to social work practice. By focusing on the context of the environment in which the client exists, the curriculum encourages students to address problems or issues at every practice level--micro, mezzo and macro, while emphasizing client empowerment and promoting social justice. Developed from an array of knowledge and theoretical foundations, interventions are flexible and can be customized for the uniqueness of client systems at various levels.

The BSW curriculum requires one hundred twenty-four (124) credit hours: thirty-five (35) hours of liberal arts (general education courses), thirty (35) hours of pre professional social work core courses (including general electives) and fifty-four (54) hours of professional courses (see the table below).

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<th>ORGANIZATION OF BSW CURRICULUM:</th>
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<td>Social Work</td>
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<td>Pre social work</td>
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See the advisement degree plan for a detailed list of courses required for each component.

**Liberal Arts (University Core) (35 hours)**

The General Education Curriculum (GEC) or University Core provides BSW students with a broad educational background that includes a liberal arts perspective. It teaches students how to acquire knowledge and influences their way of thinking and communicating on a broader level. It provides a broad basis for being engaged civic citizens who can think about society, people and their problems. The liberal arts foundation exposes students to various aspects of culture including art, literature, science, history and philosophy.

The liberal arts courses are classified into five categories: written and oral communication; natural sciences and mathematics; humanities; aesthetic values; and social and behavioral sciences. The focus of courses in these categories is on the acquisition and integration of relevant knowledge; the development of intellectual skills in learning; and the enlargement and refinement of ideas and values, and aesthetic appreciation. They complement the social work professional foundation by providing a broad exposure to diverse ideas. These educational experiences encourage critical thought and analysis, and add to the social work foundation.
Pre Professional Social Work Core (35 hours)

The School of Social Work requires students to take an additional 35 ‘core’ hours. The pre professional social work core is comprised of courses that extend the university core. So, in addition to the courses in the university core, the pre professional social work core consists of writing, computer competency, oral communication, human sexuality, foreign language, sociology, psychology and general elective courses.

Social Work Professional Foundation (54 hours)

The faculty believes it is important for students to be informed of what the social work profession entails before they choose social work as a career. Therefore, students are required to take three (9 hrs) pre social work courses: Introduction to Social Work (SWK 301), Social Service Systems (SWK 300) and Human Diversity in a Changing World (SWK 315) before applying to the BSW program. These courses provide information about the profession, including its history and the knowledge and the values and skills needed to become effective, engaged, generalist practitioners.

The social work courses in the BSW professional foundation (45 hours) are built on the content from the Liberal Arts Core courses, the pre-professional social work core courses and the three pre social work courses. The professional foundation of the curriculum is designed to provide students with the requisite 10 competencies essential for generalist practice, with the goal of being able to demonstrate the 41 practice behaviors upon graduation.

Course Sequencing

Students follow a prescribed progression plan or a sequencing of social work courses that dictate when they can take any given course. These courses are sequenced in such a way as to reinforce learning across the curriculum. Students are expected to possess the prerequisite knowledge and skills prior to entering each subsequent course. Each prerequisite has been chosen over time after consideration of the knowledge and skills needed for successful completion of each social work course.

The first semester of classes are clustered to provide an emphasis on micro/mezzo level social work practice. Interviewing and Recording (SWK 329) provides information about the fundamentals of good oral and written communication skills for social work practice. Social Work Practice I (SWK 330) provides information on generalist practice skills with a focus on direct services to individuals and families. The Human Behavior and the Social Environment I: Transitions in Early Life (SWK 340) course provides information on the study of the interrelations of the biological, social, cultural, spiritual, environmental and psychological factors in human behavior with an emphasis on life transitions and their relevance and application in early life and social work practice.
The second semester of courses builds on the first cluster and has a more mezzo/macro focus for social work practice. Students take Social Work Practice II (SWK 331), which is a continuation of SWK 330 but with an emphasis on organizations, groups and communities. The Human Behavior and the Social Environment II: Transitions in Adulthood course (SWK 341), is an extension of SWK 340 (Transitions in Early Life). The Methods of Social Work Research (SWK 420) course focuses on group level data for informing practice and policy. Students also take a social work general elective (of their choosing) during this semester.

The third semester of courses provides an emphasis on macro level social work practice. Social Welfare Policy and Analysis (SWK 400) provides information on the examination of the construction, analysis and implementation of social welfare policy at local, state and federal levels. The Human Rights and Social Justice (SWK 415) course provides students with theories and practices of human rights and social justice related to oppressed and marginalized people. The Crisis Intervention (SWK 493) course provides theory and interventions to assist the client in coping with various crises. Students also take a social work general elective (of their choosing).

The final semester of the BSW program is dedicated to field and the integration of the previous 42 credit hours of social work course content with actual practice. Students must have a 2.5 or higher GPA and may not take additional courses while enrolled in the field courses.

The Field Education (SWK 430) course is a 9 hours credit course. The 450 hour practicum allows students to demonstrate the practice behaviors in their work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, sexual orientation, social, physical and religious backgrounds.

To promote integration of classroom learning and agency experience, students attend a face to face Capstone Field Seminar (SWK 431) once a week. The seminar component is a discussion format in which students process their learning experiences and make necessary conceptual links back to curriculum and the value base of the profession. It is a three hour course which, in addition to class discussion, also involves written assignments and presentations.

See the field handbook for more information about field requirements at www.usm.edu/social-work
A recommended progression per semester of the degree plan through the BSW curriculum is provided in the following table:

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<td>SWK 301- Introduction to Social Work</td>
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<td>SWK 300 – Social Service Systems</td>
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<td>SWK 315- Human Diversity in a Changing World</td>
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<th>BSW Courses (45hrs)</th>
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<tr>
<td>SWK 330 -- Social Work Practice I</td>
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<td>SWK 340 – HBSE I Transitions in Early Life</td>
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<td>SWK 331 – Social Work Practice II</td>
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<td>SWK 341 -- HBSE II Transitions in Adulthood</td>
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<td>SWK 420- Social Work Research</td>
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<td>SWK elective</td>
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<th>3rd Semester (12hrs)</th>
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<td>SWK 400 – Social Welfare Policy Analysis</td>
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<td>SWK 415 – Human Rights and Social Justice</td>
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<td>SWK 493 – Crisis Intervention</td>
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<td>SWK elective</td>
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<td>SWK 430 – Field Education (9 hrs)</td>
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Credit for Life Experiences

Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience is not given in lieu of the field placement or any other required social work course.

**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**Required Pre-SWK Courses:**

**301. INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK** (3 hrs) Introduction to Social Work as a profession and to its practice methodologies, with an emphasis on the Generalist Method

**300. SOCIAL SERVICE SYSTEMS** (3 hrs) Study of the major social service systems in which social workers practice. Historical perspectives, value issues and current administrative policies are examined
315. HUMAN DIVERSITY IN A CHANGING WORLD (3 hrs) Cultural, social and psychological implications of diverse lifestyles for social work practice. Differences/similarities among various cultures and implications for social work practice are explored.

Required BSW Courses: (*MAJORS ONLY)


330*. SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE I (3 hrs) Corequisites: SWK 329 & SWK 340. Development of generalist practice skills with a focus on direct services to individuals and families.

331*. SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE II (3 hrs) Prerequisite: SWK 330. Corequisites: SWK 341 and SWK 420. Models of social work practice carried out in groups, organizations and communities with an emphasis on macro practice.

340*. HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT I: TRANSITIONS IN EARLY LIFE (3 hrs) Prerequisites: PSY 275, and CHS 430, or BSC 250/Lab or BSC 251/Lab. Co-requisites: SWK 329 and SWK 330. Study of the interrelations of the biological, social, cultural, spiritual, environmental and psychological factors in human behavior, life transitions and their relevance and application in early life and social work practice.


400*. SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY AND ANALYSIS (3 hrs) Prerequisites: SWK 331, SWK 341 AND SWK 420. Co-requisites: SWK 415 & 493. Examination of the construction, analysis, and implementation of social welfare policy at local, state, and federal levels.


493*. CRISIS INTERVENTION (3 hrs) Prerequisites: SWK 331, SWK 341 and SWK 420. Corequisites: SWK 400 and SWK 415. Theory and interventions for the helping professional to assist the client in coping with various crises.

430*. FIELD EDUCATION (9 hrs) Prerequisites: Must have completed the required university general education curriculum, the social work core, and the professional foundation. The student must have at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA. Corequisite: SWK 431. This internship in a social service agency provides experience in direct service to client systems and enhances and
develops generalist practice skills. This course is the only one in the social work curriculum where students earn a Pass/Fail grade

431* FIELD SEMINAR (3 hrs) Corequisite: SWK 430. The seminar enables students to further develop generalist practice skills and integrate professional knowledge, values, skills and theory with practice.

Social Work Electives (6 hours are required)

492. SPECIAL PROBLEMS (3hrs) (May be repeated up to 6 credit hrs.) Allows a student or a group of students to study issues of special significance for social work practice that are not normally addressed by regular courses.

405. SOCIAL WORK with HIGH RISK POPULATIONS. (3hrs) Introduces students to case management services to selected high-risk populations; focuses on models, practices, roles, assessments, interventions and emerging trends.

411. SPIRITUALITY IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE. (3hrs). This course addresses issues of spirituality and religion in the practice of generalist social work.

421. SOCIAL WORK: GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT. (3hrs). This course will provide a framework for critical analysis of the dynamics of healthy grief and bereavement.

435. GRANT WRITING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS. (3hrs). Introduces students to the principles of grant proposal development and design; course culminates in students producing a fundable grant proposal in the human service field.

488* SOCIAL WORK AND FIRST NATIONS/INDIGENOUS PEOPLE. (3hrs). Prerequisite: SWK 330. Examines issues of special significance to social work practice in working with First Nations/Indigenous People.

494. SOCIAL WORK WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (3hrs) Prerequisite: SWK 330. Overview of child welfare systems providing services to children and their families along with practice strategies.

495. HUMAN RIGHTS & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN JAMAICA (4hrs) Prerequisite: Pre-social work or social work major and permission of the instructor. This study abroad course provides a cross cultural experience where students learn about Jamaican culture, social development, social welfare, and social justice.

496. SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS (3hrs) Prerequisite: SWK 330. Examines the challenges and opportunities of social work practice in education and the roles and functions of social workers within a complex ecological system of home/school/community; addresses the impact of issues such as violence, AIDS, physical and sexual abuse, drugs, and racism.

497. SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE AND FAMILY VIOLENCE (3hrs) Prerequisite: SWK 330. Examines family violence and suggests strategies for social work intervention with violent families, including those involving child abuse and neglect, spouse abuse and elder abuse. The problem is viewed from the dual perspectives of societal concerns and social work interventions, including policies and programs, and work with individual families.
ADMISSIONS

The program’s admissions criteria and procedures are designed to admit students with the capacity to become effective and competent social work professionals. The BSW admissions committee is composed of faculty and administrators with the responsibility of reviewing admission materials and making a decision about the applicant’s potential ‘fit’ with the program and ultimately the social work profession.

When students are admitted to The University of Southern Mississippi, they can choose Pre-SWK (Social Work) as their major. Students already enrolled at USM can change their major to Pre-SWK by filling out a change of major form (they must have at least a 2.0 GPA).

During the students’ pre-social work semesters, once all pre requisites have been met, students can apply to the BSW program. The following are admission standards:

The following **admission standards** must be met by all applicants to the BSW program:

- Complete the following prerequisite courses:
  - Three Pre professional courses:
    - Social Service Systems (SWK 300)
    - Introductions to Social Work (SWK 301)
    - Human Diversity in a Changing World (SWK 315)
  - Human Sexuality (CHS 430)
  - Developmental Psychology (PSY 275)
  - College Algebra (MAT 100 or higher)
- Complete all but 6-9 hours of the remaining General Education Curriculum (GEC) and the Social Work Program Curriculum requirements listed in DEG 02 and DEG 03 (see the 2013-2014 University Undergraduate Bulletin, page 325)
- Earn grades of C or above in all core required courses (including transfer courses) used to meet the social work degree requirements
- Maintain a Southern Miss GPA of 2.5 or above
- Successfully complete the 40 hours of volunteer experience; supervised by a social worker (a requirement of SWK 301)
- Submit the BSW application online (go to [www.usm.edu/social-work](http://www.usm.edu/social-work) for application process)
  - For fall admissions, the Gulf Coast and Hattiesburg applications are due the last business day in March and/or the last business day in June
  - For spring admissions, the Hattiesburg applications are due the last business day in October (The Gulf Coast campus only accepts applications for fall admissions)
- Two letters of recommendation are required; one from a non-relative and one from a social worker (the one from the social worker will be submitted as part of the 40 hr volunteer service learning component that the student complete as part of SWK 301)
- Instructors who teach the three Pre-SWK courses will submit recommendations to be included in the BSW application
- Participate in an interview with the BSW program Admissions Committee.
Thirty minutes before the interview, students will respond to a vignette (assuming the role of a social worker) which is submitted as part of the application packet.

Once applications have been submitted by potential students, the admissions committee (made up of the BSW coordinator, faculty and staff) will meet to review each application and make sure that the criteria used for admissions has been met. The admissions committee will assess the merits of the application as a whole in light of program goals and objectives, and render a determination of suitability for admission. Students will be notified by letter with one of three decisions:

- **Regular admit** – all admission requirements have been met
- **Conditional admit** – the student is accepted but must address any admission requirements not met or any concerns the admissions committee may have. The letter states what those concerns were and what the student must do to address those concerns, thereby working to ultimately remove the conditional admit status
- **Non acceptance/Deny** – for those who are not accepted, we encourage them set up an appointment with the BSW Coordinator to discuss their options (which could include reapplying at a later time)

Students applying to the program will be notified of a decision by the end of the semester in which they apply, after grades have been posted. If students apply in the spring semester for fall admissions to the program, with the intention of meeting the requirements that summer, decisions will be made at the end of the summer session once grades have been posted.

**TK20**

In an effort to help track and enhance our students’ growth, as well as make our assessment and accountability tasks more manageable, the School of Social Work has purchased Tk20, a comprehensive system with a rich set of tools. This system is going to help keep track of your work and will allow us to store, retrieve and analyze information. It will allow you to store projects electronically for portfolios and will help us later to send you information.

The Tk20 subscription of $100 is one-time only and non-refundable and must be purchased by all students the semester you are accepted to the BSW program. To activate a Tk20 account, please go to [https://usm.tk20.com](https://usm.tk20.com) and click on the link located on the lower left hand side of the screen that says, “Click here to register or purchase your student account.”

To learn more about Tk20, please visit their website at [http://www.tk20.com](http://www.tk20.com).

**Transfer of Credits**

The transfer applicant can be admitted to Southern Miss through several different routes:

- Admission Through Traditional Transfer Requirements
- Admission Through Partial Transfer Requirements
- Admission Through Freshman Requirements
- Probationary Admission Through Adult Status
An official transcript evaluation will be completed after all the required official documents necessary for the applicant’s admission to the university have been received by the Office of Admissions.

Any additional substitution of courses for USM equivalent courses is done by your faculty advisor at your request (if appropriate). The advisor must have strong evidence that the courses are equivalent. To do this, you should provide the current transcript, a catalog description of the class, and upon request, a syllabus of the class. A standard substitution form will be filled out and forwarded through the appropriate channels for a decision.

Policies and procedures concerning the transfer of credits for individuals applying to The University of Southern Mississippi may be found at http://www.usm.edu/admissions/transfer-requirements and in the University Undergraduate Bulletin.

Students requesting to transfer social work credit from another CSWE accredited university, to be used towards the BSW degree at Southern Miss, must submit course descriptions and/or syllabi for those courses. The admissions committee will review the materials, make a decision and notify the student of the committee’s decision.

PROGRESSION POLICIES
The following progression policies apply for all students accepted into the BSW program:

- Maintain a Southern Miss GPA of at least 2.5 (The minimum GPA is required for acceptance into the senior practicum)
- Earn grades of at least C or higher in all courses in the BSW program
- Complete the senior practicum (450 clock hours) in an agency setting designated by the school’s field coordinator

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

Course Withdrawal
Withdrawal from courses or from the social work program must comply with procedures established by the University. A student intending to withdraw from all courses must comply with procedures established by the University (see www.usm.edu/registrar/undergraduate-bulletins) A student who withdraws from all courses and later wishes to re-enroll in the program must request (in writing) permission to do so from the BSW Admissions’ Committee.

Incomplete Grades
Under University regulations, a student may request a grade of "incomplete" for a course when illness or other extenuating circumstances have occurred beyond the student's control. The professor may decide to grant or deny the request based on the evidence presented by the student. If an incomplete is awarded, the time limit for removal of the grade is the end of the following semester. If, at the end of the next semester, the “I” grade is not removed, it will automatically become an "F".
Minors

The School of Social Work does not offer a minor. Pre-social work/BSW students with a 2.0 GPA or higher can earn a minor while pursuing a BSW degree. In order to officially pursue a minor, the student must complete a “Request to Add a Minor” form from the department they wish to add the minor. The specific requirements of any minor are determined by the department awarding the minor. Once the request is approved, the student’s permanent record will reflect the new minor. Social work advisors are not responsible for advising students regarding minor requirements. Students must obtain an advisor in the minor department (e.g., sociology, psychology).

Change of Major

For students changing their major to pre-social work, they must have a 2.0 or higher GPA and fill out a change of major form in the social work department. Pre-SWK or BSW students who wish to pursue another major must complete a change of major form from the department in which they wish to change their major.

Tape/Digital Recording

Audio, video, or other forms of taping/digital recording of class sessions generally are not allowed. A student may request to be given special permission by the instructor to record class sessions. If permission is granted, care must be taken to safeguard confidential information. Videotaping requires the written consent of all participants.

The above policy does not apply to students who have a documented disability and the Office of Disability Accommodations at the University of Southern Mississippi has so requested such accommodations for the student.

Auditing a Course

A student may audit a social work course if class space is available and with permission of the instructor. Fees and special requirements consistent with University policy may apply.

Grade Appeal

Students may appeal grades they believe were awarded in an arbitrary or capricious manner.

1. A student considering a grade appeal should immediately discuss the matter with the instructor awarding the grade.

2. If a resolution is not reached, the student should promptly submit their appeal in writing to the BSW/MSW Coordinator, depending on the student’s academic program. Please provide details for your reasons of the appeal and include copies of supportive documentation.

3. This request will be reviewed by the Administrative team and once a decision is made the student will be informed in writing.

4. If the student does not agree with the decision, they can appeal the decision to the Director of the School of Social Work.

5. After the Director of the School of Social Work – students have the right to appeal the decision to the Dean, College of Health. At this point, the university has specific appeal guidelines to follow. For full and complete instructions, refer to the University’s Grade Appeal Process as outlined in the University Student Survival
guide and/or the Undergraduate/Graduate School Bulletins. Be advised, there are specific time deadlines that must be met on the appeal process as it reaches the Dean’s Office and progresses higher into university administration.

Academic Dishonesty
The following is from the USM Undergraduate Bulletin:

When cheating is discovered, the faculty member may give the student an F on the work involved or in the course. If further disciplinary action is deemed appropriate, the student should be reported to the dean of students.

In addition to being a violation of academic honesty, cheating violates the Code of Student Conduct and may be grounds for probation, suspension or expulsion. Academic dishonesty also includes any submission of false documents such as add/drop forms, substitutions, special requests, etc.

Students on disciplinary suspension may not enroll in any courses offered by The University of Southern Mississippi.

Electronic Devices
Neither computers nor other electronic devices are to be used in the classroom for non-academic reasons. This includes emailing, texting, social networking, and use of the internet. The use of cell phones is prohibited and should be set on silent before class begins. Failure to meet these expectations may result in a loss of participation points or the student may be asked to leave the class.

Children in the Classroom
Children at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) are defined as persons under the age of 16 years. The University has an obligation to conduct its operation and maintain its facilities in a manner consistent with its primary mission as an institution of higher learning. Because USM wants to ensure the safety and security of children the following regulations will apply to children of faculty, staff, and students who come to a university facility.

1. Children may remain on campus only if accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult (over 18 years of age).
2. Babysitting is not allowed on campus.
3. Children cannot be left in lobby areas of building while parents or guardians are in classes.
4. Children may not be taken to classrooms or field because class lectures and participation will often touch on controversial topics and are integral to learning process.

Guests in the Classroom
If you want to bring guests to the classroom, make sure you speak with your instructor in advance to secure permission.

Criminal Background Check
Conviction of past criminal activity or conduct may not be used as a criterion for denial of admission into the Social Work Program. However, students are advised that past or future criminal activity or conduct may limit or inhibit the student from completing the BSW program requirements (e.g. field practicum). In addition, it is important that the student understand that
serious past criminal convictions can impact the likelihood of obtaining a license to practice social work in Mississippi. For more information related to this issue, see the field handbook and the state licensure board website (www.swmft.ms.gov).

Class Attendance
Students are expected to attend all classes. There are no excused absences. Repeated absences from class may result in a lowered grade or in the denial of credit for the course. For all classes that meet one time per week in fall or spring semesters, the School policy is as follows:

- Missing one class: Receives grade earned
- Missing two classes: Receives no higher than a ‘B’
- Missing three classes: Receives no higher than a ‘C’
- Missing four or more classes: May fail course

Summer classes, mini-sessions and other courses that have class periods lasting longer than the weekly fall and spring semester classes will apply this policy by this formula: one class equals 2 hours and 45 minutes. There are no excused absences but emergency situations may be appealed to the Director of the School at the end of the semester. A faculty approved, school sanctioned professional event, may be counted as professional off-campus education and may be excluded from this attendance policy.

Because tardiness is disruptive to a class meeting, 3 tardies, as defined by the instructor, will equal 1 absence. Likewise, leaving early is unacceptable and may result in an absence for the class. Students who leave the classroom due to employment on-call issues may be counted as a tardy at the discretion of the instructor.

Scholarly Misconduct (See Undergraduate bulletin and/or student survival guide)

Policy Exemption Requests
On occasion, extraordinary circumstances may warrant a student’s exemption from a policy of the School of Social Work (for example, the policy on class attendance and grading). A BSW or MSW student requesting an exception should provide a written request, including rationale to the BSW/MSW Coordinators respectively. The BSW/MSW Coordinator will present the request with input from the faculty, to the administrative team for discussion, vote and inform the student of the decision.

DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

Students are advised to deal with concerns and problems before they become critical. When a student has a concern, the student is advised to follow these steps when the concern is relevant to:

Classroom Instruction
1. The Student should first talk with the instructor and attempt to resolve the issue. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached,

2. An appointment should be made to meet with the BSW/MSW Program Coordinator, depending on the student’s academic program. Ideally, this meeting should be scheduled within ten (10) days of the issue. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached,
3. An appointment should be made to meet with the Director, School of Social Work. Ideally, this meeting should be scheduled within ten (10) days of the decision made by the BSW/MSW Program Coordinator. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached,

4. Students always have a right to appeal any academic decision. After the Director, School of Social Work – students have the right to appeal the decision to the Dean, College of Health. At this point, the university has specific appeal guidelines to follow. These are listed in the Undergraduate/Graduate School Bulletins. Be advised, there are specific time deadlines that must be met on the appeal process as it reaches the Dean’s Office and progresses higher into university administration.

Field Education:
1. The student should first talk with the Field Instructor and attempt to resolve the issue.
   If a satisfactory resolution is not reached,

2. The student should meet with his/her Field Liaison (seminar instructor). If resolution is not reached through the collaborative help of the Field Liaison and Field Instructor,

3. A meeting involving the concerned parties should be arranged with the Field Coordinator. If a resolution is not reached as a result of this meeting,

4. An appointment to meet individually with the Director of the School should be made.
   (See the field handbook for more information)

If the concern is not directly related to Field Education or Class Instruction:
1. The student should first speak with his/her advisor for professional development. If a resolution is not reached,

2. An appointment should be made to meet with the BSW/MSW Coordinator, depending on the student’s academic program. If a resolution is not reached,

3. An appointment should be made to meet with the Director of the School.

University Grievance Policy
Instructions regarding the formal University grievance procedure are available to students at the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Associated Student Body and published in the Student Survival Guide (Student Handbook).

TERMINATION POLICY

The School of Social Work hopes to graduate each student admitted to its degree programs. A student may be terminated, however, for reasons of conduct and/or academic performance.

Policy for Terminating Enrollment in the Social Work Program and the Student Performance Committee process

The Council on Social Work Education requires that accredited social work programs
have “policies and procedures for terminating a student’s enrollment in the social work program for reasons of academic and professional performance” (CSWE, 2004, 16). The faculty of the School of Social Work at USM is charged with integrating the standards of the profession throughout the program. Thus a Student Performance Committee (SPC) assists students who have difficulty with the personal/professional integration of the standards of the profession, knowledge and skills and social work values and ethics as identified in the Code of Ethics.

**Ethical and Professional Behavior**

Both in the classroom and in their field placements, students are expected to demonstrate ethical and otherwise appropriate conduct required of professional social workers. The School requires adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics.

Also, upon acceptance to the BSW/MSW programs, students are required to read and sign the Social Work Professional and Technical Standards document (see appendix B). These standards describe the physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioral requirements of social work students. They are designed to provide an overview of non-academic criteria required for students to fully participate in all aspects of coursework and the field practicum experiences. Any behavior that may be considered unethical or is in violation of the Social Work Professional and Technical Standards document may be cause for dismissal from the program.

In their course work, students are expected to comply with stringent standards of academic honesty. Students are not to plagiarize, present another student’s work as their own or share information about the content of examinations with other students.

In the field, students are representatives of agencies and are expected to behave in a way that reflects their accountability to the agency, the community and their clients. All students must observe the principle of confidentiality. No case or situation should be discussed with anyone except the field instructor or with other persons who have a professional responsibility for the case or situation. Permission of the agency should be obtained before agency material is used for class purposes. If case material is discussed in class, names and other identifying material must be disguised. Due to the central importance of confidentiality to ethical social work practice, students are required to sign a “Student Confidentiality Agreement”.

For additional and specific information regarding university policies regarding professional and ethical behavior, see the university student survival guide and/or the undergraduate/graduate bulletin.

**Behavior Which May Constitute Termination**

The following are examples of behavior that may be cause for termination (please note that reasons for termination are not limited to the items listed below):

- Conduct that is not congruent with the values and ethics of the social work profession including the NASW *Code of Ethics* or applicable to The University of Southern Mississippi’s rules and regulations. This includes behavior in the student’s classroom and fieldwork
- Behavior that interferes with the student’s functioning and/or jeopardizes the welfare of those with whom the student interacts; student peers, faculty, staff, and clients and co-workers in field agency settings
• Failure to communicate effectively, both verbally and in written form, including interviewing skills and interpersonal skills which permit appropriate professional interaction with other people
• Failure to adhere to service learning/practicum agency policies and professional standards
• Failure to use sound judgment both in work with clients and in regard to oneself such as not seeking professional help for physical or emotional problems that interfere with functioning of the program
• Academic dishonesty, including cheating on examinations or plagiarism, which involves presenting the work of someone else as one’s own
• Repeated, unexcused tardiness and/or absences that negatively impact the learning process of the student and their peers
• Failure to abide by BSW and MSW Program policies and procedures
• Participation in class or practicum activities while under the influence of drugs or alcohol
• Maintaining, after it has been addressed, hostile, negative behavior directed toward clients, instructors, peers, agency staff, and/or university staff
• Failure to disclose critical background information in applying for the program or field that bears on one’s competence or performance

Academic Performance Which May Constitute Termination

Students in the BSW Program must maintain a 2.5 USM GPA. A student whose GPA falls below a 2.5 will be required to meet with the BSW Coordinator to determine actions to be taken. This may include a contract which will set forth problems to be solved, actions to be taken, a time period for completion of designated actions and a reevaluation meeting. The student may also be required to meet with the Student Performance Committee. If students’ GPAs fall below 2.0, they will be subject to the university policy related to probation, probation continued and suspension.

For additional and specific information regarding university policies regarding academic probation, academic probation continued and suspension, see the university undergraduate bulletin.

Student Performance Committee

The Student Performance Committee is a standing committee in the School of Social Work charged with assisting non-routine student problems and when necessary making binding decisions about individual student’s curricular progression plans. The purpose of the Committee is to review the status of students that appear to experience behavioral difficulties within the classrooms or field agencies, demonstrate difficulty related to personal conduct, and are suspected of engaging in ethical violations as spelled out in the NASW Code of Ethics.

The Student Performance Committee is an ad hoc committee that is chaired by the Director of the School. Committee members are invited to participate by the Director. These
members vary according to the situation but would normally include the BSW or MSW Coordinator depending on the student’s academic program, involved faculty and others deemed appropriate. The student can be accompanied by their faculty advisor.

The following are procedures for calling a SPC meeting when a review is necessary:
1. The student will be notified about the meeting and the concerns expressed by faculty and/or staff
2. Once the meeting is held, the review of all relevant information, materials and evidence will be discussed
3. The student will be allowed to introduce relevant materials and evidence (including the testimony of others) and will be allowed to speak on his/her behalf
4. The SPC will then deliberate
5. A decision will be provided to the student, The SPC has the authority to make decisions relative to any student's continuation or termination in the program. Thus, the Student Performance Committee can recommend any of the following:
   a. Continuation without recommendations,
   b. Continuation with conditions which will include a written statement designating the issues for needed personal and/or professional change (i.e. regular meetings with an advisor, counseling, etc.) or
   c. Discontinuation/suspension of academic progress

A student can appeal the Student Performance Committee’s decision with a written statement within 10 days. The letter should be addressed to the director of the school. The statement must specify reasons for disagreement with the committee’s decision and rationale for considering a different decision. The committee will then convene within 10 days of receipt of the statement to review the appeal. The student initiating the appeal will be invited to address the committee. The committee will render, in writing, a follow-up decision or continuation of the original decision. If the student believes the committee’s appeal decision was made in error, a written statement of appeal may be submitted to the Dean of the College of Health.

The policies above are in accordance with the policies found in the University’s student handbooks.

COMMUNICATION

Faculty and staff of the School of Social Work take pride in their accessibility to students. Telephone and electronic mail are the easiest ways to contact faculty when a face-to-face meeting is not feasible. Students who have difficulty contacting faculty are encouraged to work through the staff at both sites (Gulf Coast and Hattiesburg). Mail to faculty members may be sent through the administrative assistants and coordinating staff as well.

Texting
The school may ask for your cell phone number and carrier as a means of communicating with you to keep you informed about the school’s events and activities. However, this is an optional form of communication.

Bulletin Boards
Please pay attention to posted flyers and information in the classroom or the academic buildings. These flyers may have announcements that are of interest to you.
Facebook
Become the School’s Facebook friend for current information about the school. Also, become friends on the BSW Club’s Facebook page to keep up with the club’s activities.

Internet Access
Personal Access
Internet Service accounts are automatically created for all USM students. They may be accessed by Hattiesburg and Gulf Park students at the iTech Help Desk. Student ID cards are required to obtain account information.

Organizational Access
USM organizations can request E-mail accounts for their group. This E-mail account would indicate the name of the group rather than the name of an individual.

Questions regarding access to the Internet should be directed to the HELP Desk @ 601-266-HELP (4357). The HELP Desk is the primary point of contact with iTech. The HELP Desk is available to answer informational, procedural, or technical questions and take requests for service calls or consultation.

Letters of Reference
A student may request that the School provide a letter of reference to one or more potential employers. Letters will be written directly to prospective employers upon receipt of a written or verbal request from them. No copy of any letter of reference will be released unless the student has a written Release of Information Form on file with the School.

Change of Address/Phone Numbers
To facilitate smooth and effective communication, students are strongly encouraged to make sure the School of Social Work has an up-to-date address, e-mail address, and phone number on file with the Records and Advisement Coordinator.

Email
Please activate your USM EMAIL account as soon possible. Faculty and staff can only correspond with you via email using your USM email address, not your personal email address.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Awards
The School of Social Work honors students once a year at the USM Awards Day Ceremony. The recipients of the three awards presented to undergraduate social work students at the USM Awards Ceremony are selected by the social work faculty. Students are recognized for their outstanding leadership and service skills, academic excellence, and significant contributions to the School of Social Work. Award recipients are notified in March and honored in April at the University Awards Day Ceremony and at a reception hosted by the College of Health.

Awards presented include:

Social Work Student of the Year
This award is presented as part of the NASW annual recognition program to the undergraduate student who has achieved academic excellence, demonstrated outstanding leadership skills and commitment to community service.
**Academic Excellence Award**
This award is presented to the undergraduate student with the highest GPA at time of selection.

**Award of Merit**
This award is given to undergraduate students who have GPAs of 3.6 or higher.

**Banquet**
The School of Social Work honors students via an annual social work banquet. This banquet is usually held in April and recognizes students’ achievements.

**Honors**
In addition to the recognition that BSW students can receive through the various School of Social Work Awards, the University of Southern Mississippi also recognizes students for their academic accomplishments. Basically there are two ways that the University recognizes exceptional academic accomplishments - Latin Designation and Honors. Additional information can be found at: [http://www.usm.edu/honors](http://www.usm.edu/honors)

**GRADUATION**

**When to Apply for Graduation**
Bachelor’s Degree Candidates: Apply the semester preceding your expected graduation date. For more information see [http://www.usm.edu/registrar/graduation-commencement](http://www.usm.edu/registrar/graduation-commencement)

**Commencement**
For information on commencement activities see [http://www.usm.edu/commencement](http://www.usm.edu/commencement)

**Pinning Ceremony**
A graduation reception is held to honor our graduating students in the Fall and Spring semesters before the commencement ceremony. This is an opportunity to recognize our students and celebrate their success with their family and friends. The program includes a pinning ceremony whereby students are called up to the podium and presented with a USM pin commemorating their academic experience.

**PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE**

BSW graduates are eligible for professional licensure. A state licensure exam must be passed in order to obtain a permanent license. Graduates who are leaving the state should inquire about licensure in the state where they will be practicing.

The licensure process is explained and initiated as part of students’ final field practicum by the field liaison who assists students in completing the necessary forms for taking the licensure exam. Information about the national licensure exam can be found at [www.aswb.org](http://www.aswb.org). Information about the state licensure process can be obtained from:

Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage & Family Therapists
PO Box 12948
Jackson, MS 39236-2948
Phone (601)987-6806
[www.swmft.ms.gov](http://www.swmft.ms.gov)
SPECIALIZED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The following opportunities are available to social work students. They span on-campus opportunities as well as some that are available at the local, state, and international level. We believe that students who take advantage of these opportunities, and become engaged as social workers will enrich their educational experience. The following opportunities are available to students:

Caribbean Studies Program

The School of Social Work participates in the Caribbean Studies Program sponsored by the University’s College of International and Continuing Education. The program currently directed by Dr. Tim Rehner, is designed to give students with various academic interests first-hand experience in an area of growing economic, cultural and strategic importance to the United States. Located 500 miles south of Miami, Jamaica, the largest English speaking island in the Caribbean, provides a unique setting for study.

Social work students may receive 4 credit hours in Social Work (SWK 495) as they study human rights and social development in Jamaica. The course provides students with a cross cultural experience in which they learn about Jamaican culture, social development and social welfare. Students explore issues related to social justice, social welfare, and the service delivery approaches that are used to address the social needs of Jamaicans. Students visit social service agencies in many of the traditional “fields of practice” (Family and Children, Health, Mental Health, Education, Gerontology, Disabilities and Adult and Juvenile Corrections) in which social workers practice. The development of the Social Work profession and the contributions of social workers in Jamaica may also be explored through a visit to the University of West Indies. For more information, contact Tim Rehner at 601-266-4170 or visit http://www.usm.edu/study-abroad/caribbean-studies-program

Student Participation on School Committees

Students are encouraged to provide input for program development and School operations through membership in the Social Work Club, participation on School committees (a list of school committees and their members are listed below) and through regularly scheduled meetings with the Director.

Student representatives are elected or appointed by the Social Work Club, and serve as voting members on most committees. However, they cannot be present when student records or personnel matters are being considered.

Composition of School Committees

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STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION

National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

Students are encouraged to join the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). NASW is the national organization through which social workers stay connected to ideas, information, resources and people who help them reach their full potential as professional social workers. For information see www.socialworkers.org

The Mississippi Chapter of NASW holds an annual conference in March of each year. Students are encouraged to attend this state conference. Likewise, students are also encouraged to attend and participate in the NASW MS Chapter Pine Belt Program Unit in Hattiesburg, the Gulf Coast Program Unit or the closest local unit in proximity to where the student reside.

BSW Club

The Social Work Club is an active organization that encourages a network of friendship and support for social work students. The members participate in activities that promote awareness of and interest in social work practice and community service. Also, it serves as a “collective voice” through which organizational concerns are communicated to the faculty. Officers are elected annually by the membership. A faculty advisor is appointed by the Director.

The Mission of the BSW Club is:

“To unite social work majors in an organization that will promote social work as a profession, contribute to the professional development of its members and provide the means for engagement in community services as well as relevant human rights and social justice issues.”

Both full-time and part-time students are eligible and encouraged to join the student organization. The goals of the organization are to:

1. provide services in the department, college, university and community,

2. promote the personal as well as the academic growth of the students, faculty and administration,

3. protect the rights of the individual student,

4. foster skills necessary in the professional practice of social work, and

5. provide an opportunity for enhancement of skills in the areas of communication and relationship building.
The BSW Club members participate in various student organizations across campus with positions and/or special interests in **The Golden Eagles Intertribal Society**, which was established in May 2002, with a mission of creating a stronger presence for Native American students on the Southern Miss campus and **The Center for Human Rights and Civil Liberties**, which was founded to advance the principle of "liberty and justice for all," both here and abroad. See the website: [www.usm.edu/humanrights](http://www.usm.edu/humanrights)

**Phi Alpha Honor Society- National Honor Society for Social Work Students**

*“Through Knowledge - the challenge to serve.”*

Phi Alpha Honor Society is a national honor society for social work students. The purposes of Phi Alpha are to provide a closer bond among students of social work and promote humanitarian goals and ideas. Phi Alpha fosters high standards of education for social workers and invites into membership those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work ([http://www.phialpha.org](http://www.phialpha.org)).

The USM Chapter of Phi Alpha, Zeta Iota, was chartered Spring 1997. BSW students who have achieved sophomore status, completed at least 9 semester hours of required social work courses with a GPA of 3.25 and have an overall GPA of 3.0 are eligible for membership.

Zeta Iota Officers are elected each year by the chapter membership. The chapter sponsors several projects each year within the School as well as the community.

**UNIVERSITY SERVICES AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

The following are a list of student services, for more detailed information visit [http://www.usm.edu/student-life/get-help](http://www.usm.edu/student-life/get-help)

- Student Support Services
- The Writing/Speaking Center
- Office of Disability Accommodations
- Student Health Services
- CARES (Campus Action Referral and Evaluation System
- Counseling Center
- Career and Student Employment Services
- Libraries
- Bookstore

**FINANCIAL AID/SCHOLARSHIPS**

For questions regarding financial aid and scholarships please contact the financial aid office at 601 266-4774 (Hattiesburg) and 228 865 4513 (Gulf Coast) or [http://www.usm.edu/admissions/financial-aid/overview](http://www.usm.edu/admissions/financial-aid/overview)

The School of Social Work has a few named scholarships for BSW students which carry cash awards. BSW students are eligible for the awards based upon recommendation of the faculty. Students can apply through the application process. The applications are usually available in the Spring semester. Once the applications are submitted, the faculty of the School choose students for the awards based on academic performance, service, attributes that exemplify the knowledge, skills, and values of the professional social worker and the criteria set forth by the donor. The recipients chosen are recognized at our annual social work banquet.
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

See the following websites regarding current employment information for social workers:

http://careers.socialworkers.org

www.bls.gov/ooh/Community-and-Social-Service/Social-workers.htm
Appendix A: Competencies and Practice Behaviors

Students completing the generalist curriculum (BSW and first 30 credit hours of the MSW program) will demonstrate the ability to:

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

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

1. Advocate for client access to the services of social work
2. Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development
3. Attend to professional roles and boundaries
4. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication
5. Engage in career-long learning
6. Use supervision and consultation

Educational Policy 2.1.2 – Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Students completing the foundation courses will:

1. Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice
2. Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Worker Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles
3. Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts
4. Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions

Educational Policy 2.1.3 – Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information.
Students completing the foundation courses will:

1. Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice wisdom
2. Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention and evaluation
3. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and colleagues

Educational Policy 2.1.4 – Engage diversity and difference in practice.

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

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

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

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

1. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination
2. Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice
3. Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice

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

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

1. Use research evidence to inform practice
2. Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry

Educational Policy 2.1.7 – Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

Systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Students completing the foundation courses will:

1. Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the process of assessment, intervention and evaluation
2. Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment

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

Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know the history and current structures of social policies and services; the role of policy in service delivery; and the role of practice in policy development. Students completing the foundation courses will:

1. Analyze, formulate and advocate for policies that advance social well-being
2. Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action

Educational Policy 2.1.9 - Respond to contexts that shape practice.

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

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

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

ENGAGE: Students completing the foundation courses will:

1. Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
2. Use empathy and other interpersonal skills.
3. Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.

ASSESS: Students completing the foundation courses will:

Collect, organize and interpret client data.
1. Assess client strengths and limitations.
2. Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives.
3. Select appropriate intervention strategies.

INTERVENE: Students completing the foundation courses will:

1. Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals
2. Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities
3. Help clients resolve problems
4. Negotiate, mediate and advocate for clients
5. Facilitate transitions and endings

EVALUATE: Students completing the foundation courses will:

1. Social workers critically analyze, monitor and evaluate interventions
Appendix B:
Social Work Professional and Technical Standards

School of Social Work

The technical standards outlined below are required for completion of programs from the School of Social Work at The University of Southern Mississippi. These standards, describe the physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioral requirements of social work students. They are designed to provide an overview of non-academic criteria required for students to fully participate in all aspects of coursework and the field practicum.

1. **Observation:** Students must be able to:
   - Accurately observe clients to effectively assess their situations.
   - Have the sensory and motor abilities to carry out effectively the necessary assessment activities.

2. **Communication:** Students must be able to:
   - Communicate effectively with other students, faculty, staff, clients and other professionals, and exemplify a willingness and ability to listen to others.
   - Demonstrate effective communication in presentations, written assignments, small group settings, and through electronic means.
   - Perceive and interpret nonverbal communication.
   - Use spoken and written English to understand the content presented in the program.
   - Comprehend reading assignments and search and evaluate the literature.
   - Demonstrate competency in writing skills.

3. **Sensory and Motor Functions:** Students must have sufficient sensory and motor abilities to:
   - Attend class and complete the required number of hours during their field practicum.
   - To attend and perform safely and satisfactorily in the classroom and in social work agency settings.

4. **Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Functions:** Students must have the ability to:
   - Think critically, analyze and interpret objective and subjective data, and apply effective problem solving skills. These skills allow students to make proper assessments, use sound
judgment, appropriately prioritize therapeutic interventions, and measure and report client outcomes.

- Demonstrate cognitive ability to effectively use and apply program’s knowledge/skills.

5. **Self-Awareness**: Students must exhibit:
   - Knowledge and openness to learning how one’s values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and past experiences affect thinking, behavior and relationships.
   - Willingness to examine and change their behavior when appropriate and work effectively with others in subordinate positions as well as with those in authority.

6. **Emotional and Mental Stability**: Students must demonstrate the ability to:
   - Deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms effectively by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others.
   - Effectively use help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with academic and clinical performance.

**Professional Performance Standards**

The School of Social Work recognizes that preparation for professional practice requires more than scholastic achievement. The program expects students to exhibit behaviors that are consistent with professional performance. Such behavior is expected not only in the classroom but throughout the University and the larger community. Some specific examples of professional performance standards are outlined below.

Students must demonstrate:

- A commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession, as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics.
- The essential values of social work including the respect for the dignity and worth of every individual and his/her right to a just share of society’s resources (social justice).
- Behaviors that are in compliance with program policies, institutional policies, professional ethical standards, and societal laws in classroom, field, and community.
- Responsible and accountable behavior by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, respecting others, being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements, and accepting supervision and criticism in a positive manner.
• A commitment to serve in an appropriate manner all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person’s age, class, race, religious affiliation (or lack of), gender, disability, sexual orientation and/or value system.

I have read, understand and acknowledge receipt of the Social Work Professional and Technical Standards.

Signature of Applicant_____________________________________ Date___________________

Technical Standards may be met with, or without, accommodations. The University complies with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Requests for accommodations should be directed to the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) and follow established university policies and procedures. For more information, contact ODA at 601.266.5024 or 228.214.3232 or visit www.usm.edu/oda. Individuals with hearing impairments can use Mississippi Relay Service at 800.582.2233 (TTY) to contact campus offices.
Appendix C:

Professional Expectations for Social Work Students

In the process of preparing competent social work generalists, the School of Social Work Program seeks to prepare students to develop a professional identity that incorporates the values and ethics of the social work profession. While students in the program are at different stages in the development of this identity, it is expected that all social work students strive to attain and demonstrate professional values and ethics during the course of their enrollment in the Social Work Program. These values and ethics should be in evidence in the social work classroom, in the interaction of social work students with each other, with professors and while interning in social service agencies off campus. Based on core social work values, included in the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers, the following are considered part of the professional expectations for Social Work students.

Dignity and Worth of the Person. Social work students should treat others in a respectful manner, regardless of differences. Respect for the dignity and worth of the person is demonstrated by:

- basic courtesy in interactions with others;
- paying attention to whoever has the instructor’s permission to speak in the classroom;
- refraining from behaviors which interfere with the learning process in the classroom (random talking, use of cell phones, interruptions to answer the vibrating cell phone or take an individual break from class); and
- always speaking and behaving in ways that show respect for others.

Importance of Human Relationships. Social work students demonstrate the importance of human relationships when they:

- form and sustain positive working relationships with others;
- demonstrate respect for and consideration of others;
- communicate effectively;
- accept responsibility for their own behavior in interaction with others;
- use appropriate channels for resolving conflicts; and
- manage their own personal stress and problems in ways that do not interfere with their relationships with their colleagues, their instructors, and especially clients and staff of social service agencies.

Integrity. Social workers are expected to be trustworthy and demonstrate high integrity. Social work students demonstrate integrity when they:

- meet their responsibilities in their classes;
- do their own work;
- refrain from plagiarizing;
- refuse to do the work of others; and
- refrain from all forms of cheating and dishonesty in assignments and examinations.

Competence. Social work students are expected to demonstrate competence with their commitment to their studies. Behaviors that demonstrate this commitment include:

- attending all scheduled classes on time;
- remaining attentive and in the classroom throughout the time scheduled for the class meeting;
- participation in all learning activities scheduled for the class;
- reading all assigned readings to prepare for classes;
• effort to produce quality work in completing all assignments;
• timely submission of assignments;
• effort to prepare for quizzes and examinations; and
• following up on recommendations of instructors for skill improvement.

Students whose family and/or employment obligations interfere with their commitment to their studies should consider reducing their course load to devote sufficient attention to their studies.

Service. Social work students are expected to be of service to others. Students demonstrate this value by:
• learning all they can as students to become prepared for the role of social worker;
• active participation in all service learning requirements of the curriculum;
• reporting to service learning agencies on time, properly dressed, and ready to provide service to the organization and its clients;
• demonstrating all the professional values and ethics in their interactions at the service learning site; and
• volunteering their services to assist others, when feasible.

Social Justice. Social workers are especially concerned about people who are vulnerable and oppressed. They seek social change to challenge social injustice. They work to provide equal access to opportunities and meaningful participation in decision making for persons who have experienced discrimination and oppression. Social work students are expected to:
• be sensitive in relating to persons who have experienced discrimination and oppression; and
• learn ways to seek social change for a more just society.

Source: Special thanks to Jackson State University, School of Social Work, Adapted August, 2010
Appendix D: 
NASW Code of Ethics

Code of Ethics 
of the National Association of Social Workers

Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly

The 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly approved the following revisions to the NASW Code of Ethics:

1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity

(c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.

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, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.

4.02 Discrimination

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

6.04 Social and Political Action

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

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

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

Ethical decision making is a process. There are many instances in social work where simple answers are not available to resolve complex ethical issues. Social workers should take into consideration all the values, principles, and standards in this Code that are relevant to any situation in which ethical judgment is warranted. Social workers’ decisions and actions should be consistent with the spirit as well as the letter of this Code.

In addition to this Code, there are many other sources of information about ethical thinking that may be useful. Social workers should consider ethical theory and principles generally, social work theory and research, laws, regulations, agency policies, and other relevant codes of ethics, recognizing that among codes of ethics social workers should consider the NASW Code of Ethics as their primary source. Social workers also should be aware of the impact on ethical decision making of their clients’ and their own personal values and cultural and religious beliefs and practices. They should be aware of any conflicts between personal and professional values and deal with them responsibly. For additional guidance social workers should consult the relevant literature on professional ethics and ethical decision making and seek appropriate consultation when faced with ethical dilemmas. This may involve consultation with an agency based or social work organization’s ethics committee, a regulatory body, knowledgeable colleagues, supervisors, or legal counsel.

Instances may arise when social workers’ ethical obligations conflict with agency policies or relevant laws or regulations. When such conflicts occur, social workers must make a responsible effort to resolve the conflict in a manner that is consistent with the values, principles, and standards expressed in this Code. If a reasonable resolution of the conflict does not appear possible, social workers should seek proper consultation before making a decision.

The NASW Code of Ethics is to be used by NASW and by individuals, agencies, organizations, and bodies (such as licensing and regulatory boards, professional liability insurance providers, courts of law, agency boards of directors, government agencies, and other professional groups) that choose to adopt it or use it as a frame of reference. Violation of standards in this Code does not automatically imply legal liability or violation of the law. Such determination can only be made in the context of legal and judicial proceedings. Alleged violations of the Code would be subject to a peer review process. Such processes are generally separate from legal or administrative procedures and insulated from legal review or proceedings to allow the profession to counsel and discipline its own members.
A code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Moreover, a code of ethics cannot resolve all ethical issues or disputes or capture the richness and complexity involved in striving to make responsible choices within a moral community. Rather, a code of ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be judged. Social workers’ ethical behavior should result from their personal commitment to engage in ethical practice. The NASW Code of Ethics reflects the commitment of all social workers to uphold the profession’s values and to act ethically. Principles and standards must be applied by individuals of good character who discern moral questions and, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments.

**Ethical Principles**

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

**Value:** Service

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

**Value:** Social Justice

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

**Value:** Dignity and Worth of the Person

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

**Value:** Importance of Human Relationships

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

**Value:** Integrity
Ethical Principle: Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.
Social workers are continually aware of the profession’s mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

Value: Competence

Ethical Principle: Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.
Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.

Ethical Standards

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

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

1. SOCIAL WORKERS’ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO CLIENTS

1.01 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, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, 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 feeforservice 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, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.

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

2.02 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 wellbeing of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the social work profession. Professional and ethical obligations of the interdisciplinary team as a whole and of its individual members should be clearly established.

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

2.04 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, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, 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’ wellbeing, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.

(f) When evaluation or research participants are incapable of giving informed consent, social workers should provide an appropriate explanation to the participants, obtain the participants’ assent to the extent they are able, and obtain written consent from an appropriate proxy.

(g) Social workers should never design or conduct evaluation or research that does not use consent procedures, such as certain forms of naturalistic observation and archival research, unless rigorous and responsible review of the research has found it to be justified because of its prospective scientific, educational, or applied value and unless equally effective alternative procedures that do not involve waiver of consent are not feasible.

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

(i) Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.
(j) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.

(k) Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.

(l) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.

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

(n) Social workers should report evaluation and research findings accurately. They should not fabricate or falsify results and should take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.

(o) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest and dual relationships with participants, should inform participants when a real or potential conflict of interest arises, and should take steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes participants’ interests primary.

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

6. SOCIAL WORKERS’ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE BROADER SOCIETY

6.01 Social Welfare

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

6.02 Public Participation

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

6.03 Public Emergencies

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

6.04 Social and Political Action

(a) Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on
practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.

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

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

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

Key Terms

code of ethics, nasw code of ethics, ethics, code, social work, preamble, ethical, code in english, code in spanish.