



**BSW**  
**PROGRAM MANUAL**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

118 College Drive #5114

Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39406

Telephone: (601) 266-4163

FAX: (601) 266-4167

**Administration**

Trent Gould, Dean, College of Education and Human Sciences

Jerome Kolbo, Director, School of Social Work

School of Social Work Web Address:

<http://www.usm.edu/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 (both campuses) has been continuously accredited since that 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 Park BSW program has grown in a few short years to become one the most successful new programs offered at the Gulf Park 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.

In 2018, the University again underwent a reorganization and social work remained a fully accredited, stand-alone School of Social Work, housed in the College of Education and Human Sciences.

## **VISION & MISSION OF THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SCIENCES**

*Vision:* By capitalizing on its unique academic composition and commitment to excellence, the College of Education and Human Sciences will be the primary choice for regional, national, and international undergraduate and graduate students that meet high standards for admission and graduation in each of our programs. Our academic programs will recruit, retain, and graduate students representing diverse groups and at rates that represent the top quartile nationally. Academic programs in the College of Education and Human Sciences will provide transformative educational experiences to ensure that graduates possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to be successful and to positively influence a culturally diverse, global community.

*Mission:* Building on the distinctive heritage of our University as a normal college, the College of Education and Human Sciences has expanded its mission to prepare not only successful professional educators but also influential researchers, mental health and human service professionals, and information specialists. The College 1) delivers high quality teaching that transforms the lives of students, 2) generates and disseminates knowledge through research that impacts societal needs, and 3) engages in professional service that multiplies the effects of both teaching and research. The College of Education and Human Sciences provides a student experience characterized by student support that fosters success, provides exposure to diversity of people and ideas, includes active

engagement in research, offers quality practicum and internship experiences, and provides opportunities for professional service.

### **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.

### **MISSION OF THE BSW PROGRAM IN THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

The BSW Program in The School of Social Work prepares students for the professional practice of micro, mezzo, and macro level social work. Our program is driven by the values and ethics that shape the foundation of the profession. Students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to provide fundamental support services to vulnerable individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations with a focus on assessment, intervention strategies, social welfare policy, case work, and generalist practice. Graduates are motivated by the significant impact of prevention, diversity, and the awareness of human potential for all people.

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE BSW PROGRAM IN THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**We prepare students for competent, ethical, and culturally informed social work practice.**

- We deliver a dynamic, integrated competency-based generalist curriculum.
- We infuse opportunities across the generalist curriculum to demonstrate an understanding of social work knowledge, skills, and values.
- We promote a professional social work identity.

**We advance knowledge relevant to social work generalist 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 generalist practice, policy, and social service delivery at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

**We inspire realization of human potential.**

- We promote healthy human growth and development.
- We explore 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 Education and Human Sciences. 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, an Associate Director, an 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 does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy, gender identity, genetic information, religion, race, color, national origin, veteran status, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local law, in its admission, treatment, or access to its educational programs and activities or in its employment practices. The University of Southern Mississippi prohibits sexual and gender-based harassment, including sexual assault and misconduct, and other forms of interpersonal violence. See <https://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-pres-aa-005> for full policy.

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 are 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 Americans 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 Address:

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

#### Gulf Coast Address:

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 ODA at [oda@usm.edu](mailto:oda@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 and 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](http://www.usm.edu/registrar/southern-miss-and-ferpa-compliance-policy) for more information.

### **Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence**

The University of Southern Mississippi does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs and activities. The university, in an effort to foster an environment of respect for the dignity and worth of all

members of the university community, is committed to maintaining an educational environment free of sexual harassment. It is the policy of the university that no member of its community shall engage in sexually harassing or sexually violent behavior toward another. Any student or employee who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action which may include expulsion from the university or termination of employment. Sexual harassment, including sexually violent behavior, is illegal under both state and federal law. See <https://www.usm.edu/police/sexual-harassment-policy> for more information.

## **SOCIAL ISSUES AND POLICIES**

### **Alcohol and Drugs**

The University of Southern Mississippi strives to maintain campus communities, activities and worksites free from the illegal use, possession, or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs or controlled substances as defined by state law and in Schedules I through V of the Controlled Substances Act, 21 United States Code section 812, as amended and by regulation at 21 Code of Federal Regulations section 1308. The University of Southern Mississippi recognizes that the illegal and/or abusive use of alcohol or drugs by members of the University community can prevent the University from meeting its commitments and accomplishing its missions. Further, such use jeopardizes the safety and welfare of the individual, fellow employees and students, and the University community. The University Alcohol and Drug Policy prescribes standards of conduct expected of academic and staff employees, students and visitors to maintain alcohol and drug-free campus communities, activities and worksites, and contains provisions to ensure that the University is in compliance with federal and state statutes. See <https://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-pres-pr-001> for more information.

### **Smoking**

The University of Southern Mississippi strives to enhance the general health and wellbeing of its faculty, staff, students and visitors. We desire to support individuals to be tobacco free, achieve their highest state of health and to launch students into their careers at a high level of health and wellbeing. To support this commitment, we intend to provide a tobacco-free environment. Smoking and the use of tobacco are prohibited in or on all University owned, operated or leased property including vehicles. See <https://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-stua-hs-001> for more information.

## **PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS**

When students are admitted to The University of Southern Mississippi, they can choose social work as their major. If students who are already enrolled at USM wish to change their major to social work, they can do so by initiating a change of major request via SOAR (they must have at least a 2.0 GPA).

### **Special Program Requirements**

The social work degree program is academically rigorous and requires students to possess certain competencies prior to enrolling in the first block of SWK courses. These core competencies include a basic knowledge of the social and psychological domains of the human person as well as the ability to effectively communicate. Therefore, though the first block of SWK courses is open to all USM students, students must meet the following requirements before enrolling in SWK 300, SWK 301, SWK 301L, and SWK 315:

- Earn a minimum grade of C in DEG courses, which can be found in the second column of the Social Work Degree Plan.

## Additional Program Progression Requirements

To be eligible to advance in the social work program and remain in good standing, students must meet the following requirements:

- Complete the first block of courses (SWK 300, SWK 301, SWK 301L, and SWK 315) with a minimum grade of C in each course.
- Earn a minimum grade of C in all required DEG courses.
- Maintain a minimum cumulative USM GPA of 2.50 (excluding remedial courses, if applicable).
- Be a declared SWK major.
- Adhere to the standards of conduct specified in the Social Work Code of Ethics and the Professional and Technical Standards document.
- Adhere to the advisement plan and course sequencing requirements prescribed by the School of Social Work.
- Complete all coursework, including minimum letter grade and cumulative GPA requirements, prior to enrolling in senior capstone and field practicum.
- Social work students may repeat no more than two SWK courses, one time each.
- Students who fail to meet program progression standards will be placed on program probation for one semester and may not be eligible to enroll in subsequent SWK courses. Students who fail to meet program standards while on probation may be dismissed from the School of Social Work.

## BSW Part-time Program (8 semesters)

Historically The University of Southern Mississippi School of Social Work has offered the BSW program only as a full time plan of study. In order to make the program available to those persons whose schedules cannot accommodate becoming a full-time student, we now offer a part -time option as well. Once students have met the requirements to advance to the professional level courses, they will be able to choose either the full-time or part-time option. Although the part-time option will be available primarily on the Hattiesburg campus, Gulf Park students are welcome to consider this option if they are willing to commute to the Hattiesburg campus for some of their courses. The following is the proposed progression (subject to change) of the BSW part-time model:

1 <sup>ST</sup> SEM	2 <sup>nd</sup> SEM	3 <sup>rd</sup> SEM	4 <sup>th</sup> SEM	5 <sup>th</sup> SEM	6 <sup>th</sup> SEM	7 <sup>th</sup> SEM	8 <sup>th</sup> SEM
SWK 329	SWK 340	SWK 331	SWK 420	SWK 400	SWK 493	SWK 430	SWK 430
SWK 330	SWK 410	SWK 341	SWK 499	SWK 415	SWK elec	SWK 431	SWK 431

## Transfer of Credits

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

- Admission Through Traditional Transfer Requirements
  - Students must have either an Associate's Degree intended for transfer from a regionally accredited institution or have completed the 30 semester hours of designated coursework outlined below with a minimum 2.0 cumulative grade point average for admission.
    - 6 semester hours of English Composition (English Composition I and II)
    - 3 semester hours of mathematics (college algebra, quantitative reasoning, or higher mathematics)
    - 6 semester hours of natural science (courses must be laboratory-based, with the lecture courses accompanied by the respective lab course)
    - 9 semester hours of humanities and fine arts (common examples of acceptable coursework are history, philosophy, religion, world literature, art, music)
    - 6 semester hours of social or behavioral sciences (common examples of acceptable coursework are anthropology, geography, sociology, psychology, social work)

- 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 an advisor or our Social Work Student Support Specialist (SSS) at your request (if appropriate). The advisor/SSS 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.

### **Tavera**

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 Tavera, a comprehensive system with a rich set of tools. This system helps to keep track of student 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 Tavera subscription of approximately \$200 is one-time only, non-refundable fee and students will be asked to purchase Tavera at some point during their tenure in the professional level social work program. More information will be provided to students when the purchase of Tavera is appropriate.

### **ADVISEMENT**

Advisement is an essential component of the 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. During the last accreditation period, when students declared social work as a major, they were assigned an advisor (faculty and/or staff). Beginning in the fall 2019 semester, a Social Work Student Support Specialist (SSS) was hired on to work with the Advisement Team through the College of Education and Human Sciences Advisement Center. The SSS assists students in preparing for progression through the BSW program.

Students must meet with the Social Work Student Support Specialist and/or his/her team in the College of Education and Human Sciences Advisement Center every semester to register for the subsequent semester. During this time, the SSS approves class schedules and assists with the preparation of Applications for Degree. The SSS 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, the SSS provides 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, the SSS will refer them to campus resources (i.e. writing center or BSW Writing Lab). On occasion, the SSS may address personal problems that affect the attainment of their educational and professional goals. However, SSS will not serve as a replacement for professional mental health services. If the SSS believes a student needs services beyond those provided by the school, he or she may be referred to mental health care services.

Beginning in the summer of 2021, the University Advisement Center (UAC) started advisement for all incoming freshman during their first three semesters at USM. This will provide the new freshman with a more holistic overview of the University and will expose them to resources and opportunities outside the School of Social Work. The Social Work SSS will partner closely with the UAC Social Work Advisor to train that person towards Social Work Advisement and the BSW Coordinator and Social Work SSS will remain involved and engaged in the communication process between the UAC and all incoming freshman.

The Social Work Student Support Specialist will continue direct advisement with all professional-level BSW students beginning in their first semester of the BSW Program through graduation.

## **CURRICULUM DESIGN**

Since the last accreditation, there have been several changes in the BSW formal curriculum design. The first set of changes began in 2008 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 defined 10 competencies, which were considered common to all social work practice (EP 2.1.1-EP 2.1.10). Each of the 10 competencies consisted of knowledge, values and skills that defined 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 was 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.

In 2015, the new social work competencies were developed by COEP and approved by the CSWE Board of Directors on March 20, 2015. Each of the updated 9 competencies consists of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that assess students critical thinking and professional judgement. These updated competencies characterize what our BSW students must know and be able to prove for competent practice. The school has since operationalized the 9 competencies and the BSW curriculum was modified around each one with the overall goal of ensuring that our graduates are prepared to work confidently and ethically with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Today, the BSW curriculum requires one hundred twenty (120) credit hours: thirty-five (35) hours of liberal arts (general education courses), twenty-eight (28-31) hours of social work core courses (including upper level

directed electives) and fifty-eight (58) hours of professional courses (see the table below).

For a detailed list of coursework and requirements, please refer to our School of Social Work Bulletin: [http://catalog.usm.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=24&poid=11396](http://catalog.usm.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=24&poid=11396) This outlines the 120 hour of Social Work Degree Requirements.

<b>ORGANIZATION OF BSW CURRICULUM:</b>		
<b>Liberal Arts (University Core) (35 hours)</b>	<b>Social Work Core (28-31 hours)</b>	<b>Social Work Professional (58 hours)</b>
The University's General Education Curriculum (GEC) courses	The School of Social Work's core course requirements	Introductory level social work courses
		Social Work professional level courses
		Social Work elective courses

**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 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.

### **Social Work Core Courses (28-31 hours)**

In 2019, The School of Social Work modified the Social Work Core section of the degree plan. In doing this, the human sexuality (DPH 430) course was eliminated, as it was primarily used for science-majors and did not add value to the knowledge base gained by social work students. Also, instead of requiring a section of only sociology electives and a section for Abnormal Psychology, The School of Social Work created a more comprehensive base of upper level directed electives for students to choose from. This new course listing includes classes from a variety of disciplines closely associated with social work including Anthropology, Black Studies, Criminal Justice, Family Sciences, Sociology, Psychology, and Women and Gender Studies. The updated elective list, in which students choose 9-hours from, provides our social work graduates with a more well-rounded outlook into disciplines that they will likely be exposed to at some point either in their field practicum or career post-graduation.

### **Social Work Professional Foundation (58 hours)**

The faculty believes it is important for students to be informed of what the social work profession entails before they make a final decision about social work as a career choice. Therefore, students are required to take four (10 hrs) of introductory level social work courses: Introduction to Social Work (SWK 301), Introduction to Social Work Lab (SWK 301L), Social Service Systems (SWK 300) and Human Diversity in a Changing World (SWK 315)

before advancing to the professional level courses. The SWK 301L was added in 2018 as a way to separate the service-learning component of the class from the content taught in Introduction to Social Work. Students now only focus on social work content in the SWK 301 course and have more time to focus on the practicum (service-learning) volunteer component that takes place alongside the subject matter in SWK 301L. These courses provide information about the profession, including its history, and the knowledge, values and skills needed to become effective, engaged, generalist practitioners.

The social work courses in the BSW professional foundation (48 hours) are built on the content from the Liberal Arts Core courses, the social work core courses and the four introductory level social work courses. The professional foundation of the curriculum is designed to provide students with the requisite 9 competencies essential for generalist practice, with the goal of being able to demonstrate the required knowledge and 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 is 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. Social Work Theory and Best Practice (SWK 410) provides an overview of practice theories, which is the foundation to social work practice with children, adults and families.

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. During our last accreditation, students also took a social work general elective (of their choosing) during this semester. However, in the last three years, we have replaced that general elective with Forensic Social Work (SWK 499). This course provides an overview of the interplay between social work professionals and the court systems and builds on the history of forensic social work practice and its theoretical base and illustrates skills for working with diverse populations.

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 that is typically rotated during this third semester of the program. In the fall semesters, Grief and Bereavement (SWK 421) or Social Work in Schools (SWK 496) is offered and in the spring semesters, Child Maltreatment and Advocacy: CAST (SWK 490) is offered.

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 9 hours. 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](http://www.usm.edu/social-work)

A recommended progression per semester of the introductory and professional level courses is provided in the following table:

<b>Introductory level SWK courses (10hrs)</b>
SWK 301- Introduction to Social Work
SWK 301LSL- Introduction to Social Work Lab
SWK 300 – Social Service Systems
SWK 315- Human Diversity in a Changing World
<b>Professional Level SWK Courses (48hrs)</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Semester (12hrs)</b>
SWK 329 – Interviewing and Recording
SWK 330 -- Social Work Practice I
SWK 340 – HBSE I Transitions in Early Life
SWK 410 – Social Work Theory and Best Practice
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Semester (12hrs)</b>
SWK 331 – Social Work Practice II
SWK 341 -- HBSE II Transitions in Adulthood
SWK 420- Social Work Research
SWK 499- Forensic Social Work
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Semester (12hrs)</b>
SWK 400 – Social Welfare Policy Analysis
SWK 415 – Human Rights and Social Justice
SWK 493 – Crisis Intervention
SWK elective
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Semester (12hrs)</b>
SWK 430 – Field Education (9hrs)
SWK 431 – Field Education Seminar (3hrs)

## 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.

### SOCIAL WORK COURSES

#### Required Introductory Level Social Work 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

**301L. INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK LAB (1 hr)** This lab will orient students to the field of social work and focus specifically on the 40-hour Service-Learning Experience with an emphasis on skills needed for academic and professional success.

**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 Professional Level Social Work Courses (\*MAJORS ONLY)- It is important to note that while the majority of classes are labeled “Majors Only”, if a student from a different major declares the Child Advocacy Studies Minor (CAST) (more information below), they will be approved to enroll in the available course with the permission of the BSW Coordinator or Social Work Student Support Specialist.**

**329\*. INTERVIEWING AND RECORDING** (3 hrs). Prerequisites: Social work major A minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. Fundamentals of good oral and written communication skills for social workers presented in a laboratory setting.

**330\*. SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE I** (3 hrs). Prerequisites: Social work major. A minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. Development of generalist practice skills with a focus on direct services to individuals and families.

**331\*. SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE II** (3 hrs) Prerequisite: Social Work major, A minimum 2.5 GPA, SWK 330. 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: Social Work Major. Minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. 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

**341\*. HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT II: TRANSITIONS IN ADULTHOOD** (3 hrs) Prerequisite: Social Work Major, Minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA, SWK 340. 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 adulthood and social work practice

**400\*. SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY AND ANALYSIS** (3hrs) Prerequisites: Social Work Major, Minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. Examination of the construction, analysis, and implementation of social welfare policy at local, state, and federal levels

**410\*. SOCIAL WORK THEORY AND BEST PRACTICE** (3hrs.) Prerequisites: Social Work major. A minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. Overview of practice theories providing the foundation to social work practice with children, adults and families.

**415\*. HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE.** (3hrs). Prerequisites: Social Work Major or CAST Minor, a minimum USM GPA 2.5. Theories and practices of human rights and social justice related to oppressed and marginalized people

**420\*. METHODS OF SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH** (3 hrs) Corequisites: Social Work Major, Minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. Methods of data collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting in preparation for the evaluation of social work practice and research

**493\*. CRISIS INTERVENTION** (3 hrs) Prerequisites: Social Work Major or CAST Minor, Minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. Theory and interventions for the helping professional to assist the client in coping with various crises

**499\*. FORENSIC SOCIAL WORK** (3 hrs) Prerequisite(s): Social Work Major or CAST Minor, Minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. An overview of the interplay between social work professionals and the court systems. Builds on the history of forensic social work practice and its theoretical base and illustrates skills for working with diverse populations.

**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** (3 hours are required)

**421. SOCIAL WORK: GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT.** (3hrs). Prerequisite: Social Work Major, or permission of BSW Coordinator, Minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. This course will provide a framework for critical analysis of the dynamics of healthy grief and bereavement.

**494. SOCIAL WORK WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES** (3hrs) Prerequisite: Social Work Major, CAST Minor, Minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. Overview of child welfare systems providing services to children and their families along with practice strategies. **\*\*RARELY OFFERED\*\***

**496. SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS (3hrs)** Prerequisite: Social Work Major, CAST Minor, or permission of the BSW Coordinator, Minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. 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. **\*\*RARELY OFFERED\*\***

**499. FORENSIC SOCIAL WORK** (3hrs) Prerequisite: Social Work Major or CAST Minor, Minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. An overview of the interplay between social work professionals and the court systems. Builds on the history of forensic social work practice and its theoretical base and illustrates skills for working with diverse populations. **\*\*NOW BUILT INTO THE CORE CURRICULUM OF THE SECOND SEMESTER OF THE BSW PROGRAM.\*\***

**490. CHILD MALTREATMENT AND ADVOCACY: CAST** (3hrs) Prerequisites: Social Work Major or CAST Minor, Minimum 2.5 Southern Miss GPA. This course focuses on the history of child maltreatment, compares professional perspectives, discusses the development and maintenance of legal frameworks, and reviews agency responses.

**Other Courses:** *This class is offered for students needing additional academic support and campus resources. Students enrolling in this class must receive permission of the Social Work Student Support Specialist.*

**200. ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND STUDENT SUPPORT (1hr).** Prerequisite: Permission of BSW Coordinator or Student Support Specialist. Focuses on developing strategies associated with creating academic success as a Social Work Major, such as time management, goal setting, test-taking skills, and APA writing style. Add Consent: Department Consent Required.

### **Child Advocacy Studies Minor (CAST)**

The School of Social Work has long held an interest in improving the workforce for our state's nonprofit and for profit-child serving agencies, and Mississippi's Child Protective Services. The School maintains a working relationship with the Mississippi Department of Human Services (DHS), offers specially scheduled courses for DHS cohorts, and employs faculty with expertise in the profession of child welfare.

As a result, and since the last accreditation process, the School of Social Work established the CAST Minor at Southern Miss. This CAST minor provide students with knowledge of how to organize and implement a multidisciplinary response to child maltreatment. CAST focuses on experiential, interdisciplinary, ethical, and culturally sensitive content that provides a collective knowledge base for responding to child maltreatment for professionals who work with children. Students will choose existing courses in the various disciplines: SWK, CJ, PSY, DPH, CD, PS, SOC, and FAM to meet the course requirements.

The CAST minor was developed to better equip students to carry out the work of various agencies and systems (i.e. healthcare, criminal justice, social services) as they advocate on behalf of the needs of children as victims and survivors of child abuse.

This minor is available to all students actively enrolled at Southern Miss who meet certain admissions' criteria (see back page for minor template) and will be offered for students on both the Hattiesburg and Gulf Park campuses.

### **Requirements for a Minor in Social Work Child Advocacy Studies (CASTMNR)**

Eighteen (18) Hours Required. Students must maintain a 2.50 Cumulative GPA and earn a minimum grade of C in each course within the minor. Additionally, students must complete an application. After completion of the CAST minor courses, students must also complete self-report measure. Students must complete SWK 490 and CJ 364 and an additional twelve (12) hours, of which nine (9) hours must be from at least two (2) different disciplines and cannot be shared with the student's major or other minor requirements, if applicable.

- 1) SWK 490 - Child Maltreatment and Advocacy: CAST
- 2) CJ 364 - Child Abuse and the Law
- 3) Choose twelve (12) hours from the following courses. Restrictions apply; see description above.

### Psychosocial and Physical Development of Children and Adolescents

- CD 350 - Child Development
- CD 471/L – Infant Development
- CD 477 - Developmental Disabilities in Early Childhood  
or PSY 477 - Developmental Disabilities in Early Childhood
- PSY 372 - Adolescent Psychology
- PSY 446 - Abnormal Child and Adolescent Psychology
- PSY 482 - Moral Development in Childhood and Adolescence

- SWK 496 - Social Work Practice in Schools\*

Substance Abuse and Intervention (Students may select only one course from this group)

- CJ 445 - Drugs and Society
- DPH 422 - Drugs and the Whole Person
- PSY 435 - Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Intervention

Family, Marriage, and Parent-Child Relationships

- DPH 430 - Human Sexuality
- FAM 351 - Marital and Family Relationships
- FAM 452 - Parenthood
- SOC 414 - Issues in the Family
- SWK 494- Social Work Practice with Children and Families: CAST I

Domestic Violence and Family Law

- CJ 463 - Family Law
- SWK 497 - Social Work Practice and Family Violence: CAST 2\*  
or CJ 464 - Family Violence, Investigation and Deterrence

Criminal and Deviant Behavior

- PSY 432 - Behavioral Interventions
- SOC 340 - Deviant Behavior
- SOC 341 - Criminology
- SOC 444 - Juvenile Delinquency

The Court System, Social Justice, and Crisis Intervention

- CJ 480 - Seminar in Criminal Justice (Variable Topic)
- SWK 499 - Forensic Social Work\*
- SWK 415 - Human Rights and Social Justice\*  
or PS 459 - Human Rights
- SWK 493 - Crisis Intervention: CAST 3\*

Case Management, Rehabilitative Services, Behavior Analysis

- PSY 330 – Principles and Processes of Case Management
- PSY 331 – Medical Aspects of Rehabilitation
- PSY 385 – Applied Behavior Analysis

## **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](http://www.usm.edu/registrar/undergraduate-bulletins) ).

### **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**

### Minor in Another Department

In order to officially **pursue a minor in another department**, the student must complete a “Request to Add a Minor” form in SOAR 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 social work, they must have a 2.0 or higher GPA and fill out a change of major form via SOAR. The BSW Coordinator will then approve or deny the request via SOAR and will send a follow-up email to the student with the outcome and the contact information for the Social Work Student Support Specialist for Advisement purposes. The only reason a denial would take place is if the student does not meet the GPA requirements to change their major. Social work 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 via SOAR.

### **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.

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.

### **Independent Study**

Social Work courses may not be taken as Independent Study courses. All Social Work majors must complete Social Work coursework with a grade of “C” or better to meet accreditation standards for graduation.

### **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 (see website for form with instructions: [www.usm.edu/social-work/forms](http://www.usm.edu/social-work/forms) )
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 Education and Human Sciences. 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 Integrity**

All students at the University of Southern Mississippi are expected to demonstrate the highest levels of academic integrity in all that they do. Forms of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to):

1. Cheating (including copying from others’ work)
2. Plagiarism (representing another person’s words or ideas as your own; failure to properly cite the source of your information, argument, or concepts)
3. Falsification of documents
4. Disclosure of test or other assignment content to another student
5. Submission of the same paper or other assignment to more than one class without the explicit approval of all faculty members’ involved
6. Unauthorized academic collaboration with others
7. Conspiracy to engage in academic misconduct

Engaging in any of these behaviors or supporting others who do so will result in academic penalties and/or other sanctions. If a faculty member determines that a student has violated our Academic Integrity Policy, sanctions ranging from resubmission of work to course failure may occur, including the possibility of receiving a grade of “XF” for the course, which will be on the student’s transcript with the notation “Failure due to academic misconduct.” For more details, please see the University’s [Academic Integrity Policy](https://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-acaf-pro-012) (<https://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-acaf-pro-012>). Note that repeated acts of academic misconduct will lead to expulsion from the University.

### **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 that are integral to the 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](http://www.swmft.ms.gov) ).

### **Confidentiality and Mandated Reporting**

As social workers and educators, your instructors are bound by law to uphold your rights to confidentiality under FERPA law. In certain circumstances we are also ethically, if not legally, obligated to report suspected abuse and threats of harm to self or others.

Free and confidential counseling is available to all students on both campuses at the Counseling Center (601-266-4829 and 601-606-5390 after hours), the Shafer Center for Crisis Intervention (601-264-7777), and the Student Health Center (601-266-5390).

### **Class Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to attend all classes. In order to be counted as present, the student is responsible for signing the roll sheet or confirming with the faculty that his/her attendance was recorded. Absences are strongly discouraged.

Absences from a class, excluding university closing or School of Social Work approved events, will result in the following academic penalty:

Missing one or two classes	Receives grade earned
Missing three classes	Receives grade no higher than a 'B'
Missing four classes	Receives grade no higher than a 'C'
Missing five or more classes	Student cannot pass the course

If a student's grade was negatively affected by absences, he/she may appeal the awarded course grade to the Director of the School through the BSW or MSW Coordinator at the end of the semester after grades have been posted. Students should maintain their own documents related to their absences and submit them regarding the course grade being appealed. Appeal forms are found at the following website address: <http://www.usm.edu/social-work/forms>

Because tardiness is disruptive and disrespectful 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 and return beyond a scheduled break may be counted as tardy at the discretion of the instructor.

For policies and procedures on absences related to **pregnancy** or **military service**, please see Appendices E and F.

Because tardiness is disruptive and disrespectful 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 and return beyond a scheduled break may be counted as tardy at the discretion of the instructor.

### **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.

### **Ethical and Professional Behavior**

Upon acceptance to the BSW/MSW programs, students are required to read and sign indicating that they reviewed the Social Work Professional and Technical Standards document (refer to 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 violation of these Social Work Professional and Technical Standards document may be cause for dismissal from the program.

Both in the classroom and in their field placements, students are expected to demonstrate the highest levels of academic integrity in all that they do. Forms of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to):

1. Cheating (including copying from others' work)
2. Plagiarism (representing another person's words or ideas as your own; failure to properly cite the source of your information, argument, or concepts)
3. Falsification of documents
4. Disclosure of test or other assignment content to another student
5. Submission of the same paper or other assignments to more than one class without the explicit approval of all faculty members involved
6. Unauthorized academic collaboration with others
7. Conspiracy to engage in academic misconduct

Engaging in any of these behaviors or supporting others who do so will result in academic penalties and/or other sanctions. If a faculty member determines that a student has violated our Academic Integrity Policy, sanctions ranging from resubmission of work to course failure may occur, including the possibility of receiving a grade of "XF" for the course, which will be on the student's transcript with the notation "Failure due to academic misconduct." For more details, please see the University's Academic Integrity Policy (<https://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-acaf-pro-012> ). Note that repeated acts of academic misconduct will lead to expulsion from the University.

Ethical and otherwise appropriate professional conduct is required of all BSW/MSW students, as is of all professional social workers (refer to Appendix C). The School also requires adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics (refer to Appendix D).

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.

### **Faculty Concerns**

If a faculty member has a concern about a student’s behavior or academic performance which is not resolved through one-on-one interaction,

- the faculty member will communicate with the BSW or MSW Coordinator describing the concern;
- the Coordinator will then contact the student and discuss the concerns of the faculty member;
- if deemed necessary, the Coordinator will call a meeting with the student and the faculty member;
- the Coordinator will create a plan of action; this plan will be produced in writing, then reviewed (and possibly revised, with the faculty member and student, and then signed by the student and placed in the student’s file; and,
- if the student does not adhere to the plan, the student will be referred to the Student Performance Committee (SPC) for further intervention

### **Student Performance Committee (SPC)**

The SPC is charged with responding to non-routine student problems and, when necessary, making binding decisions about individual students’ curricular progression plans. The purpose of the SPC is to review the status of any student who demonstrates behavioral difficulties within the classrooms or field agencies, related to personal conduct, or who is suspected of engaging in ethical violations as spelled out in the NASW Code of Ethics and/or the Social Work Professional Technical Standards’ document.

The SPC is an ad-hoc committee chaired by the Director of the School. Committee members are invited to participate by the Director. These members vary according to the situation but usually include the BSW or MSW Coordinators (depending on the student’s academic program), involved faculty, and others deemed appropriate. When a faculty or staff member notifies the Coordinator and/or Director of a student’s academic or behavioral concerns, the Director may call a meeting of the SPC and the student in question. The student may be accompanied by their faculty advisor or other advocate at any and all meetings.

When a SPC meeting is called, the following procedures are followed:

- The student is notified of the meeting and the concerns expressed by faculty and/or staff.
- The student may submit any written material prior to the meeting that may help to clarify the situation.
- The student will be present at the meeting to respond to the concerns of the faculty, but will not be present during deliberations and decision-making.
- At the meeting, the issues of concern will be fully addressed with the student, and the student will have the opportunity to present his/her perspective on the matter.
- 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.
- Once the meeting has been held, all relevant information, materials and evidence will be discussed and the SPC will determine a course of action.
- The SPC's 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 SPC may recommend any of the following:
  - Continuation without conditions;
  - Continuation with conditions which could include a Student Performance/Academic Improvement Plan to address needed personal and/or professional change (e.g., regular meetings with an advisor, mandated counseling, remediation, etc.), which will be monitored by the BSW or MSW Coordinator, depending on the student's academic program, and/or the Director; or
  - Immediate termination from the program.

The Student Performance/Academic Improvement Plan may not be appealed. A student who refuses to follow the plan will be dismissed from the program. If the problematic behavior continues or the student does not progress satisfactorily, the SPC may reconvene to reassess the situation.

If the SPC determines that, in its academic and professional judgment, the student is not meeting the standards of the program and/or the profession at the level expected of an undergraduate/graduate student, and determines that the problematic issue is unlikely to be resolved quickly and satisfactorily with a problem resolution plan, the student may be terminated from the BSW/MSW program.

A student may appeal the SPC's decision with a written statement within 5 days. The letter should be addressed to the Director. The statement must specify reasons for disagreement with the committee's decision and rationale for considering a different resolution. The SPC 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 SPC. The SPC will render, in writing, a follow-up decision or continuation of the original decision. If the student believes the SPC's appeal decision was made in error, a written statement of appeal may be submitted to the Dean of the College.

### **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 behavioral and/or academic performance.

### **Policy for Terminating Enrollment in the Social Work Program**

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 Southern Miss is charged with integrating the standards of the profession throughout the program. Thus, the SPC intervenes with students who 1) demonstrate an inability to meet the Professional and Technical Standards and/or 2) are unable to

integrate their personal/professional values with the knowledge, skills and social work values and ethics of the social work profession and the NASW Code of Ethics.

### **Academic Performance Which May Constitute Termination in the BSW Program**

Social work students 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 SPC. If a student's GPA falls below 2.0, the student 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.

## **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).

### **Email**

Please activate your USM EMAIL account as soon possible. For privacy and security reasons, faculty and staff can only correspond with you via email using your USM email address, not your personal email address.

### **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/Social Media**

For current information about the school and to keep up with the social work clubs' activities, follow the School through the various Facebook pages/groups:

- **School of Social Work FB Group:** Southern Miss Social Work Students and Alumni
- **BSW Club Hattiesburg:** USM BSW Club
- **BSW Club Gulf Park:** Southern Miss Gulf Coast Student Social Work Association

### **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 *i*Tech. 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 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.

## **STUDENT RECOGNITION**

### **Awards**

The School of Social Work honors students once a year at the School of Social Work Year End Celebration. The recipients of the awards presented to undergraduate social work students at the School of Social Work Awards Ceremony are selected by the social work students and 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 sometime in the spring semester and honored in late April at the Awards Ceremony and sometimes, additionally, at a reception hosted by the College of Education and Human Sciences.

### **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 <https://www.usm.edu/registrar/faqs-graduation-information.php> and Honors College achievements <http://www.usm.edu/honors> Students are responsible for pursuing additional information related to these achievements.

## **GRADUATION**

### **When to Apply for Graduation**

Bachelor's Degree Candidates: Apply the semester preceding your expected graduation date. The Application for Degree will be filled out during BSW student's 3<sup>rd</sup> semester advisement appointment. The Social Work Student Support Specialist will assist, the BSW Coordinator will sign off on all Applications for Degree, and all forms will be sent to the Dean's Office for processing by the required University date. For more information see

<http://www.usm.edu/registrar/graduation-commencement>

## **Commencement**

For information on commencement activities see <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. BSW students can apply to take the licensure exam when they are within their last 15 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)

## **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.

## **Composition of School Committees**

### **Curriculum**

Faculty  
Undergraduate Student  
Graduate Student

### **Awards**

Faculty  
Staff  
Undergraduate Student  
Graduate Student

### **Professional Continuing Ed**

Faculty  
Undergraduate Student  
Graduate Student

### **Graduate Admissions**

Faculty  
Staff  
Undergraduate Student  
Graduate Student

### **Policy & Handbook**

Faculty  
Undergraduate Student  
Graduate Student

### **Recruitment & Public Relations**

Faculty  
Staff  
Undergraduate Student  
Graduate Student

**Undergraduate Admissions**

Faculty  
Undergraduate Student  
Graduate Student

**College of Education and Human Sciences Committees**

Student Advisory  
Awards

**Evaluation**

Faculty  
Undergraduate Student  
Graduate Student

**Faculty Search**

Faculty  
Undergraduate Student  
Graduate Student

**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](http://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 resides.

**BSW Club**

The Undergraduate Social Work Club (offered on both campuses) 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 service 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 service 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>)

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 (including transfer courses) 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>

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

### **Mental Well-Being**

USM recognizes that students sometimes experience challenges that make learning difficult. If you find that life stressors such as anxiety, depression, relationship problems, difficulty concentrating, alcohol/drug problems, or other stressful experiences are interfering with your academic or personal success, consider contacting Student Counseling Services on campus at 601-266-4829. More information is also available at <https://www.usm.edu/student-counseling-services>. All students are eligible for free, confidential individual or group counseling services. *In the event of emergency, please call 911 or contact the counselor on call at 601-606-HELP (4357).*

## **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 <https://www.usm.edu/financial-aid/scholarships>

The School of Social Work has a few named scholarships for BSW students which carry cash awards. BSW students who are taking the professional level social work courses 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.

Click here to access The USM Foundation Scholarship Application System:

<https://www.usmfoundation.com/s/1149/foundation/index.aspx?sid=1149&gid=1&pgid=924>

<https://usm.academicworks.com/> 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 celebration.

### **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](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Community-and-Social-Service/Social-workers.htm)

## Appendix A:

### Generalist and Resilience-Informed Social Work Practice Competencies

#### Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

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

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

#### Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

**Generalist** - Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

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

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

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

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

### **Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

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

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

### **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

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

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

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

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

communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Appendix B:



### **Social Work Professional and Technical Standards MASTERS AND BACHELORS DEGREE PROGRAMS**

The professional and 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.

#### **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.

## **Professional Standards Performance**

### Standard:

- Plans and organizes work effectively.
- Turns in assignments complete and on time.
- Keeps scheduled appointments (advisement, fieldwork interviews, etc.).
- Makes arrangements for his/her special needs.
- Develops increasing levels of knowledge and skills with awareness of integration as demonstrated through class participation, assignment and field performance.

### Indications of Concern:

Appears to demonstrate a pattern of:

- Poor organizational skills.
- Demonstrates inability to take initiative toward increasing knowledge and skills relevant to performance demands.
- Requests for extension on assignments and exams.
- Turning in field and/or class assignments late or incomplete.
- Excessive absences from class per class syllabus.
- Non-response to program communications.
- Multiple absences from field placement.

## **Conduct/Behavior**

### Standard:

- Demonstrates ability to work cooperatively with others.
- Actively participates in class discussion groups/role plays.
- Is open to feedback from peers/faculty.
- Is able to accept constructive criticism.

- Actively participates in fieldwork supervision sessions,
- Conducts him/herself according to the NASW Code of Ethics.

Indicators of Concern:

- Appears to create conflict in class, which impedes learning and /or building effective relationships.
- Uncooperative/unwilling to participate in class activities.
- Consistently late for class, or leaves class early.
- Consistently late for field placement.
- Sleeps during class periods.
- Disrupts class process by talking to others.
- Difficulty in listening, (e.g. overly sensitive, externalizes blame, distorts communications).
- Appears unwilling/unable to accept feedback.
- Responds in a defensive manner.
- Consistently argumentative
- Monopolizes class discussions.
- Consistently complains about class workload to the point of impeding class process.
- Unwilling/unable to develop an understanding of people different from oneself.
- Inability to separate his/her personal values from professional values and responsibilities.
- Inability to recognize the impact of personal values and behaviors of others.
- Inadequate maturity, readiness, and/or ability for generalist practice; for example, evidence of excessive anxiety, grandiosity, passivity, etc.
- Physical action directed at clients, faculty, staff, or fellow students.
- Unethical professional behavior (e.g., sexual contact with a client).
- Inappropriate dress or adornment.
- Academic misconduct (see Statement on Academic Integrity).

- Takes little initiative in exploring areas of learning growth.

### **Emotional Self-Control (Self-Understanding)**

#### Standard:

- Uses self-disclosure appropriately (e.g., students seems to have an insight, and self-awareness, and has resolved the issue he/she is sharing).
- Deals appropriately in class with issues which arouse emotions.
- Demonstrates an awareness of one's own personal limits.
- Understands the effect of one's behavior on others.

#### Indicators of Concern:

- When engaged in self-disclosure, the student appears to be working through unresolved issues and/or avoiding client issues.
- The student appears to overreact to, or resent feedback (e.g., takes it personally).
- Appears unable/unwilling to control emotional reactions.
- Possible alcohol/drug abuse, mental health issues.
- Verbal threats directed at clients, faculty, staff, or students.
- Demonstrates impaired judgment, decision-making, or problem-solving skills.
- Consistent failure to demonstrate ability to form effective client/social worker relationship.
- Appears judgmental, abrupt in manner or unapproachable.
- Expects perfection of self and others.
- Pushes "own agenda" rather than listening to client.
- Crosses boundaries; doesn't recognize them

### **Communication Skills**

#### Standard (Written):

- Shows consistency in written communication. Written assignments demonstrate: good spelling, appropriate use of punctuation, clear structure, paragraphing, good organization, follows logical sequence. Demonstrates the ability to use citations (A.P.A style).

- Demonstrates ability to write effectively in records.
- Demonstrates ability to summarize, identify major points and document succinctly • Shows command of the English language.
- Abides by College Academic Standards.
- Demonstrates use of critical thinking skills.

Indicators of Concern:

- Written work is frequently vague, shows difficulty in expressing ideas clearly and concisely.
- Work appears to have been hastily prepared and not proof read.
- Student has many errors in the areas of spelling, punctuation, structure, etc., and does not make effort to show improvement.
- Appears to have plagiarized the work of others.
- Written work is excessive and/or inadequate regarding the purpose of the work e.g. (case notes vs. term paper)

Standard (Verbal):

- Is able to clearly articulate ideas, thoughts, concepts, etc.
- Has working proficiency of the English language even when English is not the student's primary language.

Indicators of Concern:

- Difficulty communicating so that others can hear or understand.
  - Lacks working proficiency of the English language when communicating

**School of Social Work  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement  
STRIDE**

We are committed to fostering, sustaining, and **strategizing toward racial inclusion, diversity, and equity** (S.T.R.I.D.E.). As a school, we will adhere to this commitment by taking strong positions, taking action, providing help, and being clear on expectations from all affiliated with the School of Social Work at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM). This statement is couched within the National

Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics. Lastly, this statement is intended to offer our position, plans of action, and expectations for students, staff, faculty, and field partners.

### **What is Our Position?**

All students, staff, and faculty are welcome in any School of Social Work setting. We disavow all racism, xenophobia, homophobia, sexism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, classism, ableism, and hate speech or actions that attempt to silence, threaten, and degrade others. We recognize that discrimination can be direct or indirect and take place at both institutional and personal levels. Expressions or actions that disparage a person are contrary to the mission of S.T.R.I.D.E. and the school and will not be tolerated.

### **How do we Implement Action behind our Position?**

We are committed to supporting our students and fostering an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. We will work to promote an anti-discriminatory environment where everyone should feel welcome. During class, your instructors will not shy away from the uncomfortable. The faculty urge you to have the courage to be uncomfortable in class discussions. In exchange for your courage, we will work to ensure a classroom environment that supports your taking these intellectual and emotional risks.

### **What does Providing Help Look Like?**

If you feel that our courses, programs, or department fall short of this commitment, we encourage you to engage in dialogue with your instructor, staff, or administrator. Your instructors will always be in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said or done that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to an instructor, administrator, or university partner about it. If you experience or witness harassment or discrimination, you may file a Statement of Complaint with the **Office of Affirmative Action & Equal Employment Opportunity** in person or online at: <https://forms.usm.edu/human-resources/view.php?id=13153>. You may also contact the **Office of Multicultural Programs and Services (Hattiesburg Campus)** to submit complaints in person or online at: <https://www.usm.edu/student-affairs/cares.php#report>.

### **Our Expectations**

We expect that learning needs will be addressed both in and out of class. The diversity that students bring to class will be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. Courteous behavior and responses are expected at all times. It is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in the classroom. We expect you to be able to disagree without becoming disagreeable. Civility and respect for the opinions of others are very important in an academic environment.

#### Standard:

- Shows respect for others' opinions.
- Demonstrates a willingness to understand diversity of people regarding race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, political orientation, sexual orientation, and populations at risk.
- Appears to be able to handle discussion of uncomfortable topics.

#### Indicators of Concern:

- Uses derogatory language or demeaning remarks.
- Discriminatory behavior or harassment towards others on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion, etc.

- Consistently “glosses over” or ignores discussion of uncomfortable topics.

### **Technical Standards**

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:

Hattiesburg Address:

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

Gulf Coast Address:

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 ODA at [oda@usm.edu](mailto:oda@usm.edu)

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.

- Transportation to field placements if none is available on campus.
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.

**Statement of Understanding**

I understand that although I am admitted to the social work program at The University of Southern Mississippi, if my professional development is not deemed satisfactory by the social work faculty Student Performance Committee, the program has the right and responsibility to request re-evaluation of my suitability for the social work program and make a decision regarding my progression in the program.

I hereby agree to abide by the standards outlined in this document. I have read, understand and acknowledge receipt of the Social Work Professional and Technical Standards.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## 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**

The NASW Code of Ethics is a set of standards that guide the professional conduct of social workers. The 2021 update includes language that addresses the importance of professional self-care. Moreover, revisions to Cultural Competence standard provide more explicit guidance to social workers. All social workers should review the new text and affirm their commitment to abide by the Code of Ethics. Also available in Spanish.

- The first Section, "Preamble," summarizes the social work profession's mission and core values.
- The second section, "Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics," provides an overview of the Code's main functions and a brief guide for dealing with ethical issues or dilemmas in social work practice.
- The third section, "Ethical Principles," presents broad ethical principles, based on social work's core values, that inform social work practice.
- The final section, "Ethical Standards," includes specific ethical standards to guide social workers' conduct and to provide a basis for adjudication.

### 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 dual 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, and encourages all social workers to engage in self-care, ongoing education, and other activities to ensure their commitment to those same core features of the profession.
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. \*For information on the NASW Professional Review Process, see NASW Procedures for Professional Review.

Furthermore, 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. In situations when conflicting obligations arise, social workers may be faced with complex ethical dilemmas that have no simple answers. 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.

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

Professional self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Professional demands, challenging workplace climates, and exposure to trauma warrant that social workers maintain personal and professional health, safety, and integrity. Social work organizations, agencies, and educational institutions are encouraged to promote organizational policies, practices, and materials to support social workers' self-care.

### Ethical Principles

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

#### **Value:** *Service*

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

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

#### **Value:** *Social Justice*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers challenge social injustice*

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

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

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.*

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

**Value:** *Importance of Human Relationships*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.*

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

**Value:** *Integrity*

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

Social workers are continually aware of the profession's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers should take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally. 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 should discuss with clients the social workers' policies concerning the use of technology in the provision of professional services.

(f) Social workers who use technology to provide social work services should obtain informed consent from the individuals using these services during the initial screening or interview and prior to initiating services. Social workers should assess clients' capacity to provide informed consent and, when using technology to communicate, verify the identity and location of clients.

(g) Social workers who use technology to provide social work services should assess the clients' suitability and capacity for electronic and remote services. Social workers should consider the clients' intellectual, emotional, and physical ability to use technology to receive services and the clients' ability to understand the potential benefits, risks, and limitations of such services. If clients do not wish to use services provided through technology, social workers should help them identify alternate methods of service.

(h) Social workers should obtain clients' informed consent before making audio or video recordings of clients or permitting observation of service provision by a third party.

(i) Social workers should obtain client consent before conducting an electronic search on the client. Exceptions may arise when the search is for purposes of protecting the client or other people from serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm, or for other compelling professional reasons.

#### **1.04 Competence**

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

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

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

(d) Social workers who use technology in the provision of social work services should ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide such services in a competent manner. This includes an understanding of the special communication challenges when using technology and the ability to implement strategies to address these challenges.

(e) Social workers who use technology in providing social work services should comply with the laws governing technology and social work practice in the jurisdiction in which they are regulated and located and, as applicable, in the jurisdiction in which the client is located.

### **1.05 Cultural Competence**

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

(b) Social workers should demonstrate knowledge that guides practice with clients of various cultures and be able to demonstrate skills in the provision of culturally informed services that empower marginalized individuals and groups. Social workers must take action against oppression, racism, discrimination, and inequities, and acknowledge personal privilege.

(c) Social workers should demonstrate awareness and cultural humility by engaging in critical self-reflection (understanding their own bias and engaging in self-correction), recognizing clients as experts of their own culture, committing to lifelong learning, and holding institutions accountable for advancing cultural humility.

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

(e) Social workers who provide electronic social work services should be aware of cultural and socioeconomic differences among clients' use of and access to electronic technology and seek to prevent such potential barriers. Social workers should assess cultural, environmental, economic, mental or physical ability, linguistic, and other issues that may affect the delivery or use of these services.

### **1.06 Conflicts of Interest**

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

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

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

when social workers relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.)

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

(e) Social workers should avoid communication with clients using technology (such as social networking sites, online chat, e-mail, text messages, telephone, and video) for personal or non-work-related purposes.

(f) Social workers should be aware that posting personal information on professional Web sites or other media might cause boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.

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

(h) Social workers should avoid accepting requests from or engaging in personal relationships with clients on social networking sites or other electronic media to prevent boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.

### **1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality**

(a) Social workers should respect clients' right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from or about clients except for compelling professional reasons. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.

(b) Social workers may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a client.

(c) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. The general expectation that social workers will keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or others. In all instances, social workers should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose; only information that is directly relevant to the purpose for which the disclosure is made should be revealed.

- (d) Social workers should inform clients, to the extent possible, about the disclosure of confidential information and the potential consequences, when feasible before the disclosure is made. This applies whether social workers disclose confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or client consent.
- (e) Social workers should discuss with clients and other interested parties the nature of confidentiality and limitations of clients' right to confidentiality. Social workers should review with clients circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. This discussion should occur as soon as possible in the social worker-client relationship and as needed throughout the course of the relationship.
- (f) When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual's right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. This agreement should include consideration of whether confidential information may be exchanged in person or electronically, among clients or with others outside of formal counseling sessions. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.
- (g) Social workers should inform clients involved in family, couples, marital, or group counseling of the social worker's, employer's, and agency's policy concerning the social worker's disclosure of confidential information among the parties involved in the counseling.
- (h) Social workers should not disclose confidential information to third-party payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.
- (i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information, electronically or in person, in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semi-public areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.
- (j) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law. When a court of law or other legally authorized body orders social workers to disclose confidential or privileged information without a client's consent and such disclosure could cause harm to the client, social workers should request that the court withdraw the order or limit the order as narrowly as possible or maintain the records under seal, unavailable for public inspection.
- (k) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media.
- (l) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients' records are stored in a secure location and that clients' records are not available to others who are not authorized to have access.
- (m) Social workers should take reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of electronic communications, including information provided to clients or third parties. Social workers should use

applicable safeguards (such as encryption, firewalls, and passwords) when using electronic communications such as e-mail, online posts, online chat sessions, mobile communication, and text messages.

(n) Social workers should develop and disclose policies and procedures for notifying clients of any breach of confidential information in a timely manner.

(o) In the event of unauthorized access to client records or information, including any unauthorized access to the social worker's electronic communication or storage systems, social workers should inform clients of such disclosures, consistent with applicable laws and professional standards.

(p) Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of electronic technology, including Internet-based search engines, to gather information about clients.

(q) Social workers should avoid searching or gathering client information electronically unless there are compelling professional reasons, and when appropriate, with the client's informed consent.

(r) Social workers should avoid posting any identifying or confidential information about clients on professional websites or other forms of social media.

(s) Social workers should transfer or dispose of clients' records in a manner that protects clients' confidentiality and is consistent with applicable laws governing records and social work licensure.

(t) Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker's termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.

(u) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients for teaching or training purposes unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information.

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

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

### **1.08 Access to Records**

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

(b) Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of technology to provide clients with access to their records.

(c) When providing clients with access to their records, social workers should take steps to protect the confidentiality of other individuals identified or discussed in such records.

### **1.09 Sexual Relationships**

(a) Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities, inappropriate sexual communications through the use of technology or in person, or sexual contact with current clients, whether such contact is consensual or forced.

(b) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a close personal relationship when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. Sexual activity or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a personal relationship has the potential to be harmful to the client and may make it difficult for the social worker and client to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Social workers--not their clients, their clients' relatives, or other individuals with whom the client maintains a personal relationship--assume the full burden for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

(c) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with former clients because of the potential for harm to the client. If social workers engage in conduct contrary to this prohibition or claim that an exception to this prohibition is warranted because of extraordinary circumstances, it is social workers--not their clients--who assume the full burden of demonstrating that the former client has not been exploited, coerced, or manipulated, intentionally or unintentionally.

(d) Social workers should not provide clinical services to individuals with whom they have had a prior sexual relationship. Providing clinical services to a former sexual partner has the potential to be harmful to the individual and is likely to make it difficult for the social worker and individual to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

### **1.10 Physical Contact**

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

### **1.11 Sexual Harassment**

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

### **1.12 Derogatory Language**

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

### **1.13 Payment for Services**

(a) When setting fees, social workers should ensure that the fees are fair, reasonable, and commensurate with the services performed. Consideration should be given to clients' ability to pay.

(b) Social workers should avoid accepting goods or services from clients as payment for professional services. Bartering arrangements, particularly involving services, create the potential for conflicts of interest, exploitation, and inappropriate boundaries in social workers' relationships with clients. Social workers should explore and may participate in bartering only in very limited circumstances when it can be demonstrated that such arrangements are an accepted practice among professionals in the local community, considered to be essential for the provision of services, negotiated without coercion, and entered into at the client's initiative and with the client's informed consent. Social workers who accept goods or services from clients as payment for professional services assume the full burden of demonstrating that this arrangement will not be detrimental to the client or the professional relationship.

(c) Social workers should not solicit a private fee or other remuneration for providing services to clients who are entitled to such available services through the social workers' employer or agency.

### **1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision-Making Capacity**

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

### **1.15 Interruption of Services**

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

### **1.16 Referral for Services**

(a) Social workers should refer clients to other professionals when the other professionals' specialized knowledge or expertise is needed to serve clients fully or when social workers believe that they are not being effective or making reasonable progress with clients and that other services are required.

(b) Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should take appropriate steps to facilitate an orderly transfer of responsibility. Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should disclose, with clients' consent, all pertinent information to the new service providers.

(c) Social workers are prohibited from giving or receiving payment for a referral when no professional service is provided by the referring social worker.

### **1.17 Termination of Services**

(a) Social workers should terminate services to clients and professional relationships with them when such services and relationships are no longer required or no longer serve the clients' needs or interests.

(b) Social workers should take reasonable steps to avoid abandoning clients who are still in need of services. Social workers should withdraw services precipitously only under unusual circumstances, giving careful consideration to all factors in the situation and taking care to minimize possible adverse effects. Social workers should assist in making appropriate arrangements for continuation of services when necessary.

(c) Social workers in fee-for-service settings may terminate services to clients who are not paying an overdue balance if the financial contractual arrangements have been made clear to the client, if the client does not pose an imminent danger to self or others, and if the clinical and other consequences of the current nonpayment have been addressed and discussed with the client.

(d) Social workers should not terminate services to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client.

(e) Social workers who anticipate the termination or interruption of services to clients should notify clients promptly and seek the transfer, referral, or continuation of services in relation to the clients' needs and preferences.

(f) Social workers who are leaving an employment setting should inform clients of appropriate options for the continuation of services and of the benefits and risks of the options.

## **2. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues**

### **2.01 Respect**

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

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

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

## **2.02 Confidentiality**

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

## **2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

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

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

## **2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues**

(a) Social workers should not take advantage of a dispute between a colleague and an employer to obtain a position or otherwise advance the social workers' own interests.

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

## **2.05 Consultation**

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

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

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

## **2.06 Sexual Relationships**

(a) Social workers who function as supervisors or educators should not engage in sexual activities or contact (including verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact) with supervisees, students, trainees, or other colleagues over whom they exercise professional authority.

(b) Social workers should avoid engaging in sexual relationships with colleagues when there is potential for a conflict of interest. Social workers who become involved in, or anticipate becoming involved in, a

sexual relationship with a colleague have a duty to transfer professional responsibilities, when necessary, to avoid a conflict of interest.

## **2.07 Sexual Harassment**

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

## **2.08 Impairment of Colleagues**

(a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's impairment that is due to personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties and that interferes with practice effectiveness should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.

(b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague's impairment interferes with practice effectiveness and that the colleague has not taken adequate steps to address the impairment should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

## **2.09 Incompetence of Colleagues**

(a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's incompetence should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.

(b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague is incompetent and has not taken adequate steps to address the incompetence should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

## **2.10 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues**

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

(b) Social workers should be knowledgeable about established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues' unethical behavior. Social workers should be familiar with national, state, and local procedures for handling ethics complaints. These include policies and procedures created by NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, agencies, and other professional organizations.

(c) Social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should seek resolution by discussing their concerns with the colleague when feasible and when such discussion is likely to be productive.

(d) When necessary, social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should take action through appropriate formal channels (such as contacting a state licensing board or regulatory body, the NASW National Ethics Committee, or other professional ethics committees).

(e) Social workers should defend and assist colleagues who are unjustly charged with unethical conduct.

### **3. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings**

#### **3.01 Supervision and Consultation**

(a) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation (whether in-person or remotely) should have the necessary knowledge and skill to supervise or consult appropriately and should do so only within their areas of knowledge and competence.

(b) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

(c) Social workers should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with supervisees in which there is a risk of exploitation of or potential harm to the supervisee, including dual relationships that may arise while using social networking sites or other electronic media.

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

#### **3.02 Education and Training**

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

(b) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should evaluate students' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

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

(d) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student, including dual relationships that may arise while using social networking sites or other electronic media. Social work educators and field instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

#### **3.03 Performance Evaluation**

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

### **3.04 Client Records**

- (a) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in electronic and paper records is accurate and reflects the services provided.
- (b) Social workers should include sufficient and timely documentation in records to facilitate the delivery of services and to ensure continuity of services provided to clients in the future.
- (c) Social workers' documentation should protect clients' privacy to the extent that is possible and appropriate and should include only information that is directly relevant to the delivery of services.
- (d) Social workers should store records following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by relevant laws, agency policies, and contracts.

### **3.05 Billing**

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

### **3.06 Client Transfer**

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

### **3.07 Administration**

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

Ethics. Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to eliminate any conditions in their organizations that violate, interfere with, or discourage compliance with the Code.

### **3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development**

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

### **3.09 Commitments to Employers**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **3.10 Labor-Management Disputes**

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

(b) The actions of social workers who are involved in labor-management disputes, job actions, or labor strikes should be guided by the profession's values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. Reasonable differences of opinion exist among social workers concerning their primary obligation as professionals

during an actual or threatened labor strike or job action. Social workers should carefully examine relevant issues and their possible impact on clients before deciding on a course of action.

#### **4. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals**

##### **4.01 Competence**

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

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

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

##### **4.02 Discrimination**

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

##### **4.03 Private Conduct**

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

##### **4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception**

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

##### **4.05 Impairment**

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

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

#### **4.06 Misrepresentation**

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

#### **4.07 Solicitations**

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

#### **4.08 Acknowledging Credit**

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

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

#### **5.01 Integrity of the Profession**

- (a) Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.
- (b) Social workers should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession. Social workers should protect, enhance, and improve the integrity of the profession through appropriate study and research, active discussion, and responsible criticism of the profession.
- (c) Social workers should contribute time and professional expertise to activities that promote respect for the value, integrity, and competence of the social work profession. These activities may include teaching, research, consultation, service, legislative testimony, presentations in the community, and participation in their professional organizations.

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

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

## **5.02 Evaluation and Research**

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

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

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

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

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

(f) When using electronic technology to facilitate evaluation or research, social workers should ensure that participants provide informed consent for the use of such technology. Social workers should assess whether participants are able to use the technology and, when appropriate, offer reasonable alternatives to participate in the evaluation or research.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **6. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society**

### **6.01 Social Welfare**

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

### **6.02 Public Participation**

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

### **6.03 Public Emergencies**

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

### **6.04 Social and Political Action**

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

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

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

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

*\*Taken from <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics>, June 2021*

## Appendix E Pregnancy-Related Accommodations

Students who are expecting a child within an enrolled semester should work with their instructors to:

1. Plan ahead for resulting absences
2. Document these plans
3. Make arrangements to obtain the material they will miss
4. Complete all course requirements

The policy of the university in regard to pregnancy is issued through the Office of the Provost. It states:

“The University of Southern Mississippi does not discriminate against any student on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy or recovery from such. Further, the University does not exclude any student from its educational programs or activities, including any class, internship, assistantship or extracurricular activity because of any pregnancy-related criteria listed above. The University strongly endorses the right of students to receive appropriate consideration for, and when necessary, medical accommodation for, pregnancy-related conditions. Pregnancy-related appropriate considerations and/or accommodations will both be provided in a supportive manner that does not compromise the integrity of the academic experience.

Under federal law, absences due to a student’s pregnancy or related conditions will be excused for as long as the student’s physician deems the absences to be *medically necessary*. The Office of Disability Accommodation will verify any documentation submitted by a physician. When the student returns to school, she must be reinstated to the academic status she held when the leave began, which should include giving her the opportunity to make up any work missed. The University may offer the student alternatives to making up missed work, such as retaking a semester, taking part in an online course credit recovery program, or allowing the student additional time in a program thereby allowing the student to complete the program at a date later than they would have otherwise completed the program, especially after longer periods of leave. The student should be allowed to choose how to make up the work from various alternatives. This federal law supersedes any class attendance policy established for a course that conflicts with it. **Before informing a student that a request for accommodation or consideration cannot be provided, contact the Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Rebecca Malley, @ 601.266.4466 or by emailing [rebecca.malley@usm.edu](mailto:rebecca.malley@usm.edu).**”

Hattiesburg students requiring further assistance or accommodations should contact the Coordinator, Office of Student-Oriented Services, RC Cook Union 221, Box 5073, Phone: 601.266.4025.

Gulf Coast students should contact the Director of Student Services, Hardy Hall 232  
730 East Beach Boulevard, Long Beach, MS 39560, Phone: 228.865.4565.

## **Appendix F**

### **Military Service Accommodations**

The Center for Military Veterans, Service Members and their Families has established the following policy regarding absences due to active duty:

#### **(State of Mississippi Institute of Higher Learning Policy 516)**

Any student who has enrolled at an institution under the governance of the Board of Trustees, who is a member of the Mississippi National Guard, or one or more units of the Mississippi State Guard, or who is a member of any of the Reserve Components of the armed forces of the United States, and who has been placed in Active Duty status by orders of the President of the United States, or who has been drafted into any component of the armed forces of the United States, may be allowed to withdraw as a student of the institution, with a full refund of tuition, out-of-state fees (if applicable), student fees and any special fees, with room and board fees prorated with the approval of the Institutional Executive Officer.

Any student who withdraws from an institution under this policy will not receive any grades. The student record will show evidence of the withdrawal with documentation on file.

Any student called to active duty who has completed at least 3/4 of the semester and is in good standing with the institution, and who needs to only take the final examination to complete the semester, has the option to leave the university pursuant to this policy, without his/her class standing effected, and without refund of any of the above fees or tuition. However, within ninety (90) days after release from active duty, the student may make arrangements to take the final examination. The score of the final exam plus the unfinished semester's work will constitute the student's final grade.

Alternatively, any student called to active duty who has completed at least 3/4 of the semester and is in good standing with the institution, has the option to leave the university pursuant to this policy, without his/her class standing effected, and without refund of any of the above fees or tuition and shall have the option of receiving full credit for each enrolled course of study with the grade earned at the date he or she was called into active duty.

## Appendix G CAST (Child Advocacy Studies) Minor



### CAST (Child Advocacy Studies)

The University of Southern Mississippi, School of Social Work has long held an interest in improving the workforce for our state's nonprofit and for profit-child serving agencies, and Mississippi's Child Protective Services. The School maintains a working relationship with the Mississippi Department of Human Services (DHS), offers specially scheduled courses for DHS cohorts, and employs faculty with expertise in the profession of child welfare.

This CAST minor provide students with knowledge of how to organize and implement a multidisciplinary response to child maltreatment. CAST focuses on experiential, interdisciplinary, ethical, and culturally sensitive content that provides a collective knowledge base for responding to child maltreatment for professionals who work with children. Students will choose existing courses in the various disciplines: SWK, CJ, PSY, DPH, CD, PS, SOC, and FAM to meet the course requirements.

The CAST minor was developed to better equip students to carry out the work of various agencies and systems (i.e. healthcare, criminal justice, social services) as they advocate on behalf of the needs of children as victims and survivors of child abuse.

This minor is available to all students actively enrolled at Southern Miss who meet certain admissions' criteria (see back page for minor template) and will be offered for students on both the Hattiesburg and Gulf Park campuses.

#### **Requirements for a Minor in Social Work Child Advocacy Studies (CASTMNR)**

Eighteen (18) Hours Required. Students must maintain a 2.50 Cumulative GPA and earn a minimum grade of C in each course within the minor. Additionally, students must complete an application. After completion of the CAST minor courses, students must also complete self-report measure. Students must complete SWK 490 and SWK 494 (or CJ 364) and an additional twelve (12) hours, of which nine (9) hours must be from at least two (2) different disciplines and cannot be shared with the student's major or other minor requirements, if applicable.

- 1) SWK 490 - Child Maltreatment and Advocacy: CAST
- 2) CJ 364 - Child Abuse and the Law
- 3) Choose twelve (12) hours from the following courses. Restrictions apply; see description above.

#### **Psychosocial and Physical Development of Children and Adolescents**

- CD 350 - Child Development
- CD 451/L – Infant Development
- CD 477 - Developmental Disabilities in Early Childhood
- PSY 372 - Adolescent Psychology
- SWK 496 - Social Work Practice in Schools\*

#### **Substance Abuse and Intervention** (Students may select only one course from this group)

- CJ 445 - Drugs and Society
- DPH 422 - Drugs and the Whole Person
- PSY 435 - Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Intervention

Family, Marriage, and Parent-Child Relationships

- SWK 494 - Social Work Practice w/Children and Families: CAST 1\*
- DPH 430 - Human Sexuality
- FAM 351 - Marital and Family Relationships
- FAM 452 – Parenthood

Domestic Violence and Family Law

- CJ 463 - Family Law
- SWK 497 - Social Work Practice and Family Violence: CAST 2\*  
or CJ 464 - Family Violence, Investigation and Deterrence

Criminal and Deviant Behavior

- SOC 340 - Deviant Behavior
- SOC 341 - Criminology

The Court System, Social Justice, and Crisis Intervention

- CJ 480 - Seminar in Criminal Justice (Variable Topic)
- SWK 499 - Forensic Social Work\*
- SWK 415 - Human Rights and Social Justice\*  
or PS 459 - Human Rights
- SWK 493 - Crisis Intervention: CAST 3\*

Case Management, Rehabilitative Services, Behavior Analysis

- PSY 330 – Principles and Processes of Case Management
- PSY 331 – Medical Aspects of Rehabilitation
- PSY 385 – Applied Behavior Analysis

\* Open to SWK majors or by permission of faculty advisor and/or Undergraduate SWK Program Coordinator

Check list:

<input type="checkbox"/> GPA ( )	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed minor template	<input type="checkbox"/> Total hours ( )
<input type="checkbox"/> Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-report measure	