

Student Handbook

Lamar University  
Social Work Program

2009- 2010

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**PURPOSE**

The *Lamar University Social Work Program Student Handbook* is an information supplement for social work majors. Students should also refer to the current *Lamar University General Catalog* and the current *Lamar University Student Handbook*. The *Lamar University Social Work Program Student Handbook* will serve to provide an overview of policies and procedures specific to the Baccalaureate Social Work Program. This document is to be used as an aid for students in conjunction with scheduled sessions with advisors, and is not to be considered a substitute for direct contact with faculty advisors.

The policies and procedures contained in this *Social Work Student Handbook* have been approved by Administration and in no way conflict with or supersede established University policies. All majors should also obtain copies of the *Lamar University General Catalog* and the *Lamar University Student Handbook*. Both of these handbooks may be obtained at the Wimberly Student Affairs Building.

## **BRIEF HISTORY OF LAMAR PROGRAM**

The Social Work Program began in 1969 as an 18 hour minor housed within the Sociology Department. In 1974, the social work minor was moved administratively to the newly created Department of Public Affairs, which also administered the newly established Criminal Justice Program. In 1977, an institutional request for the establishment of a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work (BSW) was approved by the Coordinating Board of Texas. In 1980 The University created the Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Criminal Justice as a result of merging the departments of Sociology and Public Affairs.

The initial three-year accreditation of the Program by the Council on Social Work Education began in June 1980 and the Social Work Program has been continuously accredited since 1980.

## **PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT**

Within the larger context of a liberal arts education, the mission of the Lamar University Social Work Program is to develop competent and ethical beginning generalist professional social work practitioners who possess the knowledge, skills, and values required to understand, prevent, and eliminate social problems for all sizes and types of client systems, specifically for populations at risk to social and economic injustice.

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

1. Prepare graduates to identify and address oppression, discrimination, and social and economic injustice within the context of the historical roots of the profession.
2. Prepare graduates to use effective generalist social work interventions with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in a variety of social work settings.
3. Prepare graduates who value and respect human diversity and who are capable of practice with diverse populations without discrimination.
4. Prepare graduates to understand the impact of policy on all social work practice, and to be engaged in policy development and policy change.
5. Prepare graduates who are committed to life long professional growth and development, primarily through the utilization of research methods and research knowledge to enhance their social work practice.

### **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The Lamar University Social Work Program has 13 Program Objectives that are derived from the Program Goals. Programming is designed in the Lamar University Social Work Program so that upon graduation, students will be able to:

1. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
2. Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.
3. Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
5. Understand and interpret the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.
6. Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with systems of all sizes.

7. Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span as well as the interaction between individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.
8. Analyze, formulate, and influence social policies, client systems, staff and agencies.
9. Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions.
10. Use communication skills with a variety of diverse client populations, colleagues, and communities.
11. Use supervision and consultation appropriate to generalist social work practice.
12. Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.
13. Demonstrate identification with the social work profession and its emphasis on life long learning necessary for competent practice.

## **ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY**

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**NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Social Work Program values human diversity. The Program accords all its stakeholders (i.e., students, faculty, staff, field representatives, Program committees) dignity and worth and therefore, prohibits discrimination in its policies and practices based on differences in age, class, color, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and / or sexual orientation.

On the inside cover of every official university document is a statement of the University's policy of non-discrimination. On the inside cover, the *Lamar University Student Handbook* states, "Lamar University believes that freedom of thought, innovation, and creativity are fundamental characteristics of a community of scholars. To promote such a learning environment, the university has a special responsibility to seek cultural diversity, to instill a global perspective in its students and to nurture sensitivity, tolerance, and mutual respect. The university does not discriminate in any of its policies and programs with regard to race, religion, color, national origin, disability, or sex."

**ACCREDITATION**

The BSW Program at Lamar University-Beaumont is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

**LICENSING**

BSW graduates are eligible upon graduation to take the state licensing examination as administered by the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners. The BSW graduate will apply for the LSW (Licensed Social Worker) status.

## **BSW ADMISSION, ADVISEMENT, AND REGISTRATION**

### **BSW Admission**

After admission to the University, (see Pages 24-26 in the 2002 -2004 *Lamar University General Catalog*) the student declares an interest in social work as a major and is referred to a faculty advisor in the Social Work Program. The advisor will describe the Program, outline social work as a profession, and discuss with students their aptitude for social work as a professional career choice. Prior to being accepted into the Lamar Social Work Program, students must have a 2.0 or higher grade point average in all courses attempted at Lamar.

### **Advisement**

All social work majors are assigned to social work faculty advisors according to their classification. Participation in the advisement process is a mandatory requirement for all social work majors. While students are responsible for monitoring their program of study and assuring that they meet all requirements in a timely, appropriately sequenced fashion, faculty advisors serve as an aid in carrying out this important process. Students should plan to meet with their advisor at least once per semester to review their program of study and determine the appropriate schedule of classes for the next semester. Advisors will give each student a copy of the BSW degree plan and the Social Work course grid during the initial advisement session.

Advising appointments will be set each semester during the University's pre-advisement schedule to assure that students are advised prior to their scheduled registration appointment. The times for pre-advisement are printed each semester in the University Press. Those who delay too long may have to wait beyond their registration appointment to be advised, which increases the risk of being closed out of needed or desired classes or sections.

Each student should, in consultation with the advisor, develop a comprehensive program of study as soon as possible. Some students may have to alter the recommended plan due to irregular, part-time enrollment and/or due to entering the major after the sophomore year. A planned program of study will greatly facilitate scheduling of classes, monitoring of progress toward graduation, and preventing sequencing problems and delays.

Students electing to change their course schedule from the schedule mutually agreed upon with their advisor may encounter sequencing problems and/or may have to withdraw from a class if appropriate prerequisites and co-requisites have not been completed. Social work majors should not drop or add any course without prior consent from their advisor.

### **Transfer Students**

The Lamar University Admissions Office's Transfer Evaluator evaluates all official transcripts from other colleges and universities for academic credit. Non-social work transfer credits

approved by the Lamar Transfer Evaluator which meet the requirements of the Lamar Philosophy of Knowledge Core (see pages 15-16 in the *Lamar University General Catalog*) are accepted by the Program. Other non-social work credits approved by the Lamar Transfer Evaluator may be accepted by the Program as electives.

The BSW Program faculty evaluates and provides final approval for all transfer credits to be applied to the BSW degree plan. If the student is transferring from a program not accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, all transferred social work courses are credited as electives and will not be credited as fulfilling the degree requirements of the Lamar Social Work Program.

If a student transfers social work classes from a CSWE accredited program, each social work course will be evaluated by Program faculty. Transferring students must submit course outlines of their social work courses to demonstrate the content of transferred courses. Practice courses and field practicum courses cannot be transferred. They will count as general university electives. Under no circumstance is social work credit given for social work courses taken at colleges or universities not accredited by CSWE or for life experiences or previous work experiences.

### **Registration**

Registration policies and schedules are developed by the Registrar's office. Semester course schedules are available at the Wimberly Student Service Building. The *University Press* publishes announcements concerning the dates of pre-advisement and registration each semester. Social Work students should remember that academic advisement is required prior to registration. Social Work students WILL NOT be able to enroll for ANY classes without prior advisement and cleared for registration by the department secretary.

## **SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Curriculum**

The courses required for the social work major are built on the liberal arts curriculum as the foundation. Each student should be familiar with the recommended program of study, the Social Work Program course descriptions, the social work grid, the Program's prerequisites and co-requisites. These documents will be found in the Appendix at the end of the *Lamar University Social Work Program Student Handbook*.

### **No Academic Credit for Life Experience**

Under no circumstance is social work academic credit given for life experiences or previous work experiences.

### **Class Attendance**

Regular class attendance is required of all social work majors. Doing well on tests and/or assignments is not sufficient to meet the course objectives in most of the professional level courses. Class discussions and interactive exercises are integral parts of most social work classes. Faculty will also often relate materials that may not be found in the text or other assigned readings. In addition, the faculty expects that students will begin exhibiting professional behavior which includes promptness for classes and other special activities. This includes field practicum and assigned workshops, etc.

Should students be unable to attend a class or field practicum, it is their responsibility to notify the professor or field instructor of the reasons for such absences. Students are also responsible for arranging with the professor the conditions under which any required work that was missed can be made up. Each instructor determines their own absence policy as stated on the individual class syllabi. Credit may or may not be awarded for any course if the number of absences exceeds the faculty member's policy as stated on the course syllabus. Students should learn the instructor's policies on class attendance in the first week of class.

### **Grades and Professional Performance**

The determination of student grades is the prerogative of the course instructor. The syllabus in each social work course will outline the grading procedures of the course. It should be noted that regular class attendance and participation in class discussions are viewed by the faculty as a measure of students' developing professional standards of behavior and will be reflected in course grades.

A grade of "C" or better must be earned in each social work course. Students receiving less than a "C" in a social work course may repeat the course one time. If after the second time students do not earn the grade of "C" or better, they will be referred to their advisor and/or the instructor for an assessment and re-evaluation. Recommendations will then be made as to whether or not a student should be retained as a social work major. A grade of "C" or better in all social work courses is required in order to enroll in field practicum courses. A cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or better is required for graduation.

### **Fall 2000 Grade Replacement Policy**

Students should review the current *Lamar University Student Handbook* (p.83) for a complete discussion of the grade replacement policy. In brief, students will have one chance to replace a grade for a course. If a student repeats a course, the official grade is the second one earned, although the original grade remains on the student's transcript. A student who wishes to repeat a course must do so before completing a more advanced course in the same subject. Before registering to repeat a course for grade replacement, a student must receive approval from the Program Director or Faculty Advisor

## **Incompletes**

The grade of "I" for an incomplete is only given if a student is doing satisfactory work but, for non academic reasons, was unable to complete the course requirements. The "I" must be removed by the end of the following semester, otherwise the "I" turns to an "F." (See *Lamar University General Catalog* p.64).

Social Work majors must remove all "I's" before entering the required field practicum courses (SOWK 4321 and SOWK 4324).

## **Overloads**

Social Work students are not encouraged to take an overload unless it is thought to be necessary and/or feasible. An overload (more than 19 hours) must be approved by a Social Work Program Advisor. Further approval must also be given by the Department Chair and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Students will not be allowed to take an overload while taking Field Practicum (SOWK 4321 and SOWK 4324) unless there is an exceptional situation. The decision to approve an overload must assure that the field practicum will not be compromised in any way.

## **Field Practicum (Social Work Internships)**

The field practicum is an extremely important part of the curriculum. All social work majors are required to successfully complete two field practicum courses - SOWK 4321 and SOWK 4324.

Each intern is placed in a social service agency and receives three credit hours for each course. Each intern must be approved for the internship by the Field Practicum Coordinator and will be assigned by the Field Practicum Coordinator to an agency for supervision by an approved field instructor. The objective of the internship is to allow the student structured opportunities to apply the knowledge, values, and skills of the BSW curriculum to human service delivery systems.

Students will not be allowed to enter the practicum unless they are able to devote the required hours per week without interference from paid jobs or classes. The prospective student intern completes a placement preference form for the field practicum the semester prior to enrollment in the field practice. The placement preference form is used to assist the Field Coordinator in assessing individual student needs within the BSW Program. Professional liability insurance is required of all interns and is to be purchased through the National Association of Social Workers prior to entry in field. Students should be aware that many practicum agencies will perform a criminal background check before accepting a social work student as an intern. Students with past criminal convictions **MUST DISCUSS THIS WITH THE FIELD DIRECTOR BEFORE STUDENTS ENTER FIELD PLACEMENT.**

To be eligible for field practicum the student must:

- (1) be a major in academic good standing (2.0 or better overall grade point average)
- (2) have completed the University's core curriculum
- (3) have completed SOWK 2361, SOWK 2371, SOWK 3300, SOWK 3310, SOWK 3320, SOWK 3330, SOWK 3340, SOWK 3350, SOWK 3360, SOWK 4320 (Child Welfare), SOWK 4320 Seminar, SOWK 4320 Seminar, and SOWK 4380 with a grade of "C" or better in each course. The SOWK 4320 Seminar courses provide more intensive training in specific areas. Students are required to complete two Seminar courses. The Child Welfare course, required for all majors, will have a lower course number in the next *Lamar University General Catalog*.

See the *Field Practicum Manual* for in-depth information and copies of all relevant forms used (including the application and the evaluation instruments). Students cannot receive field practicum credit for volunteer and/or work experiences outside of the internships.

### **Last 30 Hour Requirement**

In keeping with University policy, the last 30 semester hours must be taken at Lamar University-Beaumont (See Page 67, "General Education Requirements," in the 2002-2004 *Lamar University General Catalog*).

### **Graduation**

The graduation process is outlined in the current *Lamar University General Catalog*. Students should pay careful attention to the steps outlined in the Catalog. In order to graduate students must complete the application for graduation in the Records Office. Additionally, students must pay the necessary fees for cap, gown and diploma by the deadline listed in the current *Lamar University General Catalog*.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

There are a large number of student services available at Lamar University. Students should refer to the *Lamar University Student Handbook* for a complete listing of student services. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities, the Student Health Center and the Writing Lab are briefly discussed below.

### **Students With Disabilities**

The Lamar Social Work welcomes students with disabilities in the program. Students with disabilities are encouraged to meet as early as possible with Social Work faculty and the Coordinator of Services with Students with Disabilities to ensure the receipt of appropriate services. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities offers a variety of services

designed to assist students with disabilities to become full-participating members of the university community. Some of the services provided include academic accommodations, assisted equipment, interpreters, note-takers, physical access and priority registration. Currently, the Coordinator is a graduate of the Lamar Social Work Program who also holds an M.S.W. degree. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in 101A of the Wimberly Building. The phone number is 409-880-8347. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities has a compressive web site: <http://dept.lamar.edu/sfswd/>

### **Student Health Center**

The Student Health Center offers outpatient services for currently enrolled students. No appointment is needed, and students are charged only for medications and supplies, not for the office visit. In addition to basic medical services (including laboratory services), the Health Center also provides mental health counseling. The phone number of the Student Health Center is 880-8466.

### **Writing Lab**

The Writing Center provides assistance to Lamar University students with their writing projects. The Center's goal is to help students grow and mature as writers by providing help with difficulties they may have in academic writing. A student may work one-on-one basis with a writing consultant during individual tutorials. Students are reminded to utilize the services of the Writing Center in a timely fashion. The Writing Center staff cannot always assist students who appear minutes before the deadline for their academic papers.

The Writing Lab is located in room 208 of the Maes Building. The phone number is 880-8571.

## **STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN POLICY FORMULATION**

Each fall the Student Social Work Association is charged with reviewing the *Social Work Student Handbook*. Through the Student Association, students make recommendations for change to the Program faculty. Students are encouraged to bring issues concerning policy change to faculty members at any time.

## **STUDENT EVALUATION OF FACULTY**

All students enrolled at Lamar University have an opportunity each semester to evaluate their instructors. At the end of each course, students are given standardized faculty evaluation forms to complete. These evaluations are confidential with the results being computer generated. These evaluations are returned to the faculty to utilize in strengthening content, teaching, and learning methods to facilitate more effective instruction. Social work faculty also may devise their own instruments to evaluate individual classes.

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Social Work Student Association**

The Social Work Student Association, an approved University student organization, is the official student organization for social work majors and is also open to all Lamar University students interested in social work related activities.

The Social Work Student Association meets bi-monthly (Usually during college hour 12:30pm). Activities include volunteer experience, guest speakers, social/recreational events, attendance at workshops (local and out of town), and many community service projects. The Social Work Student Association plans and co-ordinates the annual Social Work Program Banquet. Officers are elected from the student members and provide leadership in conjunction with the support of a faculty advisory. All officers must be social work majors. The organization is supported by student dues (\$5.00 per student per semester) and fund-raising activities.

All social work majors are encouraged to attend meetings, and to network with their student colleagues. Information regarding scheduled meetings and activities is posted in the classrooms and on the Social Work Program Bulletin Board (Maes Building) and via the Association's bi-monthly newsletter "**THE WORD**." Students are encouraged to submit material for the newsletter.

### **Social Work Honor Society**

The Lamar University Social Work Program is a member of Alpha Delta Mu National Social Work Honor Society. The Lamar Chapter, Gamma Omicron, was established in April 1986. Each Spring semester, senior social work majors with an overall grade point average of 3.0 and an overall grade point average of 3.5 in social work courses are invited to join Alpha Delta Mu. Students are initiated into the Honor Society during the annual Social Work Program banquet.

### **National Association of Social Workers**

All social work majors are encouraged to join NASW (National Association of Social Work) the professional social work organization, as student members. Applications are available from the Department Office and from any social work faculty member. NASW membership is required in order to apply for the professional malpractice insurance (which is mandatory for enrollment in field practicum).

## **STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND BEHAVIOR REVIEW**

### **Social Work Program Policy and Procedures for Student Professional Misconduct and Student Impaired Behavior**

The assumption of the Lamar Social Work Program is that admitted students have the academic, ethical, and professional potential to enter, upon graduation, the professional practice of social work. All students in the Program are expected to maintain standards established by the University, the Program and the Profession of Social Work. In addition to the University's academic and personal standards of behavior (outlined in the *Lamar University Student Handbook*), social work students are required to adhere to the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers. **Ethical adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics is required** from our students in all University settings as well as in the community and the field practicum.

Additionally, social work students, as developing professionals, are required to properly resolve their own personal problems so that these problems do not interfere with the student's professional abilities, judgments, or client interactions. While not an inclusive list, many debilitating student problems include: substance abuse, alcohol abuse, and psychiatric disorders. Students who do not adhere to the requirements of the NASW Code of Ethics and students whose behavior is impaired by personal problems, may be referred to and evaluated by the Social Work Program's Program Review of Student Performance Committee. Students may be referred to the Program Review of Student Performance Committee by faculty members, field staff, or other students.

### **Examples: Student Ethical and Professional Violations**

The following list, while not inclusive, outlines the types of behaviors that might cause a student to be referred to the Program Review of Student Performance Committee.

1. Unethical conduct in field practicum.
2. Failure to follow field practicum policies.
3. Behavior that threatens the welfare of other students, faculty, agency personnel, or clients.
4. Conduct that is inconsistent with the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (see attached NASW Code of Ethics).
5. Failure to use sound judgment with clients, colleagues, and faculty.
6. Failure to utilize professional assistance for a serious personal problem which interferes with the student's personal interactions or academic performance.
7. Failure to maintain minimal academic performance.

### **Function of the Program Review of Student Performance Committee**

The function of the Program Review of Student Performance Committee is to assess the alleged student behavior as well as to determine the outcome for the individual student. Students who are

alleged to have deficiencies in academic, ethical, professional, or personal performance may be referred to the Program Review of Student Performance Committee. The members of the Program Review of Student Performance Committee will be the Program Director and at least two other Social Work faculty members. All decisions of the Committee will be by majority vote.

### **Program Review of Student Performance Committee Procedures**

Social Work students will be notified, in writing, of the issues which will be considered by the Program Review of Student Performance Committee. The written notification will specify the alleged areas of deficient student performance or behavior. A meeting date for the Program Review of Student Performance Committee will be set within five working days of the written notification. The Program Review of Student Performance Committee will meet privately with the student and discuss the allegations. During the meeting, the Program Director will present the student with the allegation of deficiencies. The Committee will discuss the issues with the student. The student will be permitted to provide written and oral information and may also ask up to two persons knowledgeable about their performance to present information to the committee. In order to bring individuals to the meeting, the student must provide at least 48 hours advance notice of the names of the individuals and the types of information these individuals will provide to the Committee. The discussions of the allegation will be kept confidential. The records of the meeting will not be a part of the ordinary Department student filing system. The records of the Committee will be securely maintained by the Program Director until the time of the student's graduation at which time the records will be destroyed.

### **Program Review of Student Performance Committee Outcomes**

The range of decisions of the Program Review of Student Performance Committee span from dismissal of the student from the Social Work Program to a finding of no action to be taken. In general, where findings of deficiencies are found, the Program Review of Student Performance Committee will enter into a written contract with the student. This contract will spell out the procedures the student must follow to address the issues and concerns found by the Committee. The written contract will also spell out the duration of time for this contract. At the end of the contractual time, the Committee will reconvene in order to determine the student's compliance with the contractual terms. Committee decisions at this time will be to: (1) dismiss the contract, (2) modify the contract, or (3) dismiss the student from the Social Work Program. The Committee may also convene in an ad hoc basis to review the student's performance during the term of the contract. Failure to comply with the contract will result in immediate dismissal from the Social Work Program. It is the belief of the Program that student behavior can be improved and, therefore, the Committee will work with the student to provide any needed assistance to help the student to fulfill individualized requirements.

### **Program Review of Student Performance Committee Appeal Procedures**

Students who do not agree with the decision of the Program Review of Student Performance Committee in either the initial meeting, at an ad hoc review, or the end or contract review may, within five (5) working days, appeal to the Department Chair. The Department Chair will review the student's appeal within five (5) working days and provide the student with a written response. Students have the same rights of appeal above the Department Chair as outlined in the *Lamar University Student Handbook*. Students may appeal all decisions to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. The decision of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs is final.

## **LAMAR UNIVERSITY PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT**

The *Lamar University Student Handbook* outlines a large number of very specific prohibited activities. Students should familiarize themselves with this list. Among the prohibited activities are: hazing, possessing weapons, endangering the health of others and harassment. Specifically, the *Lamar University Student Handbook* states, "Persons found guilty of racial harassment, sexual harassment, or violating another person's civil rights will be subject to disciplinary sanctions up to and including suspension from the university."

The University has outlined a large number of policies and procedures concerning student academic and general conduct. The *Lamar University Student Handbook Code of Conduct* outlines prohibited individual and academic offenses and the due process procedures surrounding these issues. Among issues outlined are: plagiarism, cheating, harassment, and general violations of University Policy. Disciplinary procedures in these areas are clearly outlined in the current *Lamar University Student Handbook*.

### **Harassment Policies**

Procedures to address student complaints against faculty or staff regarding discrimination, sexual harassment, or racial harassment *Lamar University Faculty Handbook*, Appendix I, "Grievance Procedures for Filing, Processing, and Resolving Complaints of Alleged Discrimination Based Upon Race, Color, Creed, Sex, Age, Handicap or National Origin." A copy of the *Lamar University Faculty Handbook* is available to all students in the administration office of the Department as well as in the reference section of the John and Mary Gray Library.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

The *Lamar University Student Handbook* (p.81) states, "The university expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action." Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, collusion, and plagiarism. The faculty member is responsible for notifying the student of the instance of academic dishonesty as well as the penalty to be assessed. The faculty member must notify the

student of their rights to appeal to the Department Chair, the Dean, and finally, to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

## **LAMAR UNIVERSITY STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

### **General University Student Grievance Procedures**

The Social Work Program adheres to the grievance procedures as outlined in the *Lamar University Faculty Handbook*, the *Lamar University General Catalog* and the *Lamar University Student Handbook*. Students should refer to these documents for a comprehensive discussion of all grievance procedures. Students may obtain a copy of the *Lamar University General Catalog* in the Wimberly Building. The *Lamar University Student Handbook* is available in the Wimberly building and Seizer Student Center. A copy of the *Lamar University Faculty Handbook* is available in the Department Office for student viewing.

### **Lamar Student Due Process Rights and Procedures**

The *Lamar University Student Handbook* clearly outlines the due process procedures for student disciplinary hearings on pages 75 to 79. In part the *Lamar University Student Handbook* states, “In those cases in which the accused student disputes the facts upon which the charges are based, such charges shall be heard and determined by a fair and impartial person or committee, hereinafter called the hearing officer or hearing committee, selected in accordance with procedures adopted by the university.” The *Lamar University Student Handbook* outlines the procedures, appeal process and potential range of penalties for general student offenses

### **Faculty / Staff Behavior: Filing Student Grievances**

If students believe that they have been treated unfairly or unprofessionally by a faculty or staff member, or that a policy or procedure is unjust or unwise, then the student may submit, in writing, a formal grievance petition to the Chair of the Department. Grievance petitions are reserved for those issues or incidences that warrant formal and thorough investigation. Such petitions should be submitted in a professional manner, consistent with social work norms, values, and ethics.

## **SMOKE-FREE UNIVERSITY**

Lamar University recognizes its commitment to the physical well being of its students, faculty and staff. Smoking is prohibited at all times in all university facilities and vehicles unless otherwise designated.

## **WEB SITES OF INTEREST**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Lamar University                           | <a href="http://www.lamar.edu">www.lamar.edu</a>  |
| Lamar University Social Work Program       | <a href="http://dept.lamar.edu/artssciences/crim/swork.html">http://dept.lamar.edu/artssciences/crim/swork.html</a>             |
| NASW                                       | <a href="http://www.nasw.org">www.nasw.org</a>  |
| Council on Social Work Education           | <a href="http://www.cswe.org">www.cswe.org</a>  |
| Electronic Policy Network                  | <a href="http://www.epn.org">www.epn.org</a>  |
| Children's Defense Fund                    | <a href="http://www.childrensdefense.org">www.childrensdefense.org</a>  |
| Legislation on the Internet                | <a href="http://loc.gov/thomas">http://loc.gov/thomas</a>   |
| Social Work Examination                    | <a href="http://www.swes.net/">http://www.swes.net/</a>   |
| Association of Social Work Boards          | <a href="http://www.aswb.org/">http://www.aswb.org/</a>   |
| Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners | <a href="http://www.tdh.state.tx.-us/hcqs/plc/lsw/lsw_default.htm">http://www.tdh.state.tx.-us/hcqs/plc/lsw/lsw_default.htm</a> |
| Influencing State Policy                   | <a href="http://www.statepolicy.org/">http://www.statepolicy.org/</a>   |

## SOCIAL WORK GRID

Students please note: this grid outlines the semesters that Social Work courses are offered. Due to the sequencing necessities, most of the courses are only offered in the fall or spring semester each year. Please pay attention to the sequencing to prevent problems in your course scheduling.

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Lower Level Students: Freshmen or Sophomores

Offered fall and spring semesters each year; note that these two courses are pre-requisites for all upper level social work courses:

1. SOWK 2361: Introduction to Social Work
  2. SOWK 2371: Introduction to Social Welfare Institutions
- 

PROFESSIONAL SEMESTERS: JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEAR  
FALL SENIOR YEAR COURSES:

1. SOWK 3360: Promoting Social Justice  
Additional 3-4 courses(recommended to finish all core requirement)
- 

SPRING JUNIOR YEAR COURSES

1. SOWK 3330: HBSE I, Human Behavior in the Social Environment I
  2. SOWK 3310: Social Work Practice I
  3. SOWK 3340: Social Welfare Policy (Optional for juniors, may also be taken senior year)
  4. SOWK 4320: Seminar (Introduction to \*Child Welfare, \*Families at Risk, Crisis, others) \*Required for Title IV CPS Stipend placement)
- 

FALL SENIOR YEAR COURSES

1. SOWK 3320: HBSE II, Human Behavior in the Social Environment II
  2. SOWK 3330: Social Work Practice II
  3. SOWK 4380: Social Work Research
  4. SOWK 4320: Seminar (Introduction to \*Child Welfare, \*Families at Risk, Crisis, others) \*Required for Title IV CPS Stipend placement)
  - \* SOWK 4321: Field Placement Concurrent (Fall session) (May graduation date)
- 

SPRING SENIOR YEAR COURSES

1. SOWK 3350: Social Work Practice III
  2. SOWK 4320: Children and Families at Risk (required for Title IV CPS stipend)
  3. SOWK 4320: Seminar, two required to graduate
  4. SOWK 3340: Social Welfare Policy (if not taken junior year)
  - \* SOWK 4324: Field Placement Concurrent (Spring session) (May graduation date)
- 

Field Block Placement –OFFERED SUMMER ONLY SENIOR YEAR

1. SOWK 4321: Field Placement (summer session I) (August graduation date)
2. SOWK 4324: Field Placement (summer session II) (August graduation date)

Note: in general, summer field students are discouraged from enrolling in additional courses during the field internship because of the number of required practicum hours.

## Sample Suggested Program of Study for Bachelor of Social Work

### First Year

#### Fall 1<sup>st</sup> Semester

#### Spring 2nd Semester

| Course       | Credit Hours | Course               | Credit Hours |
|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| English 1301 | 3            | English 1302 or 1374 | 3            |
| Math (1314)  | 3            | CRIJ/ANTHRO          | 3            |
| Bio 1408     | 4            | Bio 1409             | 4            |
| Soci 1301    | 3            | Psych 2301           | 3            |
| Pega         | 1            | Comm 1315            | 3            |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>14</b>    | <b>Total</b>         | <b>16</b>    |

### Second Year

#### Fall 3rd Semester

#### Spring 4th Semester

| Course        | Credit Hours | Course             | Credit Hours |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Phil 1370     | 3            | English Lit        | 3            |
| Hist 1301     | 3            | Hist 1302          | 3            |
| Fine Arts     | 3            | Psych 2308 or 2311 | 3            |
| Soci elective | 3            | Pols 2301          | 3            |
| SOWK 2361     | 3            | SOWK 2371          | 3            |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>15</b>    | <b>Total</b>       | <b>15</b>    |

### Third Year

#### Fall 5th Semester

#### Spring 6th Semester

| Course       | Credit Hours | Course              | Credit Hours |
|--------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
| COSC         | 3            | SOWK 3300           | 3            |
| Pols 2302    | 3            | SOWK 3310           | 3            |
| Elective     | 3            | SOWK 3340           | 3            |
| Elective     | 3            | Psych 2471 or Stats | 4            |
|              |              | Elective            | 3            |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>12</b>    | <b>Total</b>        | <b>16</b>    |

(\* 3 -4 Credit)

**Summer Electives** (optional but strongly advised for May graduates)

3 - 6

**Total**

**15-18**

**Summer Electives**  
(optional but strongly advised for May graduates)

3 - 6

**Total**

**15-18**

**Fall 7th Semester****Spring 8th Semester**

| <u>Course</u> | <u>Credit Hours</u> | <u>Course</u> | <u>Credit Hours</u> |
|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| SOWK 3320     | 3                   | SOWK 3350     | 3                   |
| SOWK 3330     | 3                   | SOWK 4320     | 3                   |
| SOWK 4380     | 3                   | SOWK 4320     | 3                   |
| SOWK 3360     | 3                   | Elective      | 3                   |
| * SOWK 4321   | 3                   | SOWK 4100     | 1                   |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>15</b>           | * SOWK 4324   | 3                   |
|               |                     | <b>Total</b>  | <b>16</b>           |

**Summer Field Option****(For a August graduation Date)**

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| * SOWK 4321 | 3 |
| * SOWK 4324 | 3 |

Total Credits 121-122 (120 required)

**Minor in Social Work**

Required Lower Division Classes SOWK 2361 and SOWK 2371

plus any 12 hours in Social Work (4 courses)

\* SOWK 4321 & 4324 are taken over 2 semesters (Concurrent) **or** in summer (block)

\* Note: In general, summer block field placement students are discouraged from enrolling in additional courses during the field internship because of the rigor &amp; number of required practicum hours (40 hours per week for 10 weeks).

## Code of Ethics *Of the National Association of Social Workers*

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

### Preamble

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

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

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

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

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

### NASW Code of Ethics

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

The *NASW Code of Ethics* serves six purposes:

1. The Code identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.
2. The Code summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide social work practice.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Moreover, a code of ethics cannot resolve all ethical issues or disputes or capture the richness and complexity involved in striving to make responsible choices within a moral community. Rather, a code of ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be judged. Social workers' ethical behavior should result from their personal commitment to engage in ethical practice. The *NASW Code of Ethics* reflects the commitment of all social workers to uphold the profession's values and to act ethically. Principles and standards must be applied by individuals of good character who discern moral questions and, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments.

## Ethical Principles

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

**Value:** *Service*

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

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

**Value:** *Social Justice*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Value:** *Integrity*

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

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

**Value:** *Competence*

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

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

## **Ethical Standards**

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

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

### **1. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO CLIENTS**

#### **1.01 Commitment to Clients**

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

#### **1.02 SelfDetermination**

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

#### **1.03 Informed Consent**

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **1.04 Competence**

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

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

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

#### **1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity**

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

(b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients' cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.

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

#### **1.06 Conflicts of Interest**

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

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

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

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

#### **1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality**

- (a) Social workers should respect clients' right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from clients unless it is essential to providing services or conducting social work evaluation or research. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.
- (b) Social workers may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a client.
- (c) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. The general expectation that social workers will keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or other identifiable person. In all instances, social workers should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose; only information that is directly relevant to the purpose for which the disclosure is made should be revealed.
- (d) Social workers should inform clients, to the extent possible, about the disclosure of confidential information and the potential consequences, when feasible before the disclosure is made. This applies whether social workers disclose confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or client consent.
- (e) Social workers should discuss with clients and other interested parties the nature of confidentiality and limitations of clients' right to confidentiality. Social workers should review with clients circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. This discussion should occur as soon as possible in the social workerclient relationship and as needed throughout the course of the relationship.
- (f) When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual's right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.
- (g) Social workers should inform clients involved in family, couples, marital, or group counseling of the social worker's, employer's, and agency's policy concerning the social worker's disclosure of confidential information among the parties involved in the counseling.
- (h) Social workers should not disclose confidential information to thirdparty payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.
- (i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semipublic areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.
- (j) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law. When a court of law or other legally authorized body orders social workers to disclose confidential or privileged information without a client's consent and such disclosure could cause harm to the client, social workers should request that the court withdraw the order or limit the order as narrowly as possible or maintain the records under seal, unavailable for public inspection.
- (k) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media.
- (l) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients' records are stored in a secure location and that clients' records are not available to others who are not authorized to have access.
- (m) Social workers should take precautions to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of information transmitted to other parties through the use of computers, electronic mail, facsimile machines, telephones and telephone answering machines, and other electronic or computer technology. Disclosure of identifying information should be avoided whenever possible.

- (n) Social workers should transfer or dispose of clients' records in a manner that protects clients' confidentiality and is consistent with state statutes governing records and social work licensure.
- (o) Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker's termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.
- (p) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients for teaching or training purposes unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information.
- (q) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients with consultants unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information or there is a compelling need for such disclosure.
- (r) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of deceased clients consistent with the preceding standards.

### **1.08 Access to Records**

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

### **1.09 Sexual Relationships**

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

### **1.10 Physical Contact**

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

### **1.11 Sexual Harassment**

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

### **1.12 Derogatory Language**

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

### **1.13 Payment for Services**

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

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

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

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

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

### **1.15 Interruption of Services**

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

### **1.16 Termination of Services**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **2. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO COLLEAGUES**

### **2.01 Respect**

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

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

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

### **2.02 Confidentiality**

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

### **2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

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

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

### **2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues**

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

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

### **2.05 Consultation**

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

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

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

### **2.06 Referral for Services**

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

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

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

## **2.07 Sexual Relationships**

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

(b) Social workers should avoid engaging in sexual relationships with colleagues when there is potential for a conflict of interest. Social workers who become involved in, or anticipate becoming involved in, a sexual relationship with a colleague have a duty to transfer professional responsibilities, when necessary, to avoid a conflict of interest.

## **2.08 Sexual Harassment**

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

## **2.09 Impairment of Colleagues**

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

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

## **2.10 Incompetence of Colleagues**

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

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

## **2.11 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues**

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

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

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

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

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

### **3. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN PRACTICE SETTINGS**

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

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

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

(c) Social workers should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with supervisees in which there is a risk of exploitation of or potential harm to the supervisee.

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **3.03 Performance Evaluation**

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

#### **3.04 Client Records**

(a) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in records is accurate and reflects the services provided.

(b) Social workers should include sufficient and timely documentation in records to facilitate the delivery of services and to ensure continuity of services provided to clients in the future.

(c) Social workers' documentation should protect clients' privacy to the extent that is possible and appropriate and should include only information that is directly relevant to the delivery of services.

(d) Social workers should store records following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by state statutes or relevant contracts.

### **3.05 Billing**

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

### **3.06 Client Transfer**

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

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

### **3.07 Administration**

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

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

(c) Social workers who are administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that adequate agency or organizational resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision.

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

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

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

### **3.09 Commitments to Employers**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **3.10 LaborManagement 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 labormanagement disputes, job actions, or labor strikes should be guided by the profession's values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. Reasonable differences of opinion exist among social workers concerning their primary obligation as professionals during an actual or threatened labor strike or job action. Social workers should carefully examine relevant issues and their possible impact on clients before deciding on a course of action.

## **4. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS PROFESSIONALS**

### **4.01 Competence**

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

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

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

### **4.02 Discrimination**

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

### **4.03 Private Conduct**

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

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

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

### **4.05 Impairment**

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

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

#### **4.06 Misrepresentation**

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

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

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

#### **4.07 Solicitations**

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

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

#### **4.08 Acknowledging Credit**

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

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

### **5. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **5.02 Evaluation and Research**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **6. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE BROADER SOCIETY**

### **6.01 Social Welfare**

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

### **6.02 Public Participation**

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

### **6.03 Public Emergencies**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Agreement that I have received the student manual and code of Ethics

I have received a copy of the Student handbook and I have agreed to read and abide by the policies of the social work department. I understand that my behavior is expected to be professional and that I agree to abide by the Social Work Code of Ethics

\_\_\_\_\_

Printed name

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature