



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE

School of Social Work



BSW Student Handbook
Academic Year 2017-2018

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Faculty and Staff

The Administrative Offices of the School of Social Work are located in Masterton Hall, Portland Campus. The main school telephone number is 780-4120 and the Fax number is 780-4902.

TEACHING AND FIELD FACULTY:

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Faculty descriptions are available online at <http://www.usm.maine.edu/swo/people>

School of Social Work Faculty and Staff

Director: Jeanette Andonian; BSW Coordinator: Leslie Richfield; Fieldwork Coordinator: Stacia Fitch; Administrative Specialist: Kim E. Dominicus

Professors: Fineran, Johnson; Associate Professors: Andonian, Johnson, Kohli, Lazar, Wachholz; Assistant Professors: Gentiles-Gibbs, Gerstenblatt and Shanti; Lecturer: Belicose

WELCOME!

Welcome to the University of Southern Maine's School of Social Work. We are very pleased you have chosen to major in Social Work. The School of Social Work, is composed of an undergraduate major (Bachelors of Arts in Social Work) and a graduate program (Master of Social Work).

You are embarking on a journey into the profession of social work. It is a profession that is deeply committed to the relief of human distress and alleviating the causes of social inequality and oppressive conditions. While this concern for others is a vital ingredient of social work, it must be implemented with the knowledge and skills of the profession. Social workers provide services to individuals, families, organizations, groups, and communities in a wide variety of public, non-profit, and some private settings-wherever there are human needs to be met. To accomplish these goals, the School of Social Work offers an undergraduate degree in generalist social work practice.

“Generalist” practice means we do not offer specializations as do some MSW programs (for example, clinical practice, community organization, school social work, gerontology, etc.)

We hope the time you spend with us will be rewarding. This handbook details the aspects of the School's curriculum and programs for students, outlines the curriculum, and provides an overview of the services, resources, and policies. This manual is not a substitute for the USM Undergraduate Catalog. Please read both carefully.

Two national organizations provide direction for social work education. The Council on Social Work Education has stringent guidelines and policies, which guide the development of the curriculum. Those policies and guidelines are available at <http://cswe.org>. The National Association of Social workers (NASW) is a national organization of social workers which among other things provides ethical guidelines for social work practice. These guidelines are available in this handbook and from <http://naswdc.org>.

School of Social Work

The School of Social Work at the University of Southern Maine is committed to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service. Graduates are expected to integrate the knowledge, skills, and values of the social work profession at entry and advanced levels of professional practice with vulnerable and diverse populations. The multicultural context locally, nationally, and globally is celebrated and integrated across the curriculum.

The curriculum is designed to encourage the development of collaborative practice models based on the principles of social and economic justice and informed evaluative, generalist practice. Graduates are prepared to be change agents at all levels of practice. They are prepared for entry-level social work practice in a range of community based public and non-profit social service agencies.

School of Social Work Mission and Diversity Statements

Mission Statement

The University of Southern Maine's School of Social Work is committed to educating culturally competent generalist social work practitioners prepared for multi-level, strengths-based practice that values the centrality of community in enhancing the well-being of diverse individuals, families, groups.

Diversity Statement

Commitment to diversity is an integral part of the School of Social Work's mission. The School of Social Work faculty and staff are committed to preparing culturally competent social work practitioners. We welcome and honor people of all ages, abilities, creeds, cultures, genders, races, sexual orientations, and socio-economic statuses. We value intellectual curiosity, pursuit of knowledge, academic freedom, and integrity, and vigorously promote a safe atmosphere where ideas can be presented and challenged in a mutually respectful manner. We promote values of social justice and social change, and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice through partnership with the community and in our teaching, scholarship, and service endeavors.

BSW Program Objectives

1. To apply existing knowledge and develop new knowledge to advance social work practice through teaching, scholarship and service of faculty and students while building upon the profession's history, purposes, and philosophy.
2. To prepare students at the baccalaureate level to practice generalist social work in an increasingly complex and diverse world.
3. To prepare students for generalist social work practice that includes respect for human rights and social and economic justice.
4. To develop in students skills to employ critical thinking in addressing complex human social problems throughout their lifetime.

Curriculum

Bachelor of Arts in Social Work

The minimum number of credits (exclusive of the University's Core curriculum) required for the major: 45. In addition, 40 credits of foundation courses must be completed in other departments. Some of these foundation courses may also be used to satisfy the Core curriculum requirements as appropriate. Students shall not be eligible to repeat a class more than once without the written permission of the director of the School of Social Work.

The program in social work prepares the student for the professional practice of social work at the entry level. The social work curriculum of the School is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Students who receive a degree from an accredited undergraduate program in social work may apply to selected graduate schools of social work for advanced standing. It is important to consult individual institutions for their acceptance criteria and procedures, which may vary. "Advanced standing" means that some BSW graduates can qualify for a one year program; however, this is not automatic. Admissions to graduate school, including USM's MSW program, is based on graduate admission criteria, and as BSWs near graduation they should discuss their goals with faculty advisors.

During the first years at the University, with the assistance of faculty advisors, students enroll in a combination of classes fulfilling their Core curriculum requirements, required foundation courses for social work (classes in other fields required by the major), and the major itself. Because many classes are prerequisites for other classes, students must carefully sequence their courses. The model below indicates the desired program for social work majors; starred (*) classes indicate the class is a prerequisite for other social work curriculum requirement.

Model Schedule Assuming a Full Time Program

Year 1

Proficiency in writing, math if needed

ENG 100C College Writing

PSY 101J General Psychology I*

PSY 102 General Psychology II

SOC 100J Introduction to Sociology*

Biology and Biology Lab* (also fulfills Science Exploration Core requirement)

Core Creative Expression

Core Cultural Interpretation

General Electives

Year 2

ECO 101J Introduction to Macroeconomics*

HRD 200J Human Growth and Development*

POS 101J Introduction to American Government*

Core Ethical Inquiry Course*

SWO 201 Introduction to Social Work*

SWO 250J Introduction to Social Welfare*

Statistics (in math, psychology, sociology, or SBS at Lewiston-Auburn College)* (also fulfills Quantitative Reasoning Core requirement)

General Electives

Year 3

SWO 393 Social Work Methods I (spring semester)*

SWO 333 Social Work Research I*

SWO 334 Social Work Research II

SWO 350 Social Welfare Policy

SWO 365 Examining Oppression and Valuing Diversity

SWO 370 Human Behavior and Social Environment

Electives in sociology, psychology, criminology or SBS (also fulfill Cluster Theme)

General electives

Year 4

SWO 403, 404 Social Work Methods II and III

SWO 411, 412 Field Work (full year)

2 Social Work electives at least 300 level or higher

General electives or Cluster Theme

Because many students do not go to school for four full time years, the following represents a sample of a six year program:

SAMPLE PART-TIME SCHEDULE

Year I

EYE Entry Year Experience*

College Writing

Mathematics readiness requirement

PSY 101 General Psychology I*

SOC 100 Introduction to Sociology*

General Electives

Creative Expression CORE

Cultural Interpretation CORE

Year II

ECO 101 Introduction to Macroeconomics*

HRD 200 Human Growth and Development*

POS 101 Introduction to American Government*

PSY 102 General Psychology II

SWO 201 Introduction to Social Work*

General Electives

Ethical Inquiry CORE

Year III

Biology and Biology Lab (also fulfills Science Exploration)*

SWO 250 Introduction to Social Welfare*

Electives in sociology, psychology, criminology, or SBS (Thematic Cluster)

General electives

HRD 200 Human Growth and Development*

Year IV

SWO 365 Examining Oppression and Valuing Diversity

Statistics* (in math, psychology, sociology, or SBS at Lewiston-Auburn College, also fulfills

Quantitative Reasoning CORE)

SWO 333 Social Work Research I*

SWO 334 Social Work Research II

General Electives

Year V

SWO 350 Social Welfare Policy

SWO 370 Human Behavior and Social Environment

SWO 393 Methods of Social Work Practice I*

Social work elective, 300 level or higher

Any remaining sociology, psychology, criminology, SBS elective

Year VI

SWO 403, 404 Methods of Social Work Practice II and III

SWO 411, 412 Field Work I and II (full year)

Social Work elective, 300-level or higher

Any remaining sociology, psychology, criminology, SBS elective

Any remaining general elective

The two intermediate level sociology, psychology, criminology courses or SBS courses at LAC selected in consultation with the student's advisor are required. No more than two classes taken for this requirement may be in the same discipline, with the exception of either external transfer students, or LAC students. These courses must be at an intermediate level 200-399.

Students transferring to USM from another college or university must have completed these courses, or their equivalent, as recorded on their Transcript Evaluation form. Students transferring from an accredited CSWE undergraduate institution will have their transcript evaluated by the BSW Coordinator. Social work credits, however, cannot be given for non-social work courses or for work experience (aside from decisions made by the Prior Learning Office).

To assure consistency and avoid confusion, it is important that social work majors **meet with their advisors on a regular basis**. Advising in the School of Social Work is a mutual process of exploring career objectives, reviewing School requirements, designing the best possible combination of required courses and electives, determining proper course sequencing, and facilitating a collaborative relationship between the student and the School.

Field Work

During the field work year (the last year of your undergraduate work), each student is placed in a community social service agency approved by the School of Social Work. Placements begin only in the fall semester and continue throughout the academic year. By the end of the spring semester, each student will have completed 480 hours of field work. A large number of social and community

agencies in Southern Maine and in cities and towns even further have been most generous in their cooperation with the School and in making available field instruction resources including supervision for students of the School. All students should refer to School guidelines governing field work for more information and directions.

Admission to Field Work and Methods I (SWO 393)

Because the field work internship is so central to social work education, and will expose clients in the community to you as social-worker-in-training, procedures exist to make sure students are capable of entering field work as educated and competent trainees. In the junior year prior to entering SWO 393 Methods I which must be taken prior to entering field work; the following criteria need to be met: 1) have at least 60 credits at the time of preregistration and have completed math readiness, EYE, English composition, statistics, SOC 100, PSY 101 and 102, POS 101, ECO 101, Biology and Lab, HRD/SBS 200, SWO 201 and 250; and 2) have a 2.5 cumulative GPA overall. Students must maintain the 2.5 GPA and a grade of C or better in all social work and required foundation courses to complete the major.

Required Social Work Courses

SWO 201 Introduction to Social Work
 SWO 250J Introduction to Social Welfare
 SWO 333 Social Work Research I
 SWO 334 Social Work Research II
 SWO 350 Social Welfare Policy
 SWO 365 Examining Oppression and Valuing Diversity
 SWO 370 Human Behavior in the Social Environment
 SWO 393 Methods of Social Work Practice I
 SWO 403 Methods of Social Work Practice II
 SWO 404 Methods of Social Work Practice III
 SWO 411 Field Work I
 SWO 412 Field Work II
 2 SWO Electives

Required Foundation Courses in Other Departments

ENG 100 College Writing
 ECO 101 Introduction to Macroeconomics
 BIO 101 Biological Basis of Human Activity or
 BIO 102 Biological Foundations, or
 BIO 105 Biological Principles I
 BIO 102 Biological Experiences or
 BIO 106 Laboratory Biology
 POS 101 Introduction to American Government
 PSY 101J General Psychology I
 An introductory statistics course (MAT 120, PSY 201, SOC 307 or
 SBS 328)
 PSY 102 General Psychology II
 SOC 100J Introduction to Sociology
 HRD 200J Human Growth and Development

Three other intermediate level sociology, psychology, criminology courses, or SBS courses at Lewiston-Auburn College, selected in consultation with the student's advisor, are required. No more than two classes taken for this requirement may be in the same discipline, with the exception of either external transfer students or Lewiston-Auburn College students.

Required Social Work Course Descriptions

SWO 201 Introduction to Social Work: This course is an introduction to the profession of social work. Students are introduced to the core values of social work and the code of ethics that emanates from those values. Oppression and social justice are central themes of this course. The practice of social work is considered from the perspective of a collaborative strengths-based model working with complex social service systems. The course familiarizes students with various roles, functions, and tasks which social workers perform in a variety of settings, and acquaints students with the primary skills and practices of professional social work. Taking this course will help students make a more informed decision about social work as a career. Cr 3.

SWO 250 Introduction to Social Welfare: Provides an introduction to the institution of social welfare through a review of social welfare history; the values and philosophy in America of treating the poor, the ill, and others in need; contemporary approaches to social policy; and possible alternative models of social welfare. Cr 3.

SWO 333 Social Work Research I: A study of the methods of social work research for social policy and social work practice. The course emphasizes both quantitative and qualitative research processes with the goal of enabling the student to be competent as a "practitioner-researcher." Prerequisites: SWO 201, SWO 250J; any introductory statistics course (MAT 120D, PSY 201D, SOC 307D, or SBS 328D). Cr 3.

SWO 334 Social Work Research II: In this continuation of SWO 333, students complete an empirical research project. Class members serve as a review committee for all research instruments used; learn the practical aspects of writing quantitative and qualitative research reports, and function as a research support group for one another. Prerequisite: SWO 333. Cr 3.

SWO 350 Social Welfare Policy: A critical examination of social welfare institutions, the social problems and social needs to which they are addressed, and the policy decisions which determine the organization and direction of social welfare programs. Prerequisites: ECO 101J, SWO 250J, POS 101J, or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SWO 365 Examining Oppression and Valuing Diversity: This course is designed to provide a framework for understanding and respecting cultural diversity. The cultural aspects of race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and ableness will be discussed. A central theme in organizing the course is the examination of the role of oppression in shaping lives of members of various cultural groups. Prerequisites: SWO 201 or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SWO 370 Human Behavior in the Social Environment: This course examines the ways in which normative and predictable human behavior throughout the life cycle is mediated by gender, race, age, sexual preference, class and culture. The implication of this knowledge for social work practice

will be explored. Prerequisites: SWO 201, SWO 250J; PSY 101J, PSY 102 and introductory course in biology. Cr 3.

SWO 393 Methods of Social Work Practice I: This course is an introduction to the basic concepts and skills of interviewing and assessment within the framework of a strengths perspective. Emphasis will be placed on the integration of ethics and the process of reflection within a generalist practice of social work. Prerequisites: EYE, math readiness, English Composition, statistics, SOC 100, PSY 101 and 102, Biology and lab, HRD 200, POS 101, ECO 101, SWO 201, SWO 250; at least 60 credits at the time of preregistration for SWO 393; grade of C or better in all required social work and foundation courses; and a 2.5 cumulative GPA overall. Offered spring semester only. This course has a service-learning component that requires students to have some time available for work in the community. Cr 3.

SWO 397 Department Projects: Individual or group projects, requiring independent study or field work in some aspect of social welfare, to be selected by students in consultation with a particular faculty member. Prerequisites: Department permission and application prior to registration. Cr var.

SWO 403: Methods of Social Work Practice II: Examines the dilemmas of professional human service workers in bureaucratic systems and the effects of professionalization and the bureaucracy on consumers. Develops a range of methods aimed at better meeting client need with particular reference to strategies of organizational change and community organization. Class discussions and assignments are based on field work experiences. Prerequisites: SWO 301 and a C or better in all required social work and foundation courses, and an overall 2.5 GPA. SWO 411 taken concurrently. Cr 3.

SWO 404 Methods of Social Work Practice III: This course is a continuation of Methods of Social Work Practice II. It explores the contextual nature of generalist social work practice within a strengths perspective. Emphasis will be placed on the processes of engagement, assessment, and intervention with individuals, families, and groups. Family systems, group, and crisis models of intervention will be presented. This course must be taken concurrently with SWO 412 (Field Work II). Prerequisites: SWO 301, SWO 403. Spring semester only. Cr 3.

SWO 411 Field Work I: For social work majors: a required internship of 16 hours per week in approved agency settings, designed to relate social work theory to practice under professional supervision. Fall semester only. Must be taken as the first in a two-course sequence. Prerequisites: SWO 201; SWO 301; a C or better in all required social work and foundation courses, and an overall 2.5 GPA. SWO 403 taken concurrently. Fall semester only. Cr 6.

SWO 412 Field Work II: A continuation of SWO 411. Spring term only. Must be taken as the second in a two-course sequence. Prerequisites: SWO 301, SWO 403, SWO 411, and SWO 404 (concurrent). Cr 6.

ADVISING, COMMUNICATION, REGISTRATION AND OTHER INFORMATION

A. Email and BSW Listserv

All students are required to secure a USM e-mail account (firstname.lastname@maine.edu). An account is free for students and can be obtained by visiting 144 Luther Bonney Hall (just inside the Portland campus computer lab) and filling out an application form.

The University environment has become paperless. All correspondences should be made through e-mail whenever possible. It is the student's responsibility to check all e-mails to receive messages sent out by the USM and by the School of Social Work through its MSW Student Listserv. Please make sure that you are signed up for the MSW listserv. You will miss important announcements and communications if you are not on the listserv. You can contact the SSW Student Affairs Coordinator to make sure you are signed up. Also, please keep the School office informed of any changes in your email address, home mailing address, or telephone number. You will also need to notify the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, Registrar, and Office of Financial Aid of any changes

B. Bulletin Boards and the School Website

Along the corridor on the ground floor of the Masterton Hall where the School of Social Work is housed, there are several bulletin boards. Information about Field Practicum Application Process is posted. Information about NASW and its Maine chapter is also posted. There is a variety of information about scholarships, deadlines, conferences, and volunteer opportunities. Outside the School's main office, you will find important information regarding class registration, class scheduling, course changes, new policies, etc. Notices may not be posted on the School's bulletin boards without prior approval of the School of Social Work.

The School also has a web site (<http://www.usm.maine.edu/swo>) where the aforementioned information and other useful information can be found. For information on faculty news, professional social work community news, learning resources, employment information, school events, scholarships, and other items, students are strongly encouraged to check the school website frequently

C. Computer Labs

At USM, computers are available for students' use at three locations: 1) the Microcomputer Lab at the Portland campus (first floor Luther Bonney Hall), 2) the Microcomputer Lab at the Gorham campus (8 Bailey Hall), and 3) the Glickman Library (314 Forest Avenue) at the Portland campus. For hours of operation and other information, please call the Computing Services Information Line at (207) 780-4611.

USM also has its own computer store, The Logic Shop, where students can purchase computers and related items. Students are offered a discounted price on merchandise with a student ID.

D. The Help Desk

The Help Desk is available for the USM community to assist with any computing issues and especially with questions about use of Blackboard, e-mail, passwords, etc. The Help Desk hours are 8-4:30 and you can reach a technician by phone, (207) 780-4029 or e-mail,

usm-helpdesk@maine.edu. Extended hours are offered during the first week of school. The website address is: <http://www.usm.maine.edu/computing/helpdesk>.

E. Glickman Library

The library has a wide range of resources and services that reflect the most current technology. The School of Social Work has a reference librarian specially designated to support the educational and research needs of students and faculty. Our Library Liaison is Pat Prieto, and she will be happy to assist you. The faculty may place materials on reserve. These materials can be found at the Reserve Desk on the first floor of the library. Reserve readings may also be available electronically via “E-reserves”. You can access “E-reserves” at this link:

<http://library.usm.maine.edu/reserves/aboutreserves.html> In addition to subscriptions to the major social work journals, our library has online search databases and programs. A simple interlibrary loan process provides access to those resources not immediately available at USM. For Library locations and hours of operation, please visit their website at <http://usm.maine.edu/libtech/locations-hours>

F. FACULTY ADVISING ROLES AND AVAILABILITY

Faculty

All faculty have offices in Masterton Hall, mailboxes, phones with voice mail, and email addresses. This information is posted outside the Social Work office and at the beginning of this handbook. Faculty members can assist you in overcoming difficulties you may have with understanding a particular subject matter, verification of progress toward graduation, or in discussion of career plans and ongoing support.

Advising

All students are assigned a faculty advisor upon admission to the program and are required to meet with their advisor for overall planning before their first registration. The required curriculum is reviewed with the student, and options available are discussed in terms of the student’s interest. Advisors additionally serve as guides who provide academic advice about students’ professional development. In addressing students’ individual educational plans, advisors are responsible for knowing about University resources that can support students with study skills, career exploration, tutoring, and other appropriate support services.

Advisors certify the student’s eligibility for field practicum and other courses. Students are encouraged to consult with their advisors throughout the year, and are required to meet with their advisors prior to registering for each semester. It is also important that students maintain their own record of progress through the program, including copies of syllabi, evaluations, and official actions.

Fieldwork Coordinators

When you reach the appropriate time to plan on your field work internship, you will meet with one of the School's Field Work Coordinators to gain information and share your interests. Field Work Coordinators will make every effort to meet your needs such as field of interest and geographic location; however, field sites are limited. Additionally, for students who have had work or volunteer experience exclusively in one area, the Field Coordinators may recommend you try a different area of practice. If for some reason you have a particular need,

whether geographic or disability or other, you should consult with the Field Work Coordinators as early as possible.

Faculty Field Liaisons/Fieldwork Seminar Instructors

Faculty teaching the Fieldwork Seminars are assigned as Faculty Field Liaisons and advise students regarding the professional content of their work in the field. They serve as a link between the School and the community, and between classroom and agency. They advise students in terms of their progress in relating the knowledge and skills learned in the rest of the curriculum to the field, and in conducting themselves as professionals in relation to their clients and to the agency.

Office Hours

All faculty members post their office hours on our website. Faculty are available at other times, but you must contact them to make an agreeable time. Since faculty are busy, we suggest allowing a number of days for email or calls to be responded to except in emergencies.

STUDENT SOCIAL WORK ORGANIZATIONS

The students of the School have organized a Social Work Student Organization (SWSO). This has been comprised of both BSW and MSW students although only BSW students are allowed funding through the Board of Student Organizations (BSO) because of the way the student fee is collected. The BSO requires officers of the Organization (elected by students) to obtain training at the beginning of the semester. The organization seeks to facilitate communication between students and faculty, ensure student involvement in School activities, provide for professional growth, and respond to issues and problems in the community. Student representatives may attend faculty meetings and may serve as advisory members on the School's curriculum committees, including the Curriculum Committee, Sequence Committees, and Smith-Catalano Committee. Within the School, a chapter of the Social Work Honor Society, Phi Alpha exists. The BSW Coordinator usually acts as advisor to the SWSO and the Honor Society also has a faculty advisor. Additionally, the School of Social Work encourages its students to be active in the University; there are numerous openings in the Student Senate, various committees in the University, etc. Students who are interested are encouraged to chat with faculty and staff about how to access these organizations.

LICENSURE INFORMATION STATE of MAINE

Social workers in Maine need licenses for certain positions. The University has no formal role in this process although faculty members may write references. For information regarding licensure contact Board of Social Worker Registration, Licensing, & Enforcement Agency, 35 State House, Station, Augusta, ME. 04333-0035 Phone: 207-624-8603.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS (NASW)

The Maine Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers is easily accessible and holds frequent meetings and events. They can be contacted at (207) 622-7592 naswmaine@naswmaine.org for more information on the legislative agenda, social work events, and licensure information. The NASW Code of Ethics can be found at the end of this handbook. They often need student representatives.

REGISTRATION

Once you are a matriculated student, you may pre-register for the Fall and Spring semesters. Please be aware of what week pre-registration occurs so you do not get "placed out" of class. You will need

to meet with your advisor (or in some cases, at least have an email exchange) to get a RAN number to register. Once you receive this, registration takes place primarily via your MaineStreet account; however, you can also register over the phone with the Registrar's Office at 207-780-5320 each semester. Information pertaining to classes can be found in course schedule, which is located in the "class search" function in MaineStreet. Copies of the social work course schedule are available at the School. Registration for summer and winter semester does not proceed in the same fashion, but are up to students wishing to enroll to register at the proper times. **PLEASE BE AWARE THAT ONLY A RELATIVE FEW SOCIAL WORK CLASSES ARE GIVEN IN THE SUMMER** (You can check with your advisor as to the likely ones). Many CORE classes and other foundation courses, however, may be available in summer session.

STUDENT FILES

Student files are maintained in the administrative office of the School of Social Work and are the property of the School. It is the University's policy not to remove any materials from a student's file. Students may examine their own files at any time, but cannot remove the file or its contents from the social work office.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism, the use without attribution of language, ideas, or the organization of ideas not one's own, is a fundamental breach of basic academic principles and is prohibited in all courses. Evidence of plagiarism will result in a grade of F for the assignment and can, at the discretion of the instructor, lead to an F in the course. In addition, further sanctions may be imposed through the Student Conduct Code. A copy of the USM Student Guide to Academic Integrity and/or a copy of the Student Academic Integrity Policy is available from the Office of Community Standards, 125 Upton Hall, Gorham (Tel: 207-780-5242) or on their website, <https://cms.usm.maine.edu/ocs/student-academic-integrity-policy-0>.

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (APA) WRITING STYLE

Academic writing in social work utilizes APA format. All students are required and expected to use this format for papers and assignments. The APA publishes a guidebook on APA format writing and there are web links available that offer examples of how to write using this style. APA format is especially important in properly citing and referencing sources of literature used in your writing. The APA website has more information about obtaining a manual and learning to write in this format: <http://www.apastyle.org/>

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

There are formal procedures for the adjudication of student grievances in instances where student rights are allegedly denied or violated. Grievances from students can be brought because of grading practices, administrative policy disputes, discrimination or harassment, and difficulties in the field practicum. The first step in any grievance process is to discuss the issue with the faculty member/administrative person that the student believes is the source of the problem. Next the student speaks with the BSW Coordinator. If not satisfied, the student may bring the grievance to the School of Social Work Director. When grievances are not resolved at this level, specific procedures exist for different types of grievances.

By University policy, grade disputes that cannot be resolved between faculty and student are handled by the Dean of the College of Management and Human Service. Administrative disputes are

handled by the appropriate vice president of the area involved. This procedure is explained in the USM student handbook.

Claims of discrimination or harassment are brought to the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, and may be done without recourse to the usual procedure.

Unlike the processes described above, difficulties between student, field faculty liaison, and field instructor are handled within the School. Student complaints regarding field practicum are first addressed to his/her field faculty liaison. It is the responsibility of that faculty liaison to set up a meeting with the field instructor to discuss the student's concerns. Although most grievances are resolved at this level, in a few cases there is a need to take the process further. In such instances the following procedure occurs.

The Field Faculty Committee is consulted regarding the issues being raised by the student and a plan of action is determined based on the committee's decision regarding the problem. This can result in several outcomes:

1. Changing the student's field placement based on available information.
2. Asking that the agency provide another Field Instructor to take the student.
3. Counseling the student regarding his/her readiness for the rigors of field placement and suggesting that he/she withdraw from field.
4. Requesting that the Field Coordinator work with the other three parties to mediate the issues regarding the field placement.

This process does not have to be accomplished in one meeting, and throughout the process the Field Coordinator and Field Faculty Liaison report progress to the Field Faculty Committee for their continued support and input.

Notwithstanding all the above, a student, advisor or other faculty member may request an Academic Review at any time. The Academic Review is meant as an open discussion of difficulties or issues a student is having. It may be of an academic variety or an issue relevant to field work or suitability to the profession. The student may be accompanied by any representative of their choice including a member of the Social Work Student Organization. The Review also includes the student, faculty advisor, the BSW Coordinator, and all other parties (faculty member, field instructor, etc.) that are relevant to the issues raised. An Academic Review may have the following outcomes: Resolution of the issue without conditions, a plan for resolution with conditions or termination from the Social Work program.

Should a student not agree with the decision of the Academic Review Meeting, the appeals process, as set forth in the student handbook, involves contact, in the following order, with: The Director of the School, the dean of the college or school, and the provost and vice president for academic affairs.

School of Social Work Academic Review Policy

Difficulties between a student, a faculty member, Faculty Field Liaison, and Field Instructor are handled within the School of Social Work. If field is involved, it is the responsibility of the Faculty-Field Liaison to notify the Field Work Coordinator and to set up a meeting with the Field Instructor to discuss the student's concerns. Although most grievances are resolved at this level, in a few cases there is a need to take the process further. In such instances an Academic Review will be arranged. The procedure is outlined as follows:

(1) Purpose of and Reasons for the Academic Review:

The purpose of an Academic Review Meeting is to provide a forum for discussion and decision making when the traditional advisor/advisee relationship is believed to be inadequate for resolving the problem situation.

The issues that are the focus of an Academic Review are often related to problems that emerge in field work (e.g., the suitability of a student for the field of social work as defined in the *Code of Ethics* of the National Association of Social Workers). However, there are many other reasons an Academic Review might be called. The following list, though not exhaustive, offers some examples of issues that could prompt an Academic Review:

- a) A student is evidencing academic or field difficulties;
- b) A student receives a failing grade in a critical course or is placed on academic probation;
- c) Problems emerge between a student and his/her field instructor that cannot be remediated with the faculty-field liaison.
- d) A student violates the NASW Code of Ethics in field or in the classroom.
- e) A student receives a poor field evaluation or has been dismissed from field placement.

The outcome of the Academic Review usually includes: (a) resolution without conditions, or (b) a plan for resolution with conditions. In some situations, when a resolution cannot be achieved, the Academic Review may result in the student's termination from the Social Work program.

In addition to addressing clearly identified problems needing resolution, the Academic Review may be used as a forum to facilitate early intervention when a student is evidencing signs of academic or fieldwork difficulties. In some situations, developing plans to deal with emerging problems can mitigate more serious complications, and efforts are made to use the Academic Review in this way whenever possible.

(2) Academic Review Procedures:

A) An Academic Review is requested.

Any social work faculty member or student can request an Academic Review. This meeting may be called after a student has spoken to his/her advisor but before the issue is taken to the level of the Office of the Dean.

B) An Academic Review is scheduled.

1. The Academic Review is called by the MSW or BSW Coordinator. The Coordinator contacts the individuals involved to invite them and arrange for a day and time. The student is then informed when the meeting is scheduled. The Academic Review will occur within ten business days of the request for such a meeting.
2. All relevant social work faculty and community professionals may be invited to attend the Academic Review Meeting, along with the student and his/her advisor. If key individuals cannot be present for the meeting, they are asked to submit their contributions in written form to be read aloud at the review meeting.
3. The student may choose to invite one person to accompany him/her at the review meeting. This person can serve as a support only and is not a participant in the meeting. The support person may be invited to add information at the end of the meeting but should not plan to be

a contributor. If the student does invite someone, he/she must notify the Coordinator in advance of the meeting.

4. The academic advisor, or his/her proxy, serves as the note taker during the Academic Review to ensure the discussion is accurately documented.

C) An Academic Review is held.

1. The MSW or BSW Coordinator serves as Chair of the Academic Review and facilitates the meeting.
2. The advisor serves as the recorder of the Academic Review and is also a participant.
3. All people present at the review, except for the support person, are invited to participate in the discussion of the issues at hand.
4. The meeting usually takes one hour (a bit more or less, depending on the situation). Once the discussion has come to a close, the student and the support person are asked to leave the room and the Academic Review Committee remains to discuss and make a decision about the outcome.
5. A letter summarizing the academic review and the outcome is prepared by the Coordinator. Since the formal written letter may take some time to compose, usually the Coordinator informs the student promptly of the outcome by phone or via e-mail once decisions have been made.
6. The official letter is mailed to the student within ten business days following the meeting and a copy is placed in the student's record. The student has the option to prepare a written response within ten days of receiving the letter and it is also placed in the student's record.
7. If a resolution plan is the outcome of the review, this serves as a contract between the student and the SSW. The student is expected to follow through with the plan as detailed in the letter.

(3) *The Right to Appeal*

Nothing in this policy statement is intended to interfere with or deny any right guaranteed to a student by the University of Maine system.

A) Appeal Process

Should a student not agree with a decision resulting from the Academic Review, an appeal may be precipitated by the student. The appeal process is initiated by a letter from the student to the Director of the School of Social Work outlining the reasons for the appeal. The Director may contact the student for more information or to schedule a meeting to discuss the situation in more detail. The appeal could be resolved at this level, but should the student feel the process has not addressed the issue in a satisfactory manner, he/she may appeal to the Dean of the College of Management and Human Services by contacting the Dean's office. Further, if the student is not satisfied with the resolution at the Dean's level, the student may appeal further to the Provost. All stages of the appeal process are documented and filed in the student's record.

If the student feels the above process has not resolved the issue, he or she may request that the USM Student Senate Executive Committee review the issue and report its findings to the President of the University. The final decision rests with the President, after the receipt of recommendations from those involved.

School of Social Work Policy on Termination

In addition to the policies and procedures delineated as “Academic Dismissal” (University of Southern Maine Undergraduate catalog) and “Student Conduct Code,” a student can be terminated by the School of Social Work.

Student termination usually occurs only upon the formal convening of an Academic Review Meeting when the conclusion is reached that a student is unable to fulfill the Code of Ethics of Social Work and is not suitable for the profession or is unable academically to meet the standards of the undergraduate program.

In the case of academic problems, students must maintain a 2.5 GPA and receive a C in each required or foundation course. It is rare for a student to continue as a social work major having failed in these requirements. Students, for example, cannot move to sequential courses when they have not done well enough in pre-requisite courses. After being admitted to Methods or Field Work, continued academic problems are usually subject to Academic Review as above.

All cases of serious problems meeting professional standards (where of course students do not agree with such findings) are taken up at a prompt Academic Review as noted above.

It should be noted that USM policy for undergraduates, does not permit termination of a student from college on this basis (unlike the termination due to the student conduct code). Students may transfer to another major. Additionally, a termination from the social work major lasts only two years, at which point a student may apply for reinstatement.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

A. Graduation

Graduation Requirements: To be eligible for graduation from the School of Social Work a student must:

1. Complete all University proficiency and CORE requirements.
2. Complete 45 credits of social work classes and 40 credits of related foundation area courses (some of these classes are also able to satisfy the CORE requirement)
3. Complete a total of 120 credits
4. Complete a completed application for graduation to the Registrar

Certification for Graduation: Each program is responsible for certifying fulfillment of departmental graduation requirements by a student to the Registrar. The College is responsible for certifying proficiency and CORE requirements to the Registrar.

Commencement Ceremony: A student may participate in a commencement ceremony only if he or she has been certified for graduation. If a student has 6 credits or less remaining to complete at the time of commencement, he or she may participate in the ceremony, but will not receive a diploma until all credits are complete.

B. Catalog Effective Date for Graduation

Freshmen and new transfer students (including transfers from other campuses of the University of Maine System) must satisfy the graduation requirements set out in the catalog effect for the first

semester of their attendance as a matriculated student. At the student's choice, a later catalog may be selected for graduation requirements; but a student may not select an earlier catalog. If a student's matriculation expires and the student is readmitted, the effective catalog is the one in effect for the first semester of attendance as a readmitted student.

C. Adding and Dropping Classes

During the first week of a semester, students may add or drop courses and select or reverse the pass/fail option. Adds require the signature of the instructor, but drops should be completed with the Registrar or via MaineStreet without signature. Drops processed during the first two weeks of the semester do not have a financial penalty. Summer session courses have a different set of dates, so please refer to their website for policy information. The procedure enables the student to make the necessary changes in the planned curriculum. A student dropping a course after the second week through the eighth week of classes will receive the grade notation of W. If a student has not officially withdrawn by the end of the eighth week of the course, she or he will be assigned a regular grade, normally F. The W notation may be assigned after the eighth week under unusual circumstances if so determined by the instructor and the dean. *All students who register for a course and neither complete the course objectives nor officially withdraw according to any one of the procedures described above will be graded F in that course and must assume all financial obligations associated with the course.* (The details and timetable of the refund policy are available in the course schedule for the semester.)

D. Transfer Policies/Work Credit

Undergraduate coursework completed at other institutions of higher education will be evaluated for transfer credit by the Transfer Affairs Office in conjunction with the appropriate academic department, school, or college. The coursework is evaluated on the basis of the following: whether or not the previous institution was regionally accredited; grades achieved in the previous coursework; comparability of courses taken with courses at the University. *Credit for courses in the Social Work major is given only if the previous institution is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.* However, the BSW Coordinator may ask for syllabi or other information to make certain the class fulfills our requirements. Transfer evaluations are assumed to be correct if a student does not direct questions to or enter an appeal with the Transfer Affairs Office within one year of the completion of the evaluation.

The Social Work School cannot give credit for work done in the human services or social work field by the rules of the Council of Social Work Education. Students may want to apply to the Office of Prior Learning if they have done considerable work or volunteer experience in an area. The Office will ask you to put together evidence of such work and a portfolio. This office may credit you with elective credit.

E. Grades

Grades at the University are given in terms of letters, with the option of a plus or minus designation, representing levels of achievement. The basis for determining a grade is the relative extent to which the student has achieved the objectives of the course. The student's work in each course is graded as follows: A—honors; B—basic competence; C—below competency; D—unsatisfactory; F—failure.

F. Pass/Fail

Courses open to the Pass/Fail option have no impact on GPA. Students may choose to do Pass/Fail courses (one a semester) but not in the CORE requirements or the major, with the exception of Field Work seminars which are graded Pass/Fail.

G. Incompletes

A grade of Incomplete (I) indicates that a portion of the required coursework has not been completed and evaluated in the prescribed time period due to unforeseen, but fully justified reasons, such as personal illness or family emergencies. If you find that you must request an incomplete because of an emergency situation, see your instructor who will clarify the conditions for completion with you. An incomplete not made up within the following semester automatically converts to an F. Remember the incomplete is the decision of the instructor. Incompletes are not given for convenience or for failure to complete course work.

H. Registration

Registration is done primarily via Maine Street but is also available over the phone or at the Registrar's Office each semester. Information pertaining to classes can be found in the "class search" function in MaineStreet. *You must meet with your advisor each semester before registration.*

I. Financial Aid

The University of Southern Maine offers eligible students a variety of need-based grants, scholarships, loans, and work programs. This aid is awarded to students, who, through completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, demonstrate a financial need. To receive aid, you must be admitted into a degree program and, in most instances, be registered for at least 6 credit hours each semester. Other scholarship opportunities are also available both through University departments and through outside organizations. Applications and information about these resources are available at the following Financial Aid Offices:

Bailey Hall, Gorham, 780-5250

Payson Smith Hall, Portland, 780-4526

Lewiston-Auburn College, 753-6957

USM Responds, 780-5800

<http://www.usm.maine.edu/fin>

J. Reporting Criminal Background

As part of the USM Graduate Program Application, applicants are required to respond to a question about the presence of a criminal background. An affirmative response to this question is in no way considered in the decision to accept or deny an applicant for admission to the program. An affirmative response does however have special importance for professional schools like social work. Accepted MSW students with a criminal record need to be aware that many field agencies require formal criminal background checks and it is best that students are forthcoming and honest

about this before it is discovered through a formal process. While some agencies have policies that disallow accepting students or employees with a criminal background, the USM SSW will assist students in this situation to seek a field placement without this prohibition. This said, while it is not impossible to find a field setting for students with a criminal background, it is a reality that fieldwork options are limited for these students.

It is also important for students with a criminal background to know that the state social work licensing board may deny you a license based on this. At the time of licensure application, you will undergo an investigation of the type of criminal background you have and any associated resolutions. It is entirely the decision of the licensing board to grant or deny a social work license based on these findings and the USM SSW has no influence over the outcome.

If you are an accepted or matriculated student, you can discuss any concerns you may have about your criminal background and its impact on your education and training with either your advisor or the MSW Program Coordinator. You should also be sure to inform the Field Coordinator of your situation before you are referred for fieldwork interviews so that you can be sent to appropriate settings. The SSW will support your education and training in any way we can. If you are an applicant to the program, you can contact the MSW Program Coordinator or the Dean of Graduate Admissions to discuss this further in advance of applying.

General Campus Information:

A. STORM LINE

In case of inclement weather, information on school closings will be announced on local radio and television, as well as on the USM Storm Line at (207) 780-4800 or 780-5034 (TTY). Do not contact the School or individual faculty or staff regarding closures.

B. SUPPORT SERVICES

If you have a disability or become disabled during the course of the semester and need special accommodations for class, please contact the Office of Academic Support for Disabilities (780-4706). It is located on the second floor of Luther Bonney Hall. For support with writing, student tutors are available through the Academic Support Center, 242 Luther Bonney, 780-4470.

It is not unusual for students to experience emotional stress in the context of studying and practicing social work. If you feel the need for support around personal issues, help is available through University Counseling Services, 105 Payson Smith, 780-4050.

The Women's Resource Center is dedicated to providing a safe space for students to have dialogue about things that are important to them, including: gender equality, racism, homophobia, HIV/AIDS, body image, parenting, and domestic and sexual violence. They encourage students of every gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and ability to join them in this dialogue. In addition, they collaborate and sponsor ongoing events with The Multicultural Center, The Center for Sexualities and Gender Diversity, the Women's Studies Department, and many more.

Center for Sexualities and Gender Diversity, 228-8235
The Learning Center, 780-4228
Student Legal Services, 780-4792

C. CAMPUS SAFETY REPORT

In accordance with the Cleary Act of 1998, USM publishes the Campus Safety Report. The report includes three years of statistics regarding crime (on campus, on adjacent public property, and in University owned off-campus buildings) and campus policies on alcohol and drug use, crime prevention, the reporting of crimes and sexual assaults. The report is available online at www.usm.maine.edu/police/safetyreport.htm or by calling the Office of Community Standards at (207) 780-5242 to request a paper copy.

D. POLICE AND EMERGENCY NUMBERS

For emergencies, reporting of crimes, lost and found, or to report suspicious persons and/or maintenance/safety problems, call the USM Police Department at (207) 780-5211, or **in case of emergency, 911 or (207) 780-5000**.

***** USM Police (24-hour):**

Portland Campus: (207) 780-5211

Lewiston-Auburn Campus: (207) 753-6500

Gorham Campus: (207) 780-5211

UNIVERSITY POLICIES REGARDING CAMPUS LIFE

In addition to the Student Conduct Code, USM has a number of important University policies that govern campus life. These policies and many others can be found in the USM Navigator, the student handbook that is available to all new students. In order to review the policies in their entirety,

A. Equal Opportunity

In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and pursuing its own goals of pluralism, the University of Southern Maine shall not discriminate on the grounds or race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or citizenship status, age, disability, or veterans' status in employment, education, and all other areas of the University.

B. AIDS Policy

The USM AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) policy has been established to protect the rights of individuals infected with HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and the health and safety of all others at the institution. USM will not discriminate in any manner against any person who is infected with HIV, including admissions, facilities access, hiring, housing, promotion, tenure or termination. USM will not require HIV testing for either its students or employees and information about suspected or known HIV infection will be kept confidential. For more information or advice regarding this policy, call (207-780-4211).

C. Sexual Harassment Policy

http://www.maine.edu/system/policy_manual/policy_section402.php

Sexual harassment of either employees or students is a violation of federal and state laws. It is the policy of the University of Maine System that no member of the University System community may sexually harass another. In accordance with its policy of complying with non-discrimination laws, the University System will regard freedom from sexual harassment as an individual employee and student right which will be safeguarded as a matter of policy. Any employee or student will be

subject to disciplinary action for violation of this policy.

In conformance with this policy, the University of Maine System will ensure fair and impartial investigations that will protect the rights of the person(s) filing sexual harassment complaints, the person(s) complained against, and the institution or unit. Retaliation against anyone who makes a complaint of sexual harassment or who is involved in a complaint process will not be tolerated.

Consenting relationships may constitute sexual harassment under this policy. When a professional power differential exists between members of the University of Maine System and a romantic or sexual relationship develops, there is a potential for abuse of that power, even in relationships of apparent mutual consent. Faculty and staff members are strongly advised not to engage in such relationships. Further, the University System prohibits the abuse of power in romantic or sexual relationships. To assure that power is not abused and to maintain an environment free of sexual harassment, a faculty or staff member must eliminate any current or potential conflict of interest by removing himself or herself from decisions affecting the other person in the relationship. Decisions affecting the other person include grading, evaluating, supervising, or otherwise influencing that person's education, employment, housing, or participation in athletics or any other University System activity.

To Report Harassment by a Student(s) or University guest contact:

Joy Pufhal, Deputy Title IX Coordinator, 207-780-5512, jpufhal@usm.maine.edu

To Report Harassment by an Employee contact:

Daryl McIlwain, Director of Equity & Compliance & Title IX Coordinator
207-780-5510, darylc@usm.maine.edu

D. Gender-Based Misconduct

The University of Southern Maine is committed to providing a learning environment free of harassment and violence. Gender-based misconduct is a serious issue on college campuses and is not tolerated at USM. Gender-based misconduct includes all forms of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX of the Higher Education Amendment of 1972, including gender discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and gender based stalking and relationship abuse. To effectively preempt and address gender-based misconduct, the University provides educational and preventative programs, services for individuals impacted by gender-based misconduct, and accessible, prompt, and equitable methods of investigation and resolution and education and training to all members of the University community about the nature of gender-based misconduct and its impact on individuals and the community. Victims and witnesses are urged to seek personal support and to take action, including pursuing criminal and student conduct action.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY

Individuals seeking confidentiality and/or who are unsure if they want to report an incident to the University are encouraged to seek help from the confidential resources listed below.

Sexual Assault
1-800-871-7741—www.mecasa.org
24-hour confidential crisis & support line.

Dating & Relationship Abuse

1-866-834-4357 www.mcedv.org
24-hour confidential crisis & support line.

USM Health & Counseling Services
(207)780-4050

Individual and group counseling & support sessions and connections with other services.

USM Interfaith Chaplaincy
(207)228-8093

Space for reflection & support by Assoc. Chaplains from diverse religious & spiritual traditions
Most University employees are required by law to report all information of this nature to the Deputy Title IX Coordinator for action including making sure the victim/survivor is connected to all available services and determining if there is a threat to the rest of the university community.

Individual privacy will be respected to the fullest extent possible and the complaint will only be shared with members of the University community with a need to know to respond to the incident. The complainant/Victim will be kept informed of any action by the university.

To Make a Report:

In cases involving students:

Deputy Title IX Coordinator Joy Pufhal (207) 780-5512

E. Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy

http://www.usm.maine.edu/sites/default/files/sul/USMAODpolicy_0.pdf

The University of Southern Maine views alcohol and substance abuse as a serious problem both nationally and on campus and wishes to do everything possible to address this critical issue. In compliance with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act and the Drug Free Workplace Act passed by Congress, annually the University publishes a booklet which informs all students and employees of the University's substance abuse policy, sanctions for violation of the policy, state and federal alcohol and drug laws, offenses and sanctions. The booklet also discusses the health risks connected with alcohol and drug use and provides a referral list of the campus and community assistance available. Below is a summary of USM's alcohol and substance abuse policy.

The possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs as defined by federal, state, and local statutes is prohibited at any time on University property. Students who possess, use, or distribute illegal drugs are liable for public law enforcement sanctions and University disciplinary action. Use of alcoholic beverages on University property shall be in compliance with state laws and campus regulations and procedures. Violation of such laws, regulations and procedures may result in disciplinary action and, where applicable, criminal proceedings.

Students with substance abuse problems may take advantage of diagnostic, referral, counseling, and prevention services available through the Substance Abuse Prevention Program or Counseling Services. For more information, contact the Substance Abuse Prevention Program, Student Health Center, Gorham, 780-5164.

Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers

Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and [revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly](#)

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

1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity

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

2.01 Respect

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

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

4.02 Discrimination

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

6.04 Social and Political Action

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

Preamble

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

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression,

poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

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

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

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

Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics

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

The *NASW Code of Ethics* serves six purposes:

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

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

standards. Ethical responsibilities flow from all human relationships, from the personal and familial to the social and professional.

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

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

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

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

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

A code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Moreover, a code of ethics cannot resolve all ethical issues or disputes or capture the richness and complexity involved in striving to make responsible choices within a moral community. Rather, a code of ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be judged. Social workers' ethical behavior should result from their personal commitment to engage in ethical practice. The *NASW Code of Ethics* reflects the commitment of all social workers to uphold

the profession's values and to act ethically. Principles and standards must be applied by individuals of good character who discern moral questions and, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments.

Ethical Principles

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

Value: *Service*

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

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

Value: *Social Justice*

Ethical Principle: *Social workers challenge social injustice.*

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

Value: *Dignity and Worth of the Person*

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

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

Value: *Importance of Human Relationships*

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

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

Value: *Integrity*

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

Social workers are continually aware of the profession's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers act honestly and

responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

Value: *Competence*

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

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

Ethical Standards

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

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

1. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO CLIENTS

1.01 Commitment to Clients

Social workers' primary responsibility is to promote the 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 Self Determination

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

1.03 Informed Consent

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.04 Competence

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

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

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

1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity

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

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

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

1.06 Conflicts of Interest

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

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

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

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

1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality

(a) Social workers should respect clients' right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from clients unless it is essential to providing services or conducting social work evaluation or research. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.

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

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

(d) Social workers should inform clients, to the extent possible, about the disclosure of confidential information and the potential consequences, when feasible before the disclosure is made. This applies whether social workers disclose confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or client consent.

(e) Social workers should discuss with clients and other interested parties the nature of confidentiality and limitations of clients' right to confidentiality. Social workers should review with clients' circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. This discussion should occur as soon as possible in the social worker client relationship and as needed throughout the course of the relationship.

(f) When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual's right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. Social

workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.

(g) Social workers should inform clients involved in family, couples, marital, or group counseling of the social worker's, employer's, and agency's policy concerning the social worker's disclosure of confidential information among the parties involved in the counseling.

(h) Social workers should not disclose confidential information to third party payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.

(i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semipublic areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.

(j) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law. When a court of law or other legally authorized body orders social workers to disclose confidential or privileged information without a client's consent and such disclosure could cause harm to the client, social workers should request that the court withdraw the order or limit the order as narrowly as possible or maintain the records under seal, unavailable for public inspection.

(k) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media.

(l) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients' records are stored in a secure location and that clients' records are not available to others who are not authorized to have access.

(m) Social workers should take precautions to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of information transmitted to other parties through the use of computers, electronic mail, facsimile machines, telephones and telephone answering machines, and other electronic or computer technology. Disclosure of identifying information should be avoided whenever possible.

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

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

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

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

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

1.08 Access to Records

(a) Social workers should provide clients with reasonable access to records concerning the clients. Social workers who are concerned that clients' access to their records could cause serious misunderstanding or harm to the client should provide assistance in interpreting the records and consultation with the client regarding the records. Social workers should limit clients' access to their

records, or portions of their records, only in exceptional circumstances when there is compelling evidence that such access would cause serious harm to the client. Both clients' requests and the rationale for withholding some or all of the record should be documented in clients' files.

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

1.09 Sexual Relationships

(a) Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with current clients, whether such contact is consensual or forced.

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

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

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

1.10 Physical Contact

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

1.11 Sexual Harassment

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

1.12 Derogatory Language

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

1.13 Payment for Services

- (a) When setting fees, social workers should ensure that the fees are fair, reasonable, and commensurate with the services performed. Consideration should be given to clients' ability to pay.
- (b) Social workers should avoid accepting goods or services from clients as payment for professional services. Bartering arrangements, particularly involving services, create the potential for conflicts of interest, exploitation, and inappropriate boundaries in social workers' relationships with clients. Social workers should explore and may participate in bartering only in very limited circumstances when it can be demonstrated that such arrangements are an accepted practice among professionals in the local community, considered to be essential for the provision of services, negotiated without coercion, and entered into at the client's initiative and with the client's informed consent. Social workers who accept goods or services from clients as payment for professional services assume the full burden of demonstrating that this arrangement will not be detrimental to the client or the professional relationship.
- (c) Social workers should not solicit a private fee or other remuneration for providing services to clients who are entitled to such available services through the social workers' employer or agency.

1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision Making Capacity

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

1.15 Interruption of Services

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

1.16 Termination of Services

- (a) Social workers should terminate services to clients and professional relationships with them when such services and relationships are no longer required or no longer serve the clients' needs or interests.
- (b) Social workers should take reasonable steps to avoid abandoning clients who are still in need of services. Social workers should withdraw services precipitously only under unusual circumstances, giving careful consideration to all factors in the situation and taking care to minimize possible adverse effects. Social workers should assist in making appropriate arrangements for continuation of services when necessary.
- (c) Social workers in 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 Labor Management Disputes

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

4. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS PROFESSIONALS

4.01 Competence

- (a) Social workers should accept responsibility or employment only on the basis of existing competence or the intention to acquire the necessary competence.
- (b) Social workers should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. Social workers should critically examine and keep current

with emerging knowledge relevant to social work. Social workers should routinely review the professional literature and participate in continuing education relevant to social work practice and social work ethics.

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

4.02 Discrimination

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

4.03 Private Conduct

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

4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception

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

4.05 Impairment

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

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

4.06 Misrepresentation

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

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

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

4.07 Solicitations

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

4.08 Acknowledging Credit

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

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

5.01 Integrity of the Profession

- (a) Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.
- (b) Social workers should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession. Social workers should protect, enhance, and improve the integrity of the profession through appropriate study and research, active discussion, and responsible criticism of the profession.
- (c) Social workers should contribute time and professional expertise to activities that promote respect for the value, integrity, and competence of the social work profession. These activities may include teaching, research, consultation, service, legislative testimony, presentations in the community, and participation in their professional organizations.
- (d) Social workers should contribute to the knowledge base of social work and share with colleagues their knowledge related to practice, research, and ethics. Social workers should seek to contribute to the profession's literature and to share their knowledge at professional meetings and conferences.
- (e) Social workers should act to prevent the unauthorized and unqualified practice of social work.

5.02 Evaluation and Research

- (a) Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.
- (b) Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research to contribute to the development of knowledge.
- (c) Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice.
- (d) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.

- (e) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants' wellbeing, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.
- (f) When evaluation or research participants are incapable of giving informed consent, social workers should provide an appropriate explanation to the participants, obtain the participants' assent to the extent they are able, and obtain written consent from an appropriate proxy.
- (g) Social workers should never design or conduct evaluation or research that does not use consent procedures, such as certain forms of naturalistic observation and archival research, unless rigorous and responsible review of the research has found it to be justified because of its prospective scientific, educational, or applied value and unless equally effective alternative procedures that do not involve waiver of consent are not feasible.
- (h) Social workers should inform participants of their right to withdraw from evaluation and research at any time without penalty.
- (i) Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.
- (j) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.
- (k) Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.
- (l) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.
- (m) Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants' confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.
- (n) Social workers should report evaluation and research findings accurately. They should not fabricate or falsify results and should take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.
- (o) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest and dual relationships with participants, should inform participants when a real or potential conflict of interest arises, and should take steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes participants' interests primary.
- (p) Social workers should educate themselves, their students, and their colleagues about responsible research practices.

6. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE BROADER SOCIETY

6.01 Social Welfare

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

6.02 Public Participation

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

6.03 Public Emergencies

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

6.04 Social and Political Action

- (a) Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.
- (b) Social workers should act to expand choice and opportunity for all people, with special regard for vulnerable, disadvantaged, oppressed, and exploited people and groups.
- (c) Social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the United States and globally. Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate for programs and institutions that demonstrate cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people.
- (d) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability.