



Tennessee Wesleyan
UNIVERSITY

SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Student Handbook

2023-2024

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Welcome!

As a social work major, you are joining a profession that is deeply rooted in equity, justice, inclusion, and social change. Professional social workers work with individuals, families, communities, and organizations and help them to reach their goals. In your coursework and field placement, you will gain the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for professional generalist social work practice with diverse populations. Social workers work in a wide range of settings such as mental health, criminal justice, schools, medical, child welfare, or government, and your faculty are here to help guide you as you prepare for a career as a social worker.

This student handbook is a guide to the policies of the BSW program at Tennessee Wesleyan University. Please ensure you read it thoroughly, as it provides important information that will help you throughout your program. Please note that policies and procedures do change from time to time, and therefore the TWU social work program reserves the right to make such modifications as necessary. We will make every attempt to notify the student of such changes.

As faculty, we are excited to be a part of your educational and professional journey, and we are here to support you. We are invested in helping students become competent, professional social workers, and are so glad you are a part of the BSW program at TWU.

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Social Work Program Director

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<https://www.tnwesleyan.edu/academics/socialwork.php>

Tennessee Wesleyan University Mission

In keeping with the spirit of the liberal arts, Tennessee Wesleyan University seeks within the framework of the Judeo-Christian tradition to provide for students the highest quality educational experience, to promote personal responsibility, integrity, and purpose, and to prepare students for a life of leadership and service in an ever-changing global community.

BSW Program Mission

The Tennessee Wesleyan University Baccalaureate Social Work Program provides the foundation for students to become empathetic, competent generalist social work practitioners with integrity who adhere to the values and ethics promoted by the profession of social work. Students will cultivate a sense of responsibility to improve the lives of their fellow person engaging people as partners in the helping process while advancing social and economic justice on a local and global level advocating to prevent and eliminate conditions like poverty that limit human rights. Through study grounded in the liberal arts foundation, study of the person-in-environment framework, scientific inquiry, and mentoring, our students are prepared to be active listeners, critical thinkers, and lifelong learners who are willing to examine their own values and beliefs, grow in self-awareness, and maintain a balance between a subjective/objective view of the people they serve while respecting their dignity, diversity, and right to self-determination.

Program Goals

The TWU BSW Program prepares our students to become generalist social work practitioners.

1. The TWU Social Work Program provides a foundation for BSW students to become empathetic competent generalist social work practitioners with integrity who adhere to the values and ethics promoted by the profession of social work.
2. The TWU Social Work Program instills a sense of responsibility to the BSW students to improve the lives of their fellow person engaging people as partners in the helping process respecting their dignity, diversity, and right to self-determination.
3. The TWU Social Work Program prepares BSW students with the knowledge and skills through study of the person-in-environment framework, strengths perspective, scientific inquiry, evidence-based practice, and research and mentoring to advocate preventing and eliminating conditions like poverty that limit human rights and advancing social and economic justice on a local and global level.
4. Through study grounded in the liberal arts, the TWU Social Work Program equips BSW students to be active listeners, critical thinkers and lifelong learners who examine their own values and beliefs and grow in self-awareness.

Accreditation

The TWU BSW Program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Board of Accreditation, 333 John Carlyle Street, Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 223143457. Phone: 703-683-8080
www.cswe.org



Generalist Social Work

Bachelor of Social Work programs prepare students for social work practice at the generalist level. According to the Council on Social Work Education (2022),

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice (p. 17).

The nine CSWE competencies, listed below, are indicators of competence in generalist social work practice.

CSWE Competencies

The Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Board of Accreditation and Commission on Educational Policy develop Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) for accredited social work programs. New standards are published every seven years. The 2022 standards include nine core competencies, which are below. These interrelated competencies identify the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that social work graduates will be able to demonstrate, and they serve as educational outcomes for the social work program.

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

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

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

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

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

Discrimination Policy

The university values a community atmosphere that is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. In compliance with federal law, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Tennessee Wesleyan University does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability in the administration of its educational policies, programs, or activities, its admission policies, or employment. The university prohibits conduct which prevents free academic interaction and opportunities, or which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive study or work environment.

Students with Disabilities

Tennessee Wesleyan University affirms its intent to comply with federal regulations regarding persons with disabilities, specifically with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The University does not discriminate based on disability in employment or admissions.

It is the responsibility of the student seeking reasonable accommodations consequent to a documented disability to contact the Office of Disability Services to request services for accommodations. Dr. Patricia Ging, Sherman Hall, 423-746-5237, will meet with the student to discuss the individual's disability and the necessary services required.

Any student with a qualifying disability is eligible for reasonable accommodations as determined by the Office of Disability Services director. The student must provide documentation of a qualifying disability. Students are not required to report their disability but must understand that no services will be rendered without a request and proper documentation. An appropriately licensed professional must provide documentation. This documentation must be completed within the last three years. A simple written statement that a student has a disability will not suffice as evidence that a student needs accommodations. Based on the nature of the disability, a complete psychological evaluation, including aptitude and achievement tests, may be required.

An evaluation must provide specific evidence that the disability exists. Current IEPs or 504 Plans and evaluations may be provided for review.

After reviewing the documentation provided by the student, the office will help the student work with the faculty to secure reasonable accommodations.

Modifications or adjustments, including but not limited to the following, may be made for qualified students with disabilities:

1. Classes may be relocated or rescheduled to accommodate students with mobility impairments reasonably.
2. Alternate testing and evaluation methods may be made available for students with disabilities that impair their capacity to be tested in standard formats.
3. A medical evaluation of the disability may be required to assess the student's needs.

The Office of Disability Services director will determine what reasonable accommodations will be made for students with disabilities and will forward accommodations requests to the student's professors. After being accepted to the University, the University requests that the student provide advance notice so that the University may plan to meet the student's needs. Reasonable accommodations may not be made without such advance notice. If a student feels that an instructor has not made accommodations, the Vice President for Academic Affairs becomes the contact for complaint.

Program Application Process

All students interested in social work as their major must make formal application to the Social Work Program. Students should submit their application during their sophomore year by the appropriate deadline.

2023-2024 Academic Year BSW Application Deadlines

- Current Student Application Deadline is February 23, 2024
- Transfer Student Application Deadline is July 1, 2024

Applications received after the above deadlines will be reviewed and considered on a space available basis.

Social work major course work, not including prerequisite courses, requires a minimum of four (4) semesters. Students must consider this prior to (1) changing majors and/or (2) transferring from another institution.

Admission Criteria and Application Process

Every student must meet the following minimum criteria prior to applying for official admission to the Social Work Program.

1. Have an overall GPA of at least 2.5.
2. Complete of the following pre-requisite courses: PSY 101, SOC 101, and SWRK 231 with a minimum of a "C" in each.
3. Complete a written program application, including the following:
 - a. Two recommendations (one academic, one professional/volunteer related)

- b. A copy of your professional resume
 - c. A copy of your unofficial transcript for all coursework completed
 - d. Personal Narrative
4. Complete an interview with BSW Program faculty.

Admission Decisions

The BSW Admission Committee will review applications and interview content to make an admission decision. Students will receive a formal decision by email. Students must be formally admitted to the program to enroll in Social Work major courses beyond SWK 231 unless a social work course is a requirement of major or minor or is part of the Wesleyan Essentials.

1. Admission to the program may be conditional or probationary for one semester.
 - a. *Conditional* admission may be granted for candidates who lack a prerequisite or who are not yet completely certain if the major is an ideal “fit” for them.
 - b. *Probationary* admission may be granted for candidates whose overall GPA is below the 2.5 requirement.

Students admitted under either the conditional or probationary classifications will not be able to enroll in field or practice courses until conditions are resolved and/or the student’s overall GPA is raised to 2.5 and the GPA in social work prerequisite courses is a “C” or above. Any exceptions to this standard will be handled on a case by case basis.

2. Students admitted on probationary or conditional status must resolve any specified deficiencies within the next semester.
3. Retention in the Social Work Program will be based upon periodic faculty review.

Tennessee Wesleyan University’s BSW program requires a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5. Students should be aware however, that most graduate programs require at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA for admission.

All students who meet the minimum requirements stated above are invited to apply, and no student will be denied admission on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, gender, age, marital or veteran status, disability, religion, or sexual orientation. All students are expected to be in compliance with the standards set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics, the Tennessee Wesleyan Student Handbook, and the BSW Program’s Professional Standards.

Tennessee Wesleyan University and the Social Work Program reserve the right to select students based on academic performance and professional qualifications.

Students with Criminal Histories

Students with criminal histories will not automatically be denied admission to the BSW program. Eligibility will be considered on a case-by-case basis. However, students should be aware that a criminal background may prevent field placement or employment in certain settings.

Additionally, students may not be able to obtain professional licensure. As laws vary from state to state, students are encouraged to consult individual state licensing agencies for additional information. Social work licensure information for Tennessee can be obtained by visiting:

<https://www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/health-professional-boards/sw-board/sw-board/licensure.html>

Life Experience Policy

Per Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) guidelines, academic credit is not given for life experiences or previous work experience. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Social Work Major Course Requirements

A major in Social Work requires 51 semester hours, distributed as follows:

SWK 231 Introduction to Social Work 3 s.h.
SWK 250 Human Behavior and the Social Environment 3 s.h.
SWK 270 Social Work Research Methods 3 s.h.
SWK 302 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 3 s.h.
SWK 333 Introductory Helping Skills 3 s.h.
SWK 334 Social Policy 3 s.h.
SWK 371 Ethics, Human Rights, and Social Justice 3 s.h.
SWK 434 Social Work Practice I: Individuals & Families 3 s.h.
SWK 435 Social Work Practice II: Groups, Orgs., & Communities 3 s.h.
SWK 460 Social Work Field Practicum I 5 s.h.
SWK 461 Social Work Field Practicum Seminar I 1 s.h.
SWK 462 Social Work Field Practicum II 5 s.h.
SWK 463 Social Work Field Practicum Seminar II 1 s.h.
PSY 101 Introduction to Psychology 3 s.h.
SOC 101 Introduction to Sociology 3 s.h.
MAT 132 Essentials of Statistics 3 s.h.

Choose three hours from the following courses: 3 s.h.

SWK 290 Topics in Social Work
SWK 381 Death, Dying, and Grief
SWK 321 School Social Work
SWK 331 Interpersonal Violence
SWK 332 Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking
SWK 351 Social Work with Older Adults
SWK 361 Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders
SWK 471 Child Welfare I
SWK 472 Child Welfare II
CJS 331 Criminology
SOC 312 Gender and Society

Example Social Work Major Course Plan

Fall 1st year		Spring 1st year	
PSY 101 Introduction to Psychology*	3	SOC 101 Introduction to Sociology*	3
Fall 2nd year		Spring 2nd year	
SWK 231: Introduction to Social Work*	3	MAT 132 Essentials of Statistics	3
Fall 3rd year		Spring 3rd year	
SWK 333 Introductory Helping Skills	3	SWK 302 Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion	3
SWK 371 Ethics, Human Rights, and Social Justice	3	SWK 434 Social Work Practice I: Individuals and Families	3
SWK 250 Human Behavior and the Social Environment	3	SWK 334 Social Policy	3
Social Work Elective or graduation requirements	3	Social Work Elective recommended or graduation requirements	3
Fall 4th year		Spring 4th year	
SWK 435 Social Work Practice II: Groups, Organizations, and Communities	3	SWK 462 Social Work Field Practicum II	5
SWK 270 Social Work Research Methods	3	SWK 463 Social Work Field Practicum Seminar II	1
SWK 460 Social Work Field Practicum I	5	Elective or other graduation requirements	6
SWK 461 Social Work Field Practicum Seminar I	1		

***Program Prerequisites**

Academic and Professional Advising

Students are expected to meet each semester with a full-time social work faculty member who is assigned advisor. The goals of advisors include, but are not limited to,:

1. Providing role modeling in the area of social work values and professionalism.
2. Assisting students in assessing their aptitude and motivation for a career in social work.
3. Providing academic guidance (e.g. course selection, preparation for practice and serving as a broker to link students to needed services)
4. Providing for regular review of the student's educational performance
5. Being available to discuss the personal/academic concerns of the student, and serving as a broker to link students to needed services
5. Referring interested students to a) career services regarding employment and b) graduate school contact information

Advisors will assist students in meeting all George Fox University and major requirements, but **the student is ultimately responsible** for completing all requirements and for knowledge regarding all requirements in general education and the major.

The role of advisor is not a therapeutic one. Faculty does not provide personal counseling to social work majors since this could easily place faculty in a situation of dual-role conflict. It is program policy to refer students needing personal counseling to other resources.

Professional Licensure

Licensed Bachelor Social Worker (LBSW)

Upon graduation, students are eligible to apply for the state exam through each state's regulatory board and accrediting agencies. Upon the successful completion of the exam a student will become a Licensed Bachelor Social Worker (LBSW).

School Social Work Licensure

The Tennessee Wesleyan University Social Work Program offers the opportunity for State of Tennessee School Social Work Licensure to currently enrolled social work students as well as alumni who currently hold a bachelor's degree in Social Work.

Licensure in school social work offers classroom knowledge as well as specific field experience to equip students with the knowledge and skills to practice in school settings throughout the state of Tennessee.

The requirements to be certified for licensure through the Tennessee Wesleyan University Social Work Program include the completion of the required SWK 321 School Social Work class, 400 hours of field hours in a school setting **OR** two years post-graduate work with children and families and hold a BSW from a CSWE accredited Social Work Program. In collaboration

with the Tennessee Wesleyan University's Education Department, the Social Work Program will certify applicants for the State of Tennessee School Social Work License.

For more information on the licensure programs contact socialwork@tnwesleyan.edu The TWU Social Work Program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Board of Accreditation, 333 John Carlyle Street, Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314-3457. Phone: 703-683-8080 www.cswe.org

Opportunities for BSW Program Participation and Feedback

Social Work Club

Students are given the lead in the Social Work Club. The officers and members of the club decide what learning opportunities and experiences the club chooses. These opportunities and experiences add to students learning and give students practice in organizing, fund raising, and networking to secure resources both on campus and in the greater community and region. The club members often participate across disciplines to support one another's initiatives.

The Social Work Club chooses a student representative to serve in an advisory capacity on the Social Work Program Committee to provide feedback and input regarding policies and curriculum in the Social Work Program. A Social Work Club student representative is invited to attend the Social Sciences Department Meetings with concerns/feedback from the Social Work Club. The Social Work Club has a Student Government Representative that attends their weekly meeting to interact with the larger campus community. The SGA provides some funding for club activities.

Phi Alpha Honor Society

The purpose of Phi Alpha Chi Tau chapter is to recognize and promote scholastic achievement among students and faculty involved in the undergraduate social work program at Tennessee Wesleyan University. The chapter also seeks to improve and further the goals of Social Work in the community.

The top 35% of social work program students are invited to participate in Phi Alpha. The students are given the lead in the Phi Alpha Honor Society. The officers and members of the honor society decide what learning opportunities and experiences the honor society chooses.

BSW Program Advisory Committee

The program's advisory committee consists of community representatives who provide feedback and input to the social work program. At least one student representative will be appointed to the committee each year. The committee typically meets at least two times per academic year.

Exit Survey and Other Program Evaluations

Students in their final semester will complete a BSW program exit survey in which they evaluate various aspects of the program. Students will also participate in an exit exam. Data both instruments will be used for program improvement. The program will also survey alumni periodically regarding their experiences in the program and preparation for social work practice.

Course Evaluations

Students are encouraged to complete a confidential university course evaluation provided by the university near the end of each course. Feedback received from course evaluations is used for program improvement. The evaluations are compiled confidentially for Institutional Effectiveness and the results made available to the faculty member and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Open-Door Policy

Social work faculty maintain an open-door policy and welcome student feedback and ideas. In general, making an appointment is the best way to ensure that faculty will be available to hear ideas. Students who have concerns regarding coursework or a grade in a course should first address the concern with the course faculty member.

Student Participation in Institutional Decision Making

Student involvement is considered an important part of institutional decision making and many opportunities are available for TWU students to provide input into university-wide plans. Listed below are various avenues through which students participate in institutional planning and decision making.

1. Student Government Association
2. Student Representation on the Board of Trustees
3. Student Representation on the Student Activities Board
4. Regular student involvement on various Ad-Hoc committees
5. Informally through random canvassing and opinion questionnaires

Other opportunities for participation in institutional decision-making are found elsewhere in this TWU student handbook. Questions concerning what opportunities are open and how to become involved address to the Vice President for Student Life.

Professional Social Work Organizations

Students are encouraged to join a national social work organization of their choice. Often national organizations offer a student discount. Examples of these organizations include, but are not limited to:

National Association of Social Workers (NASW) <https://www.socialworkers.org/>

Founded in 1955, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world. NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards, and to advance sound social policies.

North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NACSW) <https://www.nacsw.org/>

The North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NACSW) is a non-profit Christian social work member organization. Members of NACSW represent a rich diversity of Christian denominations and traditions. Its mission is to equip our members to integrate Christian faith and professional social work practice.

Latino Social Workers Organization (LSWO) <http://www.lsw.org>

Dedicated to promote the professional development of Latino social workers and to advocate, support, and participate in addressing concerns and issues that impact the Latino community.

National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) <http://www.nabsw.org>

The National Association of Black Social Workers, Inc., comprised of people of African ancestry, is committed to enhancing the quality of life and empowering people of African ancestry through advocacy, human services delivery, and research.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes unless due to an excused absence because of illness or an unavoidable hardship. Class attendance is imperative because of the experiential learning that takes place in most Social Work classes. Students are expected to attend their field placements as scheduled.

In the event of unexpected absences, prompt communication with Social Work Faculty and Field Instructors is essential and is in keeping with professional conduct. In field placement one unexcused absence will result in a documented warning in the student's file. An additional unexcused absence is grounds for loss of field placement and could lead to termination from the program.

If a student experiences hardship that may affect attendance, the student is responsible for contacting the Field Instructor as soon as possible to arrange an excused absence. To allow for scheduling flexibility when students encounter unexpected circumstances, the program provides for a few exceptions. Each circumstance will be addressed on a case-by-case basis by program faculty and documented in the student's file for future reference.

Academic Integrity

Honor Code

Students admitted to the TWU Social Work Program are expected to adhere to the Tennessee Wesleyan University Honor Code. As indicated in the TWU Academic Catalog for the current academic year.

The Tennessee Wesleyan University Honor System promotes academic integrity on the Tennessee Wesleyan University campus and increases awareness among different groups within the University community - students, faculty, staff, and administration - of the importance of academic honesty. Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The Honor System establishes the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Tennessee Wesleyan University students. Violation of academic integrity, either by plagiarism or by cheating in the classroom or elsewhere, is inconsistent with the philosophy of education of Tennessee Wesleyan University and the moral and ethical prescriptions of the Christian faith. The basis of the Honor System is the assumption that academic honesty lies at the heart of the academic enterprise. It provides the foundation for the intellectual freedom that is encouraged and shared by all members of the academic community, and it embodies the belief that true academic freedom and discourse can exist only within a framework of honesty, integrity, and responsibility - values essential to the life of an engaged citizenry. The success of the Honor System depends upon the co-operation of the entire community. Students, faculty, and university employees are equally involved in matters of academic integrity.

Plagiarism

If an instructor determines that a student has committed an act of plagiarism, including self-plagiarism, on a graded assignment the student shall receive a zero for the assignment. The instructor will notify the student of the penalty in writing and copy the Department Chair and the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The VPAA will then notify the student that he/she is required to complete a plagiarism tutorial and submit a Certificate of Completion to the VPAA within two weeks of the date of the VPAA's notification. Failure to do so will result in the student's final grade in the course being reduced by one full letter grade. Upon receipt of the Certificate of Completion the VPAA will forward this information to the instructor and the Department Chair.

If a student commits an act of plagiarism with less than two weeks left in the term the student will be given an incomplete and still must complete the plagiarism tutorial and submit a Certificate of Completion within two weeks of the VPAA's notification. Failure to do so will result in the student's final grade in the course being reduced by one full letter grade when the incomplete is subsequently changed to a final grade for the course. If an instructor determines that a student has committed a second act of plagiarism in the course on a graded assignment the student shall receive a zero for the course.

The basis of the Honor System is the assumption that academic honesty lies at the heart of the academic enterprise. It provides the foundation for the intellectual freedom that is

encouraged and shared by all members of the academic community, and it embodies the belief that true academic freedom and discourse can exist only within a framework of honesty, integrity, and responsibility - values essential to the life of an engaged citizenry.

The success of the Honor System depends upon the co-operation of the entire community. Students, faculty, and university employees are equally involved in matters of academic integrity.

Steps in the Disciplinary Process

When an instructor suspects a student has violated the Honor Code the instructor must notify the student within five (5) business days of the alleged violation or within five (5) business days of the date upon which the instructor became aware of the alleged violation. The instructor also shall attempt to schedule a meeting with the student to present evidence of the alleged violation and to provide the student an opportunity to respond to the accusation. It is the student's responsibility to schedule this meeting within five (5) business days of the student's receipt of the instructor's request. If the student fails to respond the instructor may proceed as indicated in the TWU Academic Catalog for the current academic year.

Other Violations

If an instructor determines that a student has committed another type of Honor Code violation (e.g. cheating), the student shall receive a zero on the assignment in question for the first offense and a failing grade for the course upon the commission of a second offense. Upon making either determination the instructor must notify the student in writing of the penalty to be imposed and copy the Department Chair and the VPAA.

Suspension

The VPAA will maintain the institutional record of all Honor Code violations. When a student has committed three violations of the Honor Code the VPAA will notify the student, in writing, that he/she will be placed on academic suspension for one calendar year beginning at the end of the current term. During this time the student will not be permitted to attend classes at the University or apply credit earned at other institutions toward completion of his/her degree at TWU.

To be reinstated, the student must submit a Recommendations to the VPAA formally requesting readmission to the University. The Recommendations must be submitted at least 45 days prior to the end of the suspension period and must include an acknowledgment of the student's past Honor Code violations, a reaffirmation of his/her commitment to abide by the Honor Code if readmitted to the institution, and any other documentation which the student feels is pertinent to his/her case.

Social Work Professional Standards

The social work student behaves professionally by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, adhering to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) *Code of Ethics* and adhering the Tennessee Board of Social Worker Standards of Conduct (1365-01-.10) as found in the Tennessee Board of Social Work Certification and Licensure General Rules and Regulations located at <https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/1365/1365-01.20220606.pdf>. Students are also expected to abide by university policies as outlined in the university's Student Handbook.

Professional behavior in the TWU BSW program includes the following criteria :

1. Adhering to the NASW Code of Ethics
2. Adhering to university conduct standards, including the Honor Code, as outlined in the TWU Student Handbook.
3. Demonstrating behaviors, attitudes, and values consistent with professional social work practice. These qualities include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Personal integrity and emotional stability
 - b. Appropriate behavior toward peers, faculty, staff, and agency personnel and clients
 - c. Value system consistent with social work practice
 - d. Awareness of self and demonstrated interpersonal helping skills
 - e. Respect and acceptance of diverse populations and sensitivity to the needs of various populations
 - f. Openness to professional growth, including faculty observations of strengths and weaknesses.

Program Termination Policies

Students must maintain a 2.50 overall GPA, obtain at least a C in prerequisite courses, and at least a C- in all social work major courses.

If a student drops below those standards they will have one semester to achieve the Social Work Program retention standards. If they are not able to meet those standards at the end of that semester, they will be terminated from the Social Work Program. They will not be eligible to enroll in higher level practice classes or field practicum if they are below those standards. This policy is included in the Student Social Work Program Handbook and in the Student Field Education Manual. Students are required to sign that they have read and understood the TWU Social Work Program Student Handbook before being accepted into the Social Work Program.

If a student is placed on academic probation, they must meet with their academic advisor to devise an action plan to rectify their academic standing. If they fail to achieve good academic standing the following semester, the Social Work advisory committee will meet to review the student's file and will schedule a meeting with the student to decide on program status.

Students who are dismissed from their field placement or who are unable to obtain a field placement may be terminated from the social work program. If Social Work program students

violate the TWU Honor System, they are subject to the policy and process identified as indicated in the TWU Academic Catalog for the current academic year.

Grievance Policy and Procedures

Grade Appeals:

A student who feels the final grade assigned in a course is incorrect or has been awarded unfairly may appeal the grade utilizing the following procedure.

Students must initiate the grade appeal process no later than midterm of the following semester. A student should first contact his/her instructor to resolve a grade dispute. If the dispute cannot be satisfactorily resolved at this level, the student should contact their Department Chair. If the dispute cannot be satisfactorily resolved at this level, the student should submit a written grade appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Students must use the Grade Appeal form for this purpose; the form is available through the Registrar's Office.

Upon receipt of the appeal, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will notify the student of his/her decision, in writing, within five (5) business days. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs is not subject to appeal. (Academic Catalog)

Student Complaint Policy (Non-Academic Issues):

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and procedures for Tennessee Wesleyan University students, faculty, and staff members about the handling of informal and formal student complaints. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) requires that there be a policy specific to handling and logging written student complaints.

Tennessee Wesleyan University seeks to promote civil discourse among all of our constituencies (students, parents, alumni, members of the Board of Trustees, guests, faculty members, staff members, and other employees of the University). The University seeks to address concerns and complaints with integrity, respect and virtue in communications, relationships, and actions. For many student concerns or complaints that do not involve discrimination or harassment, the University seeks to support informal communication channels involving the student and those most directly involved.

Informal Process

1. The student who has a specific conflict shall first discuss his/her concern with the community member in question. If the student has justifiable reasons for not communicating directly with the individual, the student may proceed directly to Step 2. However, the student should be prepared to explain his/her decision not to talk directly with the other campus member.

2. If the student does not believe that the initial conference with the campus member has resolved the conflict, a request may be made for a conference with the Vice President of Student Life. At the student's request, the Vice President of Student Life will inform the student, in writing, of any outcome of this process within five (5) business days.

Formal Process

To be considered a formal complaint, the complaint must meet the following criteria:

1. Be written (this includes complaints received by email);
2. Be received by the Vice President for Student Life; and
3. Include a reporter's name, date, and signature.

Formal complaints will be addressed, and a written response given to the reporter within twenty (20) business days.

In addition to the above procedures, students can utilize the following off campus agencies to file complaints:

- The University provides a "Campus Conduct Hotline" that is an anonymous reporting system designed to protect the principles of honesty, integrity, and excellence of the campus community. The "Campus Conduct Hotline" is operated by a third party that notifies the university administration should a report be received. A call to the hotline initiates a campus investigation into the issue. Individuals can contact the hotline at (423) 252-1105.
- Complaints relating to quality of education or accreditation requirements shall be referred to the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (SACS), (<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/complaintpolicy.pdf>);
- Complaints related to the application of state laws or rules related to approval to operate or licensure of a particular professional program within a postsecondary institution shall be referred to the appropriate State Board (i.e., State Boards of Health, State Board of Education, and so on) within the Tennessee State Government and shall be reviewed and handled by that licensing board (<http://www.tn.gov>, and then search for the appropriate division).
- Complaints related to state consumer protection laws (e.g., laws related to fraud or false advertising) shall be referred to the Tennessee Division of Consumer Affairs and shall be reviewed and handled by that Unit (<http://www.tn.gov/consumer/>).

Date

Appendix A: Application



BSW Program Summary of Application Process

Introduction

All students interested in social work as their major must make formal application to the Social Work Program. Students should submit their application during their sophomore year by the appropriate deadline.

2023-2024 Academic Year BSW Application Deadlines

- Current Student Application Deadline is February 23, 2024
- Transfer Student Application Deadline is July 1, 2024

Applications received after the above deadlines will be reviewed and considered on a space available basis.

Social work major course work, not including prerequisite courses, requires a minimum of four (4) semesters. Students must consider this prior to (1) changing majors and/or (2) transferring from another institution.

Admission Criteria and Application Process

Every student must meet the following minimum criteria prior to applying for official admission to the Social Work Program.

1. Have an overall GPA of at least 2.5.
2. Complete of the following pre-requisite courses: PSY 101, SOC 101, and SWRK 231 with a minimum of a "C" in each.
3. Complete a written program application, including the following:
 - a. Two recommendations (one academic, one professional/volunteer related)
 - b. A copy of your professional resume
 - c. A copy of your unofficial transcript for all coursework completed
 - d. Personal Narrative
4. Complete an interview with BSW Program faculty.

Admission Decisions

The BSW Admission Committee will review applications and interview content to make an admission decision. Students will receive a formal decision by email. Students must be formally admitted to the program to enroll in Social Work major courses beyond SWK 231 unless a social work course is a requirement of major or minor or is part of the Wesleyan Essentials.

1. Admission to the program may be conditional or probationary for one semester.
 - c. *Conditional* admission may be granted for candidates who lack a prerequisite or who are not yet completely certain if the major is an ideal “fit” for them.
 - d. *Probationary* admission may be granted for candidates whose overall GPA is below the 2.5 requirement.

Students admitted under either the conditional or probationary classifications will not be able to enroll in field or practice courses until conditions are resolved and/or the student’s overall GPA is raised to 2.5 and the GPA in social work prerequisite courses is a “C” or above. Any exceptions to this standard will be handled on a case by case basis.

2. Students admitted on probationary or conditional status must resolve any specified deficiencies within the next semester.
3. Retention in the Social Work Program will be based upon periodic faculty review.

Tennessee Wesleyan University’s BSW program requires a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5. Students should be aware however, that most graduate programs require at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA for admission.

All students who meet the minimum requirements stated above are invited to apply, and no student will be denied admission on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, gender, age, marital or veteran status, disability, religion, or sexual orientation. All students are expected to be in compliance with the standards set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics, the Tennessee Wesleyan Student Handbook, and the BSW Program’s Professional Standards.

Tennessee Wesleyan University and the Social Work Program reserve the right to select students based on academic performance and professional qualifications.



SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Application for Admission Checklist for the BSW Program

Use this sheet as a cover sheet for your application packet. Check off the items you have completed and sign below. Put all required materials in a manila envelope or folder and submit it to the Social Work Office (Meridian Street House) by the deadline.

2023-2024 Academic Year BSW Application Deadlines

- Current Student Application Deadline is February 23, 2024
- Transfer Student Application Deadline is July 1, 2024

- Read the BSW Program Student Handbook
- Completed application and attached personal narrative
- Included a copy of professional resume
- Included a copy of unofficial transcripts for all coursework (TWU students can print this from the portal)
- Obtained two letters of recommendation (1 academic and 1 professional/volunteer; no friends or relatives)
- Completed all prerequisite courses for the program with a “C” or higher for the course grade
- Have at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA

In addition to the materials submitted, the BSW program may require a formal interview as part of the application process. Students must be formally admitted to the program to enroll in Social Work major courses beyond SWK 231 unless a social work course is a requirement of major or minor or is part of the Wesleyan Essentials.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

TWU ID#: _____

College/University: _____ Location: _____

Major(s) _____ Dates of Attendance: _____ Degree Awarded: _____

Prior Social Work Education

Have you ever been dismissed from a social work program at another institution? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Legal History

*Have you ever been arrested or convicted of a misdemeanor or a felony? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

** Please note, a yes response does not automatically mean that you will be denied admission to the BSW program.*

Volunteer and Work History

Please list the last three paid or volunteer positions you have held. Start with the most recent.

Employer/Agency	Job Description	Dates of Service
Name: Location:	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer What I did:	Dates: Reason for leaving:
Name: Location:	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer What I did:	Dates: Reason for leaving:
Name: Location:	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer What I did:	Dates: Reason for leaving:

Additional Work History

Do you expect to be employed while completing this major? (Including work-study) Yes No

How many hours per week do you plan on working? _____

Program Questions

How did you first hear about TWU's BSW Program? _____

What most attracted you to TWU's BSW Program? _____

Personal Narrative

Respond to the below areas in a 3-4 page (typed, double spaced) personal narrative that will assist us in understanding your motivation for pursuing a BSW degree. Ensure your name is on each page of the document and attach it to this application.

1. Describe your family (both of origin and current).
2. What is your personal motivation for wanting to study social work?
3. What are your future career goals?
4. What are your personal strengths and limitations related to a future social work career?
5. What have been your experiences in helping others, including others with backgrounds and characteristics different from your own? How well do you deal with value differences and diversity? Are there any groups you feel you could not help? Provide examples.

I certify that the information I have provided in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that withholding or falsifying information on this application is sufficient cause for denial of admission or dismissal from the program once admitted. Information submitted with this application will be kept in individual student files in a locked cabinet. Access to individual student files will be limited to the Social Work Program faculty/staff and the Social Work Program Admissions Committee. Individual social work students may access all information in their own files excluding any personal recommendations that have been denoted for non-release and the committee's applicant rating sheet. The information submitted will be used by the Social Work Program Admissions Committee in making decisions regarding acceptance to and/or continuation in the program and by program faculty for advisement of individual students.

Signature of Applicant _____

Date _____

General Instructions for Letters of Recommendation

As part of your application to the BSW program, you are required to provide **two** letters of recommendation. The form for the recommendation letters follows these instructions. You should provide a letter from each of the below areas.

- 1) **Professional Reference** – from someone who has supervised you in a work or volunteer setting.
- 2) **Academic Reference** – from a professor or an academic advisor who is familiar with your academic work.

In addition, **please do not use a friend, relative, or Tennessee Wesleyan Social Work faculty member for any of the above references.**

Please note:

- 1) You must fill out the “To the Applicant” box on each of your reference letter forms prior to giving it to your reference. You must choose whether you are waiving your right to see the letter, and you must sign each reference form. Forms that are received and have not been properly completed may not be accepted.
- 2) You should provide your reference with a printed reference form and an envelope. You should have your reference put the letter in the envelope and sign across the back. If your reference is at a distance and will need to mail the letter, you should provide them with a stamped envelope that is addressed to YOU. **You should turn in both unopened reference letters with your application packet. *Please do not have your references mail the letters to the Social Work Office.***
- 3) You are responsible for making sure you get the two reference letters back in time to turn in with the rest of your application materials by the application deadline.

2023-2024 Academic Year BSW Application Deadlines

- Current Student Application Deadline is February 23, 2024
- Transfer Student Application Deadline is July 1, 2024

TWU Bachelor of Social Work Program
 204 East College Street
 Athens, Tennessee 37303
 (423) 746-5255



Letter of Recommendation for the BSW Program

To the Applicant: Please read and complete this section of the form. Deliver or mail this form to the person who will write your recommendation. Ask the person writing the recommendation to return it to you in a sealed envelope with their signature across the seal. Submit both letters of recommendation with your application and other required documentation by the deadline.

Name of Applicant (print) _____
Last First Middle

In accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), you may waive your right to inspect this recommendation by signing the statement below.
I choose to waive not waive my right of access to this letter.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

To the Reference: The above listed person is applying for admission to Tennessee Wesleyan University's Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program. Thank you for providing us with your honest assessment of this applicant in order to assist us in determining this applicant's suitability for social work. **Please return this form in a sealed envelope with your signature across the seal to the applicant.** Please note, in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), it is possible that an applicant may read your reference unless he or she waives that right.

How long have you known the applicant? _____ Nature of Relationship _____

Please rate the applicant relative to other students, employees, or others in social work that you have known:

	Superior	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory	Unknown
Service to others						
Academic potential						
Intellectual ability						
Maturity, Emotional stability						
Verbal communication skills						
Written communication skills						
Critical thinking ability						
Leadership potential						
Ability to work with others						
Self-Awareness						
Constructive use of feedback						

Additional Comments (attach a letter to this form if needed):

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Phone: () _____

Name (Print): _____ Title: _____

Email Address: _____ Organization: _____

TWU Bachelor of Social Work Program
 204 East College Street
 Athens, Tennessee 37303
 (423) 746-5255



Letter of Recommendation for the BSW Program

To the Applicant: Please read and complete this section of the form. Deliver or mail this form to the person who will write your recommendation. Ask the person writing the recommendation to return it to you in a sealed envelope with their signature across the seal. Submit both letters of recommendation with your application and other required documentation by the deadline.

Name of Applicant (print) _____
Last First Middle

In accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), you may waive your right to inspect this recommendation by signing the statement below.

I choose to waive not waive my right of access to this letter.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

To the Reference: The above listed person is applying for admission to Tennessee Wesleyan University's Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program. Thank you for providing us with your honest assessment of this applicant in order to assist us in determining this applicant's suitability for social work. **Please return this form in a sealed envelope with your signature across the seal to the applicant.** Please note, in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), it is possible that an applicant may read your reference unless he or she waives that right.

How long have you known the applicant? _____ Nature of Relationship _____

Please rate the applicant relative to other students, employees, or others in social work that you have known:

	Superior	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory	Unknown
Service to others						
Academic potential						
Intellectual ability						
Maturity, Emotional stability						
Verbal communication skills						
Written communication skills						
Critical thinking ability						
Leadership potential						
Ability to work with others						
Self-Awareness						
Constructive use of feedback						

Additional Comments (attach a letter to this form if needed):

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Phone: () _____

Name (Print): _____ Title: _____

Email Address: _____ Organization: _____

Appendix B: Major Course Descriptions

SWK 231 INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK (3) This course is an introduction to the profession of social work and to generalist practice. Social work practice settings and the work that social workers do with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities is explored. The course integrates content on social work theory, history, values, ethics, policy, diversity, social justice, and planned change. (Fall, Spring, on demand)

SWK 250 HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT (3) This course provides a basic framework for creating and organizing knowledge of human behavior during the lifespan. Social systems, human development theories, and strengths approaches are critically examined to foster understanding of individual, family, group, organization, and community behaviors and the impact of the larger environment on these systems. Special attention is given to the impact of human diversity, discrimination, and oppression on the ability of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to reach or maintain optimal health and well-being. Prerequisites: PSY 101 and SOC 101 or permission of the instructor (Fall)

SWK 270 SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH METHODS (3) This course provides an overview of social work research methods in preparation for contributing to and using research to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs. Course content includes bias in research, ethics, anti-racist, antioppressive, culturally informed approaches, qualitative and quantitative methods, problem and question formation, sampling, and data analysis. Students utilize current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses and present research findings from their research project in the course. (Fall)

SWK 302 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (3) This course explores dimensions of human diversity in preparation for professional anti-racist social work practice. Special attention is given to issues of intersectionality, bias, discrimination, power and privilege, and oppression. Students will explore their own personal identity and how their views, beliefs, values, and behaviors may support or hinder future social work practice with diverse populations. (Spring)

SWK 321 SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK (3) This course is required for the State of Tennessee School Social Work Licensure Program. This course is a concentration elective. The course covers the varied roles and functions of school social workers in their practice with diverse groups of students, families, school personnel, and diverse communities. It emphasizes best practices in assessing, intervening, and evaluating social work practice across all system level (i.e., students, families, teachers, classrooms, schools, neighborhoods, communities), and the importance of the political environment of the school and its impact on social work practice. It also covers best practices in school-based prevention programs as well as best practices in consultation and collaboration

SWK 331 INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE (3) This course explores interpersonal violence throughout the life course, from child abuse and neglect to intimate partner violence and elder abuse. Course content includes the scope of the problems, theoretical perspectives, intersectionality, prevention and intervention approaches, and related policy. A particular focus of the course will be upon the impact of trauma and trauma-informed practice approaches. (On demand)

SWK 332 DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING (3) This course looks at the issue of Human Trafficking with a special focus on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST). course content explore factors that place children at higher risk for being trafficked and different methods of DMST. Additionally, how trafficking is defined in international and US law, how survivors exit trafficking, and services that a survivor may need to recover from the trauma is also covered. A primary focus of the

course is on the US citizens and legal resident children who are trafficked for sexual exploitation. (On demand)

SWK 333 INTRODUCTORY HELPING SKILLS (3) This course serves as an introduction to professional helping skills for entry-level generalist practice in a variety of settings. Course content includes development of knowledge and skills in active listening, interviewing, data collection, and documentation. Additionally, social work values and ethics and dimensions of diversity are examined as they relate to professional practice. (Fall)

SWK 334 SOCIAL POLICY (3) This course provides an in-depth analysis of how human needs and values are translated into social policy on community, national and international levels. Special attention is given to the ways in which values and power influence the creation of social policy. Emphasis is placed on the history of social welfare and related policies, the process of policy formation and analysis, and impact of policy on at-risk populations. Implications for generalist social work practice and services will be explored through a variety of class activities. (Spring)

SWK 351 SOCIAL WORK WITH OLDER ADULTS (3) This course provides a general introduction to the study of aging, older people, and their adaptation to a rapidly changing world from a social work perspective. It examines a wide variety of physical, cognitive and psycho-social changes that occur as one ages, how these factors influence interaction with social/physical environments, and how the older person is, in turn, affected by these interactions. Social work perspectives, values and interventions with this population will be emphasized. Prerequisites: PSY 101 or SOC 101, at least sophomore level status or instructor permission (On demand)

SWK 361 MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS (3) This course focuses on mental health and substance use disorders in American society. Students will learn about the major DSM-5-TR mental disorders and treatment for mental illness. Theories of addiction, addiction treatment, cultural perspectives, policy, and the impact of addiction on family and society will also be examined. (On demand)

SWK 371 ETHICS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE (3) This course provides students with foundational knowledge and skills in social work ethics, human rights, and social justice. Course content is designed to help develop knowledge and skills for ethical decision making by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, and models for ethical decision making. Related concepts of oppression, power, privilege, and inequity will also be covered. Additionally, students will engage in reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism. (Fall)

SWK 381 DEATH, DYING, AND GRIEF (3) This course provides students with the opportunity to examine and reflect upon attitudes, ethics, and theoretical perspectives related to death, dying, and grief. Topics will include the nature of death, societal responses to dying and death, coping with loss, ethical issues, assisted suicide, hospice and palliative care, and advanced planning. Prerequisites: PSY 101 or SOC 101 and at least sophomore status or instructor permission.

SWK 434 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE I: INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES (3) This course builds upon the beginning knowledge and skills developed in SWK 333 Introductory Helping Skills. In this course students will expand their knowledge of micro and mezzo-level theory, skills, and interviewing techniques for generalist practice with individuals and families. Course content will include engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation techniques and strategies for work with individuals and families. Also, students will practice self-exploration and reflection, relating to future ethical social work practice. (Spring)

SWK 435 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE II: GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

(3) This course continues the development of generalist practice social work knowledge and skills with a focus on mezzo and macro practice. Course content will include engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation techniques and strategies for work with groups, organizations and communities.

Prerequisite: SWK 434; Corequisite: SWK 460 and SWK 461(Fall)

SWK 460 FIELD PRACTICUM I (5) This course is the first course in a student's supervised field practicum experience which provides beginning level generalist experience in a social service agency. Students integrate and apply concepts from prior courses, including professionalism, ethics, diversity and inclusion, human rights and justice, and the generalist practice skills of working with individual, families, groups, organizations, and communities in this experience. (200 hours in practicum agency). Prerequisite: SWK 434; Corequisite: SWK 435, SWK 461. Declared social work majors only. (Fall)

SWK 461 FIELD PRACTICUM SEMINAR I (1) This seminar course is taken concurrently with a student's field practicum experience and is designed to enhance students' learning through integration of social work concepts and critical reflection on the field experience. Prerequisite: SWK 434, Corequisites: SWK 435 and SWK 460. (Fall)

SWK 462 FIELD PRACTICUM II (5) This course is the second course in a student's field practicum experience which continues beginning level generalist experience in a social service agency. Students integrate and apply concepts from prior courses, including professionalism, ethics, diversity and inclusion, human rights and justice, and the generalist practice skills of working with individual, families, groups, organizations, and communities in this experience (200 hours in practicum agency). Prerequisite: SWK 435; Corequisite: SWK 463. Declared social work majors only. (Spring)

SWK 463 FIELD PRACTICUM SEMINAR II (1) This seminar course is taken concurrently with a student's field practicum experience and is designed to enhance students' learning through integration of social work concepts and critical reflection on the field experience. Prerequisite: SWK 434, SWK 460, SWK 461; Corequisite: SWK 462. (Spring)

SWK 471 CHILD WELFARE I (3) This course is a study of the child welfare system that examines history, policies and programs, both state and federal, pertinent to child maltreatment and juvenile justice.

SWK 472 CHILD WELFARE II (3) This course is designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of students interested in child welfare and subsequently improve the quality of services delivered by child welfare programs. Topics covered will include building trusting relationships with families; conducting family-centered assessments and planning; conducting family centered CPS investigations; permanence; and juvenile justice.

Appendix C: NASW Code of Ethics

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics>

Preamble

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

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems. The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

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

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

Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics

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

The NASW Code of Ethics serves six purposes:

1. The Code identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.
2. The Code summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide social work practice.
3. The Code is designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.
4. The Code provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable.

5. The Code socializes practitioners new to the field to social work's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards, and encourages all social workers to engage in self-care, ongoing education, and other activities to ensure their commitment to those same core features of the profession.
6. The Code articulates standards that the social work profession itself can use to assess whether social workers have engaged in unethical conduct. NASW has formal procedures to adjudicate ethics complaints filed against its members.* In subscribing to this Code, social workers are required to cooperate in its implementation, participate in NASW adjudication proceedings, and abide by any NASW disciplinary rulings or sanctions based on it.

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

* For information on the NASW Professional Review Process, see NASW Procedures for Professional Review.

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

Ethical decision making is a process. In situations when conflicting obligations arise, social workers may be faced with complex ethical dilemmas that have no simple answers. Social workers should take into consideration all the values, principles, and standards in this Code that are relevant to any situation in which ethical judgment is warranted. Social workers' decisions and actions should be consistent with the spirit as well as the letter of this Code.

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

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

individuals, agencies, organizations, and bodies (such as licensing and regulatory boards, professional liability insurance providers, courts of law, agency boards of directors, government agencies, and other professional groups) that choose to adopt it or use it as a frame of reference. Violation of standards in this Code does not automatically imply legal liability or violation of the law.

Such determination can only be made in the context of legal and judicial proceedings. Alleged violations of the Code would be subject to a peer review process. Such processes are generally separate from legal or administrative procedures and insulated from legal review or proceedings to allow the profession to counsel and discipline its own members.

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

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

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

Ethical Principles

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

Value: Service

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

Value: Social Justice

Ethical Principle: Social workers challenge social injustice.

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

Value: Dignity and Worth of the Person

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

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

Value: Importance of Human Relationships

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

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

Value: Integrity

Ethical Principle: Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.

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

Value: Competence

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

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

Ethical Standards

The following ethical standards are relevant to the professional activities of all social workers. These standards concern (1) social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients, (2) social workers' ethical responsibilities to colleagues, (3) social workers' ethical responsibilities in practice settings, (4) social workers' ethical responsibilities as professionals, (5) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the social work profession, and (6) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the broader society. Some of the standards that follow are enforceable guidelines for professional conduct, and some are aspirational. The extent to which each standard is enforceable is a matter of professional judgment to be exercised by those responsible for reviewing alleged violations of ethical standards.

1. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Clients

1.01 Commitment to Clients

Social workers' primary responsibility is to promote the well-being of clients. In general, clients' interests are primary. However, social workers' responsibility to the larger society or specific legal obligations may, on limited occasions, supersede the loyalty owed clients, and clients should be so advised.

(Examples include when a social worker is required by law to report that a client has abused a child or has threatened to harm self or others.)

1.02 Self-Determination

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

1.03 Informed Consent

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

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

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

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

(e) Social workers should discuss with clients the social workers' policies concerning the use of technology in the provision of professional services.

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

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

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

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

1.04 Competence

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

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

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

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

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

1.05 Cultural Competence

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

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

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

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

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

1.06 Conflicts of Interest

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality

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

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

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

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

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

(f) When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual's right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. This agreement should include consideration of whether confidential information may be exchanged in person or electronically, among clients or with others outside of formal counseling sessions. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.

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

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

(i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information, electronically or in person, in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or 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 reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of electronic communications, including information provided to clients or third parties. Social workers should use applicable safeguards (such as encryption, firewalls, and passwords) when using electronic communications such as e-mail, online posts, online chat sessions, mobile communication, and text messages.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.08 Access to Records

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

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

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

1.09 Sexual Relationships

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

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

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

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

1.10 Physical Contact

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

1.11 Sexual Harassment

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

1.12 Derogatory Language

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

1.13 Payment for Services

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

(b) Social workers should avoid accepting goods or services from clients as payment for professional services. Bartering arrangements, particularly involving services, create the potential for conflicts of interest, exploitation, and inappropriate boundaries in social workers' relationships with clients. Social workers should explore and may participate in bartering only in very limited circumstances when it can be demonstrated that such arrangements are an accepted practice among professionals in the local community, considered to be essential for the provision of services, negotiated without coercion, and

entered into at the client's initiative and with the client's informed consent. Social workers who accept goods or services from clients as payment for professional services assume the full burden of demonstrating that this arrangement will not be detrimental to the client or the professional relationship.

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

1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision-Making Capacity

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

1.15 Interruption of Services

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

1.16 Referral for Services

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

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

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

1.17 Termination of Services

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues

2.01 Respect

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

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

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

2.02 Confidentiality

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

2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration

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

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

2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues

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

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

2.05 Consultation

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

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

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

2.06 Sexual Relationships

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

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

2.07 Sexual Harassment

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

2.08 Impairment of Colleagues

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

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

2.09 Incompetence of Colleagues

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

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

2.10 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues

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

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

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

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

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

3. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings

3.01 Supervision and Consultation

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

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

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

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

3.02 Education and Training

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

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

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

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

3.03 Performance Evaluation

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

3.04 Client Records

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

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

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

(d) Social workers should store records following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by relevant laws, agency policies, and contracts.

3.05 Billing

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

3.06 Client Transfer

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

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

3.07 Administration

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

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

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

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

3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development

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

3.09 Commitments to Employers

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.10 Labor-Management Disputes

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

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

4. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals

4.01 Competence

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

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

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

4.02 Discrimination

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

4.03 Private Conduct

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

4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception

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

4.05 Impairment

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

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

4.06 Misrepresentation

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

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

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

4.07 Solicitations

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

4.08 Acknowledging Credit

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

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

5.01 Integrity of the Profession

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

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

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

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

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

5.02 Evaluation and Research

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- (l) Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.
- (m) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.
- (n) Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants' confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.
- (o) Social workers should report evaluation and research findings accurately. They should not fabricate or falsify results and should take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.
- (p) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest and dual relationships with participants, should inform participants when a real or potential conflict of interest arises, and should take steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes participants' interests primary.
- (q) Social workers should educate themselves, their students, and their colleagues about responsible research practices.

6. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society

6.01 Social Welfare

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

6.02 Public Participation

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

6.03 Public Emergencies

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

6.04 Social and Political Action

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

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

(c) Social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the United States and globally. Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate

for programs and institutions that demonstrate cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people.

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