

Master of Social Work Program

Student Handbook

Department of Social Work

College of Nursing & Health Professions

Arkansas State University

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## WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE MSW PROGRAM

Congratulations on your decision to pursue a graduate degree in social work! You are joining a profession that is dedicated to helping people build more functional and fulfilling lives. Social workers have been active in many important social efforts. Jane Addams, who established Hull House in Chicago, advocated for peace and social justice, and was the first woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize. Harry Hopkins was one of the designers of the New Deal that helped the United States recover from the Depression. Currently, social workers are making a difference in the lives of people in the halls of Congress and state legislatures, hospitals, substance abuse programs, schools, nursing homes, homeless shelters, family agencies, health clinics, hospice programs, behavioral health organizations, and a variety of other settings.

Social Work graduate education at Arkansas State University will help prepare you to be a competent and ethical social work professional. You will gain knowledge and skills required for rural-based clinical practice; however, you also will be prepared to practice in other areas as well. You will find your work here challenging. The faculty believes you are up to the challenge and we are ready to help you succeed. You will find yourself asking new questions and discovering that complex answers are required to address social issues. Expect to be changed as a professional and as a person.

You are about to become an essential part of a learning community where knowledge, experience, feelings, and skills are shared in a safe environment. A learning community requires commitment of both faculty and students alike to each other and to the learning process. We are all learners, teachers, and doers. During your time in the Master of Social Work (MSW) program, I hope you will take advantage of the many opportunities that are available to you through the MSW Student Organization and special events such as conferences sponsored by the Department and the National Association of Social Workers. Use faculty expertise and take risks in both classroom and field settings to maximize your learning opportunities. Engage with your fellow students and faculty members as you make this journey together.

Again, welcome to A-STATE Master of Social Work Program.

Cheryl Knight

Cheryl Knight, DSW, LCSW

MSW Program Director

# ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

**MISSION STATEMENT OF ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY**

The mission of Arkansas State University is to educate leaders, enhance intellectual growth and enrich lives.

**Accreditation**

Arkansas State University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association (NCA) of Colleges and Schools.  A-STATE was first accredited in 1928 and has had continuous accreditation since that time.  The MSW Program at A-STATE was granted Initial Accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) effective in the academic year 2008-2009.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Arkansas State University Master of Social Work Program celebrates diversity. We welcome all applicants for admission without regard to race, color, gender, age, religious affiliation, ethnicity or national origin, physical condition, or sexual orientation. Arkansas State University’s diversity policy (as stated in the Student Handbook, 2010-2011) <http://www2.astate.edu/a/student-affairs/student-conduct/student-code-of-conduct.dot>

The quest for knowledge is central to the very existence of Arkansas State University and universities in general. While portions of knowledge may be attained in various segments of the university and society, the fullness of knowledge can only be obtained when people of all races, ethnicities, colors, genders, religions, and socio-economic statuses are free to gather and exchange their life’s experiences, problem solving skills, methods and styles of communications, values, beliefs, and ways of thinking and learning in an environment that encourages the presence and participation of all who desire to be affiliated with the academy.

Achieving this fullness of knowledge begins with recognizing that no single people, group, personality, discipline or trade is the caretaker of all knowledge or life experiences. Rather, the pursuit and sharing of knowledge requires the presence, and meaningful participation, of those who may contribute their unique qualities and experiences to this constantly changing mosaic we call diversity.

A-State will be known for its commitment to diversity as evidenced by its learning environments, its acceptance of differences as positive and enriching and its ability to attract, retain and advance a diverse faculty, staff and student body. A-STATE will have an environment where anyone, no matter who they are, will see a consistent reflection of themselves on the campus and in its activities. They will feel comfortable, welcomed, and as if they belong at A-STATE.

Diversity at A-STATE is a process embracing the ideal of inclusion. Through continuous education, the A-STATE community constantly moves towards that ideal by accepting each person as an equal and valued member of the campus community.

### MasterS of Social Work PROGRAM

**MSW PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the MSW Program at A-STATE is to provide a transformative educational experience that prepares graduates for compassionate, ethical, clinical practice that enhances the well-being and quality of life for individuals, families, groups and communities. Graduates utilize contemporary, evidence-base theories and approaches to intervene and bring about positive changes including economic and social justice for the client systems we serve. Our primary focus is serving vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups in rural environments including the Lower Mississippi Delta Region and beyond.

**MSW PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

1. Education for Clinical Practice: Building on a foundation of generalist social work practice, the MSW prepares graduates for competency-based, clinical practice with an emphasis on rural context.
2. Knowledge Development: The MSW program contributes to the knowledge base of the profession through the faculty’s leadership in scholarship and community collaborations. Students develop critical thinking and research skills to address the problems and needs of diverse, multilevel client systems and further contribute to the profession’s knowledge base. Graduates of the MSW program will engage in career-long learning to continually develop their professional knowledge base and practice skills.
3. Service: The MSW program at A-STATE creates an environment that promotes in students and faculty a desire to serve others by contributing time, effort, and other resources to address the needs of the community in which we live and learn and beyond.
4. Education for culturally sensitive practice: Graduates of the MSW program at A-STATE will demonstrate a commitment to social and economic justice by changing conditions which oppress and marginalize people, particularly in rural environments.

The Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education define the competencies that are common to all social work practice. Each competency is composed of knowledge, values, and skills that define what social workers must know and be able to do to practice effectively. For social workers who practice at the advanced (MSW) level, each program articulates advanced practice behaviors consistent with its mission.

The core competencies and foundation and advanced practice behaviors serve as the program objectives for the Arkansas State University MSW program and are as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

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

**Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

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

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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers values the importance of human relationship. Social workers understand theories of human behaviorand social environment, critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE MSW PROGRAM**

Building upon generalist practice, which includes strengths-based and client-centered perspectives, the clinical concentration is grounded in trauma informed cognitive behavioral therapy, stages of change, and family systems theory.

**MSW STUDENTS**

The student body is diverse in terms of age, gender, economics status, and ethnic identity. This diversity contributes to the richness of the educational experience and helps prepare graduates to provide services in the lower Mississippi Delta Region.

**DIVERSITY IN THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT**

As a Department, we value and respect differences among the students with regard to national origin, family structure, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, physical ability, race, and other characteristics. We work closely with the Office of Disabilities in providing support for students. Graduate students also vary in terms of their undergraduate backgrounds. Students come to the Department with degrees in Social Work, Psychology, Sociology, Business, Interdisciplinary Studies, English and many other major concentrations.

**MSW STUDENT ORGANIZATION**

The Masters Social Work Student Organization provides a forum for graduate students to organize, develop supportive relationships, communicate with each other and faculty, and promote the collective interests of the social work program and profession. The Graduate Social Work Student Organization is open to all MSW students and meets quarterly during the academic year.

**MSW CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

# The MSW Program offers both full-time and part-time study for post-baccalaureate students. The focus of the MSW Program is rural-based clinical social work practice. The rural-based perspective is infused throughout the curriculum and the clinical feature is added to the Advanced Curriculum. The A-STATE MSW Program offers two pathways for degree completion:

1. Advanced Standing Program:

This program is available only to applicants who have received a BSW degree within the last six years from a social work program that is accredited by CSWE. Students in this program complete the 36 credit hour clinical practice in a rural setting concentration.

1. Standard Program:

This 63 credit hour program is designed for students with a baccalaureate degree in any discipline, who graduate from an accredited BSW program more than six years ago, and any other student who does not meet requirements for the Advanced Standing option. Students in this program complete the Foundation curriculum consisting of 27 credit hours of work. They then complete the 36 credit hour clinical practice in a rural setting concentration. Both pathways offer two options: part-time and full-time.

Students completing the Advanced Standing Program will complete 36 graduate credit hours. Advanced Curriculum students will complete a total of 600 field hours of work along with their coursework.

1. The Advanced Standing Full-Time Program consists of three semesters of study which is spread over 12 calendar months. This includes two summer courses at the beginning of the program and two complete semesters immediately following
2. The Advanced Standing Part-Time Program consists of two academic years of study which includes two summer terms; the first summer term in the beginning of the program and the second summer term in the middle of the program.

Students enrolled in the Standard Program complete 63 graduate credit hours. They complete a total of 400 field hours during the foundation curriculum field placement and 600 field hours during the concentration curriculum field placement.

1. The Standard Program Full Time consists of two academic years of study; and
2. The Standard Program Part-time of four academic years of study.

**ADDICTIONS CERTIFICATE**

Students enrolled in the MSW Program may elect to complete a certificate in Additions Study.

Students must request permission to enroll in the Certificate Program by contacting the Coordinator of the Addictions Certificate Program, Dr. Cheryl Knight, DSW, LCSW at 870-972-3984 or cknight@Astate.edu. Students take two courses (which may be double counted as electives) in addictions studies: SW 5323: Substance Abuse and Dependence Interventions and SW 6323: Clinical Interventions in Substance Abuse & Dependence. Students must complete their internship in an approved agency that offers them the opportunity to work with clients with substance abuse disorders.

**TIME TO DEGREE**

The time allowed for completion of the Master’s degree is six years, exclusive of time
spent in the armed forces of the United States. Graduate work completed prior to six years
from the student’s date of completion of the degree cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements. The social work program is only permitted to consider courses completed at a CSWE accredited institution for transfer credit. Transfer credit taken prior to admission at Arkansas State University will be included in the six year limit (See A-STATE Graduate Bulletin) <http://www2.astate.edu/dotAsset/254275.pdf>).

**Advanced Standing (36 credit hour) Program Degree Plan**

**Advanced Standing Full-Time Degree Plan**

**Year One: Summer I Summer II**

SW6003 Psychopathology 3 SW6013 SW Ethics 3

Or Or

SW6013 SW Ethics 3 SW6003 Psychopathology 3

**Total 3 Total 3**

**\*\*Students must complete Psychopathology and Ethics before the Fall Semester**

**\*\*Electives will also be offered in the summer if students wish to take electives during summer term**

**Fall Semester Spring Semester**

SW6083 Trauma-Focused Practice 3 SW6063 SW Rural Policy Practice 3

SW6023 SW Eval. & Research 3 SW6073 Integrative Research 3

SW6033 Practice w/ Individuals 3 SW6053 Prac. w/ Grps & Families 3

Elective 3 Elective 3

SW6803 Adv. Field I (300 hrs) 3 SW6813 Adv. Field II (300 hrs.) 3

**Total 15 Total 15**

Basic Disaster Life Support (Certification) **Degree Total 36**

**Advanced Standing Part-Time Degree Plan**

**Year One: Summer I Year One: Summer II**

SW6003 Psychopathology 3 SW6013 SW Ethics 3

Or Or

SW6013 SW Ethics 3 SW6003 Psychopathology 3

**Total 3 Total 3**

**\*\*Students must complete Psychopathology and Ethics before the Fall Semester**

**\*\*Electives will be offered in the summer if students wish to take electives during summer term**

**Year One: Fall Semester Year Two: Spring Semester**

SW6083 Trauma-Focused Practice 3 SW6063 SW Rural Policy Analysis 3

SW6033 Practice w/ Individuals 3 SW6053 Prac. w/ Grps & Families 3

**Total 6 Total 6**

**Year Two: Summer I Year Two Summer II**

\*\* Elective 3 \*\*Elective 3

**Total 3 Total 3**

**Year Two: Fall Semester Spring Semester**

SW6023 SW Eval. & Research 3 SW6073 Integrative Research 3

SW6803 Adv. Field I (300 hrs) 3 SW6813 Adv. Field II (300 hrs) 3

**Total 6 Total 6**

Basic Disaster Life Support (Certification) **Degree Total 36**

**Standard Full-Time (63-credit hour) Program Degree Plan**

**Standard Full Time**

**Fall Semester Spring Semester**

SW5003 HBSE I 3 SW5333 HBSE II 3

SW5023 Foundation of SW Practice I 3 SW5043 Foundation of SW Pract II 3

SW5053 Social Welfare Policies & Serv. 3 SW5063 Social Justice & Diversity 3

SW5803 Foundation Field I (200 Hrs) 3 SW5813 Found. Field II (200hrs) 3

 Elective 3

**Total 12 Total 15**

**Summer I Summer II**

SW6003 Psychopathology 3 SW6013 SW Ethics 3

Or Or

SW6013 SW Ethics 3 SW6003 Psychopathology 3

**Total 3 Total 3**

**\*\*Students must complete Psychopathology and Ethics before the Fall Semester**

**Fall Semester Spring Semester**

SW6083 Trauma-Focused Practice 3 SW6063 SW Rural Policy Practice 3

SW6023 SW Eval. & Research 3 SW6073 Integrative Research 3

SW6033 Practice w/ Individuals 3 SW6053 Prac. w/ Grps & Families 3

Elective 3 Elective 3

SW6803 Adv. Field I (300 hrs) 3 SW6813 Adv. Field II (300 hrs.) 3

**Total 15 Total 15**

Basic Disaster Life Support (Certification) **Degree Total 63**

**Standard Part-Time (63-credit hour) Program Degree Plan**

**Standard Standing Part-Time Degree Plan**

**Year One: Fall Semester Year One: Spring Semester**

SW5003 HBSE I 3 SW5333 HBSE II 3

SW5023 Foundation of SW Practice I 3 SW5043 Found. Of SW Practice II 3

**Total 6 Total 6**

**Year Two: Fall Semester Year Two: Spring Semester**

SW5053 Social Welfare Policies & Serv. 3 SW5063 Social Justice & Diversity 3

SW5803 Foundation Field I (200 hrs) 3 SW5813 Found. Field II (200hrs) 3

**Total 6 Total 6**

**Summer I Summer II**

SW6003 Psychopathology 3 SW6013 SW Ethics 3

Or Or

SW6013 SW Ethics 3 SW6003 Psychopathology 3

**Total 3 Total 3**

**\*\*Students must complete Psychopathology and Ethics before the Fall Semester**

**Fall Semester Spring Semester**

SW6083 Trauma-Focused Practice 3 SW6063 SW Rural Policy Analysis 3

SW6033 Practice w/Individuals 3 SW6053 Pracc w/ Grps & Families 3

**Total 6 Total 6**

**Fall Semester Spring Semester**

SW6023 SW Evaluation & Research 3 SW6073 Integrative Research 3

SW6803 Advanced Field I (300 hrs) 3 SW6813 Advanced Field II (300 hrs) 3

**Total 6 Total 6**

Basic Disaster Life Support (Certification) **Degree Total 63**

**\*\*3 Electives (can be taken any time during the program) Total 9**

**\*\*Students admitted prior to 2019 are only required 60 hours for graduation and are only required to take one elective (3 hours).**

### Social Work Field Education

We are pleased that you are interested in the Arkansas State University Department of Social Work. We would like to introduce you to our field education program. Field education is a central component of the MSW curriculum. Field education provides an opportunity for students to apply and integrate classroom knowledge with hands-on experience. Students will receive professional supervision by an individual who has an MSW degree from an accredited university. The A-STATE MSW Program offers a 400 hour generalist field practicum and a 600 hour advanced clinical field practicum.

The Department of Social Work is responsible for placing students in approved agencies throughout the Northeast Arkansas-Mississippi Delta Region and maintains affiliation agreements with over 120 social service agencies. The agencies represent a wide variety of services such as mental health, child welfare, the juvenile and adult justice system, substance abuse programs, public schools, medical settings, hospice programs, and many more. Students can have the opportunity to serve a broad range of populations to include services to children and adolescents, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, victims of domestic violence, gay and lesbian individuals, veterans, persons affected by HIV/AIDS, and the mentally ill, to name a few.

After being admitted to the graduate program, the Director of Field Education will provide the student with a field application that will include further instructions. Students will complete their field application indicating their top choices and interests for field placement and return it to department. The Director of Field Education will secure placements based on student preference, the availability of a suitable placement in the geographic area requested, and the Field Supervisor-student match. Students and the prospective Field Supervisors will be notified in writing of the tentative decisions. Before a placement is finalized, the student will be instructed by the Director of Field Education to arrange an interview with the Agency Field Supervisor.

The internship will begin with the student in an observational role with independent work assigned as the Field Supervisor, student and Faculty feel it’s appropriate. The Field Supervisor and student will develop a learning agreement that guides the internship assignments and activities. During the field placement, the student will continue to receive a minimum of one hour weekly supervision by the Field Supervisor. The student will also attend a weekly integrative seminar on campus during which they will have the opportunity to process their experiences with other students and identify how they can apply theory and skills in their practice. The seminar class is led by a Faculty Liaison who will be available for consultation to the field agency and will make at least two site visits during the semester to meet with the student and the Field Supervisor to evaluate and monitor the internship objectives.

Students often find their field education to be the most exciting and rewarding aspects of their professional social work education. If you would like more specific information about field education, please feel free to contact the Director of Field Education, Donna Parker, at (870) 972-2527or dparker@astate.edu. You may also view the Field Education Manual on the Social Work website.

**A-STATE GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS**

Application to the A-STATE Graduate School must precede application to the MSW Program. For additional information, visit the Graduate School website at the following link: <http://www.astate.edu/college/graduate-school/>

**MASTERS IN SOCIAL WORK ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

**MASTERS IN SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

This MSW offers one concentration which is rural based clinical social work practice. Students learn the fundamental knowledge, skills, and ethics that guide social work practice and the populations traditionally served by the profession. Students are prepared to acknowledge and utilize the less formal social exchange between people and systems that exist in rural communities. Students learn how to identify and develop resources, and how to use natural helping networks. Students are expected to employ a broad range of approaches, theories and models in their practice and to develop skills that enable them to perform multiple roles in the helping process. Additionally, students learn the importance of examining issues of diversity; social work values and ethics; how to identify, prevent and interrupt social and economic injustice; and the importance of community empowerment.

**MSW Admission Requirements**

Applicants for admission to the MSW program must first be admitted to the A-STATE Graduate School. Admission to the Arkansas State University, Department of Social Work, Master of Social Work Program is competitive. Students must submit an application to the Graduate School and a separate application to the Department of Social Work. The Admissions Committee will select for admission those who possess the strongest qualifications based on the admissions requirement criteria. The Admissions Committee will focus on the candidate’s academic performance, commitment to social work values and ethics, potential for success in graduate education, reference letters, oral, written, and interpersonal communication skills, as well as the narrative statement which addresses specific questions posed by the Department of Social Work. Candidates’ volunteer activities, employment experience, and life experiences related to social work are also considered in the admissions process. The Admission Committee will review only folders with all necessary items on file. The Admission Process and Application Requirements for the Department of Social Work are described below.

**Application timelines**

Deadlines for submission of applications for admission to all MSW program options (Advanced Full/Part Time and Standard Full/Part Time) are posted on the MSW website (<http://www.astate.edu/a/conhp/socialwork/majors/masters-of-social-work/>). Admission decisions will be made following the closing of the deadline each year at which time all applicants will be considered. The admission period for Advanced Standing students is the first summer term of that school year. The admission period for Standard Standing students is the fall term of that year.

Applicant suitability for the MSW program at A-State will be determined by the quality of their preparation as demonstrated by the written application submitted to the Graduate School as well as an in person interview and an on the spot writing sample conducted with all eligible applicants.

**Application Requirements**

 1. Admission to Arkansas State University Graduate School at [gradsch@astate.edu](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cccamp%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CPackages%5CMicrosoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe%5Cawinn%5CDesktop%5Cword%20documents%5Cgradsch%40astate.edu).

2. A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university (official transcripts must be provided).

3. For admission to the Standard Program, students must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 scale for the last 60 hours of undergraduate degree work. If the applicant has a master’s degree from an accredited institution, his or her graduate GPA may be reviewed by the department as part of the admission decision process. Under extenuating circumstances, applicants with a GPA of less than 3.0 may be considered for conditional admission to the Standard Program full or part time. The student must achieve unconditional status by completing 12 graduate semester hours with a minimum GPA of 3.00 for these hours with no more than one course in the 12 hours with a grade of “C.” There is no conditional admission to the Advanced Program.

4. For admission to the Advanced Program, students must have a 3.2 or better on a 4.0 scale in the last 60 credit hours of the BSW degree. Student must be within 6 years of graduation from the BSW program to be eligible for Advanced Standing

5. Three references from individuals who can objectively assess the student's potential for graduate work (i.e., Field Supervisor, Field Liaison, Faculty member, Employer, Co-worker, and Other Professional. Personal references are not acceptable).

6. The following pre-requisites must have been completed with a grade of “C” or better: American Government, General Biology and Lab, Introduction to Psychology, Introduction to Sociology, and Social Statistical Methods and Lab. An Introduction to Social Work course (undergraduate or graduate) must be completed -prior to advancing to required Graduate level courses.

7. Computer literacy demonstrated through prior course work (Web-based classes or Computer Class).

8. A personal statement and current resume.

9. Personal interview for eligible applicants.

10. On-site writing exercise.

**APPLICATION PRE-REQUISITE WAIVER**

The pre-requisites are waived for applicants who have earned a BSW from a CSWE accredited program within six years of applying for admission to the MSW program at A-State.

**CRIMINAL BACKGROUND AND CENTRAL REGISTRY CHECK**

The MSW Program does require criminal background checks for all entering MSW students. The MSW applicant will be given directions for the background check upon conditional admission to the program. The applicant will be admitted unconditionally once the results of the background check have cleared. The MSW program reserves the right to not admit students that have activity on their background check. Please review the list of offenses using the following web address to determine if you will qualify for a social work license in the State of Arkansas. <http://www.state.ar.us/swlb/licensing_info.html>. You are encouraged to discuss your circumstances openly and honestly with the MSW Program Director prior to applying to the program or if a legal matter arises once admitted to the program that potentially jeopardizes your career.

## APPLICATION REVIEW

All application materials are submitted to the University’s Graduate Admissions Office. The candidates who are admitted to the Graduate School will have their applications conveyed to the MSW program electronically. Eligibility for admission to the MSW program is determined by the MSW Program Director. The application file is then forwarded to the MSW Admissions Committee for evaluation. Personal interviews are then conducted and an on-site writing exercise is completed by the candidate. Admission decisions are made following the closing of the deadline each year at which time all eligible applicants are considered. These decisions include: whether or not to admit to applicant; conditional or unconditional status; the appropriate program option for a particular applicant; and any requirements or conditions which the Committee attaches to the admission. A BSW degree does not automatically guarantee admission into the program or placement into Advanced Standing. Applicants receive notification of the Admission Committee’s decision by email. The admission period for Advanced Standing students is the first summer term of that school year. The admission period for Standard Standing students is the fall term of that year.

## TRANSFER STUDENTS APPLICATIONS

Applicants from CSWE accredited graduate social work programs will be considered for admission as transfer students. Those applicants must have maintained an overall GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in their graduate social work coursework, and no grade lower than a B (3.0) will be accepted for credit. In addition, applicants transferring into the MSW Program must submit an official statement from the former school certifying that the applicant is in good standing. The final year (33 hours of coursework) must be completed at Arkansas State University Department of Social Work.

## TRANSFER OF GRADUATE CREDIT

Course work taken before a student is given graduate status at Arkansas State University may be transferred into the student’s program of study. In all instances, only grades of “B” or better may be transferred. Transfer course work may come from the following areas:

1. Course work successfully completed as a post-baccalaureate student at Arkansas State University.
2. Course work successfully competed at institutions within the Arkansas State University or University of Arkansas systems.
3. Course work successfully completed at other institutions not in the Arkansas State University or University of Arkansas systems.
4. Course work successfully completed in graduate status in another major at Arkansas State University. The MSW Program will not transfer courses that are not graduate social work courses.
5. Systems must be fully accredited by a regionally accrediting association of the Commission on Accreditation.
6. All graduate courses must be completed within 7 years of graduation.
7. Only foundation curriculum courses may be transferred not advanced curriculum courses.

**Note: Students who have completed course work in an MSW program in an accredited program may transfer up to 9 credit hours in Foundation Curriculum courses toward the 60 hours of the degree. Courses must be evaluated on a course-by-course basis by the MSW Program Director. Students must have received at least a “B” in these courses. However, students must complete all 33 credit hours in the rural clinical concentration toward their MSW degree at Arkansas State University.**

**LIFE WORK/EXPERIENCE POLICY**

Life or previous work experience will not be accepted in lieu of social work courses or course credit, although they are considered in the application process.

**ADMISSION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Requirements and admission processes for International Students are posted on the Arkansas State University website.

**ACADEMIC ADVISING**

At Arkansas State University, advising is a shared responsibility between the student, faculty advisor and college community designed to help students grow individually, succeed academically, and to develop an appropriate educational plan leading to graduation with a focus on their life beyond the university. The university acknowledges its obligation to provide students with accurate and timely academic advising, delivered through its academic departments, colleges, and other units devoted to specific student populations. Faculty advisors serve as professional mentors as well as experts regarding the academic program for students. Students are encouraged to meet regularly with their advisors to discuss general career planning in social work. Students work out a plan of study with their advisors, and must contact their advisor each semester in order to be cleared to register for courses in the next semester. Students need to obtain the written permission of their advisor if they plan to change their plan of study (for example, change from part time to full time study). Students should also notify their advisor of any plans to withdraw from a course, the University or the MSW program prior to taking such actions.

**DEFERRED ADMISSION**

Students who have been admitted to the MSW program may have their start date deferred to the following academic year by submitting a request in writing/email to the MSW Program Director. As a condition of deferred status, the student must submit a letter of intention to enroll by the application deadline for that year. In addition, the applicant bears the responsibility for submitting a Field Experience Application within the timeframe set by the Director of Field Education. This deadline is posted on the Social Work Department website.

**REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF STATUS**

Students enrolled in full time or part time degree options may request a change of status. Prior to initiating a request, this decision should be discussed with the advisor. Requests must then be made in writing to the MSW Director. Requests will be granted based on availability of space. The sooner the request is submitted, the greater the likelihood that it can be accommodated.

**standards for academic Retention in the program**

The MSW program’s standards for academic retention and progression incorporate standards set by A-STATE’s Graduate School. Students must maintain a minimum overall GPA of 3.00 with no more than one grade of “C” to be retained in good standing. Falling below a 3.00 overall GPA or obtaining a “C” will result in immediate probation and requires the development of an action plan with the student’s adviser. Failure to make a grade of "B" or better in each course taken while on probation will result in suspension from further graduate work if the student's cumulative GPA continues below 3.00. However, in the MSW program, obtaining a second “C” jeopardizes continuation in the Program; students must meet with advisor to develop a corrective action plan. The plan must be approved by the MSW Program Director who may request a Level Two Performance Review to determine the best course of action.

Consistent with A-STATE Graduate School standards, Students who have a grade of "F" in any graduate-level course are ineligible to register for further graduate work. A grade of "I" is converted to "F" if it is not removed before the last day to withdraw during the next semester in which the student is enrolled at the university **or** within one calendar year if the student does not enroll. Students may reapply to the Graduate School/MSW program after they have been dismissed; however, the MSW Program Director may establish requirements that must be met before the application is considered for re-admission by the Program’s Admission Committee.

**PROBATION**

Academic probation will result from obtaining a “C” grade or an overall GPA below 3.00. The Graduate School permits students to be removed from probation when their cumulative GPA reaches 3.00 or better; however, students who have a received a “C” in the Program remain on probation as they are considered at risk of not completing their degree successfully. A student may also be placed on probation by the Program for failing to demonstrate professional and ethical behavior as described in the section of this handbook describing the Standards and Procedures Related to Evaluation of Student Academic and Professional Performance.

**SUSPENSION**

The Graduate School suspends a student who fails to make a grade of "B" or better in each course taken while on probation if the student's cumulative GPA continues to fall below 3.00. A student may be suspended by the Program for obtaining two “C” grades after a Level II Performance Review. A student may also be suspended for failure to maintain acceptable professional and ethical behaviors as described in the section of this handbook labeled Standards and Procedures Related to Evaluation of Student Academic and Professional Performance. Once suspended, the student must fulfill the stipulations associated with the suspension in order to be considered for continuation in graduate Social Work courses.

**DISMISSAL**

Reasons for dismissal from the MSW program are described in the section of this Handbook labeled Standards and Procedures Related to Evaluation of Student Academic and Professional Performance, subsection Academic and Professional Dismissal.

**REPEAT COURSES**

MSW students at A-STATE are limited to retaking only one course in their graduate degree program. If students are dismissed from the social work program for failing to meet academic standards (typically receiving more than two “C” grades) they may request permission to retake one class. Permission to retake a class after dismissal must be made in writing to the MSW Program Director and must include an adequate explanation as to why the student performed poorly and outline a specific plan of steps that will be taken to assure success. If the class is passed with a grade of A or B, the student may request permission to continue their graduate studies from the MSW Program Director and Chair. However, if students are suspended from the Graduate School (see *Graduate Bulletin*), they must reapply to the graduate school for readmission prior to requesting permission to retake any social work class.

**WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

Occasionally, life circumstances require that a student interrupt their graduate studies. There are two types of withdrawals from the Program:

* Approved Withdrawal: Students wishing to receive the status of Approved Withdrawal from the MSW Program first consult with his/her adviser. If the decision is made to withdraw, the MSW director should be notified in writing with reasons specified. The MSW Director will determine in consultation with the Adviser whether or not to grant Approved Withdrawal status, and if so, whether or not any conditions will be placed on readmission. Students wishing to reapply within a year from withdrawal must give notice by the admissions deadline. Any MSW student whose period of withdrawal from the program is longer than two years must reapply to the program following the re-admission procedure which follows. Withdrawal from the program does not guarantee automatic readmission.
* Un-approved Withdrawal: Students who leave the MSW Program without following the procedure for Approved Withdrawal will be assigned the status of Un-approved Withdrawal. In this case, the following procedures apply.

**Re-admission**

Unless otherwise determined by the Social Work Department, a student who is not retained for reasons of academic or professional conduct; whose suspension stipulates; whose status is Un-Approved Withdrawal or whose Approved Withdrawal status extends beyond the time limit may seek re-admission after one year. Re-admission will be considered only after the student submits a formal application to the Graduate School (if applicable) and the Program.

Unless otherwise determined, the following re-admission stipulations apply:

1. A student must complete the Department of Social Work MSW Program Social Work application process by the application deadline date.
2. Students must address the conditions that warranted their suspension/dismissal/withdrawal and indicate corrective actions that have been implemented and indicate their plan for successfully completing the Program.
3. All applications for readmission must include a current and complete official transcript.
4. Readmission to any program will be dependent upon space available, regardless of student qualifications.
5. A new field application must be submitted in a timely manner.
6. Students must have attained or maintained a GPA of 3.0 in order to be considered for readmission.

**SEQUENCE PRE-REQUISITES**

Courses must be completed satisfactorily in the sequence prescribed in the appropriate degree plan, unless extenuating circumstances are presented and the student’s adviser approves the change in the course sequence. Exceptions are electives which can be taken any time during MSW enrollment.

**Attendance**

Regular (face to face) class and field attendance is expected of all students in accord with the policy set forth in both the current academic year Graduate Bulletin and Student Handbook of the University. Faculty determine the attendance policy for their courses; however, generally speaking students are not awarded points for attendance/participation and are deducted points for absences. The faculty member’s policy for attendance, late work and making up assignments (if any) are posted in the syllabus and should be carefully reviewed by the student. Students have the responsibility for making satisfactory arrangements with the faculty member regarding all absences. Such arrangements should be made prior to the absence.

Students are expected to be present and on time for each field learning experience. If it is necessary to be absent for adequate reasons, the primary Seminar Instructor, the Field Supervisor, and Field Task Supervisor should be notified no later than one hour before the field experience is scheduled. Absences and tardiness interfere with meeting course objectives and attaining practice competence and may be grounds for failing field. Consequently, absences and tardiness will be reflected in the evaluation of the student’s ability to meet objectives and may be cause for the student’s record to be reviewed by the Director of Field Education. In the event of the inability to complete required course work, the student may contract with the course instructor to receive a grade of incomplete. Refer to Graduate Bulletin.

Students who experience chronic medical or personal problems, which prevent them from attending class or field regularly, are encouraged to review policies relating to securing a leave of absence from their university studies.

**Students Rights and Responsibilities**

**STUDENTS IN THE MSW PROGRAM HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS**

1. The right to ethical treatment from others.
2. The right to be informed of expectations of them in classes and in the field.
3. The right to engage in free inquiry.
4. The right to express unpopular or different views.
5. The right to learn in an environment free from discrimination and harassment.
6. The right to exercise the grievance and appeals procedures, or report instances of discrimination or sexual harassment or violations of the NASW Code of Ethics without fear of reprisal.
7. The right to have meaningful input into their educational experience.
8. The right to participate in a feedback process that keeps them informed of their progress and performance throughout their educational experience.
9. The right of persons with disabilities to reasonable accommodations.
10. The right to involvement in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs in their interest.

**STUDENTS RIGHTS AND GRIEVANCES**

See A-STATE Student Handbook for Students Rights Grievance Procedure. <http://www.astate.edu/a/student-affairs/>

 **STUDENTS IN THE MSW PROGRAM HAVE THE FOLLOWING RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The responsibility to stay informed of policies and procedures of the MSW Program and the University as a whole.
2. The responsibility to maintain ethical and legal behavior.
3. The responsibility to maintain high standards of academic integrity (e.g. plagiarism and cheating).
4. The responsibility to inform faculty or register with Disabilities Services if they need special accommodations to successfully complete course work or field work.
5. The responsibility to know and meet the requirements of their particular A-STATE graduate Bulletin.
6. The responsibility to treat members of the academic community as well as those associated with their field experience, especially clients, with dignity and respect.
7. The responsibility to comply with the A-STATE Student Conduct Code, the Code of Honor and Substance Abuse Contract of the College of Nursing and Health Professions (See appendices).

**Social Media Guidelines**

Social media can be a way to share life experiences and opinions with others. Use of social media presents risks and carries with it certain responsibilities.

Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort via the internet or other electronic communication method. Social media includes both your personal or someone else’s personal web log/blog, journal website, or chat room, and group interchanges such as Facebook, Twitter or Linked-in and social media anonymous sites. You are solely responsible for what you post online. Inappropriate postings specific to patients, classmates, or faculty that include discriminatory remarks, harassment or threats, or violations of professional codes of conduct are subject to disciplinary action. Your actions could adversely affect your standing in your health professions program, which could include program dismissal.

You should be aware that future employers might view potential candidate’s websites. Students are advised to review their site (s) for any unprofessional images or language, which could adversely affect successful employment upon graduation. Please make responsible decisions about your use of social media.

**STANDARDS AND Procedures related to evaluation of student academic and professional performance**

Social work is an applied discipline wherein students are expected to think and analyze conceptually and practically. Expression of that thinking, both written and oral, is expected to achieve the educational outcome of becoming a rural-based clinical social work practitioner. Students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for self and others and to adhere to ethical conduct requirements of social workers in the classroom as well as in the field placement.

Students may be dismissed from the Program for failing to meet the standards for academic retention in the program described in detail above. Students may also be dismissed from the program for failing to demonstrate academic integrity and or professional conduct and behavior.

**ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

Students may be dismissed from the program due to:

* + - 1. Failure to meet or maintain academic requirements as stated in the MSW Student Handbook (See Academic Retention Section).
			2. Failure to demonstrate adequate achievement of the competencies and practice behaviors as defined by the Council on Social Work Education and the MSW Program.
			3. Scholastic dishonesty including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, or any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student. (For complete University policy and procedures concerning student conduct see <http://www.astate.edu/a/student-affairs/student-conduct>)

**standards for professional performance**

As a professional degree program in which graduates will be working with vulnerable populations and individuals presenting with a complex array of problems, the Social Work Program requires that students demonstrate the highest level of professional and ethical conduct. Failure to demonstrate appropriate interpersonal and ethical behaviors including but not limited to the following is grounds for dismissal:

1. Behavior judged to be in violation of the current NASW Code of Ethics
2. Threatening, intimidating, discriminatory or harassing behaviors
3. Inability to form adequate relationships with others
4. Inability to accept and integrate feedback, particularly from faculty and field supervisors
5. Disruptive behaviors that undermine the teaching, learning and morale of others
6. Inability to perform due to personal problems such as substance abuse
7. Inadequate work skills such as absences and tardiness
8. Inability to recognize and respect personal/professional boundaries
9. Non-compliance with agency policies and procedures
10. Inability to engage in social work practice.

**PROCEDURES FOR REVIEWING ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL**

**CONDUCT IN THE PROGRAM**

The SW Department has established formal review procedures for identifying, evaluating, developing a corrective action plan and suspending or dismissing an individual who fails to meet the academic and professional performance standards of the Program. There are three levels of performance review.

**Level 1Performance Review**

A Level 1 review involves a faculty member and a student. When a faculty member has concerns about a student enrolled in the social work program meeting any of the academic or professional performance standards, that faculty member will:

* Discuss the concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the difficulties.
* Appraise the advisor and appropriate Program Director of the concerns in order to identify potential patterns and issues related in this student’s behavior.
* Document dates, content, and outcome of meetings with the student (signed by both).

If a problem arises in field, the agency-based field supervisor will discuss concerns directly with the student and with the faculty liaison. It is the responsibility of the faculty liaison to apprise the Field Director of the concerns.

In many instances, meetings between faculty and students result in resolution of the concerns and do not necessarily lead to further reviews, pursuant to this section. However, if the concerns are not resolved in the opinion of either the student or faculty, the student must be informed of the right to request the participation of their advisor or another faculty member of their choosing in further levels of review.

**Level 2 Performance Review**

A Level 2 Performance Review, convened by the Program Director (MSW, Field), usually occurs when concerns regarding performance issues raised at Level 1 have not been resolved satisfactorily. A level 2 involves the student, their advisor, the appropriate Program Director (MSW, Field) and faculty members as indicated. If a problem arises in field, the agency-based field supervisor, faculty liaison, and Field Director will meet for the review.

In this information gathering process, the MSW Director or Field Director will seek to determine the nature of the concern and gather sufficient information to develop a plan to address the concern or concerns, if one is needed. The MSW or Field Director will utilize conflict resolution and mediation skills where possible. No further action may be required, or the student may be asked in writing to modify his/her behavior and/or seek appropriate help. This process is designed to assist the student in dealing with identified concerns that negatively impact their performance. The MSW Director or Field Director will assess the concerns with appropriate faculty, consult with the Department Chair and maintain documentation. The Level II Performance Review Committee may decide to:

1. Retain the student in the program on probationary status
2. Specify requirements and conditions for remaining in the program.
3. Suspending the student from the program (can reapply in one year)
4. Request a Level 3 review be convened by the Chair.

The Performance Review Committee will document the discussion and their decision and inform the student in writing. The student may appeal the decision to the Departmental Chair.

**Level 3 Performance Review**

A Level 3 review is convened and facilitated by the Department Chair/MSW Program Director and generally includes the student, their advisor, the Field Director and field supervisor if indicated, and relevant members of the faculty. This level of review is indicated when problematic patterns are identified with students, particularly involving unprofessional, illegal, unethical or incompetent behaviors. A level 3 Review may be initiated when lower review levels have not achieved satisfactory results, or when the student’s behavior rises to such a level that withdrawal or dismissal is under consideration.

The Department Chair/MSW Director will meet with appropriate faculty and the student to gather information, determine the nature of the problem (if one is confirmed to exist) and identify alternatives for its remediation. Appropriate faculty to be involved in a review will include but are not limited to those who have direct knowledge of and experience with the student. The student will be notified in writing of the concerns and meeting date, with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting. The student may invite a faculty member of his/her choice or an advisor to participate in the proceedings.

After the review meeting has concluded, the Department Chair/MSW Program Director will consult with the Professional Review Committee members to reach a decision. The student will be informed in writing of the committee’s decision within three working days. The student may be instructed to refrain from attending field or social work classes until notified of the decision. Options available to the committee include but are not limited to the following:

1. Continue the student in the program with no conditions
2. Establish formal conditions for the student to continue in the program
3. Consult with the University’s Vice President for Student Affairs
4. Counsel the student to change majors/degree programs
5. Suspend the student with conditions for return
6. Dismiss the student.

In any Level 3 Review, there must be clear, concise documentation of the problem areas as well as verification that these have been discussed with the student, that a corrective action plan has been developed with the student and that the student has been given the opportunity to complete the plan with the support of the Social Work Department, unless the precipitating behavior is of such a grievous nature that corrective action is not indicated. The student must be notified of the decision in writing within ten business days of the review meeting. It is the responsibility of the Department Chair/MSW Program Director to communicate the decision to the student. At this time, the student must be informed of her/his right to appeal under University policy.

**DISMISSAL OR REMOVAL FROM FIELD**

Field agencies who request that a student be dismissed or removed from field must discuss the situation with the student and contact the Field Director and provide written documentation of their concerns. The Field Director in consultation with the field supervisor, field faculty liaison and the appropriate Program Director will evaluate the situation and determine whether or not the student should be placed in an alternative site. The Field Director may elect to convene a Professional Review Committee of the appropriate level. If retained in the program and replaced in another agency the field faculty liaison and/or faculty advisor will work with the student to produce a plan of action for the student to correct the behavior that led to dismissal. By the end of the semester, the student must demonstrate improvement or correction of the behavior that led to the dismissal from the first field site. If the student fails to improve or demonstrate correction of the behavior that led to dismissal from the field site, the student will have failed to meet the Program requirements and will be dismissed.

Students who wish to appeal the decision of a Level 3 review should follow the University Grievance Procedure.

**Departmental Procedures for Student Grievance Involving Faculty**

It is the departmental policy to encourage the informal resolution of grievances directly between the student and the faculty member. If this cannot be accomplished, the student is encouraged to continue resolution by presenting the problem in writing or orally through appropriate procedures. The appropriate procedures for student grievances within the Department require that any student or student representative having a complaint must:

1. Discuss the problem with the faculty member involved unless the student perceives that this will place the student in jeopardy. He/she may then seek advice from a faculty member of his/her choice. At this stage, or at any other step in the grievance procedure, a student is free to consult his/her faculty advisor for advice in resolving the problem.

2. If the grievance is not resolved in Step 1, the student should then make an appointment to see the Director of the MSW Program. (If the Director of the MSW Program is the subject of the grievance, the BSW Program Director of the Department will carry out the duties assigned to the Director of the MSW Program in regard to the grievance procedure.) The grievance should be presented clearly, stating the facts of the case. All parties involved in the complaint must be clearly identified.

3. If unresolved in Step 2, the student must put her/his grievance in writing and submit it to the Director of the MSW Program.

4. The Director of the MSW Program and the faculty member who is the focus of the grievance are to schedule a meeting to resolve the grievance within five school days.

5. If the student grievance still has not been resolved at this meeting, the Department Chair/MSW Program Director should convene a review committee to hear the grievance. This committee will make every effort to meet no later than 15 school days from the date of the written complaint. This review committee should be composed of one faculty member with the rank of assistant professor or higher, the Department Chair/MSW Program Director, an appointed member of the Advisory Council, and two students in their final year of their academic program. The students must be selected randomly from the list of second year students in the MSW Program. If the first student selected does not wish to serve, the selection process should continue in the same manner until a student willing to serve has been selected.

***The review committee will be charged to hear a presentation of the student grievance.***

a. The student grievance must be stated as clearly and as detailed as possible in writing. Copies of the grievance must be distributed to all committee members by the Department Chair/MSW Program Director.

b. The committee is not to be officially convened to hear the grievance until the faculty member involved has had an opportunity to receive the written student charges. The faculty member must respond in writing to the committee within seven school days after having received the charges. Copies of the faculty response must be distributed to all committee members by the Department Chair/MSW Program Director.

c. The committee will convene the meeting within five school days after receipt of the written student grievance and response from the faculty member.

d. At the meeting, the committee shall designate a voting chair to conduct the proceedings. The chair will appoint a secretary to record the findings.

e. The committee will question both the student and the faculty member separately concerning the facts presented on both sides.

f. Upon completion of the questioning period, the complainant and respondent will be asked to leave the room. The committee will then discuss the case and assess whether or not the grievance has merit.

g. Based on their findings, the committee will recommend a plan of action for the student, for the faculty member, and if necessary, for the student’s advisor and the Department Chair/MSW Program Director.

h. The secretary will formally document the committee findings and present them in writing to the Department Chair/MSW Program Director for distribution to all parties.

i. If either or both parties involved will not accept the judgment of the committee, she/he is free to pursue the matter outside the Department of Social Work. For information regarding college and university grievance procedures, individuals should see the most current edition of the appropriate A-STATE Student Handbook.

**Complaint Procedure**

 **Purpose:** The purpose of this procedure is to provide a mechanism for resolving written complaints lodged against the MSW Program.

 **Procedure:** All written complaints lodged against the MSW Program or the department will be resolved through a process listed in the procedure. A written complaint lodged against the MSW Program or department by a person(s) directly affected by Social Work education or practice such as MSW students, Field Supervisors, Task Supervisors, hospital personnel, clients, and employers of Arkansas State University MSW graduates shall be reviewed and resolved in the following manner:

1. Student complaints lodged against the MSW Program regarding grading, disciplinary action, probation, or continuation in the MSW Program shall follow the student grievance procedure found in the Arkansas State University Student Handbook.

2. Complaints about field agency personnel shall be brought to the attention of the department chair, MSW Program director, or the Director of Field Education. A senior faculty member will investigate, collect information, propose solutions, and notify the appropriate field agency personnel and the student of the findings.

3. Complaints regarding curriculum and instructional design will be reviewed by the MSW curriculum committee.

4. Complaints lodged against the MSW Program involving litigation or potential litigation will be referred to the Chancellor’s Office.

5. All other complaints will be investigated by a designated senior faculty member.

**Record:** The written complaint and a written report of action taken will be filed in the Department’s office.

**APPENDICES**

**STUDENT FINANICAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

**For further information please contact Financial Aid/ Scholarships Office:**

P.O. Box 1620

State University, AR 72467-1620, (870) 972-2310

Website: <http://finaid.astate.edu>

## OFFICE OF Access and accomModations

Students who require academic adjustments in the classroom due to a disability must first register with A-STATE Access and Accommodations. Following registration and within the first two weeks of class, please contact Dominique White at 972-3694 to discuss appropriate accommodations. Appropriate arrangements can be made to ensure equal access a course. Students are encouraged to contact the Office of Access and Accommodations if they need assistance. The internet address for Office of Access and Accommodations is <http://disability.astate.edu/atech/Spring05.htm> .

**PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK RESOURCES**

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## NASW

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is “a membership organization that promotes, develops, and protects the practice of social work and social workers” (Arkansas, NASW, 2003). The national NASW organization may be accessed, via the World Wide Web, at [www.nasw.org](http://www.nasw.org). The Arkansas State Chapter of the NASW can be contacted at: <http://www.naswar.org>. Students receive a special membership rate and have access to practice insurance while in school. All students are encouraged to join the NASW.

## NASW Code of Ethics

The NASW Code of Ethics guides all social workers in ethical practice. The code can be accessed at: <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/Code/code.asp>.

## Arkansas Social Work Licensing Board

Licensing information and continuing education requirements are listed on this site.

Social Work Licensing Board

P. O. Box 250381

Little Rock, AR 72225

(501) 372-5071

## <http://www.arkansas.gov/swlb>

## College Code of Honor – Policy

Each student admitted to a professional program in the College of Nursing and Health Professions is charged with the responsibility of honorable conduct. A student is assumed honorable until his/her actions prove otherwise. An honor offense is defined as an intentional act of lying, cheating, or stealing. Formal procedures exist for violations of the Honor Code.

As a student in a health program, it is fundamental that you act in an honorable and virtuous way so that a community of trust is established among members of the college and your clients. Honor is a practiced ideal that will positively impact your relationship with fellow students, faculty, administrators, patients and other members of the community. As you live an honorable life, you will find that you cannot live without it.

All students in this college are bound by the Honor Code and all are needed to make it work. The atmosphere of trust and integrity that is created by an honor system enables the student to know his/her word will be taken as true, to compete fairly in the classroom and to keep what is rightfully his/hers. The system functions best when all members of the college not only take responsibility for their own actions, but hold their peers to the same standards.

As a student admitted to a health professions program, you must agree to live by and support the basic principles of honesty - no lying, cheating or stealing; be accountable for your actions; and share information about honor offenses. If you are not prepared to accept these responsibilities, you should select a program outside this college.

For American Nurses Association Code of Ethics, visit the American Nurses Association website at

http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ThePracticeofProfessionalNursing/EthicsStandards/CodeofEthics.aspx

**PROCEDURES FOR COLLEGE STUDENT CODE OF HONOR**

The College Student Code of Honor exists in addition to the University Code of Conduct and the Academic Integrity Policy found in the Student Handbook. An honor offense by the college code is defined as an act of lying, cheating or stealing. These terms are defined as follows:

**Lying** - a false statement (written or oral) made with the deliberate intent to deceive; something intended to or serving to convey a false impression.

**Cheating** - to practice fraud or deceit; academic fraud is a form of cheating and includes such things as plagiarism (including Internet resources), false citation, false data and submission of the same work to fulfill academic requirements in multiple classes.

**Stealing** - to take the property of others without permission or right; to take ideas, credits, and words without right or acknowledgement; to accept credit for another's work.

These honor code violations apply whether they are performed individually or in groups. They apply to didactic, laboratory and clinical experiences of the program.

***PROCEDURES:***

If a student is aware of an honor offense, he/she should report that offense to either the faculty member of the class in question, the program director or the chair of the School of Nursing. An investigation will result.

If there is evidence to bring forward, the student will be notified, in writing, of the specific charges, who the hearing body will be and the time and place of the hearing. Such notification will be delivered at least two working days in advance of the hearing. The date of the hearing, if possible, must be set within 10 working days from the date of notification to the student.

The College Code of Ethics Committee will hear the case. The Ethics Committee is comprised of five CNHP student representatives and two CNHP faculty appointed by the dean. Actions by the Ethics Committee may include: 1) dismissal of the case, 2) sanction the student, 3) refer the case to the Dean of Students, Student Affairs. Disciplinary sanctions by the committee may include educative, reprimand, restrictions and restitution. The committee does not have the authority to suspend or expel the student.

Student rights in this committee process are outlined in the A-STATE Student Handbook under the caption "Disciplinary Hearings". The student is entitled to one appeal rendered by the Associate Dean for Judicial Affairs. The process for appeal is found in the section on "Appeal Process".

\*On each distance campus, one student will be designated as an ethics representative.

**Academic Integrity Policy**

Arkansas State University enthusiastically promotes academic integrity and professional ethics among all members of the A-STATE academic community. Violations of this policy are considered as serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary action and severe penalties.

1. **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is the act of taking and/or using the ideas, work, and/or writings of another person as one’s own.

1. To avoid plagiarism give written credit and acknowledgement to the source of thoughts, ideas and/or words, whether you have used direct quotation, paraphrasing, or just a reference to a general idea.

2. If you directly quote works written by someone else, enclose the quotation with quotation marks and provide an appropriate citation (e.g., footnote, endnote, bibliographical reference).

3. Research, as well as the complete written paper, must be the work of the person seeking academic credit for the course. (Papers, book reports, projects, and/or other class assignments).

Discipline: Faculty members may respond to cases of plagiarism in any of the following ways:

1. Return the paper or other item for rewriting; the grade may be lowered.

2. Give a failing grade on the paper or other item—“F” if a letter grade is used or zero if a numerical grade is used.

3. Give the student who plagiarized a failing grade in the course.

4. Recommend sanctions, including disciplinary expulsion from the university. All classes should be referred to the student conduct system.

**B. CHEATING**

Cheating is an act of dishonesty with the intention of obtaining and/or using information in a fraudulent manner.

1. Observing and/or copying from another student’s test paper, reports, computer files and/or other class assignments.

2. Giving or receiving assistance during an examination period. (This includes providing specific answers to subsequent examinees and/or dispensing or receiving information that would allow the student o have an unfair advantage in the examination over students who did not possess such information.)

3. Using class notes, outlines, and other unauthorized information during an examination.

4. Using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting, in part or in whole the contents of an examination or other assignment not authorized by the professor of the class.

5. Using for credit in one class a term paper, book report, project, or class assignment written for credit in another class without the knowledge and permission of the profession of the class.

6. Exchanging place with another person for the purpose of taking an examination or completing other assignments.

Discipline: Faculty members may respond to cases of cheating in any of the following ways:

1. Allow the testing to progress without interruption, informing the offending student about the offense-and award a failing grade on the test—“F” if a letter grade is used or zero if a numerical grade is used.

2. Seize the test of the offending student and give a failing grade on the paper.

3. Give the offending student a failing grade in the course.

4. Recommend sanctions, including disciplinary expulsion from the university. All cases should be referred to the student conduct system.

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#####  *Arkansas State University*

**College of Nursing and Health Professions**

**Social Work Department**

**COLLEGE CODE OF HONOR**

Each student admitted to a professional program in the College of Nursing and Health Professions is charged with the responsibility of honorable conduct. A student is assumed honorable until his/her actions prove otherwise. An honor offense is defined as an intentional act of lying, cheating, or stealing. Formal procedures exist for violations of the Honor Code.

As a student in a health program, it is fundamental that you act in an honorable and virtuous way so that a community of trust is established among members of the college and your clients. Honor is a practiced ideal that will positively impact your relationship with fellow students, faculty, administrators, patients and other members of the community. As you live an honorable life, you will find that you cannot live without it.

All students in this college are bound by the Honor Code and all are needed to make it work. The atmosphere of trust and integrity that is created by an honor system enables the student to know his/her word will be taken as true, to compete fairly in the classroom and to keep what is rightfully his/hers. The system functions best when all members of the college not only take responsibility for their own actions, but hold their peers to the same standards.

As a student admitted to a health professions program, you must agree to live by and support the basic principles of honesty - no lying, cheating or stealing; be accountable for your actions; and share information about honor offenses. If you are not prepared to accept these responsibilities, you should select a program outside this college.

I have read the explanation of the College Code of Honor. I understand that, as an admitted student in one of the programs in the college, I have accepted the pledge of honesty and will be expected to meet the standards as set forward.

 Signature Date

**To be signed and returned to the Social Work Department to be placed in Student’s File**

05/07/12

##### Substance Abuse Policy

**College of Nursing and Health Professions**

**Arkansas State University**

**POLICY**

The College of Nursing and Health Professions recognizes its responsibility to provide a healthy environment within which students may learn and prepare themselves to become members of a health occupation. Within each profession there are codes and standards for conduct by which all members of the profession are expected to function. Thus, when engaged in educational activities whether on campus or in the clinical setting health professionals are expected to be free from the abusive influence of chemical substances/drugs[[1]](#footnote-1). When students are under the influence of drugs and alcohol, they present a threat to patients, other students and the employees and visitors of clinical facilities. **It is the responsibility of the student to report any medication/s taken which would adversely affect her/his ability to perform safely in class or clinic. Written documentation will be required for verification of medications taken and will be placed in the student's file.** As a condition of admittance and retention in any professional program in the Arkansas State University College of Nursing and Health Professions all students must sign a SUBSTANCE ABUSE COMPLIANCE CONTRACT agreeing to adhere to the *Substance Abuse Policy & Procedures* when conducting any activity associated with their educational program. As the contract notes, it is inclusive of testing for substances and appropriate release of that information.

**PROCEDURES**

1. *If a faculty member or supervisor observes a student demonstrating behavioral changes giving probable cause to believe the student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol while performing course activities* the student will immediately be asked to submit to body fluid testing for substances at a lab designated by the College of Nursing and Health Professions who have identified procedures for collection (see attached). **The cost of the test will be borne by the student.** Refusal to submit for testing warrants immediate program dismissal.

At the time the specimen is released to the testing lab, the student will sign a release statement requesting that the test results be sent to the Dean's Office, College of Nursing and Health Professions, and to the student. If the results are negative, no further action will be taken and the student will only be allowed to make up work missed. If the results are positive (and substantiated by a second or confirmation test), the student will be dismissed from the professional program. Laboratory results will be disclosed to individuals whose duties necessitate review of the test results and confidentiality will be adhered to as stringently as possible.

 2. *This policy applies only to a student exhibiting behavior creating probable cause to believe drug or alcohol abuse is present. A student may be removed from the clinical environment or educational program for any prohibited behaviors as set out in the university or program handbooks, rules and regulations, whether or not related to substance abuse.*

 The generic meaning of the term "drug" is broadly defined as any chemical substance which affects living systems. For the purposes of this policy, substance and/or drug abuse are used interchangeably and defined as socially unacceptable use of drugs or other chemical substances for non-therapeutic purposes. The substance alcohol (ethanol), by its properties and actions, is a drug and is used as such in this policy. Drugs prescribed by a physician licensed to practice medicine and surgery, as long as the drug is taken in accordance with the provider's instructions and do not impair the student's ability to perform his/her duties, are exempt from this policy.

Reference: Reiss, B. & Melick M. (1987). Pharmacological Aspects of Nursing Care (2nd Ed.). Albany, NY: Delmar Publishers, pp. 2, 627, 631-633.

3. Readmission of the student to the program is contingent upon the following conditions:

a. Formal application for readmission to the program.

b. Meeting specific program admission criteria as noted in the Undergraduate/ Graduate Bulletin.

c. Clinical space availability.

d. Documentation that a prescribed treatment program has been completed by the student related to the drug/alcohol condition. The documentation is to be submitted to the Dean's Office, College of Nursing and Health Professions by the designated treatment facility.

e. Follow-up program as suggested by the treatment facility which may include, but is not limited to, one or more relapse prevention procedures. The follow-up program will be individual specific and written as part of a contractual agreement with the student.

 4. Arkansas State University may be required by state or national regulatory boards to submit information regarding a student's substance abuse history when he/she applies to take the examination for licensure. There is no guarantee that these boards will allow individuals with a substance abuse history to take the examination. Each case is judged individually by each board.

 5. Students will be required to abide by individual institutional policies relating to substance abuse in clinical agencies to which they are assigned.

**BEHAVIORAL CHANGES ASSOCIATED WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The College of Nursing and Health Professions has developed the following list of behaviors that are not all inclusive but, when observed, can be used as indices to identify an individual who at the moment of observation could be under the influence of a "drug" (see the *Substance Abuse Policy* for definition of the term "drug" and for the mechanisms to operationalize the policy). The College of Nursing and Health Professions is guided by behavioral descriptors that are stated in the latest edition of Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

 \* Observation of any of these behaviors will result in dismissal from the learning environment (clinical or classroom).

Attention Deficit/Cognitive Impairment

 Ataxia

 tremors, especially of the hands

 \* slowed response time in a familiar skill

 \* diminished from the usual in coordination/dexterity

Social Impairment

 \* inappropriate verbal remarks (subjects/words/expletives)

 \* inappropriate behaviors or those beyond the societal norm such as:

 angry outbursts/unrestrained agitation

 crying that cannot be explained

 euphoria

 paranoia

 hallucinations

 \* behaviors that are markedly changed from that individual such as

 introversion

 extroversion

 sullen/irritable

 giddy

 defensiveness

Somatic Manifestations/Discomforts

 \* odor of alcohol on breath

 nausea/vomiting/thirst

 frequent trips to bathroom/complaint of urinary frequency or diarrhea

 hiccoughs

 reddened sclera (bloodshot eyes)

 pupil changes/drooping eyelids

 complain of blurred vision or inability to focus

Speech/Communication Impairment

 \* slurred (thick tongue)

 \* rapid/choppy communication pattern

\* incoherent speech

**BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS ASSOCIATED WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The following is a list of behavioral patterns that may surface when drugs have been abused. While these patterns have many causes, thorough assessment and detailed documentation is needed over a period of time to determine if there is any relationship to drug abuse. Patterns of behavior to observe and validate are:

* repeated tardiness
* frequent absenteeism
* numerous and chronic somatic complaints (colds/GI problems/lack of sleep/weight

 loss/sluggishness/low energy)

* untidy personal appearance or deterioration in quality of grooming
* lack of attention to hygiene (hair, nails, skin, oral)
* multiple crises in personal life
* avoidance/lack of eye contact
* isolation/lack of peer support
* repeated excuses for below standard performance
* forgetfulness with appointments/assignments
* slowed response time in familiar activities
* behavior shifts/mood swings
* lack of trust and suspicious of the motives of others
* needle tracks on body surface
* behaviors surrounding the administration of narcotics:
	+ frequent need to waste "unused" medications
	+ recording the administration of larger doses than ordered
	+ unauthorized possession of the narcotic key
	+ unsupervised entry into narcotic cabinet
	+ volunteering to be in situations to gain greater access to narcotics
	+ taking frequent breaks/numerous occasions when whereabouts unknown

#####  *Arkansas State University*

**College of Nursing and Health Professions**

**Social Work Department**

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE COMPLIANCE CONTRACT**

I, have read the Board of Trustee approved *Substance Abuse Policy & Procedures* of the Arkansas State University College of Nursing and Health Professions and agree, as a student in the professional health program, to comply with all aspects of the policy as written, including testing for substance abuse and appropriate release of that information. **I understand that it is my responsibility to report any medications taken which would adversely affect my ability to perform safely in class or clinic. I also understand that any cost involved in drug testing will be my responsibility**. Furthermore, I agree to abide by the provisions for determining dismissal and to follow the conditions of readmission as outlined.

Student's Name Student's Signature

 Date

**To be signed and returned to the Social Work Department to be placed in Student’s File**

Rev: 6/09

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

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

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

**1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity**

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

**2.01 Respect**

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

**4.02 Discrimination**

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

**6.04 Social and Political Action**

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

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**Preamble**

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

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

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

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

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

**Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics**

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

The *NASW Code of Ethics* serves six purposes:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Ethical Principles**

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

**Value:** *Service*

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

**Value:** *Social Justice*

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

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

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

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

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

**Value:** *Integrity*

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

**Value:** *Competence*

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

**Ethical Standards**

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

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

**1. SOCIAL WORKERS’ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO CLIENTS**

**1.01 Commitment to Clients**

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

**1.02 Self-determination**

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

**1.03 Informed Consent**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**1.04 Competence**

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

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

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

**1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity**

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

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

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

**1.06 Conflicts of Interest**

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

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

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

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

**1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality**

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

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

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

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

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

(f) When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual’s right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**1.08 Access to Records**

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

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

**1.09 Sexual Relationships**

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

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

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

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

**1.10 Physical Contact**

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

**1.11 Sexual Harassment**

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

**1.12 Derogatory Language**

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

**1.13 Payment for Services**

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

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

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

**1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision ­Making Capacity**

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

**1.15 Interruption of Services**

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

**1.16 Termination of Services**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**2. SOCIAL WORKERS’ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO COLLEAGUES**

**2.01 Respect**

(a) Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues.
(b) Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in communications with clients or with other professionals. Unwarranted negative criticism may include demeaning comments that refer to colleagues’ level of competence or to individuals’ attributes such as race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.
(c) Social workers should cooperate with social work colleagues and with colleagues of other professions when such cooperation serves the well­being of clients.

**2.02 Confidentiality**

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

**2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

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

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

**2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues**

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

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

**2.05 Consultation**

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

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

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

**2.06 Referral for Services**

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

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

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

**2.07 Sexual Relationships**

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

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

**2.08 Sexual Harassment**

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

**2.09 Impairment of Colleagues**

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

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

**2.10 Incompetence of Colleagues**

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

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

**2.11 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues**

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

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

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

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

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

**3. SOCIAL WORKERS’ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN PRACTICE SETTINGS**

**3.01 Supervision and Consultation**

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

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

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

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

**3.02 Education and Training**

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

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

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

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

**3.03 Performance Evaluation**

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

**3.04 Client Records**

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

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

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

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

**3.05 Billing**

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

**3.06 Client Transfer**

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

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

**3.07 Administration**

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

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

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

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

**3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development**

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

**3.09 Commitments to Employers**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**3.10 Labor Management Disputes**

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

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

**4. SOCIAL WORKERS’ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS PROFESSIONALS**

**4.01 Competence**

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

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

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

**4.02 Discrimination**

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

**4.03 Private Conduct**

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

**4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception**

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

**4.05 Impairment**

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

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

**4.06 Misrepresentation**

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

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

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

**4.07 Solicitations**

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

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

**4.08 Acknowledging Credit**

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

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

**5. SOCIAL WORKERS’ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION**

**5.01 Integrity of the Profession**

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

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

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

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

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

**5.02 Evaluation and Research**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**6. SOCIAL WORKERS’ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE BROADER SOCIETY**

**6.01 Social Welfare**

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

**6.02 Public Participation**

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

**6.03 Public Emergencies**

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

**6.04 Social and Political Action**

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

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

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

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

Taken from the NASW Code of Ethics Website: <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

# A-STATE Student Conduct Code

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| clearpix |  | clearpix |
| clearpix | PreambleArkansas State University is a tax-supported educational institution whose mission is to provide an educational opportunity to all who enroll. Attendance is not compulsory, and whether the opportunity to attend is called a "right" or "privilege," it is optional and voluntary.  The enrollment of a student at the university is a voluntary entrance into the academic community. By such entrance, the student voluntarily assumes obligations of performance and behavior, which are imposed by the university relevant to its lawful missions, processes and functions. These obligations may be much higher than those imposed on all citizens by civil and criminal law.  Arkansas State University is an interdependent learning community consisting of students, faculty and staff. Just as any community has a culture, along with written and unwritten "expectations" for conduct, we too have a culture and associated expectations for behavior. The community's expectation is that conduct is marked by integrity. Any student who chooses to enroll at the university also chooses to become part of this community and constructively contribute to its culture. This choice is an obligation to conduct oneself in such a way as to facilitate the mission of the community, which is to "...pursue and share knowledge..."The following principles are part of the collective expectation of the members of this community relative to personal conduct. We hope they serve to explain and illustrate our position.* Civility — Members of a learning community interact with others in a courteous and polite manner. Members of the community are expected to respect the values, opinions or feelings of others.
* Ethical Behavior — The pursuit of a higher education is a privilege. Associated with that privilege is an obligation to aspire to a set of principles and values that demonstrate a commitment to fairness, honesty, empathy and achievement.
* Morality — Members of a learning community commit to the ideals of appropriate human conduct. This lifestyle seeks to harm no one and attempts to be a positive contributor in every interaction.

The learning community at Arkansas State University does not intend to be prescriptive regarding the personal beliefs and value systems of its members. However, this community does believe that it has a right to expect its members to demonstrate personal responsibility and integrity in word and deed. When the conduct of any member falls outside the bounds of civil, moral and ethical behavior, that member can expect the community of Arkansas State University to call such conduct into question. The university reserves the right to discipline students or student organizations for inappropriate actions that occur on or off the campus to secure compliance with these higher obligations. Students failing to maintain these higher obligations may be asked to leave the academic community. Students are expected to comply with all university policies and procedures. "Responsibility for student conduct and the University Student Conduct System is vested within the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. The Vice Chancellor may designate the Assistant Dean of Students for Student Conduct, Rights, & Responsibilities Affairs, the campus Student Disciplinary Committee, the associate director of Residence Life (Conduct/Operations), and/or Residence Hall directors as the Initial Conduct Officer/Body depending upon the severity of the infraction and where it occurred."It is understood that a regulation concerning every possible act of misconduct cannot be specifically stated. However, the following acts of misconduct apply whether they are performed singly, in groups, or at a function of an organization. These acts of misconduct could result in arrests and charges being filed under local, state or federal laws. By allowing the existence of behaviors or items that violate Arkansas State University policy, procedures, or Code of Conduct, students have demonstrated an implied consent for the violation(s) and thus may be equally charged for the violation(s).  In addition, students will be considered in violation if they fail to remove themselves from incriminating situations and/or report the incident to proper authorities. Finally, the university reserves the right to discipline students for acts of misconduct wherever they occur. Acts of violence, weapons possession, and possession of illegal drugs will not be tolerated and will result in separation from the university.     |  |

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**Non-compensation Acknowledgement Form**

***As part of the professional degree program, I will be required to enroll in clinical/field courses at various sites and locations prior to my graduation.  My signature on this form acknowledges that I understand I not be financially compensated for these field or clinical courses by either Arkansas State University or the entity who operates the site and location where these field or clinical courses will take place.***

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Student Signature Date

**To be signed and returned to the Social Work Department to be placed in Student’s file.**

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)