

Nebraska Wesleyan University Undergraduate Social Work Program

Student Handbook



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Introduction

Welcome to the Undergraduate Social Work Program at Nebraska Wesleyan University! This program is designed to teach you the knowledge, skills and values that will effectively empower you to be a professional generalist social worker and continue your training at the graduate level. As a graduate of the Undergraduate Social Work Program at Nebraska Wesleyan University you will have numerous career opportunities in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities. These opportunities comprise work within public and private agencies including, but not limited to:

- Child welfare (abuse & neglect) agencies
- Aging services
- Nursing homes
- Hospitals
- Hospices
- Home care agencies
- Substance abuse programs
- Mental health services
- Developmental disabilities services
- Vocational rehabilitation services
- Public health agencies
- Community advocacy/action agencies
- Family service agencies
- Residential treatment programs
- Child & adult day centers
- Domestic violence programs
- Homeless shelters
- Criminal justice agencies
- Schools
- Income maintenance programs
- Legal services agencies
- Juvenile services agencies
- Prevention programs

Many of our graduates pursue further graduate education in social work. An undergraduate social work degree is also excellent preparation for other graduate work such as law, public health, public administration, nursing, to name a few.

Brief History of the Social Work Department

Social work courses were first offered at Nebraska Wesleyan University in 1973. In 1978, a formalized agreement between Nebraska Wesleyan University and Union College led to the merger of two independent social work programs into one collaborative whole. At the time both institutions benefited from the added strength of sharing resources. Having only one social work faculty at each campus had limitations. However, with two faculty members available, course offerings expanded for students in addition to more library and technology resources, and the development of a slightly larger cohort of students. It was also felt that both institutions had similarities of being small, church-related, private, and liberal arts focused. In 1982 the Social Work Program was accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) as a collaborative program between Nebraska Wesleyan University and Union College.

In 2001, after much collaboration and discussion, the decision was made that both Nebraska Wesleyan University and Union College would pursue their own separate accreditations with CSWE as stand-alone programs. Nebraska Wesleyan made the commitment to expand the program and hired an additional social work faculty person giving the institution its own Program Director and Field Director. Preparations began immediately for a CSWE self-study and an initial accreditation visit as a stand-alone program from CSWE took place in April 2004. This resulted in the Social Work Program at Nebraska Wesleyan University successfully receiving full accreditation from CSWE in October 2004 and has maintained its accreditation since that time. At that time the program was affiliated with the Sociology/Anthropology Departments, as one department. In the fall of 2011, Social Work separated from the Sociology/Anthropology Department and became the Social Work Department.

In the fall of 2010, an accelerated, evening Social Work Program for non-traditional students was introduced. This program continues with course offerings on the Lincoln campus and also at the Omaha Instructional facility, offering the same curriculum and expectations as that available to traditional students.

Brief History of the Social Work Profession

The history of the social work profession is varied and rich. Significant historical events took place throughout the centuries, which contributed to increased sensitivity to the poor and the oppressed which is the historical foundation of social work practice. Such events include:

The English "Elizabethan Poor Laws" of 1601. These laws were an attempt to recognize legitimate reasons for poverty and lack of work. Local parishes were required to provide work for the poor and establish houses of correction for "rogues and idlers". When parishes could not provide proper relief, counties were required to assume responsibility for welfare. In effect, then, the government became the chief enforcer of poor relief. For the first time, care for the poor became a secular, not a church, function.

The Industrial Revolution. Increase in technology brought a concomitant displacement of workers from an agrarian-based economy to an industrial, urban-based economy. Family life changed and workers were at the mercy of the whims of economic markets. The expansion of industrialization led to an emergent middle class, but also to despicable working conditions and abuses of individual workers including children. These changing societal conditions led to the emergence of the modern, social welfare system.

The Late 1800 Immigration Movement. The poverty and squalor haunting many immigrant families sparked the development of the Charity Organization Society (COS). This society resulted from an attempt by churches to address the needs of the poor. Specifically, the COS was set up as a rational, objective system of poor relief which emphasized investigation of individual cases and coordination of services with other agencies.

Within twenty years, virtually every large city in America had a COS. Early COS workers were called "friendly visitors". Their role was to investigate appeals for assistance, distinguish between the worthy and unworthy poor, and above all to provide the needy with the proper amount of moral exhortation. These "friendly visitors" were the forerunners of today's social workers, and their methods, record keeping and counseling anticipated today's social casework.

Establishment of Settlement Houses. The first settlement house, Toynbee Hall, was established in 1886 in London. Stanton Coit, who had resided in Toynbee Hall, opened America's first settlement house, The Neighborhood Guild in New York. By 1889, Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr opened Hull House in Chicago. It became one of the most influential in the United States. The settlement movement spread quickly and houses were developed in most of the larger British and American cities. Eventually, more than 400 houses were established. Their residents were involved in social advocacy, group work and community development.

All of these movements focused attention on the need for trained social workers. The first school for social workers was established in 1898 in New York City. The New York School of Philanthropy (later to become the Columbia University School of Social Work) grew out of a series of summer workshops and training programs for volunteers and friendly visitors and offered a one-year educational program. An early social work educator, Mary Richmond, published *Friendly Visits Among the Poor*. In 1917, Ms. Richmond published *Social Diagnosis*, a text that presented for the first time a theory and methodology for social work.

In 1917, the first organization for social workers was established. The National Social Workers Exchange existed primarily to process applicants for social work jobs. Later the group became the American Association of Social Workers (AASW).

The following, listed chronologically, are some key events in the history of the social work profession:

- 1843 Dorothea Dix begins her campaign for state sponsorship of special institutions for the mentally ill.
- 1877 The first Charity Organization Society in the United States is established in Buffalo, New York.
- 1886 The first Settlement House in the United States is organized in New York City.
- 1889 Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr establish Hull House (the most famous Settlement House) in Chicago providing many educational opportunities and social services for the poor and immigrant populations.
- 1897 Mary Richmond calls for the creation of training schools in charitable work.
- 1898 Education for social work is initiated with a summer training course given by the Charity Organization Society of New York at Columbia University.
- 1904 The above summer course develops into a one-year program within the New York School of Philanthropy at Columbia.
- 1905 The first social service department in a hospital is organized at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston where Ida Cannon serves as the first medical social worker.
- 1910 Jane Addams publishes *Twenty Years at Hull House*.
- 1912 Children's Bureau is established by President Taft to protect children from early employment, dangerous occupations, and diseases. The first 15 social workers ever employed by the federal government are hired to staff it.
- 1917 Mary Richmond publishes the first social work textbook, *Social Diagnosis*.

- 1918 The American Association of Hospital Social Workers is formed as the first specialty within the new field of Social Work.
- Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, establishes the first training program for psychiatric social workers.
- 1919 The 17 schools of social work that existed in the U.S. and Canada form the Association of Training Schools for Professional Social Work to develop uniform standards of training and professional education. This group later becomes the current Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).
- 1920 Native Nebraskan Grace Abbott is named head of the Children's Bureau.
- Atlanta School of Social Work is established to train African American social workers.
- Bryn Mawr College awards the first doctoral degree in Social Work.
- The 19th Amendment grants suffrage to women.
- 1921 The American Association of Social Workers is established.
- 1933 President Roosevelt initiates the Social Security Act with the aid of social worker Harry Hopkins. The modern institutionalized social welfare state is created in America.
- 1934 The Aid to Dependent Children's program is adopted which Grace Abbott assisted in drafting.
- 1936 Social worker Jane Hoey is named to head the federal Bureau of Public Assistance.
- 1943 Social agencies begin charging modest fees for clients who could afford them.
- 1945 World War II ends. On October 24th, the United Nations establishes many agencies for dealing with world social welfare problems.
- 1946 The National Mental Health Act is passed, establishing the National Institute of Mental Health.
- 1950 The first licensing for independent social work practice goes into effect in San Diego, CA.
- 1951 The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is formed through a merger of the American Association of Schools of Social Work (AASSW) and the National Association of Schools of Social Administration (NASSA). CSWE is soon granted the authority to accredit graduate (Master of Social Work) schools of social work.
- 1955 The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is created by uniting several smaller specialized social work associations.

- 1962 CSWE recognizes community organization as a legitimate specialization for social work education.
- 1963 President Kennedy signs the Community Mental Health Centers Act into law.
- 1965 President Lyndon Johnson launches the Great Society programs. Legislation in the Economic Opportunity Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 results in programs including the Job Corps, Operation Head Start, VISTA, Neighborhood Youth Corps, and Community Action programs. Federal funding is used to train thousands of social workers and ends social work personnel shortages.
- 1969 Membership in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), once restricted to M.S.W. degreed people, is opened to social workers with qualified bachelor's degrees.
- 1970 NASW grants full membership to baccalaureate social workers graduating from CSWE-approved undergraduate programs.
- 1974 CSWE approves accreditation of undergraduate programs in social work.
- CETA – Comprehensive Employment and Training Act is established to provide job opportunities and education for disadvantaged people.
- 1975 The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142) becomes law and requires that the nation's public schools provide equal educational opportunities for handicapped and learning-disabled students.
- 1976 The Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education in Social Work is formed.
- 1982 CSWE establishes Task Force on Gay/Lesbian issues.
- 1983 The National Association of Social Workers establishes the National Peer Review Advisory Committee and trains social workers to evaluate the work of other social workers to promote accountability and to meet quality control requirements of government and third-party funding organizations.
- 1994 The Person-In-Environment System is published by the NASW to enable social workers to classify and code problems of psycho-social, health, and environmental functioning.
- 1995 The U.S. National Voter Registration Act goes into effect, giving U.S. citizens easier access to registering to vote while applying for government services.
- 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly adopts new Code of Ethics, the first major revision since 1979.
- 2000 The state of Vermont enacted Civil Unions into law.

- 2004 The state of Massachusetts under the leadership of Governor Mitt Romney ordered town clerks to begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples on May 17, 2004.
- 2008 First African American President, Barack Obama, voted into office as the 44th President of the United States.
- 2010 On March 23, 2010, President Obama signed the Affordable Care Act. This law puts in place comprehensive health insurance reforms that will roll out over four years and beyond, with most changes taking place by 2014.
- 2011 Occupy Wall Street (OWS), a people powered movement began on September 17, 2011, in Liberty Square in Manhattan's Financial District. OWS has spread to over 100 cities in the United States. OWS is fighting back against the coercive power of major banks and multi-national corporations over the democratic process, and the role of Wall Street in creating an economic collapse that has caused the greatest recession in generations.
- 2011 Don't Ask Don't Tell, the official United States Policy on homosexual individuals serving in the military originally enacted on December 21, 1993, was repealed 17 years later on December 20, 2011.
- 2012 On May 9, 2012, President Barack Obama endorses gay marriage, the first U.S. President to do so.
- 2012 On May 22, 2012, the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) endorses gay marriage.
- 2013 The Black Lives Matter movement was founded by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi in response to the death of Travon Martin.
- 2015 On July 26, 2015, in a historic ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the Supreme Court rules that bans on gay marriage are unconstitutional.
- 2017 The Women's March was a world wide protest on January 21, 2017, the day after the inauguration of the 45th President of the United States.
- 2017 Following the sexual allegations against Harvey Weinstein in October 2017 the #MeToo movement began to spread virally and as a hashtag. The hashtag was originally created and posted by Tarana Burke in 2006.
- 2020 On June 15, 2020, in *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia*, the Supreme Court rules that federal civil rights laws protect LGBTQ employees from discrimination in the workplace.

Excerpts and information taken from the following:

Barker, R. (2003). *The social work dictionary*. Washington, DC: NASW Press

Day, P.J. (2006). *A new history of social welfare*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

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Van Wormer, K. (1997). *Social welfare: A world view*. Chicago: Nelson Hall.

Van Wormer, K. S. & Link, R. J. (2016). *Social welfare policy for a sustainable future*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

www.occupywallst.org

www.healthcare.gov/law/index.html

<https://blacklivesmatter.com/about/>

Undergraduate Social Work Program: Mission and Goals

Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Undergraduate Social Work Program at Nebraska Wesleyan University is to prepare students for entry into professional generalist social work practice with a commitment to promoting social justice and enhancing human well being for individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Goal One

The Undergraduate Social Work Program at Nebraska Wesleyan University will prepare students for professional generalist social work practice.

Goal Two

The Undergraduate Social Work Program at Nebraska Wesleyan University will prepare students for a commitment to promoting social justice.

Goal Three

The Undergraduate Social Work Program at Nebraska Wesleyan University will prepare students to engage, assess, intervene and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to enhance human well being.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Social Work Department operates under the nondiscrimination policies of Nebraska Wesleyan University:

“Diversity is a core value of Nebraska Wesleyan University’s mission and we embrace it as a source of strength. Nebraska Wesleyan University provides equal educational and employment opportunities to qualified persons in all areas of university operation without regard to religion or creed, age, genetic information, gender identity and expression, sexual identity and orientation, veteran status, disability, marital status, race, or national or ethnic origin, in compliance with state and federal laws, including but not limited to Title XII, Title IX, and the ADA” (NWU Course Catalog).

Land Acknowledgement

As a settler on stolen land, we wish to **acknowledge** the land on which we are operating. With acknowledgement comes truth. Both are essential to build mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference. We acknowledge the truth that the land upon which we teach and operate today is the ancestral and forcibly ceded territory of indigenous nations.

We acknowledge every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy to making the history

that led to this moment. Some were drawn here from distant lands to make a better life; some came against their will; some lived on and traversed these lands for thousands of years.

We acknowledge that the land and the natural resources on which these nations depended were and are inextricably linked to their identities, cultures, and livelihoods as well as their physical and spiritual well-being. (from *World Bank* web site)

As we acknowledge, we **honor**.

We honor vital ancestral knowledge and expertise of land, resources, culture and spirit. We honor the elders, past and present, of the indigenous nations that inhabited the lands of eastern Nebraska:

- Dakota
- Kansa
- Missouriia
- Ponca
- Pawnee
- Omaha
- Otoe
- Sac and Fox
- Winnebago

We honor the many other indigenous nations that we do not name but who lived on or traveled these lands over thousands of years, as well as those who live on these lands today. We honor this land upon which we live, and we pledge to steward it throughout the generations.

And may this acknowledgement and honoring be a step toward deeper relationship and meaningful action engaged in a cooperative manner and guided by the knowledge and wisdom of indigenous peoples.

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Core Competencies and Related Behaviors

This mission statement and goals prepare students to master the ten core competencies and corresponding behaviors as defined by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) for undergraduate social work programs as listed below:

1. Demonstrates ethical and professional behavior
 - a. Makes ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context.
 - b. Uses reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations.
 - c. Demonstrates professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.
 - d. Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.
 - e. Uses supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment.
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
 - a. Applies and communicates understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
 - b. Presents themselves as learners and engages clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences.
 - c. Applies self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environment Justice
 - a. Applies their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels.
 - b. Engages in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
 - a. Uses practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research.
 - b. Applies critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.
 - c. Uses and translates research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.
5. Engage in Policy Practice

- a. Identifies social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services.
 - b. Assesses how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.
 - c. Applies critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
6. Engage with individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
 - a. Applies knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.
 - b. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - a. Collects and organizes data, and applies critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies.
 - b. Applies knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies.
 - c. Develops mutually agreed-on interventions goals, and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies.
 - d. Selects appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.
8. Intervene with individuals, Families, Group, Organizations, and Communities
 - a. Critically chooses and implements interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies.
 - b. Applies knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.
 - c. Uses inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes.
 - d. Negotiates, mediates, and advocates with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies.
 - e. Facilitates effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - a. Selects and uses appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes.

- b. Applies knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes.
- c. Critically analyzes, monitors, and evaluates intervention and program processes and outcomes.
- d. Applies evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Social Work Program Requirements

The following applies to students who completed Introduction to Social Work and/or declared a social work major at NWU in Spring 2020 and beyond. Those who completed these prior to Spring 2020, should refer to the handbook dated September 2019.

I. Academic Requirements

Students must maintain at least a 2.5 GPA to take courses in the social work program, and must attain at least a 2.67 GPA to enter into Field Practicum.

II. Professionalism

This program is intended to prepare you for the profession of social work. A part of this preparation includes an ongoing expectation of professional behavior in all activities related to the program, both in and out of the classroom. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

A. Professional Communication (written and verbal)

1. Students are expected to approach all communication with faculty, staff, peers, and stakeholders in a professional manner. This includes everything from the use of the appropriate salutation in an email communication to in-class presentations to negotiation of practicum placements.

B. Interpersonal Skills in Working as a Team

1. All classes will require you to participate in a team environment, whether that be an informal discussion group or a more formal team assignment. It is our expectation that you will use empathic, assertive communication in working as a team to ensure both your needs and those of your team members are met. Team members should attempt to resolve conflicts on their own, prior to seeking assistance from faculty.

C. Preparation and Self-Awareness

1. As this is an accelerated program, it is necessary you are prepared for each class by completing the required readings and other assignments. Faculty have an expectation of student engagement

throughout the class and preparation will assist you in ensuring you are able to participate effectively.

2. A key component of effective social work practice is self-awareness and self-regulation. We ask that you work to build these skills throughout your time in the program. Specifically, we ask that you be aware of your level of participation in class discussions and exercises in order to regulate your involvement (reduce/increase) as needed. Additionally, when sharing information in the classroom setting, consider the usefulness of the comment in furthering the conversation and overall understanding of the concept being discussed.

D. Prioritizing Your Student Role

1. We recognize that all students are balancing several competing demands. Professionals must learn how to prioritize these demands. The classroom environment is no different. Appropriate prioritization will be demonstrated through attendance, engagement, and respect for the classroom environment and your role in it (ie. use of cellphone in class, side conversations, overall participation, etc).

E. Compliance with NASW Code of Ethics

1. Social Workers are guided by the NASW Code of Ethics and core values. All students are required to be familiar with this document and its contents, as all students will be held to these standards.

III. Continuing Learning Experiences (CLE's)

- A. Students are required to increase their exposure to key social work concepts and experiences. This is accomplished through the completion of Continuing Learning Experiences and/or volunteer hours as defined below.
- B. Students must complete 2 items for each of the three categories defined below (Professionalism, Advocacy and Practice Exposure). Students may complete 2 of the same items from any list, as approved by their Academic Advisor.
- C. Students must receive approval for each item from their Academic Advisor prior to completing the item. Students must then provide documentation of completion in the Social Work Hub on Canvas. Documentation may be in the form of a document that represents work completed (ie. copy of letter submitted or of updated resume); a picture or image of an activity (ie. image of voter registration card or NASW membership card); Volunteer Experience Summary for any volunteer hours completed; and/or a reflection paper.

Professional Development	Experiences in Advocacy	Practice Exposure
Participate in/Complete 4 CLE's focused on professionalism	Join or support a professional or advocacy organization (<i>financial cost</i>)	Watch a documentary that details a social problem
Serve on SWAC or SWEC (indicate interest to your Academic Advisor)	Vote/Register to Vote	Volunteer 5 hours for a local social services agency
Volunteer for the NASW-NE chapter annual conference or other such event	Participate in a march, protest, or rally	Volunteer 5 shifts for the NWU Prairie Wolves Pantry
Participate in an event sponsored by Career Services	Write a letter to your local, state, or federal representatives advocating for a change representative of social work values	Attend/Participate in a community/awareness event
Create/update your resume	Testify before the Unicameral or local government entity	Read a book that discusses a social problem

D. Students must complete this requirement prior to entering their field practicum, and should demonstrate to their Academic Advisor progress towards completion of this requirement annually.

IV. Legislative Day

All students are required to attend Legislative Day in order to fulfill the requirements of the program. This requirement will most often occur within SOCWK 2200: Social Welfare Policy.

V. Field Practicum

All students are required to complete 400 hour practicum to complete their degree program. Students must receive approval from the Field Director prior to entering field practicum.

VI. Student Feedback

Student engagement both in and out of the classroom are critical to the program's success. As such, all students are encouraged to complete course evaluation forms and satisfaction surveys when prompted. This information is used in program assessment and helps to guide our practices.

Specific feedback regarding any of the above defined policies is welcomed and can be submitted directly to the Undergraduate Program Director. Any

student wishing to meet with the Program Director is encouraged to do so by scheduling an appointment, or by attending one of the scheduled “open” office hours.

Social Work Program Committees and Councils

I. Social Work Executive Council (SWEC)

This Council will be Chaired by the Undergraduate Program Director (for Lincoln students) or Omaha Coordinator (for Omaha students). The Chair of the SWEC will appoint at least one faculty member, one student and one community member to serve as the SWEC for a given semester.

II. Social Work Advisory Committee (SWAC)

This Committee will be co-Chaired by the Department Chair and the Omaha Coordinator and will meet at least one time per semester. The purpose of this committee is to: 1) **advise** the program in reviewing policy and curriculum changes; 2) assist with **educational improvement** through reviewing program assessment and assisting the program meet CSWE accreditation requirements; 3) **connect the program to professional practice and current issues facing the field.**

The co-Chairs will appoint members to serve on SWAC. Membership must include at least: six practicing social work professionals from the community (three from Lincoln and three from Omaha; at least two professionals must be alumni), at least one educational program partner (MCC, SCC, IWCC, etc), and up to three enrolled students representing all program offerings. Members of SWAC will serve one 3-year term that is renewable for a second term. Student members will serve a one-year term that is renewable for a second term. Terms should be staggered. All social work faculty are encouraged to attend SWAC meetings.

Individuals may either be nominated for service on SWAC or may submit notification of interest to the Department Chair. The Department Chair and/or the Omaha Coordinator will seek out support of the nomination from department faculty. If all are in agreement the Department Chair and/or Omaha Coordinator will work to orient the new member to their role on SWAC.

Social Work Program Policies

The following applies to students who completed Introduction to Social Work and/or declared a social work major at NWU in Fall 2021 and beyond. Those who completed these prior to Fall 2021, should refer to the handbook dated September 2020.

I. Program Standards

A. Academic Writing

Communicating clearly and effectively through writing is an essential social work skill. Papers should be carefully proofread and edited, not only for grammar, but also for content and clarity of expression. Your writing assignments are expected to demonstrate a clear expression and organization of thought. Your writing assignments should also contain little to no grammatical and spelling errors. Finally, the guidelines of the assignment must be followed.

It is also very important that you adhere to APA (American Psychological Association) documentation style especially with regard to citations and referencing. APA style is used in all scholarly Social Work publications and therefore needs to be mastered by social work students. The NWU Cooper Center is available to NWU Students and can provide assistance with writing. For more information about the Cooper Center and to schedule an appointment, please visit the Cooper Center page of the NWU website: <https://www.nebrwesleyan.edu/inside-nwu/cooper-foundation-center-academic-resources/cooper-center>

B. Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is one of the basic principles of a university community. The Code of Student Conduct states that students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty, which encompasses such activities as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, misrepresentation, and bribery, are subject to disciplinary sanctions.

The Undergraduate Social Work Program will utilize specific software that detects plagiarism in all course offerings. Faculty members have full authority in determining the action to be taken in cases of academic dishonesty including filing a Report of Academic Dishonesty with the Registrar and/or filing a complaint with the Student Conduct System. If a Report of Academic Dishonesty is filed, a first report on a student prompts no further action. However, if a second report for a student is filed, a formal complaint is submitted against the student with the Student Conduct System. Any report after a second will launch another complaint. Complaints submitted to Student Conduct System prompt a formal judicial investigation.

C. Attendance

1. Traditional Students

- a) One letter grade will be subtracted from a student's final grade for every fifth class period missed (student will start with an 89% after the fifth absence).

- b) Students may request an exception to this attendance policy if extenuating circumstances exist. The program faculty will be consulted and a final decision will be made.
 - (1) Students may be asked to provide documentation of the circumstance when requesting an exception to the attendance policy.
- c) If a student misses 10 classes in one semester, the student will fail the course.

2. Adult Students

- a) If a student misses a class, the student may begin with an 89% (the equivalent of a B+).
 - (1) Students are expected to contact their instructor well in advance of any planned absence in order to explore if accommodations may be possible. **Any accommodations granted are at the instructor's discretion.** If accommodations cannot be made the student will receive the grade deduction as described above.
 - (2) Students who need to be absent due to an emergency are expected to contact the faculty as soon as possible to explore if accommodations (i.e. attending via Zoom, completion of asynchronous content, completion of an additional assignment, etc) may be possible. If accommodations cannot be made the student will receive the grade deduction as described above.
 - (3) Some courses, such as Micro or Group Practice are not a good fit for virtual attendance. Additionally, in some cases, individual class sessions may not be a good fit for virtual attendance or completion of assignment in lieu of in-person attendance. Students are expected to review the attendance policy in the course syllabus for specific attendance guidance related to that course.
- b) If a student receives a grade deduction due to an absence, they may request an exception to this attendance policy if extenuating circumstances exist. The program faculty will be consulted and a final decision will be made.
 - (1) Students may be asked to provide documentation of the circumstance when requesting an exception to the attendance policy.
- c) If a student misses two classes in one 8-week session, the student will fail the course.

D. Course Completion

1. Foundation Courses and Electives

- a) Students must complete SOCWK 1150, SOCWK 2200, SOCWK 2270, SOCWK 2280 and any social work program electives with a C+ or better.

2. Practice Courses
 - a) Students must complete SOCWK 3080, SOCWK 3090, SOCWK 3100, SOCWK 4650 and SOCWK 4970 with a B- or better.
3. Supporting Courses
 - a) Students must complete all other courses required for the major in social work with a C- or better.
4. Repeating Courses
 - a) Students are allowed to repeat **only one foundation course (including electives) and one practice course** to obtain the required grade. If a student cannot obtain the required grade after repeating it once, then he/she will be dismissed from the social work program.

II. **Background Checks**

Although the *Social Work Department* does NOT conduct background checks or review records in the Nebraska Child Abuse and Neglect Central Register/Adult Abuse and Neglect Central Registry, *Nebraska Wesleyan University* requires that any student having contact with minor children or young adults in the community complete a background check. Therefore, all names of students registered for SOCWK 1150: Introduction to Social Work and SOCWK 4970: Field Practicum are submitted to the Assistant Vice President of Human Resources for a background check, as both courses have a requirement for involvement in the community. The NWU Human Resource Department handles processing of all background checks and analysis of the results. If a student fails the background check, the Assistant Vice President for Human Resources will notify the Social Work Department Chair or the Field Director, the student's case will be reviewed, and a decision will be made accordingly.

Students should be aware that his or her ability to become certified as a Certified Social Worker or licensed as a Certified Master Level Social Worker and/or a Licensed Mental Health Practitioner may be compromised depending on the extent of any criminal record. These decisions are made on a case-by-case basis by the State of Nebraska.

Furthermore, if a student has any current or prior criminal convictions or pending criminal charges that could result (other than minor traffic violations) in conviction and/or if the student has a record that would appear on a review of the child abuse/neglect or sex offender registry, the student is required to report such actions to the Department Chair, Field Director and their Advisor immediately. This information will be used to help assist the student in planning for the future, determining fit of the profession, and/or in determining appropriate field placement options. **Please Note: Receipt of new charges/convictions while a student in the program could impact program progression.**

All students are asked to submit acknowledgement of reading this policy, which can be done through submitting the document located in the appendices with

their signature, or by completing the quiz created in the Social Work Hub “Orientation” module on Canvas.

III. **Faculty Advising**

- A. Each student indicating his/her declaration of a Social Work major will be assigned an advisor/mentor from the Social Work faculty.
 - 1. Advisors will not be reassigned, unless extenuating circumstances are present. This decision is at the discretion of the Department Chair.
- B. Advisors will monitor academic progress, class scheduling and sequencing, and attainment of professional requirements and activities.
- C. Each student is required to meet with their academic advisor each fall and spring semester, prior to being allowed to register for classes.
- D. Omaha Adult students are required to meet with the Omaha Coordinator each fall and spring semester, in addition to their academic advisor.

IV. **Program Progression and Gatekeeping**

- A. Provisional Admission
 - 1. Once students declare social work as a major, they are assigned a faculty member to serve as their academic advisor and are considered to be provisionally admitted into the Social Work Program.
 - 2. Students must complete the requirements defined below to be admitted into the social work program.
- B. Full Admission

The purpose of Full Admission is to ensure students are a fit for the social work program and for the profession, as well as to provide each student with feedback to help them in continuing to grow throughout their time in the program. This assessment of fit will include a review of coursework completed, student’s understanding of social work values and the integration and observance of personal and professional values, student’s understanding of the profession, and any other information obtained/discussed through the interview completed.

 - 1. Requirements
 - a) Students must have declared social work as their major.
 - b) Students must have a 2.5 GPA.
 - c) Students must have completed SOCWK 1150: Introduction to Social Work and SOCWK 2270: Human Behavior in the Social Environment I and be concurrently enrolled in or completed: SOCWK 2280: Human Behavior in the Social Environment II with a C+ or better. Students must have also completed or be concurrently enrolled in SOCWK 3080: Micro Practice. Students who have completed SOCWK 3080 must have received a B-.

- (1) Students must successfully complete SOCWK 1150, SOCWK 2270, SOCWK 2280, and SOCWK 3080, and be fully admitted to the program before being allowed to take 3000 and 4000 level social work courses.
 - d) Completion of the Full Admission Application Packet, including the application form (documenting progress towards the completion of CLE's), the Philosophy of Helping Paper and one letter of reference either from: a volunteer or work experience; a faculty member outside of the social work program; or a previous teacher or mentor.
2. Process Defined
- a) Students must submit the Full Admission Packet as directed by the Undergraduate Program Director by **September 30 or February 28**. If this date falls on a weekend, students must submit the required materials the next business day.
 - b) The Undergraduate Program Director will notify students seeking full-admission of the process to schedule an interview.
 - (1) Interviews will occur mid-semester and at the end of the semester, dependent on progression of each applicant.
 - (a) Students who are enrolled in Micro Practice and/or who plan to take Micro in the second 8-week session should plan to complete their interview at the end of the semester
 - c) Students must treat the interview as a professional interview, including professional presentation of self in appearance and behavior.
 - d) The Social Work Executive Council (SWEC) will review all applications for admission to the social work program.
 - e) In reviewing each student, the Social Work Executive Council will determine if students should be 1) fully admitted into the program, 2) admitted on probation, or 3) denied admittance into the program.
 - (1) Students who are fully admitted
 - (a) Demonstrate commitment to their academic success in the program;
 - (b) Demonstrate basic skills required of social work practitioners, and;
 - (c) Demonstrate a clear understanding of social work values and ethics and how they relate to personal values.
 - (d) Demonstrate professional presentation of self in the classroom and in other interactions with faculty and peers.
 - (2) Students who are admitted on probation
 - (a) Demonstrate a commitment to their academic success in the program;

- (b) Demonstrate a willingness and ability to improve in identified knowledge and/or skill areas, and/or
 - (c) Demonstrate a willingness to continue to explore social work values and ethics and how they relate to their personal values and/or
 - (d) Demonstrate a willingness and ability to improve professional presentation of self in the classroom and in other interactions with faculty and peers.
- (3) Students may be denied admittance to the social work program if they do not:
- (a) Demonstrate a commitment to their academic success, as evidenced by poor communication with faculty, poor work product in the classroom, submission of incomplete or late work, or other such concerns.
 - (b) Demonstrate a basic skill set required of social work practitioners, as evidenced by an inability to complete written work to a minimum standard, inability to perform basic skills, such as basic attending skills, in course assignments and activities, and/or other such concerns; and/or
 - (c) Demonstrate an understanding of social work values and how they relate to personal values, as evidenced by an unwillingness to incorporate professional values and ethics in professional social work practice, an inability to separate personal and professional values when demonstrating social work practice in real or simulated settings, and/or other such concerns; and/or
 - (d) Demonstrate professional presentation of self in the classroom and in other interactions with faculty and peers, as evidenced by unprofessional dress, demeanor, and treatment of others, and other such concerns.
- f) Following the completion of the interview, students will be notified of their status through written or electronic means within 10 business days.
- (1) Students who are admitted on probation will be notified of clear expectations and benchmarks that must be achieved in order to be fully admitted into the program. This notification will also include specific details as to when the student's admission status will be reviewed again.
 - (2) Students who are denied may appeal the decision of the SWEC by submitting a request to the Undergraduate

Program Director and the Department Chair. This request must include a plan for how the student plans to address the concerns raised by the SWEC.

- (a) The Undergraduate Program Director and the Department Chair will review the appeal and will determine a final decision regarding the student's status in the program.
- (b) Students who are denied admission to the program will have the option to meet with their advisor in order to assist the student in planning a different course of study.

C. Pre-Field Consultation

1. Requirements

- a) Completion of Field Practicum Orientation
- b) Students must have a 2.76 GPA
- c) Completion of/ or concurrently enrolled in SOCWK 3090, SOCWK 3100
- d) Fully admitted to the program and in good standing (ie. not on probation)
 - (1) Students on probation may be allowed to participate in Pre-Field Consultation, but will not be allowed to enter field until their probationary status is resolved.
- e) Completion of the Application to Enter Field Packet, including the application form, evidence of substantial progress towards completion of Continuing Learning Experiences, and two academic or professional references either from a volunteer or work experience, a faculty member outside of the social work program, or a previous teacher or mentor.
- f) Students seeking a placement not previously approved by the Field Director will also need to provide evidence of how the new placement meets guidelines established (see field manual).

2. Process Defined

- a) The Field Director will notify students of the time and place for Field Practicum Orientation and the process for scheduling the consultation meeting. Students wishing to complete Field Practicum in the subsequent semester must complete this orientation prior to moving forward with the consultation meeting.
- b) Students must submit the application packet by February 15 or September 15.
 - (1) Students should explore field placement ideas, in order to discuss these in their consultation. Students should NOT commit to any individual placement until they have received approval from the Field Director.
- c) Schedule pre-field consultation with field director

- d) Students must treat the interview as a professional interview, including professional presentation of self in appearance and behavior.
 - (1) Students must bring their Admission letter to the meeting to be reviewed by the Field Director.
- e) The Field Director and other identified faculty will participate in the consultation in order to evaluate the student's readiness to enter field practicum.
- f) Following the submission of the Application to Enter Field Packet the Field Director will submit the names of all interested students to the Vice President of Human Resources so a background check can be completed.
 - (1) Students with pending charges and/or certain convictions may not be allowed to enter into practicum or may be limited in their practicum placement options.
- g) Following the completion of the consultation, students will be notified of their status in regards to entering field through written or electronic means within 10 business days.
 - (1) If additional time is needed to process background checks, the Field Director will notify students of the status of this within 10 business days of the completion of the interview.
- h) Students may be approved to enter field, delayed entrance into field with specific tasks to be completed, or denied entry into field.
 - (1) Approved to enter field.
 - (2) Field delayed to allow student to complete recommendations set forth in the Admission letter and/or address other identified concerns.
 - (a) The Field Director will consult with the Undergraduate Program Director, Omaha Coordinator (when the student is an Omaha student) and the Department Chair in making this decision.
 - (b) Students who are delayed placement in field will be notified of clear expectations and benchmarks that must be achieved in order to be approved to enter Field Practicum. This notification will also include specific details as to when the student's field placement status will be reviewed again.
 - (c) Students who are delayed entry into Field Practicum may appeal the decision of the SWEC by submitting a request to the Field Director and the Department Chair, within 5 business days of receiving notice of delay of field. This request must

include a plan for how the student plans to address the concerns raised by the SWEC.

- (d) The Field Director and the Department Chair will review the appeal and will determine a final decision regarding the student's status in the program.
 - (e) Students who are delayed entry into Field Practicum will have the option to meet with their advisor in order to assist the student in planning how to proceed.
- (3) Denied entry into Field Practicum.
- (a) The Field Director will consult with the Social Work Executive Council when making this decision.
 - (b) Students who are denied entry into Field Practicum may appeal the decision of the SWEC by submitting a request to the Undergraduate Program Director and the Department Chair within 5 business days of receiving notice of denial of field. This request must include a plan for how the student will address the concerns raised by the SWEC.
 - (c) The Field Director and the Department Chair will review the appeal and will determine a final decision regarding the student's status in the program.
 - (d) Students who are denied entry into Field Practicum will have the option to meet with their advisor in order to assist the student in planning a different course of study and/or next steps towards graduation.

D. Field Practicum

Once students enter Field Practicum they should refer to the NWU practicum manual for further guidelines and policies.

E. Gatekeeping and Dismissal from the Program

The Social Work Program at NWU takes its responsibility to provide gatekeeping for the profession seriously. In doing so, all faculty have the responsibility to bring gatekeeping concerns to the attention of the Undergraduate Program Director and the Department Chair. All concerns will be reviewed and a determination will be made to either place the student on probation or to dismiss the student from the program. The decision to dismiss a student from the program is not taken lightly, and will be determined in consultation with the program faculty and/or the SWEC. Students may be placed on probation status or may be dismissed from the

program for academic or behavioral reasons, including, but not limited to the reasons outlined below:

1. Requirements

a) Academic Reasons

- (1) Student does not pass a second attempt at a course.
 - (a) Students are allowed to re-take a course when they do not receive the grade they need (C+ for 1000 and 2000 level courses and B- for 3000 and 4000 level courses). Students who do not pass on the second attempt WILL be dismissed from the program.
- (2) Student does not demonstrate a commitment to their academic success, as evidenced by poor communication with faculty, poor work product in the classroom, submission of incomplete or late work, or other such concerns.
- (3) Student does not demonstrate a basic skill set required of social work practitioners, as evidenced by an inability to complete written work to a minimum standard, inability to perform basic skills, such as basic attending skills and demonstrating empathy, in course assignments and activities, and/or other such concerns; and/or
- (4) Student does not demonstrate an understanding of social work values and how they relate to personal values, as evidenced by an unwillingness to incorporate professional values and ethics in professional social work practice, an inability to separate personal and professional values when demonstrating social work practice in real or simulated settings, and/or other such concerns
- (5) Students does not complete and/or maintain program requirements as defined in this handbook.

b) Behavioral Reasons

- (1) Student does not demonstrate professional presentation of self in the classroom and in other interactions with faculty and peers, as evidenced by unprofessional dress, demeanor, and treatment of others, and other such concerns
- (2) Student fails to accept and integrate feedback and direction from teachers, supervisors, peers, etc. thereby evidencing limited capacity for professional growth.
- (3) Student demonstrates a pattern of uncooperative behavior and lack of collaboration with others.
- (4) Student violates the NASW Code of Ethics, or is unable to identify a potential violation of the NASW Code of Ethics.

- (5) Student does not demonstrate empathy for peers, stakeholders, clients and faculty.
- (6) Student demonstrates inappropriate professional relationships and is unable to form and/or sustain relationships with others as evidenced by poor collaboration, ineffective communication, poor conflict management, etc.
- (7) Student is charged or convicted with a law violation that may impact their capacity for future professional practice.
- (8) Student is terminated by their field agency.

2. Process Defined

- a) Social Work Program Faculty will bring gatekeeping concerns to the attention of the Undergraduate Program Director and the Department Chair. The Undergraduate Program Director and the Department Chair will discuss the concerns raised with other faculty, and may discuss the concerns raised with the SWEC, to determine next steps.
- b) Students who do not receive the grade they need in a foundation or practice course and are required to re-take that course, will automatically be placed on probation and will be notified of such in writing by the Department Chair.
- c) For all other concerns, the Department Chair will request a meeting with the student and the student's academic advisor in order to explore the concerns raised.
- d) Following this meeting, the Department Chair will either place the student on probation, or the student may be dismissed from the program. Any determination to dismiss a student from the program will be made in consultation with the SWEC, where all members of the SWEC must be unanimous in this determination.
 - (1) Students will receive a letter within 10 business days from the date of the meeting with the Department Chair, informing the student of the decision made.
 - (2) Students placed on probation will receive written feedback on how to address the concerns raised, and will be required to check in with their advisor on their progress.
 - (a) Students who do not make adequate progress towards integration of the feedback provided will be reviewed by the SWEC to determine if the student should remain on probation status, or should be dismissed from the program.
 - (3) Students who are dismissed from the program will have the opportunity to appeal the decision to the SWEC, or with the Dean of Undergraduate Programs as outlined in the Grievance process defined below.

- (a) Students have 5 days from receipt of the letter notifying of dismissal in which to submit an appeal to the either SWEC or the Dean of Undergraduate Programs.
- (b) The appeal should include a plan for how the student will address the concerns raised.

V. **Grievance Process**

- A. When a student has a grievance regarding any aspect of the social work program they are to implement the following steps:
 - 1. If the grievance is with another student in the program, students are instructed to first attempt to work out the issue with the student utilizing their social work skills. If this effort fails, the student is encouraged to bring the issue to his or her social work faculty advisor for assistance in problem solving.
 - 2. If the grievance is with a classroom professor or their social work faculty advisor, students are instructed to work out the issue with their professor or advisor. If this effort fails, the student is encouraged to bring the issue to their social work faculty advisor or the Department Chair as appropriate.
 - 3. If the student has exercised steps 1 and 2 without satisfaction, the student may request a meeting with the Social Work Executive Council (SWEC) in an effort to resolve the issue.
 - 4. If the student is not satisfied with the judgment of the SWEC, then the student may take the case to the Dean of Undergraduate Programs.
- B. Documentation of Student Complaints and Grievances
 - 1. Student complaints submitted and any action taken will be recorded by the Department Chair and stored in an on-line record keeping system established by the Department Chair.

VI. **Timing Out of the Program**

- From time to time students may need to pause their studies. Students are encouraged to do what is best for their individual circumstance. Students wishing to pause their studies must complete the following process:
- A. Students must contact their academic advisor and review the implications of pausing, as well as discuss when they plan to return.
 - 1. Students will be allowed to “time-out” of the program for up to one year, thereby allowing them to re-enter the program as they are able within that year’s timeframe.
 - B. Students wishing to pause their studies for at least one year, and up to seven years must contact the Department Chair when they wish to return. Students will be required to meet with the Department Chair and/or Undergraduate Program Director and other designated faculty prior to resuming coursework.

1. Students wishing to re-enter the program must meet the following criteria:
 - a) Be in good standing with the program upon exit.
 - b) Demonstrate commitment and readiness to return to the classroom.
 2. Students may be required to complete additional requirements and/or re-take previously completed requirements in order to meet current accreditation standards.
- C. Failure to request a “time-out” may result in the student’s dismissal from the program.
- D. Students who have been absent from the program for more than 7 years will not be allowed to re-enter and will be required to re-take any previously completed coursework.

VII. **Transfer Credits and Credit for Life Experience**

- A. Students may be able to have credits transferred from another institution depending on existing articulation agreements and policies set forth by the institution.
1. Transfer credits for core social work courses may require approval from the Undergraduate Program Director and/or the Department Chair.
- B. Students cannot receive Social Work core course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

VIII. **Record Retention**

- A. Student Records
1. Once students have graduated, selected documents from the faculty member’s advising file and from the field practicum file will be retained for at least 7 years. These documents will include, but be limited to the following:
 - a) Philosophy of Helping Paper
 - b) Admission letter
 - c) Application to Enter Field
 - d) Pre-Field Consultation letter
 - e) Practicum Instruction Contract
 - f) Final Field Evaluation
 - g) Learning Contract
 - h) Record of Practicum hours completed
 2. For students who did not complete, advising files will be kept indefinitely.

Social Work Program Course Requirements

Core Requirements:

Area	Catalog Course Titles & Numbers	Credit Hours
<i>Intro</i>	SW 1150: Introduction to Social Work	3
<i>Policy & Institutions</i>	SW 2200: Social Welfare Policy, Services & Delivery Systems	3
<i>HBSE</i>	SW 2270: Human Behavior & the Social Environment (H.B.S.E.) I SW 2280: Human Behavior & the Social Environment (H.B.S.E.) II	6
<i>Micro</i>	SW 3080: Micro Practice	3
<i>Mezzo</i>	SW 3090: Group Practice	3
<i>Macro</i>	SW 3100: Macro Practice	3
<i>Research</i>	SW 4650: Research Informed Practice	3
<i>Electives</i>	Various Social Work Electives including, but not limited to: SW 2350: Family Violence SW 2900: Loss, Grief & Death SW 3350: Young Children & Trauma SW 3250: Strengths Perspective Practice SW 3450: Social Work in Healthcare SW 3930: Field Studies: Native American Life	6
<i>Field</i>	SW 4970: Field Practicum (400 hours)	9

Additional Program Courses:

<i>Psychology</i>	PSYCH 1010: Introduction to Psychological Science	3-4
<i>Sociology</i>	SOC 1110/1111: Introduction to Sociology	3-4
<i>American Government</i>	POLSCI 1010/1010 FYW: U.S. Government & Politics/American Government	3-4
<i>Statistics</i>	SOC 2100: Social Statistics OR PSYCH 2100: Psych Statistics BUSAD 2110: Business & Economic Statistics OR MATH 1300: Statistics	3

