

# **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, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes 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 continued with course offerings on the Lincoln campus and also at the Omaha Instructional facility, until the Spring of 2022, when the Omaha program option was discontinued. The Adult Lincoln program continues, offering the same curriculum and expectations as that available to traditional students.

## **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 competent generalist social work practice with a commitment to creating critical thinkers who are able to promote social justice and human well-being for diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

### **Goal One**

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

### **Goal Two**

The Undergraduate Social Work Program at Nebraska Wesleyan University will prepare students to promote social justice and human well being for diverse populations.

### **Goal Three**

The Undergraduate Social Work Program at Nebraska Wesleyan University prepares students to critically think and problem solve in alignment with the professions ethics and values.

### **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.

## **NWU Social Work Program Requirements**

### **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. 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. The list in the table below are examples and is not an exhaustive list.
- C. 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.

<b>Professional Development</b>	<b>Experiences in Advocacy</b>	<b>Practice Exposure</b>
Participate in an event sponsored by Career Services, Intersectionality Resource Center, Cooper	Join or support a professional or advocacy organization ( <i>financial cost</i> )	Watch a documentary that details a social problem

Center or the Counseling Center.		
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 structured self-care activities such as Mindfulness Mondays and Prairie Wolf Civil Discourse opportunities.	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. The Chair of the SWEC will appoint at least one faculty member and one community member to serve as the SWEC for a given semester. Student members will be appointed ad-hoc for service in the Full Admission process described in this document.

### II. **Social Work Advisory Committee (SWAC)**

This Committee will be Chaired by the Department Chair 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 chair will appoint members to serve on SWAC. Membership must include at least: six practicing social work professionals from the community (at least two professionals must be alumni), at least one educational program partner (MCC, SCC, IWCC, etc.), and at least three enrolled students representing all undergraduate and graduate 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.

Community representatives may either be nominated for service on SWAC or may submit notification of interest to the Department Chair. The Department Chair will seek out support of the nomination from department faculty. If all are in agreement the Department Chair will work to orient the new member to their role on SWAC. Student representatives will be elected by their peers.

### III. **Student Social Work Organization (SSWO)**

Each academic year, students elected to serve on SWAC may choose to establish or re-establish the Student Social Work Organization. Undergraduate and graduate students may elect to organize separately, or may choose to collaborate. The purpose of this organization will be determined by the student leadership and will be guided and supported by a faculty member within the department. Such organization could include physical or virtual spaces.

## Social Work Program Policies

### 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. 16-week classes

- a) One letter grade will be subtracted from a student's final grade upon the 6<sup>th</sup> absence (student will start with an 89% after the fifth absence).

- b) If a student misses 10 classes in one semester, the student will fail the course.
- 2. 8-week classes
  - a) 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/they 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, her or their 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. Faculty Advising Policy

Each student indicating his/her/their 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. Procedure for Faculty Advising

1. Advisors will monitor academic progress, class scheduling and sequencing, and attainment of professional requirements and activities.
2. Each student is required to meet with their academic advisor each fall and spring semester, prior to being allowed to register for classes.
3. Adult students are assigned a staff co-advisor to assist with course planning and other needs.

### IV. **Program Admission, Progression and Gatekeeping**

#### A. Provisional Admission Policy

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 fully admitted into the social work program.

#### B. Full Admission Policy

The purpose of Full Admission is to ensure students are a fit for the social work program and 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. Admissions Criteria

- 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. Procedure for Admissions Process

- 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.

3. Evaluation of applications

- a) The Social Work Executive Council (SWEC) will review all applications for admission to the social work program.
- b) 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.
  - (e) Are in good standing with the department, as evidenced by not violating the academic and behavioral standards defined in the Gatekeeping section below.
- (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.

#### 4. Notification of Admission

a) 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.

(3) Students who are denied may re-apply for full-admission one year after the initial denial.

#### C. Pre-Field Practicum Requirements and Related Policies

##### 1. Pre-Field Practicum Policy

Students must meet specific requirements prior to entering field.

##### 2. Requirements

a) Completion of Field Practicum Orientation

b) Students must have a 2.76 GPA

c) Completion of SOCWK 3090 and SOCWK 3100 with a B- or better unless otherwise approved by Field Director

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 Practicum Manual).
  - g) Successful completion of Pre-Field Consultation.
3. Procedure for Pre-Field Placement
- 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  
Pre-Field Consultation  
Students must treat the Pre-Field Consultation as a professional interview, including professional presentation of self in appearance and behavior.
    - (1) Students are encouraged to bring their Admission letter to the meeting to be reviewed by the Field Director.
  - d) The Field Director and other identified faculty/staff will participate in the Pre-Field Consultation in order to evaluate the student's readiness to enter field practicum.
  - e) 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.

- f) Following the completion of the Pre-Field 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.
- g) 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 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. Gatekeeping and Dismissal from the Program Policies

###### a) Academic Reasons

- (1) Student does not the required grade in a course (C+ for 1000 and 2000 level courses and B- for 3000 and 4000 level courses).
  - (a) If a student does not earn the required grade they will be allowed to re-take that course one time.
  - (b) Students are allowed to only re-take one foundation level course (1000 and 2000 level courses) and one practice level course (3000 or 4000).
  - (c) If a student does not earn the grade they need in two foundation level courses or two practice level courses, they will be dismissed from the program.
- (2) Student fails to successfully complete field placement.
  - (a) Successful completion of field placement is determined based on completion of the learning

contract, completion of required hours and/or completion of requirements set forth by the placement, task supervisor, Field Instructor, and/or the Field Director/Liaison.

- (3) Student does not demonstrate a commitment to their academic success, as evidenced by not attending class sessions as required, a pattern of late or incomplete assignment submissions or non-submissions and/or not completing other course requirements as assigned.
- (4) 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 demonstrate practice-based skills to an adequate level, and/or other such concerns.

b) Behavioral Reasons

- (1) Student demonstrates behaviors that indicate they are not a good fit to serve as a social worker, including, but not limited to:
  - (a) Student does not demonstrate professional presentation of self in the classroom and in other interactions with faculty, peers, and/or in field practicum, as evidenced by unprofessional dress, demeanor, and/or treatment of others, and other such concerns
  - (b) Student fails to accept and integrate feedback and direction from teachers, supervisors, peers, etc. thereby evidencing limited capacity for professional growth.
  - (c) Student demonstrates a pattern of uncooperative behavior and lack of collaboration with others.
  - (d) Student does not demonstrate empathy for peers, stakeholders, clients and faculty.
  - (e) 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.
  - (f) Student does not demonstrate an understanding of social work values and ethics and/or how they relate to personal values, as evidenced by an unwillingness to incorporate professional values and ethics in their social work practice, an inability to separate personal and professional values, and/or violates the NASW Code of Ethics.
- (2) Student is charged or convicted with a law violation that may impact their capacity for future professional practice.

- (3) Student does not complete and/or maintain program requirements as defined in this handbook.
2. Procedure for Gatekeeping and Dismissal from the Program
- 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.

Student Notification of Decision:

- (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. Grievance Process Policy

Students have a right to file a grievance regarding any aspect of the Social Work program.

### B. Procedure for Grievance Process

Students must implement the following process:

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, Program Director 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.

### C. 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**

### A. Timing out of the Program Policy

From time to time students may need to pause their studies, and are allowed to do so. Students are encouraged to do what is best for their individual circumstance.

### B. Procedure for Timing out of the Program

Students wishing to pause their studies must complete the following process:

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.

### C. 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.
- D. Failure to request a “time-out” may result in the student’s dismissal from the program.
- E. 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 Credit and Credit for Life Experience**

- A. **Transfer Credit Policy**
1. Students may be able to have credits transferred from another institution depending on existing articulation agreements and policies set forth by the institution.
- B. **Procedure for accepting Transfer Credit**
1. Transfer credits for required social work courses must be approved by the Undergraduate Program Director and/or the Department Chair.
  2. The registrars office will work with the Program Director and/or Department Chair for any required social work course.
- C. **Life Experience Policy**
1. Students cannot receive Social Work core course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

## VIII. **Record Retention**

- A. **Student Records Policy**
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.
  2. For students who did not complete, advising files will be kept indefinitely.
- B. **Procedure for Student Records**

1. Student records will be stored internally in a locked and/or password protected storage facility on NWU campus.
2. 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

## 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 &amp; 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 1200: Life Lessons SW 2350: Family Violence SW 2900: Loss, Grief & Death SW 3250: Strengths Perspective Practice SW 3350: Young Children & Trauma 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