



# STUDENT HANDBOOK

*Updated 2018-2019*

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## SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

### WELCOME

Welcome to the Viterbo University Social Work Program. You have chosen a dynamic and challenging profession to prepare for. This handbook has been written to familiarize you with the Social Work Program at Viterbo University. We hope that it will answer some of your bigger questions. Please call or visit with the program faculty for further information. The Social Work Program faculty offices are located in the Nursing Center.

### Social Work Program Faculty and Staff

|   |                    |          |  |
|---|--------------------|----------|--|
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### PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN SOCIAL WORK

Social work is recognized as one profession that is expected to expand greatly in the next decade. There are a variety of reasons for this projection. First of all there are a growing number of challenges facing society in the U.S. and globally such as immigration and refugee issues, outsourcing of work, poverty, hunger, HIV/AIDS and crises such as hurricanes and tsunamis. Locally we are faced with issues of child abuse and neglect, individuals in need of health care without insurance, individuals dealing with chronic mental illness and addictions, veterans returning from war and dealing with PTSD and homelessness. There is increasing recognition that professional social workers are well prepared to address these challenges. Also with the significant growth in our aging population, there will be an increase in need for social workers to help senior's live independent and satisfying lives. Employment opportunities will expand in social work with the elderly but also in other areas of social work practice as the need for social workers outpaces the supply. Finally, as in other professions, the current workforce of professional social workers is aging and as baby boomers retire, employment opportunities will be created for new social workers. The Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook provides excellent employment projection information for social work:

<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/home.htm> or,  
<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/social-workers.htm>

Social workers with degrees from accredited social work programs are prepared to work in a wide variety of settings. Our graduates are now working in a broad range of private and public social service agencies. Areas within social work that are growing especially rapidly include child welfare, elder services, social work within the area of criminal justice and work with individuals who experience chronic mental illness. Your senior field education experience will be very helpful to you in making decisions about where you wish to begin your professional work.

*The following are examples of jobs our recent graduates have obtained upon completion of their social work major.*

**Employer**

Houston County Human Services, Caledonia, MN  
 Lutheran Social Services, La Crosse, WI  
 Wisconsin Cares, La Crosse, WI  
 Independent Living Resources, La Crosse, WI

Mulder Health Care Facility, West Salem, WI  
 New Horizons Shelter & Outreach, La Crosse, WI

La Crosse County CARE Center, La Crosse, WI  
 Tomah Health & Rehabilitation Center, Tomah, WI  
 Southwest Family Care Alliance, Prairie du Chien, WI  
 Sagen Center-St. Joseph's Rehabilitation Center, La Crosse, WI  
 Family Services of Northeast WI, Sheboygan, WI  
 La Crosse County Human Services, La Crosse, WI

Golden Living Care Facility, La Crescent, MN  
 Trempealeau County Health Care Center, Whitehall, WI  
 Morrow Memorial Homes & Apartments, Sparta, WI  
 Ministry Health Care, Wausau, WI  
 Monroe County Human Services, Sparta, WI

Army Community Services, Germany  
 St. Mary's Care Center, Madison, WI  
 Vernon County Human Services, Viroqua, WI  
 Iowa County Human Services, Dodgeville, IA  
 Gundersen Health System, La Crosse, WI

Lutheran Life Communities, Arlington Heights, IL  
 Catholic Charities, La Crosse

Heritage Manor Nursing Home, Elroy, WI  
 Jackson County Human Services, Black River Falls, WI  
 Legal Aid Society of Orange County, Orlando, FL  
 Mayo Clinic Health System, La Crosse, WI

Center for Independence, Milwaukee, WI  
 Bureau of Milwaukee County, Milwaukee, WI  
 Bethany Riverside Nursing Home, La Crosse, WI  
 Jackson County Department of Correction, Black River Falls, WI  
 Hopkins Care Center, Hopkins, MN  
 Vernon Memorial Healthcare, Viroqua, WI  
 Parenting Place, La Crosse, WI

**Position**

Social Worker, Children's Mental Health  
 Treatment Foster Care, Youth Western  
 Social Worker, Elderly and Disabled  
 Independent Living Specialist, Disabilities  
 Benefit Specialist  
 Social Worker, Elderly and Disabled  
 Crisis Advocate, Domestic Violence  
 Children's Advocate  
 Crisis Counselor, Adult Mental Health  
 Social Worker, Elderly  
 Social Work Case Manager  
 Social Worker, Elderly  
 Social Worker-Crisis Counselor  
 CPS-Initial Assessment Social Worker  
 Justice Support-Jail Social Worker  
 Justice Support- Bond and Sentencing Worker  
 Permanency Unit- Social Worker  
 Social worker, Elderly  
 AODA Coordinator  
 Social Worker, Elderly  
 Hospice, Volunteer/Community Outreach  
 CPS, Initial Assessment Social Worker  
 Social Worker, Family Services  
 Social Worker, Adult Mental Health  
 Social Worker, Juvenile Justice  
 Family Advocacy Trainer  
 Rehabilitation Social Worker  
 CPS & Kinship Care Coordinator  
 Social Worker, Juvenile Delinquency  
 Medical Social Worker- Emergency Room  
 Medical Social Worker-OB Clinic, Postpartum  
 Hospice and Home Health Social Worker  
 Social Worker, Discharge Planner  
 Emergency Services Social Worker  
 Adoption Social Worker  
 Director of Social Services  
 Social Worker  
 Guardian ad Litem Case Coordinator  
 Medical Social Worker, Oncology  
 Gerard Hall, Family Service  
 Sienna Hall, Adult Mental Health  
 Case Manager, Adult Mental Health  
 CPS, Initial Assessment Social Worker  
 Social Worker, Elderly  
 Social Worker  
 Social Worker, Elderly  
 Patient and Family Services  
 Birth to Three Service Coordinator

## GRADUATE EDUCATION IN SOCIAL WORK

Most of our graduates decide to work in the profession upon graduation to gain valuable experience. However, several of our graduates have gone right on to graduate school immediately and report that they feel very prepared for graduate school. There are many universities that offer Master of Social Work (MSW) degrees throughout the country. Viterbo University does not offer an MSW program, but may be exploring options in the future. The Council on Social Work Education lists all accredited social work programs on their website at [www.cswe.org](http://www.cswe.org) and you can search for programs by state and other criteria.

*The following is a list of schools that offer MSW programs in the region:*

### Wisconsin:

- University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and Oshkosh
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
- Loyola University at the Carthage College campus
- George Williams College of Aurora University at Williams Bay

### Minnesota:

- Augsburg College
- Capella University
- College of Saint Scholastica
- Minnesota State University-Mankato
- St. Catherine University/  
University of Saint Thomas Collaborative
- St. Cloud State University
- University of Minnesota-Duluth
- University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
- Walden University

### Iowa:

- Clark University
- St. Ambrose University
- University of Iowa
- University of Northern Iowa

Many Master of Social Work (MSW) programs grant advanced standing to applicants with a Baccalaureate degree in social work from an accredited program allowing them to complete an MSW in a shortened time frame (in most cases one year as opposed to two).

## SECTION TWO: OVERVIEW OF THE VITERBO UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

### SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM ACCREDITATION PROCESS

#### What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is a process that assures clients, employers, and graduates, that individuals with a major in social work have graduated from a program that meets specific standards for quality social work education. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is the agency that is authorized to accredit baccalaureate and master's degree programs in social work education in the United States. Accredited Social Work Education Programs must demonstrate that they meet minimum standards set by CSWE for social work education. A brief description of CSWE Accreditation Standards can be found in section 8 of this handbook, and a complete description can be found [online here](#).

#### Why is Accreditation important?

Accreditation is extremely important to students for several reasons. Most states require a degree in social work from an accredited program to be credentialed as a social worker. Certification or licensure as a social worker is required for many jobs and it gives graduates a tremendous advantage in finding employment. Graduating from an accredited program also prepares one for entering a master's degree program in social work. Many Master of Social Work (MSW) programs grant advanced standing to applicants with a Baccalaureate degree in social work from an accredited program allowing them to complete an MSW in shortened time frame (in most cases one year as opposed to two).

#### What is the Accreditation status of the Viterbo University Social Work Program?

The Viterbo University Social Work Program has been continuously accredited since 2000. The program is fully accredited until October 2021 when we will be reviewed for continued accreditation.

## **MISSION OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

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### **Viterbo University Social Work Program Mission Statement**

The mission of the Viterbo University Social Work Program is to prepare baccalaureate students for entry level generalist social work practice. In an atmosphere of integrity and respect, students will develop professional knowledge, values, and skills for service provision and social change. The program is guided by the Franciscan values of human dignity, social justice, strengths of diverse populations, and respect for disenfranchised members of our global society.

#### **Program Goals (linked to CSWE 2015 Social Work Competencies):**

1. Prepare students for beginning generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. (Competency 6, 7, 8, 9)
2. Prepare students for social work practice with diverse populations and cultures. (Competency 2)
3. Prepare student in the use of social work research to inform and evaluate practice. (Competency 4, 9)
4. Prepare students for development of a professional identity consistent with social work values and ethics. (Competency 1)
5. Prepare students to promote social and economic justice for disenfranchised groups through social change and advocacy. (Competency 3, 5)

## **DEFINITION OF GENERALIST SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

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

The baccalaureate program in social work prepares students for generalist practice. The descriptions of the nine Social Work Competencies presented in the EPAS identify the knowledge, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes, and behaviors associated with competence at the generalist level of practice. (Educational Policy, CSWE, 2015)

## SECTION THREE: ADMISSION

### ADVANCEMENT IN THE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

*Professional advancement in the Social Work Program involves a three step process:*

- Step 1: Declare a social work major and be assigned a social work faculty advisor.
- Step 2: Apply to the Professional Phase of the Social Work Program upon completion of pre-requisite requirements. Complete and submit the *online forms* located on the Social Work Program webpages. Professional Phase admission typically occurs in the spring semester of the sophomore year. Transfer students can enter the social work major at any time but must also formally apply for the Professional Phase.
- Step 3: Prior to entering field education students complete the Application for Acceptance to Social Work Field Education Program. Deadline for application to Field Education is early in August of the senior year. The Field Director will inform you of the process.

### ADMISSION TO THE PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

The professional social work sequence of courses begins at the junior level. Students apply to the professional phase of the Program by completing a formal application for admission typically in the spring of their sophomore year. The application is due February 1<sup>st</sup> for current students at Viterbo for admission to the professional phase courses (junior level) for the following fall. Only applications from change of major or transfer students will be accepted after February 1<sup>st</sup>. The application is available online. Professional phase courses are sequential and students can only begin these courses in the fall semester.

### ADMISSION PROCESS:

- Complete and submit the online Application for Admission on the Social Work Web Page.
- Academic Writing Sample and Personal Essay uploaded with the application.
- Interview required at the discretion of the admissions committee.

### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM

1. Admission to Viterbo University.
2. Completion of 30 semester hours prior to admission to the Social Work Program.
3. Cumulative GPA 2.5/4.0 at the time of application.
4. Grade of B or better in SOWK 210—Introduction to Social Work (This course maybe repeated once.)
5. Completion of the following prerequisite courses with grades of C or better. These courses may be in progress at time of application. Transfer students may have taken the equivalent of these courses at their prior college. If you have questions regarding transfer credits please contact the Social Work Program Director.

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| ENGL 103:*   | Composition and the Elements of Argument                |
| ENGL 104:*   | Composition and Literature                              |
| SOCL 125:    | Introduction to Sociology                               |
| POSC 121:    | Introduction to American Government                     |
| BIOL 203:    | Human Biology for Social Services                       |
| PSYC 171:    | General Psychology                                      |
| SOWK 210:    | Introduction to Social Work (must earn B or better)     |
| SOWK 240: ** | Introduction to Research Process and Analytical Writing |
| SOWK 275:    | Introduction to Professional Practice                   |

\*ENGL 105 or 195 can be substituted for 103 & 104

\*\*SOWK 240 is only available at Viterbo. Transfer students will take this course after their transfer.

6. Effective written and oral communication.

A student who does not meet one or more of the above requirements at the time of application, may be considered for conditional admission to the Social Work Program by submitting a written plan.

### **CRITERIA FOR REVIEWING APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION**

Approval for admission to the Viterbo University Social Work Program is based upon an assessment by the Admissions Committee, made up of the social work faculty, using the criteria listed below. **Meeting minimum standards does not guarantee admission to the Social Work Program. Social work is a professional program thus numerous factors are taken into account including an applicant's capacity to acquire the requisite knowledge, values, skills and professional conduct of the profession of social work.** Students are evaluated based on prior course work, admissions essay, volunteer evaluations, and other information presented by social work faculty members. Factors included in the admission assessment are:

- class attendance and academic performance
- participation in classroom activities
- ability to meet deadlines
- ethical conduct
- ability to maintain positive relationships with faculty and other students as well as clients and supervisors in volunteer placements
- evidence of willingness to be open to new ideas and beginning ability to examine one's own values and biases as they relate to social work practice
- ability to communicate effectively both in written and oral form
- maintenance of at least one year in recovery if student has history of chemical dependency as substantiated in writing by an objective professional such as a physician or therapist
- reasonable emotional stability and maturity
- criminal record which would indicate a history of physical violence, sexual misconduct, or any other offense which would prohibit employment as a social work professional.

### **RESPONSE TO STUDENT APPLICATIONS**

1. Full admission into the Social Work Program.
2. Conditional admission into the Social Work Program with specific requirements and deadline for removal of conditions.
3. Not admitted into the Social Work Program with specific reasons for the denial listed.
4. Decision deferred for further consideration by the social work faculty. (The student may be given the opportunity to supplement admissions materials.)

Once a decision has been reached, the student will be notified in writing, and reasons or conditions are identified. A student may appeal a denial of admission by following the Appeal Process for the Social Work Program.

### **CONDITIONAL ADMISSION**

If a student is admitted to the Social Work Program on conditions, written notification is given to the student stipulating the conditions for admission. Conditions may include completing prerequisite courses, tutoring, raising GPA, taking a specific course, providing a student driven plan to address academic concerns, developing writing skills, or a variety of other measures.

Students admitted under conditions are reviewed by the social work faculty at the end of each semester to determine whether they have fulfilled their conditions and should be moved to good standing, or should continue on conditional status under a revised plan.

No student on conditional status will be admitted into Social Work Field Education without special permission.

### **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

The Social Work Program makes provision for transfer of credits for coursework. The purpose of transfer credit review is to provide the opportunity for transfer students to demonstrate required course knowledge and competencies to prevent the repeat of courses with similar content. A two-step process is employed to



evaluate transfer of credit. The Viterbo University Registrar's Office evaluates the transfer of earned credit from other institutions to Viterbo University and makes a determination regarding fulfillment of University and General Education requirements. This evaluation is forwarded to the Social Work Program. The Social Work Program Director, in consultation with social work faculty, evaluates transfer credit for prerequisite, support and social work foundation courses. Students may be asked to provide a course syllabus as well as assignments completed in the course for review. Course equivalency will be determined based on a review of learning outcomes, content outline, textbooks and readings, learning activities, instructor credentials, and theoretical perspectives.

A transfer student requesting admission and transfer credit may be asked to complete a Social Work admission interview. A student accepted into Viterbo University as a transfer student that has been refused admission or dismissed by another social work program, will be asked to sign a release of information allowing the Viterbo Social Work Program to communicate with faculty at the previous social work program.

Viterbo University does not offer proficiency exams for any social work courses.

### **ASSOCIATE OF ARTS / SCIENCE BRIDGE-STUDENTS**

*Below are the Policies and Procedures for Associate of Arts/Science students who bridge into a Viterbo University Bachelor's degree program:*

1. All graduating AA/AS students must complete an "Application for Degree" form upon registration for the semester in which they will complete their requirements, regardless of whether or not the student intends to participate in commencement ceremonies. The deadline to complete this form is September 15, for December graduation and January 15, for May or summer graduation. This form provides Viterbo with information to order a cap and gown, send ceremony information, place the student's name on the graduation list, order a diploma and post the degree.
2. Students should complete an "Associate Degree to Bachelor Degree Transition Application" (no fee required) and forward the completed form to Lisa Konkell, Academic Advising Coordinator.
3. The "Associate Degree to Bachelor Degree Transition Application" will be forwarded to the Office of the Registrar and a new "program" (major) will be assigned in the Ellucian/Datatel system, along with a new advisor.
4. The Registrar's office will forward the "Associate Degree to Bachelor Degree Transition Application" to Terry Norman, Director of Financial Aid, who will make any aid adjustment and award the student a merit scholarship, if the student qualifies. The merit scholarship will be based on existing scholarship grids and the student's GPA. The student will NOT need to participate in Exit Loan Counseling as long as the Financial Aid office is notified in a timely manner of the student's intention of continuing in a bachelor's degree program
5. Lisa Konkell, Academic Advising Coordinator, will email both the Associate of Arts/Science advisor and the new advisor informing them of the change. The AA/AS advisor will be asked to forward the AA/AS student's file to the new advisor.
6. The "Associate Degree to Bachelor Degree Transition Application" will ensure that the student continues seamlessly as a Viterbo student and does not lose access to services or their priority for registration.

### **CREDIT FOR LIFE EXPERIENCE**

The Social Work Program does not give academic credit for life experience, previous work experience, or volunteer work for any courses in the professional foundation of the social work curriculum.

### **READMISSION OF STUDENTS IN GOOD STANDING**

Professional phase students in good standing with the social work program who withdraw from Viterbo, take a leave of absence or change majors and then wish to re-enter the professional phase of the social work program must reapply for admission. The Social Work Program Director will coordinate the re-entry application and provide support for this process. Immediate placement in social work courses is not assured; continuously enrolled professional phase students will have enrollment priority.

Students who have been dismissed from the social work program and wish to be re-entered must follow the readmission procedures found in Section Five: Student Rights and Responsibilities.

## **SECTION FOUR: CURRICULUM**

The curriculum leads to a Bachelor of Science or a Bachelor of Arts Degree with a major in social work.

## **SOCIAL WORK CURRICULUM**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) sets educational standards for all social work programs (see appendix). The baccalaureate social work curriculum is grounded in the liberal arts and prepares its graduates for generalist practice through mastery of core competencies. The curriculum has an intentional design to develop measurable practice behaviors in students that are comprised of specific social work knowledge, values and skills.

Upon graduation from the Viterbo University Social Work Program, students will be able to demonstrate the following core competencies outlined by CSWE. These 9 core competencies are used as the basis for the professional curriculum design.

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
2. Engage diversity and difference in practice.
3. Advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice.
4. Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.
5. Engage in policy practice.
6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

## ***Introductory Courses***

### **SOWK 210: *Introduction to Social Work, 3 Cr.***

This course introduces students to the profession of social work within contemporary society including the historical social, economic, and political context of social work practice. Students develop an understanding of the connection between social work practice and social welfare policy. Social work values and ethics, including the profession's commitment to social justice and valuing of diversity, will be emphasized. Students are introduced to the social service delivery system, the person-in-environment perspective, and generalist social work practice. The course will help students consider the social work profession as a career choice.

## ***Social Work Practice Sequence***

### **SOWK 275: *Introduction to Professional Practice, 3 Cr.***

Usually taken in the sophomore year, this course explores the diverse field of social work practice in and outside the classroom through 25 hours of service in a social service agency. Generalist social work is introduced including strength and empowerment based practice. Students examine the congruence of personal values with professional values, study social work ethics and learn about professional boundaries. Diversity and underserved client populations encountered in social work are discussed. Students will develop an awareness of professional identity, expectations, and practice that integrates the knowledge, values and skills of a social worker. Prerequisites: SOWK 210 or concurrent enrollment.

**SOWK 280: *Interview Skills for Social Work, 3 Cr.***

Students will learn essential interviewing skills for an empowering and strength-based social work practice. The skills necessary for ethical practice from engagement to assessment in the planned change process are defined, modeled, rehearsed, and evaluated. Practice skills sensitive to the needs of diverse and vulnerable populations are learned and practiced in an actual interview. The course includes a structured lab with recorded interviews, instructor, and peer evaluations. Prerequisites: SOWK 210 or concurrent enrollment and admission to professional phase of the social work program.

**SOWK 321: *Social Work Practice: Individuals and Families, 3 Cr.***

This course will provide students with knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with individuals and families. Students will develop interviewing and practice skills in relation to working with clients of diverse racial, cultural, class, and religious backgrounds, as well as address social work values and ethics. The planned change process, ethical and purposeful use of self, and use of theory to guide practice will be emphasized. Prerequisites: SOWK 280, 331; admission to the professional phase of the social work program.

**SOWK 482: *Senior Capstone, 3 Cr.***

This course is designed as a transition from academia to generalist practice in the final social work major course. The capstone is designed to support the student in their field agency and assist in the integration of the social work curricula. Emphasis is on organizational practice including ethics in agency settings, supervision, organizational functions and client systems. Information on credentialing, licensure and career development further the students' identification as a professional social worker. Must be taken concurrently with 480.

## ***Social Work Theory/Practice Courses***

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**SOWK 331: *Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 3 Cr.***

This course focuses on theory and knowledge of individuals and families including biological, social, psychological, spiritual, and cultural factors that impact human development and behavior. Utilizing the generalist approach to social work practice, a social systems perspective is applied to understand the relationships between individuals, families and the broader social environment. Diversity is presented in its many facets covering ethnicity, culture, race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and disability. The impact of discrimination and other forms of oppression on individual development and behavior are examined. Prerequisites: BIOL 203; PSYC 171; SOCL 125, admission to the professional phase of the social work program.

**SOWK 351: *Social Work Theory and Practice with Communities, 3 Cr.*** This course focuses on the theory, knowledge, and practice skills needed to understand and engage with communities from a macro level generalist practice perspective. Emphasis will be placed on viewing human behavior and social problems as multi-casual. The planned change process for addressing community challenges and assets will be stressed with an emphasis on evidence based community intervention. Students will develop an understanding of how human diversity and ethics impacts the functioning of communities with particular focus on race, environmental justice, ethnicity, and social economic class. Prerequisite: SOWK 280, 331, admission to the professional phase of the social work program.

**SOWK 451: *Social Work Theory and Practice with Groups, 3 Cr.*** This course focuses on the theory, knowledge and practice skills needed to understand and work within groups in mezzo level generalist practice. Emphasis will be placed on viewing and assessing human behavior and social problems within group work practice. The planned change process will be applied to group processes with focus on strengths and empowerment practice. Students will develop an understanding of how human diversity and ethics

impacts group functioning with focus on race, ethnicity, gender and social economic class. Prerequisite: SOWK 280, 321, 331, admission to the professional phase of the social work program.

## ***Social Work Research Sequence***

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### **SOWK 240: *Introduction to Research and Analytical Writing, 3 Cr.***

This sophomore level writing emphasis course introduces students to the research process, critical thinking, and analytic writing. Students will learn to critically read and evaluate sources and scholarly writing. Emphasis will be placed on learning to write in APA style. An overview and basic understanding of the scientific research process, with an emphasis on quantitative research is stressed. Ethical issues in human subject research and evidence based practice in social work are examined. This course is the first course in a two-course research sequence required for social work majors. Prerequisite: ENGL 104, 105 or 195. Restricted to social work majors.

### **SOWK 340: *Social Work Research, 3 Cr.***

This course will provide an overview of research methods appropriate for evaluating all levels of social work practice. Students will study the logic and ethics of research designs and practice evaluation. Selected research strategies will include single subject design, needs assessment, and program evaluation. Diversity and ethical issues are examined in all phases of the research process. Prerequisite: SOWK 240, admission to the professional phase of the social work program.

## ***Social Welfare Policy Sequence***

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### **SOWK 341: *Social Welfare Policy I, 3 Cr.***

This course examines the historical, social, and economic context of social welfare policy. Special emphasis is placed on the structural components of economic injustice and poverty, welfare programs, and welfare reform. The vulnerability of women, children, and people of color to experiencing poverty and social injustice nationally and globally is examined. Students will learn about the major social welfare programs that address financial and basic human needs. Students will be introduced to social policy analysis. Prerequisite: POSC 121, admission to the professional phase social work program.

### **SOWK 441: *Social Welfare Policy II, 3 Cr.***

Students examine the process of policy formulation at the state and federal levels and develop competencies to advocate for human rights, social and economic justice and engage in policy practice. Policies and programs associated with civil rights, aging, health, and mental health are examined. The impact of these policies and programs on the well-being of racial and ethnic groups and populations at risk is addressed. Students develop skills in articulating a policy position and analyzing the adequacy and effectiveness of social welfare policy. Prerequisites: POSC 121, SOWK 341, admission to the professional phase of the social work program.

## ***Field Education Sequence***

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### **SOWK 479: *Field Education Preparation, 3 Cr.***

This course provides students with an overview of the field education experience and focuses on the work required to obtain an approved field education placement. The course will meet for one hour per week and covers material regarding admission to field education, agency sites, placement process, agency interviews, field education expectations, learning contracts, NASW *Code of Ethics* field issues, and upcoming field education and senior capstone course overview. Students will be complete many of the course requirements outside of class. Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment or completion of social work professional courses except for 480 and 482. Restricted to students with senior standing.

**SOWK 480: *Field Education, 9 Cr.***

In this agency-based practicum students practice with the knowledge, values, and skills developed throughout the social work curricula. Students engage in a structured, individualized, educational experience in a community agency setting. Viterbo University faculty liaisons, agency instructors and students collaborate to facilitate the transition from classroom to generalist social work practice. During the semester students will provide social work services 30 hours per week, for a minimum of 450 hours, in an agency setting approved by the Viterbo University social work field director. A learning contract describes the EPAS Core Competencies and corresponding 41 practice behaviors that the student will learn and demonstrate in their agency practicum. Prerequisite: admission to social work field placement, SOCL 320, MATH 130 or PSYC/SOCL 233, SOWK 366 or PSYC 340. Must be taken concurrently with 482. Graded CR/NC.

**SOWK 482: *Senior Capstone, 3 Cr.***

The capstone is designed as a transition from academia to generalist practice in the final social work major course. The capstone is designed to support the student in their field agency and assist in the integration of the social work curricula. Emphasis is on organizational practice including ethics in agency settings, supervision, organizational functions and client systems. Information on credentialing, licensure and career development further the students' identification as a professional social worker. Must be taken concurrently with 480.

***Social Work Electives***

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**SOWK 328: *Understanding and Working with Mexicans in the U.S., 3 Cr.***

The objective of this course is to learn and respect cultural diversity through the study of the complex relationship between Mexico and the U. S. The focus of this course is the present day realities of Mexican people working and living in the U.S. The course will offer knowledge, values and skills necessary to understand and work with Mexicans in the U.S. Students will learn about selected historical, social, cultural, political and economic events that shape the life of today's Mexicans as well as current policy and political decisions that are impacting Mexican in the U.S.

**SOWK 332: *Interprofessional Practice with Elderly, 3 Cr.***

With a focus on inter-professional practice, students will gain an understanding of long living individuals in contemporary society and learn the diverse needs of aging adults and appreciate the issues impacting gerontological practice. Students will gain elder assessment skills and learn tools to screen for spiritual needs, depression, substance abuse, suicide and physical abuse or neglect. Students will learn how to practice in multidisciplinary teams to serve older adults in a wide range of settings, from hospitals to community centers. Prerequisite: SOWK 210 or SOCL 125 or PSYC 171.

**SOWK 333: *Child Welfare, 3 Cr.***

This course surveys the field of child welfare. Students will acquire an understanding of the issues that impact the welfare of children in our society, including poverty, substance abuse, violence, and mental health concerns, the relationship between these issues and child abuse and neglect. Students will examine the issues involved in providing services to children affected by child abuse and neglect, unplanned pregnancy, foster care, and institutional care. The student will acquire knowledge relevant to working with children, biological parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, and other systems involved in for the welfare of children. Prerequisite: SOWK 210 or SOCL 125 or PSYC 171. Restricted to students with sophomore standing or higher.

**SOWK 334: *Interdisciplinary Work with Today's Families*, 3 Cr.**

This course explores issues that impact families in today's society such as resiliency, trauma, family violence, mental illness, poverty, hunger, homelessness, autism, and bullying. Evidence based methods for prevention and intervention will be explored in relation to these issues with an emphasis on interdisciplinary approaches. Prerequisites: SOWK 210 or PSYC 171 or SOCL 125. Restricted to students with sophomore standing or higher.

**SOWK 360: *Interpersonal Violence*, 3 Cr.**

This course will provide an overview of common forms of interpersonal violence (sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, sexual harassment, human trafficking, and prostitution/pornography). Students analyze the interrelationships and connections between these and other social problems such as poverty, homelessness, crime, and substance abuse in the context of a sexist and racist culture. The impact of interpersonal violence on special populations (LGBT, the elderly, persons with disabilities) will be examined. Throughout the course students will have the opportunity to learn about community resources and agencies that work to combat this type of violence. Prerequisite: SOWK 210 or PSYC 171 or SOCL 125.

**SOWK 366: *Community Based Mental Health Services*, 3 Cr.**

Social workers and other helping professionals perform critical roles in mental health treatment teams, community support programs, and as advocates for mental health issues. This course provides an introduction to the community based mental health care delivery system. The strengths perspective is stressed with an emphasis on biopsychosocial aspects of mental health, social constructionist perspective of mental illness, and generalist practice. Psychological diagnosis for common mental illness is introduced for the purpose of working in interdisciplinary teams and in supportive roles with families. Evidence-based, best practice approaches are reviewed. Prerequisite: SOWK 210 or PSYC 171 or SOCL 125 or 210. Restricted to students with sophomore standing or higher.

## Sample Four Year Plan B.A. in Social Work

| Pre-professional program: courses in <b>BOLD</b> are required for admission to the social work program. |  |         |   |
|---|--|---------|---|
| Credits   | Freshman-Fall  | Credits | Freshman-Spring   |
| 3   | <b>ENGL 103 Composition and Argument</b>                           | 3       | <b>ENGL 104 Composition and Literature</b>                                      |
| 3   | <b>SOCL 125 Introduction to Sociology</b>                          | 3       | <b>SOWK 210 Introduction to Social Work</b>                                     |
| 3   | <b>PSYC 171 General Psychology</b>                                 | 3       | Quantitative Literacy - MATH 130 Statistics or SOCL/PSYC 223 Applied Statistics |
| 3   | Franciscan Values and Traditions (FVT)                             | 3       | Theological Inquiry   |
| 3   | B.A. World Language  | 3       | B.A. World Language   |
| 15  |  | 15      |   |
| Credits   | Sophomore-Fall   | Credits | Sophomore-Spring  |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 240 Introduction to Research Writing</b>                   | 3       | <b>SOWK 275 The Social Work Profession/Oral Communication</b>                   |
| 3   | <b>POSC 121 American Government</b>                                | 4       | <b>BIOL 203 Human Biology</b>   |
| 3   | Literary Analysis  | 3       | Integrating Faith and Practice  |
| 3   | Living in a Diverse World/ SOCL 320 Racial and Ethnic Groups (LDW) | 3       | Historical Analysis   |
| 3   | B.A. World Language  | 3       | Philosophical and Moral Inquiry   |
| 15  |  | 16      |   |
| Professional Program: Courses in <b>BOLD</b> must be taken concurrently and sequentially.               |  |         |   |
| Credits   | Junior-Fall  | Credits | Junior-Spring   |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 280 Social Work Interviewing</b>                           | 3       | <b>SOWK 321 Social Work Practice I</b>  |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 331 Human Behavior in the Social Environment I</b>         | 3       | <b>SOWK 351 Social Work Theory and Practice with Communities</b>                |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 341 Social Welfare Policy I</b>                            | 3       | <b>SOWK 441 Social Welfare Policy II</b>  |
| 3   | Serving the Common Good (SCG)                                      | 3       | SOWK 366 Community Based Mental Health or PSYC 340 Behavior Disorders           |
| 3   | Elective   | 3       | Elective  |
| 15  |  | 15      |   |
| Credits   | Senior-Fall  | Credits | Senior-Spring   |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 340 Social Work Research</b>                               | 3       | <b>SOWK 482 Senior Capstone</b>   |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 451 Social Work Theory and Practice with Groups</b>        | 9       | <b>SOWK 480 Field Education</b>   |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 479 Field Education Preparation</b>                        |         |   |
| 3   | The Ethical Life (TEL)   |         |   |
| 3   | Artistic Engagement  |         |   |
| 1   | Elective   |         |   |
| 16  |  | 12      |   |

- Social work majors must formally apply and be accepted into the professional program to enter junior and senior level courses. Application to the professional program occurs during the sophomore semester two.
- Students must complete SOCL 320, MATH 130 or PSYC/SOCL 223, and SOWK 366 or PSYC 340 prior to SOWK 480.
- Students need 120 credits to graduate; 40 must be upper division credits.
- This is a sample schedule and it may need to be modified to fit student interests and course availability. Every effort should be made to take major and support courses when indicated to make sure students have prerequisites for later courses. General Education courses and electives may be taken at times other than indicated.

## Sample Four Year Plan B.S. in Social Work

| Pre-professional program: courses in <b>BOLD</b> are required for admission to the social work program. |  |         |  |
|---|--|---------|--|
| Credits   | Freshman-Fall  | Credits | Freshman-Spring  |
| 3   | <b>ENGL 103 Composition and Argument</b>                           | 3       | <b>ENGL 104 Composition and Literature</b>   |
| 3   | <b>SOCL 125 Introduction to Sociology</b>                          | 3       | <b>SOWK 210 Introduction to Social Work</b>  |
| 3   | <b>PSYC 171 General Psychology</b>                                 | 3       | MATH 130 Statistics or SOCL/PSYC 223 Applied Statistics/Quantitative Literacy & BS credits |
| 3   | Franciscan Values and Traditions (FVT)                             | 3       | Historical Analysis  |
| 4   | B.S. Science Requirement   | 3       | Theological Inquiry  |
| 16  |  | 15      |  |
| Credits   | Sophomore-Fall   | Credits | Sophomore-Spring   |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 240 Introduction to Research Writing</b>                   | 3       | <b>SOWK 275 The Social Work Profession/Oral Communication</b>                              |
| 3   | <b>POSC 121 American Government</b>                                | 4       | <b>BIOL 203 Human Biology</b>  |
| 3   | Living in a Diverse World/ SOCL 320 Racial and Ethnic Groups (LDW) | 3       | Literary Analysis  |
| 3   | Integrating Faith and Practice                                     | 3       | Philosophical and Moral Inquiry  |
| 3   | Elective   | 3       | Elective   |
| 15  |  | 16      |  |
| Professional Program: Courses in <b>BOLD</b> must be taken concurrently and sequentially.               |  |         |  |
| Credits   | Junior-Fall  | Credits | Junior-Spring  |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 280 Social Work Interviewing</b>                           | 3       | <b>SOWK 321 Social Work Practice I</b>   |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 331 Human Behavior in the Social Environment</b>           | 3       | <b>SOWK 351 Social Work Theory and Practice with Communities</b>                           |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 341 Social Welfare Policy I</b>                            | 3       | <b>SOWK 441 Social Welfare Policy II</b>   |
| 3   | Serving the Common Good (SCG)                                      | 3       | SOWK 366 Community Based Mental Health or PSYC 340 Behavior Disorders                      |
| 3   | Elective   | 3       | Elective   |
| 15  |  | 15      |  |
| Credits   | Senior-Fall  | Credits | Senior-Spring  |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 340 Social Work Research</b>                               | 3       | <b>SOWK 482 Senior Capstone</b>  |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 451 Social Work Theory and Practice with Groups</b>        | 9       | <b>SOWK 480 Field Education</b>  |
| 3   | <b>SOWK 479 Field Education Preparation</b>                        |         |  |
| 3   | The Ethical Life (TEL)   |         |  |
| 3   | Artistic Engagement  |         |  |
| 1   | Elective   |         |  |
| 16  |  | 12      |  |

- Social work majors must formally apply and be accepted into the professional program to enter junior and senior level courses. Application to the professional program occurs during the sophomore semester two.
- Students must complete SOCL 320, MATH 130 or PSYC/SOCL 223, and SOWK 366 or PSYC 340 prior to SOWK 480.
- Students need 120 credits to graduate; 40 must be upper division credits.
- This is a sample schedule and it may need to be modified to fit student interests and course availability. Every effort should be made to take major and support courses when indicated to make sure students have prerequisites for later courses. General Education courses and electives may be taken at times other than indicated.



## PART-TIME COURSE OF STUDY

The courses in the Professional Phase of the Social Work Program are carefully planned to build upon one another in a sequential manner. For those students who intend to progress through the Professional Phase of the Social Work Program part-time there are three options as outlined below. Any student planning to proceed through the Professional Phase of the Social Work Program part-time should discuss this with their academic advisor and disclose this on their application to the social work program so that a part-time plan can be put in place that will best meet their needs.

### Suggested Part Time Course Sequence

#### Plan A:

| Fall                                       | Spring  |
|--|---|
| <b>Year 1</b>                              |   |
| SOWK 341 Policy I                          | SOWK 441 Policy II                            |
| SOWK 340 Research                          |   |
| <b>Year 2</b>                              |   |
| SOWK 280 Interviewing                      | SOWK 321 Practice I                           |
| SOWK 331 Human Behavior in the Social Env. | SOWK 351 Theory and Practice with Communities |
| <b>Year 3</b>                              |   |
| SOWK 451 Theory and Practice with Groups   | SOWK 480 Field Education                      |
| SOWK 479 Field Prep                        | SOWK 482 Senior Capstone                      |

#### Plan B:

| Fall                                       | Spring  |
|--|---|
| <b>Year 1</b>                              |   |
| SOWK 341 Policy I                          | SOWK 441 Policy II                            |
| <b>Year 2</b>                              |   |
| SOWK 280 Interviewing                      | SOWK 321 Practice I                           |
| SOWK 331 Human Behavior in the Social Env. | SOWK 351 Theory and Practice with Communities |
| <b>Year 3</b>                              |   |
| SOWK 451 Theory and Practice with Groups   | SOWK 480 Field Education                      |
| SOWK 479 Field Prep                        | SOWK 482 Senior Capstone                      |
| SOWK 340 Research                          |   |

## FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM

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The purpose of Social Work Field Education at Viterbo University is to prepare students for entry level social work practice by providing opportunities to reinforce social work values and ethics, apply knowledge and practice social work skills in an education focused practice setting. Field Education provides the opportunity to integrate empirical-based knowledge into practice and promote professional competence. The field program is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program competencies. In this block model, social work students spend a semester of the senior year completing a minimum of 450 hours, usually 30 hours per week for a 15 week period, in a Field Education Agency. Concurrent with SOWK 480 Field Education, students complete a three-credit integrative SOWK 482 Senior Capstone course on campus.

Field students are placed in an entry level setting and are provided structured individualized learning opportunities in generalist social work practice. Students are supervised by dedicated, well-qualified social work practitioners familiar with current trends in the profession. Each field education student is assigned a Viterbo University social work faculty liaison who collaborates with the student and agency instructor to facilitate the knowledge and practice transition from classroom to direct social work practice. Students are prepared for field education the semester before through a one-credit course SOWK 479 Field Education Preparation. In the Field Education Preparation seminar students apply for acceptance to field education, complete Wisconsin Caregiver Background check and national criminal background check, interview with potential practicum agency, and are matched to an agency based on their individual goals, agency opportunities and Field Program criteria.

The field experience places increased demands on students intellectually, emotionally, and professionally. Therefore, students should be adequately prepared to assume responsibility for and exhibit professional behavior by completing required criteria for admission to the Field Education Program, ongoing compliance with the Student Conduct Code and adhering to professional standards of the NASW *Code of Ethics*.

### MINORS

In addition to completing courses for a social work major, students may choose to complete one or more minors. A minor provides an opportunity for students to have a focus of study in addition to their social work major. Students may consider minoring in a subject area that they have a personal interest in exploring such as history, English or religion or they may want to pursue a minor that is complementary to social work. Minors that are complementary to social work include Criminal Justice; Family Studies, Gerontology; Latin American Studies; Legal Studies; Psychology; Servant Leadership; Spanish; Sociology; Substance Abuse Counseling; or Women's Studies.

Requirements for a minor may be satisfied using courses taken to fulfill general education requirements, major support courses and electives. A minor is optional, not required. Students declare a minor by completing a form obtained from the Academic Resource Center on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Murphy Center. This form must be on file in the Office of the Registrar at least six months prior to graduation. Students should discuss their interest in a minor with their academic advisor early in the academic program. Requirements for each minor may be found in the Viterbo University Catalog.

### STUDY ABROAD

Social work majors are highly encouraged to consider a study abroad experience during their time at Viterbo University. Study abroad deepens student's understanding and appreciation of global issues as a foundation for decision making in preparation to lead and serve society. Study abroad opportunities include both course embedded experiences as well as semester or year-long study. Study abroad requires early planning for social work majors. Students interested in study abroad should work closely with their academic advisor and the Office of Global Education to determine course transfer, timing, access to financial aid, and other assistance in planning your experience. Contact Taylor Corbett, global education specialist at [ticorbett@viterbo.edu](mailto:ticorbett@viterbo.edu) to make an appointment.

## SECTION FIVE: STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### STATEMENT OF STUDENT RIGHTS

Social work students deserve and have a right to:

- Competent and supportive academic advising which addresses the student's strengths and areas for improvement, as well as guides students through the necessary coursework and sequencing for completion of the social work major.
- Be included in discussions relative to decisions that affect the policies, procedures and structure of the Social Work Program and the Social Work Club.
- Have opportunities to evaluate teaching faculty, field education agency instructors and their experience in the social work program at graduation.
- Effective and competent instruction.
- Clear and accurate information regarding academic requirements and assignments.
- Fair and just grading procedures.
- Current licensure/certification and career information.
- Quality field education experiences and support.
- A program that maintains accreditation status.
- Opportunities for professional development outside of the classroom.
- Be treated with respect for their dignity and strengths.
- Have their academic and personal records kept in secured files.
- Have social work faculty who adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics*.
- Access to program assessment outcomes. Program assessment reports can be found on the Social Work Program website.

### CLASS ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is one way to demonstrate a commitment to preparing for a professional degree.

Therefore, regular class attendance is an expectation. A very limited number of class absences may be allowed for extraordinary circumstances. Each course syllabus will define specifically the attendance policy for that course.

### COURSE EXPECTATIONS

At the beginning of each semester, a course syllabus will be posted on Moodle for each enrolled social work course which outlines the course of study, required and recommended textbooks, course objectives and requirements, a description of criteria for student evaluation and course grading, and the grading scale. The criteria will include the number of exams, any required papers, outside readings, class presentations, type of participation required and a listing of appropriate dates and deadlines.

### STUDENT CONTACT INFORMATION

Students are responsible for making sure that the Social Work Program Director has their current address and phone number. The Social Work Program uses the student's Viterbo University email account to communicate with social work majors. Social work majors are expected to check this email account at least weekly.

### STUDENT EDUCATIONAL FILES

All education records of social work students are maintained in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. Please refer to the Viterbo University Student Handbook for the University policy implementing this Act. The Social Work Program utilizes three sets of student files. Upon declaration of the social work major, a social work faculty advisor has access to a student's academic planning file. Upon admission to the Social Work Program, an electronic permanent student file is setup.

This file has a copy of the student's admission application and letters of condition or good standing. Copies of any letters of reference that faculty write on behalf of a student are kept in this file. When students are accepted into Field Education, field documents are added to the permanent student file.

This permanent electronic file then becomes a source of information to be used by the social work program faculty and staff when we receive requests for letters of reference by employers or graduate schools. Student files are open files and can be viewed by the student upon request. Social work faculty and staff have access to these files and follow FERPA guidelines.

## **REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Viterbo University prioritizes safety and strives to provide a safe learning environment for everyone. Children under the age of 18 come into contact with Viterbo University employees and volunteers through various programs, camps, and events.

All Viterbo University employees must report if an employee, in the course of employment, observes an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, or learns of an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, and the employee has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur. This includes abuse or neglect that occurs off campus and/or at a child's home, if a Viterbo University employee observes or learns about it in the course of his or her employment.

A person with knowledge of child abuse or neglect must report to the county department of human/social services or to law enforcement (county sheriff or the police department of the city, village, or town). A verbal or written report must be made as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours after learning of the incident.

The employee should also report the incident to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Student Development, Human Resource Director, or the Vice President of Finance and Administration as soon as possible. The Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Student Development, Human Resource Director, or the Vice President of Finance and Administration shall, in turn, report the incident to the President as soon as possible. The official repository for all incident reports will be with the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

These reporting requirements are mandatory, and are not optional. Any Viterbo University employee who fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect in violation of this policy is in violation of this requirement and may also be found to be in violation of other applicable and related work rules. Those who fail to comply with this reporting requirement may be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination of employment.

All Viterbo University employees should treat information regarding suspected abuse or neglect as sensitive and confidential and share it only with appropriate individuals, such as the agencies to whom reports are to be made and appropriate University officials.

A Viterbo University employee making a report of child abuse or neglect in good faith will not be discharged from employment, disciplined or otherwise discriminated against in regard to employment, or threatened with any such treatment because that employee made a report in good faith.

Any Viterbo University employee who is a mandatory reporter under Wisconsin, Minnesota, and/or Iowa state statutes must comply with the requirements of a state mandatory reporter law.

Approved 11/14/12 from Viterbo University Handbook

## **SOCIAL WORK MAJOR WITH A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND**

From time to time the Viterbo University Social Work Program receives inquiries regarding how a person's past conviction of a crime could affect their becoming a social worker. There is no simple or easy answer to these questions. What we can share with you is some general information and some of our experiences; however, you need to be aware that the ultimate decision regarding your eligibility to be a credentialed social worker is up to others and you need to check into how the law applies to your circumstances.

### **Can I become a social work major?**

At this time, the Viterbo University Social Work Program does not have any policy pertaining to criminal convictions that would prevent you from declaring a social work major. However, one of the main requirements of the major is a field education experience in your senior year. The application for field education requires a caregiver background check and a national criminal background check. The result of your background checks may have bearing on your admission to field education, your ability to secure a field education placement, or even employment as a social worker.

We strongly encourage you to review the following website from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services that offers a detailed section on Caregiver Program Rules and Regulations.

Go to: <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/caregiver/StatutesINDEX.HTM>

On the site, click on the [Background Information Disclosure \(BID\) form, F82064](#). On the form you will find a list of type of agencies that require the background check.

### **Field Education Placements**

Agencies take social work field education students on a volunteer basis. An agency can decide not to accept a student with a conviction for field education if the agency feels that the nature or severity of the conviction would put the population they serve at risk. Therefore, if you have a conviction, we cannot guarantee that you will be able to secure a field placement.

Keep in mind that our Field Education Director will work with you to find an appropriate field placement. However, if you have not been accepted after two interviews then we are under no obligation to keep looking for a field education placement for you.

Our experience has been that our certified field education agencies evaluate these situations on a case to case basis. The social work profession believes that people grow, develop and can make changes in their lives so agencies are likely to consider a number of factors when considering a social work student with a criminal background for field placement. The Field Education Director along with our certified field agencies will want to know what happened and what have you done to change since then. Are you clean and sober? Have you had subsequent encounters with the criminal justice system? How long has it been since your conviction? Who can speak to your character? These factors will be taken into consideration by the Social Work Program before admitting you into Field Education and by agencies considering taking you for a field education placement.

### **Can I Become Certified or Obtain a License?**

If you graduate as a social work major and wish to apply for certification (BSW) or go on to get a master degree (MSW) and apply for licensure, again a caregiver background check is required in the state of Wisconsin. Other states may have different requirements. Information about state social work credentialing can be found at [www.aswb.org](http://www.aswb.org).

In Wisconsin, all professions are subject to the [Wisconsin state law](#) (sections 111.321, 111.322, and 111.335, Stats.) that prohibits discrimination against applicants based on conviction records unless convictions are substantially related to the practice of the profession. The phrase “substantially related” is interpreted broadly in order to protect the public, especially in health service professions where licensees interact with vulnerable populations, so convictions that involved harm to others or that suggest an impaired ability to perform licensed duties will probably be considered to be substantially related to the practice of the profession. *For example, persons convicted of felony sexual assault are typically unable to obtain a credential.*

If you apply to the [Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services](#) (Social Worker Section) and your application is denied, it is common for the Section to ask the applicant to appear in person, to explain the circumstances of his or her conviction record, and to discuss the person’s development since the offense(s). Once the Social Worker Section evaluates all the information submitted by the applicant, including any in-person interview, the Section then has wide discretion to grant or deny the application. Being denied for a certification/license would not prevent a person from applying again later.

## **VITERBO UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM STUDENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, RETENTION AND TERMINATION POLICY**

The social work major at Viterbo University is a professional program which requires that students meet standards of academic and professional comportment. Becoming a professional social worker involves maturation of a professional identity in addition to academic success. The Viterbo University Social Work Program is committed to assisting students in their development as a professional social worker. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) *Code of Ethics* and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) *Educational and Accreditation Policy* serve as the guiding documents in this process. Professional development occurs over the duration of the social work curriculum, throughout all social work courses including field education. Students become familiar with the expectations and requirements of professional social work practice throughout the major and are provided multiple opportunities to develop professionally.

The Social Work Program uses a developmental process to assist students in reaching their goal of becoming a social worker. The process is educationally focused, supportive and directive. Professional social work standards and expectations are detailed in the Social Work Program Student Handbook and Field Education Handbook, course syllabi and other documents. In each core social work course students learn about professional expectations through the NASW *Code of Ethics* which specifies the standards for appropriate social work practice. Students are offered opportunities to observe and practice professional behaviors in a number of increasingly complex social work settings. The social work curriculum facilitates individual growth and empowers each student to become a unique practitioner grounded in the values and standards of the social work profession. Students are encouraged to share challenges and questions about their professional development with faculty at any time.

### **Procedures for Professional Development, Retention and Termination**

It is the intention of the Social Work Program to facilitate and support the success of students through a collaborative professional development process. Students are expected to be proactive in communicating to the social work faculty concerns or personal changes which may affect their professional development and success.

### **The process utilized by the Viterbo University Social Work Program to support students to develop an identity as a social work professional is operationalized as follows:**

- Students are encouraged to meet individually with their advisor and/or instructors throughout their academic program to discuss issues, questions, and challenges related to academic and professional success in the major. It is important that students inform their advisor or instructor of any concerns that may affect their professional development.
- Upon application to the Professional Phase of the Social Work Program, students receive and are asked to sign the Viterbo University Social Work Program's *Academic and Professional Standards* which articulates the ethical and professional behaviors expected of students in the program.
- The Social Work faculty holds regular program meetings where concerns are discussed that may be affecting students' success. These concerns may be brought forward by students, classroom instructors, academic advisors, agency field instructors, faculty field liaisons, or other Viterbo University employees. The purpose of these faculty discussions is to provide opportunity for early intervention to support student success. If there are issues identified that could be a barrier to professional development and academic success the faculty may contact the student to discuss the issues further.

- At the end of each semester the Social Work Faculty reviews the progress of each student utilizing the *Academic and Professional Standards* and course policies to guide this review in light of each individual student situation.
- If there are significant concerns that are identified at any time during the professional phase of the social work program, the student may be put on “Conditional Standing” in the social work program. Students are directed to meet with his/her academic advisor or other members of the social work faculty and discuss steps to address the concerns and review university resources available to support student success. Ultimately it is the student’s responsibility to demonstrate behaviors that address the identified concerns.
- The NASW *Code of Ethics*, the *Academic and Professional Standards*, and standards for admission to field education, performance in field or specific course expectations are used to determine progress toward addressing the identified concerns. If the identified concerns are not resolved, the faculty may be required to make decisions about the suitability of a student for the social work profession.
- All students on “Conditional Standing” will be formally reviewed by the faculty minimally at the end of each semester to determine whether a student should be continued “Conditionally” under the current or revised plan, moved to “Good Standing”, advised to change majors or formally dismissed from the Social Work Program. If dismissed, the student’s academic advisor would assist the student in selecting a new major.
- The Social Work Program retains the right to dismiss a student without placing a student on “conditions” if there is an egregious violation of the NASW *Code of Ethics*, the *Academic and Professional Standards* or other student behavior that would prohibit the individual from being credentialed as a professional social worker.
- Students who are not in agreement with the social work faculty’s decision can utilize the Social Work Program Appeal Process.



## VITERBO UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

### **Purpose**

The Viterbo University Social Work Program is committed to assisting students in their development as a professional social worker. Professional development occurs over the duration of the social work curriculum, throughout all social work courses including field education. Students become familiar with the expectations and requirements of professional social work practice throughout the major and are provided multiple opportunities to develop professionally.

The Social Work Program is a professional academic program. Therefore, the faculty has a responsibility to the standards of the profession, to the Field Education agencies, to the students, and ultimately, to the clients our students are educated to serve. It is with these obligations in mind that the following standards are implemented.

The standards and criteria for the Student Academic and Professional Standards are based on numerous sources, including the NASW *Code of Ethics*, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards* and the social work education literature.

### **Professional Standards**

CSWE requires that social work programs have policies and standards to determine students' competency and readiness for professional social work practice. What follows are the ethical and professional behaviors that students are expected to demonstrate in the Professional Phase of the Social Work Program. Behavior that does not meet these standards may indicate that a student requires development or support to follow the standards of the NASW *Code of Ethics* and the behavioral criteria of the Social Work Program. The following is not intended to be all-inclusive and will be used as guide for faculty to review student progress. Students who do not meet these standards will be reviewed by the social work faculty and may be placed on "Conditional Standing" or dismissed from the Social Work Program.

## Student Academic and Professional Standards

The following student standards are indicators of the requisite knowledge, values and skills of a developing professional social worker. *Students will pledge their adherence to these standards upon application to the professional phase of the Social Work Program.*

### **Accountability: The student demonstrates responsibility to profession, field agency, colleagues, clients, faculty, student peers and self.**

- Comes to class and field agency on time and prepared, with readings and assigned work complete.
- Turns in assignments and field tasks complete and on time.
- Makes arrangements for his/her special needs.
- Abides by course attendance policies and follows the University and Field Education calendar.
- Actively participates in discussion and activities in class and in the field agency.
- Is responsible to peer group or field colleagues with assignments/tasks completed at the student's current developmental level.
- Engages in proper physical contact with peers, faculty, co-workers and clients.
- Engages in personal behavior that does not impede academic and field responsibilities.

**Communication: The student strives to improve verbal and written communication with instructors, peers and clients.**

- Practices positive, constructive, respectful and professional communication skills with peers, instructors and field individuals.
- Demonstrates developing skill in correct spelling, proper use of punctuation, clear structure, paragraphing, organization and logical sequence in written assignments and client records.
- Demonstrates ability to communicate verbally through clear articulation of ideas, thoughts and concepts.
- Demonstrates ability to use electronic communication platforms in an ethical and professional manner.

**Competence: The student applies self to all academic and field pursuits seriously and conscientiously. The student constantly strives to improve abilities.**

- Comes to class with books, handouts, syllabus and necessary learning tools.
- Takes responsibility for the quality of academic and field work, tests and assignments.
- Demonstrates ability to work cooperatively with others.
- Demonstrates developing judgment, decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- Forms effective client-social worker relationships.
- Uses critical thinking skills in academic and field work.
- Accepts constructive feedback from peers, faculty and field agency instructor.
- Develops a plan and seeks suitable support and services when experiencing personal or academic difficulties to ensure academic and field success.

**Diversity: The student is open to difference in people, ideas, ability and creeds that are unfamiliar and embraces diversity.**

- Demonstrates a willingness to learn about diversity in people regarding race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, political orientation, sexual orientation, and populations at risk.
- Maintains speech and behavior free of racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, and stereotyping.
- Demonstrates sensitivity to diversity when serving individuals.
- Demonstrates an understanding of how values and culture interact.

**Integrity: The student practices honesty with self, peers, instructors and field professionals.**

- Completes and takes credit for one's own work.
- Abides by University standards regarding honesty and plagiarism.
- Demonstrates ability to use citations *according to APA*.
- Follows university and agency alcohol and drug use policies.
- Honest representation of caregiver and criminal background.
- Honest representation on Application for Admission to Field Education.

**Professional Identity and Conduct: The student develops the behavior, values, skills, and knowledge of a professional social worker, both inside and outside the classroom.**

- Practices personal reflection and self-correction to assure professional development.
- Understands the effect of one's behavior on others.
- Seeks support and guidance regarding personal or academic challenges.
- Attends to professional roles and boundaries.
- Uses supervision and consultation.
- Based on development level, acts professionally in demeanor, behavior, appearance and communication.

**Respect: The student treats all members of the University and social work community with dignity and respect at all times.**

- Listens while others are speaking.
- Shows respect for others' opinions.
- Provides constructive and sensitive feedback to peers.

- Responds to uncomfortable topics or emotional issues with regard for others and self.
- Approaches differences and conflict in a cooperative manner.
- Demonstrates respect and dignity in all forms of electronic communication and social media on and off campus.

**Confidentiality: The student regards personal information heard or observed from peers, instructors, clients or field individuals as strictly confidential.**

- Maintains confidentiality on information shared in class, dyads, small groups or field agency, unless this information could pose a threat of harm to self or others. Checks with social work faculty on any question related to sharing information.
- Demonstrates development of professional boundaries when self-disclosing personal information in class or in field agency.
- Never uses names of clients or discloses identifying information in the classroom or written work.
- Maintains confidentiality on all electronic communication networks.

**Academic Performance: The student will demonstrate academic competency for entry level social work practice.**

- Maintains an overall grade point average of 2.5.
- Receives minimum grade of C or higher in all prerequisite (ENGL 103, 104, SOCL 125, PSYC 171, POSC 121, BIOL 203) and support (SOCL 320, MATH 130 or PSYC/SOCL 223, PSYC 340 or SOWK 366) courses.
- Achieves a 2.5 cumulative grade point average in the following courses SOWK 240, 280, 321, 331, 340, 341, 351, 441, 451, and 482.
- Receives a minimum grade of B or better in SOWK 210 Introduction to Social Work.
- Receives a minimum grade of C or better in all foundational social work courses (SOWK 240, 275, 280, 321, 331, 340, 341, 351, 441, 451, 479, and 482).
- Receives a grade of “credit” in SOWK 480.

## VITERBO UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM APPEAL PROCESS

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Appeals may include, but are not limited to: mistreatment by faculty, adjunct faculty, or staff, decisions regarding admission, dismissal or readmission to the Social Work Program, being placed on conditions, field education decisions, (discrimination on the basis of age, race, religion, color, sex, physical condition, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or other improper treatment). Grades in specific courses may be grieved following the Grade Appeals procedure outlined in the Viterbo University Student Handbook.

The following procedures are applicable for a student with an appeal request:

1. Discuss the issue with the person(s) alleged to have caused the grounds for the appeal.
2. If the matter is not resolved after discussion with the person(s) involved, the student should contact the Social Work Program Director to discuss the matter.
3. If the matter is not resolved after discussion with the Social Work Program Director, the student may request that the matter be reviewed by the Social Work Program Appeals Committee. Such a request shall be made in writing, and must be received by the Social Work Program Director within 15 working days of the discussion of the matter with the Program Director.
4. The Social Work Program Director shall convene a four member Appeals Committee appointed for this purpose. Committee members may include the Chair of the Department of Social Work and Criminal Justice or his/her designee, a faculty member from an accredited professional program at Viterbo University, and a third faculty member. The Social Work Director may add/remove members to the Appeal Committee as relevant. The Social Work Program Director will serve as an ex officio (non-voting) member of the Appeals Committee.
  - a. The student shall present the appeal electronically to the Committee with any necessary documentation. Additional evidence may also be presented orally.
  - b. A copy of the appeal shall be presented to the aggrieved party who in turn shall present electronically a response with any necessary documentation. After studying the documentation, the Committee shall meet separately with the student and the aggrieved party.
  - c. If desired, either or both parties may have legal or other counsel in attendance at hearings in an advisory capacity only; other than advising his/her client, counsel shall not play a participating role in the proceeding.
  - d. The committee shall meet in closed session to make a decision.
  - e. The committee shall submit its findings and recommendations in writing to both parties of the dispute.
5. The decision of the Social Work Program Appeals Committee may be brought by either party to the Dean of the College of Nursing, Health and Human Behavior for review. The request for review must be written and submitted to the Dean within two weeks of the decision by the Appeals Committee. After considering the matter, the Dean may grant or deny the review and shall notify both parties of the decision within one week of this review.

## PROCEDURE FOR READMISSION FOLLOWING DISMISSAL

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The Readmission Committee will consist of the Social Work Program Director, the Field Education Director, and one other social work faculty. The Social Work Program Director will coordinate the re-entry application and provide support for the process. A one semester waiting period (excluding summer session) is required before readmission may be requested. Immediate placement in social work courses is not assured; qualified students who have not taken the course previously will have enrollment priority to those repeating a course. Readmission to the program is contingent upon the availability of field education placements and priority will be given to students who have had continuous enrollment.

## READMISSION PROCESS

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The process begins with a meeting between the student and the Social Work Program Director to discuss the students' readiness to apply for readmission. A student may apply for readmission one time. November 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for following spring semester and April 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for the next fall semester. The Social Work Program Director will convene the Readmission Committee and advise student of the meeting date and expectations of the committee.

The student will prepare an electronic readmission folder and submit to the Social Work Program Director at least two weeks prior to the meeting. If the folder is incomplete, the application for readmission may be rejected. The folder will include:

- a. A letter of application stating the circumstances of the dismissal from the social work program and the reasons the student should be considered for readmission.
- b. Three letters of support addressing the student's growth since leaving the program and potential for academic success. These letters may come from college faculty or staff, employers, or other professionals.
- c. Demonstration of readiness to handle academic load. For most students this will be demonstrated by the completion of at least 12 credits at Viterbo or other university with grades of C or higher since dismissal. College transcripts from other schools should be submitted if other schools were attended since leaving the Viterbo social work program.
- d. An organized and detailed plan for successful completion of the program including how the student remedied the concern(s) resulting in dismissal.
- e. Evidence of meeting current university catalog and Social Work Program Handbook requirements.

*In addition, the following shall be taken into consideration by the Readmission Committee:*

- a. Viterbo academic record
- b. Evidence of growth, commitment, motivation, and ability to succeed
- c. Organized and detailed plan for successful completion of the program
- d. Employer evaluations/references
- e. Social work faculty assessment

Student requests for readmission will be heard individually. Students should be prepared to briefly present their case to the Readmission Committee. The committee will hear the student's request and consider all material presented. The student will be notified in writing of the outcome within five working days of the meeting. The application file and the record of action taken by the committee will be kept in the student's academic advising file, the student's Social Work Program file and in the office of the Director of Student Academic Success.

If the student is accepted for readmission to the Social Work Program, a contract will be negotiated between the student, the academic advisor, and the Director of Student Academic Success. Two elements of this contract will be:

1. The student must achieve a grade of C or above in all subsequent social work courses.
2. There will be no opportunity for academic progression on conditions.

If readmission is granted, certain academic requirements may be specified to insure currency in social work knowledge and skills prior to enrolling in Field Education. These requirements may include remediation and/or repetition of courses, depending on academic standing or length of time since leaving the program.

Applicants who are not in agreement with the Readmission Committees decision may utilize the Social Work Program Appeal Process.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

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It is the policy of Viterbo University not to discriminate against students, applicants for admission, or employees on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disabilities unrelated to institutional jobs, programs, or activities. Viterbo University is a Title IX institution. Violations of this policy should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator in the Business Office. For more information, contact the Title IX Coordinator at 608-796-3851.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

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Viterbo University is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment which respects the dignity of all individuals, and is free from sexual harassment. Accordingly, Viterbo University will not tolerate the sexual harassment of one member of the university community by another, or by external parties/individuals providing services to Viterbo University including social work field education agencies. The university community member's subject to this prohibition includes faculty, administrators, staff, students, and social work field education agency instructors. Please refer to the Viterbo University Student Handbook for the Viterbo University Sexual Harassment policy.

## **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

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It shall be the policy of the Social Work Program at Viterbo University to comply with the Rehabilitation Act and Americans with Disabilities Act and regulation issued thereunder to the extent applicable to Viterbo University. Students who have a diagnosed disability and are requesting accommodations should contact Jane Eddy ([jleddy@viterbo.edu](mailto:jleddy@viterbo.edu)), Director of the Academic Resource Center and Coordinator of Disability Services. Her office is located in the Academic Resource Center. Once your documentation is on file and you have been approved to receive services, you should meet with Jane Eddy to discuss accommodations and to receive appropriate documentation needed for instructors. Subsequent meetings between student and director are required at the start of each semester to continue eligibility to receive services.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES (TRIO)**

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Is a federally funded program providing outreach and additional support for students who are first generation. Two hundred students each year are invited to participate in the leadership and social opportunities and to take advantage of the additional academic support provided through the program. The goal of the program is to increase graduation and retention rates of SSS students. You are considered a first generation college student if neither of your parents have a bachelor's degree. SSS students may receive free tickets to FAC events. Contact Jane Eddy ([jleddy@viterbo.edu](mailto:jleddy@viterbo.edu)), for more information.

## **CAREGIVER BACKGROUND AND CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK**

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The 1997–99 Biennial Budget (Wisconsin Act 27) includes provisions requiring background and criminal history checks of certain personnel who are responsible for the care, safety and security of children and

adults. Social Work applicants need to be aware that while having a criminal background does not preclude acceptance into the Social Work Program, certain criminal offenses may bar an individual from being credentialed as a social worker upon graduation. A criminal background also may present challenges at the time of placement for Field Education. The Viterbo University Field Education Director will make a good faith attempt to place a student with criminal background in field education but cannot guarantee that a field education site will be secured. To comply with Wisconsin Act 27, the Social Work Program requires a Caregiver Background and Criminal History Check and a national criminal background check on all social work students before they are accepted into Field Education. Should there be a change in a student's criminal background history, such as new criminal charges being filed; the student must inform the Field Education Director for the Social Work Program within one working day of the circumstances involved. For further information about this law and the state requirements, check the web site for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services at: <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/caregiver/INDEX.HTM>

## **SECTION SIX: STUDENT RELATED SERVICES**

### **ADVISEMENT**

Student advisement is essential to social work education. As majors and as developing Social Work Practitioners, students require and benefit from the assistance and guidance of an advisor. Viterbo utilizes a dual advising model for freshman, sophomores and first-semester transfer students. These students will have two advisors: a professional advisor from the Center for Student Success and also a social work faculty advisor. Freshmen will work more with the professional advisor their first year, with three meetings a semester, and begin the transition to working with the faculty advisor the second year. Students will meet with their professional advisor twice a semester and the faculty advisor once a semester for registration during their sophomore year. Transfer students will transition to the faculty advisor after one or two semesters with the professional advisor. The student may make a request to the Social Work Program Director, for a change in advisor and whenever possible this request will be honored.

#### **Role of the Professional advisor:**

- Assist the transition to the university
- Aid students as they develop their educational and career goals
- Provide ongoing support for success in the classroom; review Starfish flags
- Assist in the development of an electronic four-year plan by the end of the freshmen year
- Integrate career planning resources if the career/major goals are uncertain
- Encourage campus involvement

#### **Role of the Social Work Faculty advisor:**

- Assisting students in assessing their aptitude and motivation for a career in social work.
- Providing academic guidance in the choice of courses consistent with the objective of preparation for generalist social work practice and related to student interests.
- Providing for regular review of the student's educational performance in all facets of the Social
- Providing a role model in the areas of social work values and professionalism.
- Available to discuss personal/academic concerns of students related to the pursuit of their educational goals and serving as a broker to link students to needed services.
- Assisting students in their efforts to obtain employment upon graduation.
- Providing information and guidance about graduate school opportunities and credentialing for Social Workers.

Students should use the example four year schedules found in this handbook and their Degree Audit to

guide their academic planning and course registration. Below are helpful online links:

VitNet Help Documents to assist you with Financial Aid, Online Registration, and academic planning:

<https://clqwa.exchange.viterbo.edu/WebAdvisor/WebAdvisor?TYPE=M&PID=CORE-WBMAIN&TOKENIDX=8326823710>

To find information about General Education requirements, the undergraduate catalog, degree requirements, and adding/dropping classes:

<http://www.viterbo.edu/registrar/>

Social Work Program Homepage:

<http://www.viterbo.edu/social-work>

Social Work Program Requirements:

<http://www.viterbo.edu/social-work/programcourses>

## **STUDENT SOCIAL WORK CLUB**

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The purpose of the Social Work Club is to promote awareness of the social work profession within the Viterbo University community, as well as educate and advocate for social causes through coordinating events on campus and in the community. The Social Work Club President and/or the club faculty advisor acts as a liaison between students and social work program. Students may forward concerns to the social work program and participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs through their participation in the Club. Students are encouraged to actively participate and support the activities of the Club. The Club supplements and supports the education of students by facilitating information exchange, socialization and community service. Career exploration is encouraged through programs, speakers or trips related to social work employment. The Club sponsors events related to social issues and causes of importance to the entire University community and offers students opportunities to participate in service activities.

Membership in the Social Work Club is open to all students, traditional and nontraditional, as well as faculty. The officers of the Club are President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer and Public Relations. The officers are elected annually.

The Social Work Club current officers can be found on Moodle.

## **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS**

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The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the primary professional organization for practicing social workers in the United States. It provides leadership on social issues at the national level, supports a wide variety of social legislation beneficial to social workers and their clients, publishes a quarterly journal entitled *Social Work* and is dedicated to encouraging high standards of social work practice. La Crosse is in the Southwest division of the Wisconsin Chapter of NASW. Students are strongly encouraged to join NASW and to attend local meetings. Applications are available online at [www.naswdc.org](http://www.naswdc.org) or, <http://www.naswdc.org/join.asp>



## **SECTION SEVEN: STUDENT PARTICIPATION ON PROGRAM COUNCILS AND PROGRAM INPUT**

### **VITERBO UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The Advisory Council provides planned, regular exchanges among the Program, field education agencies, representatives of groups that benefit from social policies and services, and other social work practitioners. While advisory in nature, this input will be used by the Program for purposes of evaluation and development regarding the program's educational goals and objectives, curriculum, student performance, program policies and developments in the field setting that affect student learning. The President of the Social Work Club, and an alumnus of the Social Work Program provide student representation on this Council.

### **STUDENT INPUT TO PROGRAM POLICIES**

Students are able to provide feedback on program policies via in person meetings, email, phone, or written document to the Program Director. Feedback can be anonymous. The program also offers an annual focus group for students to meet with neutral facilitators and share feedback about program policies. The feedback students provide is used to improve program policies and processes. All students are informed of focus group dates/times and the groups will be held when juniors/seniors are available.

## SECTION EIGHT: NASW *Code of Ethics* and CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards

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

Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the NASW Delegate Assembly 2017.  
(*The following is not the entire code of Ethics. It does not include the "Preamble" nor the "Statement of Purpose."*)

#### **Ethical Principles**

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

##### *VALUE: Service*

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

##### *VALUE: Social Justice*

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

##### *VALUE: Dignity and Worth of the Person*

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

##### *VALUE: Importance of Human Relationships*

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

##### *VALUE: Integrity*

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

##### *VALUE: Competence*

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

## **Ethical Standards**

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

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

### **1. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Clients**

#### **1.01 Commitment to Clients**

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

#### **1.02 Self-Determination**

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

#### **1.03 Informed Consent**

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

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

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

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

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

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

- (g) Social workers who use technology to provide social work services should assess the clients' suitability and capacity for electronic and remote services. Social workers should consider the clients' intellectual, emotional, and physical ability to use technology to receive services and ability to understand the potential benefits, risks, and limitations of such services. If clients do not wish to use services provided through technology, social workers should help them identify alternate methods of service.
- (h) Social workers should obtain clients' informed consent before making audio or video recordings of clients or permitting observation of service provision by a third party.
- (i) Social workers should obtain client consent before conducting an electronic search on the client. Exceptions may arise when the search is for purposes of protecting the client or others from serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm, or for other compelling professional reasons.

#### **1.04 Competence**

- (a) Social workers should provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, consultation received, supervised experience, or other relevant professional experience.
- (b) Social workers should provide services in substantive areas or use intervention techniques or approaches that are new to them only after engaging in appropriate study, training, consultation, and supervision from people who are competent in those interventions or techniques.
- (c) When generally recognized standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, social workers should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps (including appropriate education, research, training, consultation, and supervision) to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm.
- (d) Social workers who use technology in the provision of social work services should ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide such services in a competent manner. This includes an understanding of the special communication challenges when using technology and the ability to implement strategies to address these challenges.
- (e) Social workers who use technology in providing social work services should comply with the laws governing technology and social work practice in the jurisdiction in which they are regulated and located and, as applicable, in the jurisdiction in which the client is located.

#### **1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity**

- (a) Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.
- (b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients' cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.
- (c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical ability.
- (d) Social workers who provide electronic social work services should be aware of cultural and socioeconomic differences among clients and how they may use electronic technology. Social workers should assess cultural, environmental, economic, mental or physical ability, linguistic, and other issues that may affect the delivery or use of these services.

#### **1.06 Conflicts of Interest**

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

- (b) Social workers should not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.
- (c) Social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. In instances when dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable, social workers should take steps to protect clients and are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. (Dual or multiple relationships occur when social workers relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.)
- (d) When social workers provide services to two or more people who have a relationship with each other (for example, couples, family members), social workers should clarify with all parties which individuals will be considered clients and the nature of social workers' professional obligations to the various individuals who are receiving services. Social workers who anticipate a conflict of interest among the individuals receiving services or who anticipate having to perform in potentially conflicting roles (for example, when a social worker is asked to testify in a child custody dispute or divorce proceedings involving clients) should clarify their role with the parties involved and take appropriate action to minimize any conflict of interest.
- ( e) Social workers should avoid communication with clients using technology (such as social networking sites, online chat, e-mail, text messages, telephone, and video) for personal or non-work-related purposes.
- (f) Social workers should be aware that posting personal information on professional Web sites or other media might cause boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.
- (g) Social workers should be aware that personal affiliations may increase the likelihood that clients may discover the social worker's presence on Web sites, social media, and other forms of technology. Social workers should be aware that involvement in electronic communication with groups based on race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental or physical ability, religion, immigration status, and other personal affiliations may affect their ability to work effectively with particular clients.
- (h) Social workers should avoid accepting requests from or engaging in personal relationships with clients on social networking sites or other electronic media to prevent boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.

### **1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality**

- (a) Social workers should respect clients' right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from clients unless it is essential to providing services or conducting social work evaluation or research. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.
- (b) Social workers may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a client.
- (c) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. The general expectation that social workers will keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or other identifiable person. In all instances, social workers should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose; only information that is directly relevant to the purpose for which the disclosure is made should be revealed.
- (d) If social workers plan to disclose confidential information, they should (when feasible and to the extent possible) inform clients about the disclosure and the potential consequences prior to disclosing the information. This applies whether social workers disclose confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or client consent.
- (e) Social workers should discuss with clients and other interested parties the nature of confidentiality and limitations of clients' right to confidentiality. Social workers should review with clients

circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. This discussion should occur as soon as possible in the social worker-client relationship and as needed throughout the course of the relationship.

- (f) When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual's right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. This agreement should include consideration of whether confidential information may be exchanged in person or electronically, among clients or with others outside of formal counseling sessions. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.
- (g) Social workers should inform clients involved in family, couples, marital, or group counseling of the social worker's, employer's, and agency's policy concerning the social worker's disclosure of confidential information among the parties involved in the counseling.
- (h) Social workers should not disclose confidential information to third-party payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.
- (i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information, electronically or in person, in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semipublic areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.
- (j) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law. When a court of law or other legally authorized body orders social workers to disclose confidential or privileged information without a client's consent and such disclosure could cause harm to the client, social workers should request that the court withdraw the order or limit the order as narrowly as possible or maintain the records under seal, unavailable for public inspection.
- (k) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media.
- (l) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients' records are stored in a secure location and that clients' records are not available to others who are not authorized to have access.
- (m) Social workers should take reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of electronic communications, including information provided to clients or third parties. Social workers should use applicable safeguards (such as encryption, firewalls, and passwords) when using electronic communications such as e-mail, online posts, online chat sessions, mobile communication, and text messages.
- (n) Social workers should develop and disclose policies and procedures for notifying clients of any breach of confidential information in a timely manner.
- (o) In the event of unauthorized access to client records or information, including any unauthorized access to the social worker's electronic communication or storage systems, social workers should inform clients of such disclosures, consistent with applicable laws and professional standards.
- (p) Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of electronic technology, including Internet-based search engines, to gather information about clients.
- (q) Social workers should avoid searching or gathering client information electronically unless there are compelling professional reasons, and when appropriate, with the client's informed consent.
- (r) Social workers should avoid posting any identifying or confidential information about clients on professional Web sites or other forms of social media.
- (s) Social workers should transfer or dispose of client's records in a manner that protects clients' confidentiality and is consistent with applicable laws governing records and social work licensure.

- (t) Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker's termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.
- (u) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients for teaching or training purposes unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information.
- (v) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients with consultants unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information or there is a compelling need for such disclosure.
- (w) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of deceased clients consistent with the preceding standards.

**1.08 Access to Records**

- (a) Social workers should provide clients with reasonable access to records concerning the clients. Social workers who are concerned that clients' access to their records could cause serious misunderstanding or harm to the client should provide assistance in interpreting the records and consultation with the client regarding the records. Social workers should limit clients' access to their records, or portions of their records, only in exceptional circumstances when there is compelling evidence that such access would cause serious harm to the client. Both clients' requests and the rationale for withholding some or all of the record should be documented in clients' files.
- (b) Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of technology to provide clients with access to their records.
- (c) When providing clients with access to their records, social workers should take steps to protect the confidentiality of other individuals identified or discussed in such records.

**1.09 Sexual Relationships**

- (a) Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities, inappropriate sexual communications through the use of technology or in person, or sexual contact with current clients, whether such contact is consensual or forced.
- (b) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a close personal relationship when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. Sexual activity or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a personal relationship has the potential to be harmful to the client and may make it difficult for the social worker and client to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Social workers—not their clients, their clients' relatives, or other individuals with whom the client maintains a personal relationship—assume the full burden for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.
- (c) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with former clients because of the potential for harm to the client. If social workers engage in conduct contrary to this prohibition or claim that an exception to this prohibition is warranted because of extraordinary circumstances, it is social workers—not their clients—who assume the full burden of demonstrating that the former client has not been exploited, coerced, or manipulated, intentionally or unintentionally.
- (d) Social workers should not provide clinical services to individuals with whom they have had a prior sexual relationship. Providing clinical services to a former sexual partner has the potential to be harmful to the individual and is likely to make it difficult for the social worker and individual to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

**1.10 Physical Contact**

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

### **1.11 Sexual Harassment**

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

### **1.12 Derogatory Language**

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

### **1.13 Payment for Services**

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

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

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

### **1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision-Making Capacity**

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

### **1.15 Interruption of Services**

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

### **1.16 Referral for Services**

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

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

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

### **1.17 Termination of Services**

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

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



- (c) Social workers in fee-for-service settings may terminate services to clients who are not paying an overdue balance if the financial contractual arrangements have been made clear to the client, if the client does not pose an imminent danger to self or others, and if the clinical and other consequences of the current nonpayment have been addressed and discussed with the client.
- (d) Social workers should not terminate services to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client.
- (e) Social workers who anticipate the termination or interruption of services to clients should notify clients promptly and seek the transfer, referral, or continuation of services in relation to the clients' needs and preferences.
- (f) Social workers who are leaving an employment setting should inform clients of appropriate options for the continuation of services and of the benefits and risks of the options.

## **2. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues**

### **2.01 Respect**

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

### **2.02 Confidentiality**

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

### **2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

- (a) Social workers who are members of an interdisciplinary team should participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the social work profession. Professional and ethical obligations of the interdisciplinary team as a whole and of its individual members should be clearly established.
- (b) Social workers for whom a team decision raises ethical concerns should attempt to resolve the disagreement through appropriate channels. If the disagreement cannot be resolved, social workers should pursue other avenues to address their concerns consistent with client well-being.

### **2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues**

- (a) Social workers should not take advantage of a dispute between a colleague and an employer to obtain a position or otherwise advance the social workers' own interests.
- (b) Social workers should not exploit clients in disputes with colleagues or engage clients in any inappropriate discussion of conflicts between social workers and their colleagues.

### **2.05 Consultation**

- (a) Social workers should seek the advice and counsel of colleagues whenever such consultation is in the best interests of clients.
- (b) Social workers should keep themselves informed about colleagues' areas of expertise and competencies. Social workers should seek consultation only from colleagues who have demonstrated knowledge, expertise, and competence related to the subject of the consultation.
- (c) When consulting with colleagues about clients, social workers should disclose the least amount of information necessary to achieve the purposes of the consultation.

### **2.06 Sexual Relationships**

- (a) Social workers who function as supervisors or educators should not engage in sexual activities or contact (including verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact) with supervisees, students, trainees, or other colleagues over whom they exercise professional authority.
- (b) Social workers should avoid engaging in sexual relationships with colleagues when there is potential for a conflict of interest. Social workers who become involved in, or anticipate becoming involved in, a sexual relationship with a colleague have a duty to transfer professional responsibilities, when necessary, to avoid a conflict of interest.

**2.07 Sexual Harassment**

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

**2.08 Impairment of Colleagues**

- (a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's impairment that is due to personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties and that interferes with practice effectiveness should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.
- (b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague's impairment interferes with practice effectiveness and that the colleague has not taken adequate steps to address the impairment should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

**2.09 Incompetence of Colleagues**

- (a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's incompetence should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.
- (b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague is incompetent and has not taken adequate steps to address the incompetence should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

**2.10 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues**

- (a) Social workers should take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues, including unethical conduct using technology.
- (b) Social workers should be knowledgeable about established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues' unethical behavior. Social workers should be familiar with national, state, and local procedures for handling ethics complaints. These include policies and procedures created by NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, agencies, and other professional organizations.
- (c) Social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should seek resolution by discussing their concerns with the colleague when feasible and when such discussion is likely to be productive.
- (d) When necessary, social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should take action through appropriate formal channels (such as contacting a state licensing board or regulatory body, an NASW committee on inquiry, or other professional ethics committees).
- (e) Social workers should defend and assist colleagues who are unjustly charged with unethical conduct.

### **3. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings**

#### **3.01 Supervision and Consultation**

- (a) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation (whether in-person or remotely) should have the necessary knowledge and skill to supervise or consult appropriately and should do so only within their areas of knowledge and competence.
- (b) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.
- (c) Social workers should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with supervisees in which there is a risk of exploitation of or potential harm to the supervisee, including dual relationships that may arise while using social networking sites or other electronic media.
- (d) Social workers who provide supervision should evaluate supervisees' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

#### **3.02 Education and Training**

- (a) Social workers who function as educators, field instructors for students, or trainers should provide instruction only within their areas of knowledge and competence and should provide instruction based on the most current information and knowledge available in the profession.
- (b) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should evaluate students' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.
- (c) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients are routinely informed when services are being provided by students.
- (d) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student, including dual relationships that may arise while using social networking sites or other electronic media. Social work educators and field instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

#### **3.03 Performance Evaluation**

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

#### **3.04 Client Records**

- (a) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in records is accurate and reflects the services provided.
- (b) Social workers should include sufficient and timely documentation in records to facilitate the delivery of services and to ensure continuity of services provided to clients in the future.
- (c) Social workers' documentation should protect clients' privacy to the extent that is possible and appropriate and should include only information that is directly relevant to the delivery of services.
- (d) Social workers should store records following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by state statutes or relevant contracts.

#### **3.05 Billing**

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

#### **3.06 Client Transfer**

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

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

### **3.07 Administration**

- (a) Social work administrators should advocate within and outside their agencies for adequate resources to meet clients' needs.
- (b) Social workers should advocate for resource allocation procedures that are open and fair. When not all clients' needs can be met, an allocation procedure should be developed that is nondiscriminatory and based on appropriate and consistently applied principles.
- (c) Social workers who are administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that adequate agency or organizational resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision.
- (d) Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that the working environment for which they are responsible is consistent with and encourages compliance with the *NASW Code of Ethics*. Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to eliminate any conditions in their organizations that violate, interfere with, or discourage compliance with the *Code*.

### **3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development**

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

### **3.09 Commitments to Employers**

- (a) Social workers generally should adhere to commitments made to employers and employing organizations.
- (b) Social workers should work to improve employing agencies' policies and procedures and the efficiency and effectiveness of their services.
- (c) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that employers are aware of social workers' ethical obligations as set forth in the *NASW Code of Ethics* and of the implications of those obligations for social work practice.
- (d) Social workers should not allow an employing organization's policies, procedures, regulations, or administrative orders to interfere with their ethical practice of social work. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that their employing organizations' practices are consistent with the *NASW Code of Ethics*.
- (e) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate discrimination in the employing organization's work assignments and in its employment policies and practices.
- (f) Social workers should accept employment or arrange student field placements only in organizations that exercise fair personnel practices.
- (g) Social workers should be diligent stewards of the resources of their employing organizations, wisely conserving funds where appropriate and never misappropriating funds or using them for unintended purposes.

### **3.10 Labor-Management Disputes**

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

## **4. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals**

### **4.01 Competence**

- (a) Social workers should accept responsibility or employment only on the basis of existing competence or the intention to acquire the necessary competence.
- (b) Social workers should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work. Social workers should routinely review the professional literature and participate in continuing education relevant to social work practice and social work ethics.
- (c) Social workers should base practice on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge, relevant to social work and social work ethics.

**4.02 Discrimination**

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

**4.03 Private Conduct**

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

**4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception**

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

**4.05 Impairment**

- (a) Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.
- (b) Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.

**4.06 Misrepresentation**

- (a) Social workers should make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the social work profession, a professional social work organization, or the social worker's employing agency.
- (b) Social workers who speak on behalf of professional social work organizations should accurately represent the official and authorized positions of the organizations.
- (c) Social workers should ensure that their representations to clients, agencies, and the public of professional qualifications, credentials, education, competence, affiliations, services provided, or results to be achieved are accurate. Social workers should claim only those relevant professional credentials they actually possess and take steps to correct any inaccuracies or misrepresentations of their credentials by others.

**4.07 Solicitations**

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

**4.08 Acknowledging Credit**

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

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

### **5.01 Integrity of the Profession**

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

### **5.02 Evaluation and Research**

- (a) Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.
- (b) Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research to contribute to the development of knowledge.
- (c) Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice.
- (d) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.
- (e) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants' well-being, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.
- (f) When using electronic technology to facilitate evaluation or research, social workers should ensure that participants provide informed consent for the use of such technology. Social workers should assess whether participants are able to use the technology and, when appropriate, offer reasonable alternatives to participate in the evaluation or research.
- (g) When evaluation or research participants are incapable of giving informed consent, social workers should provide an appropriate explanation to the participants, obtain the participants' assent to the extent they are able, and obtain written consent from an appropriate proxy.
- (h) Social workers should never design or conduct evaluation or research that does not use consent procedures, such as certain forms of naturalistic observation and archival research, unless rigorous and responsible review of the research has found it to be justified because of its prospective scientific, educational, or applied value and unless equally effective alternative procedures that do not involve waiver of consent are not feasible.

- (i) Social workers should inform participants of their right to withdraw from evaluation and research at any time without penalty.
- (j) Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.
- (k) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.
- (l) Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.
- (m) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.
- (n) Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants' confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.
- (o) Social workers should report evaluation and research findings accurately. They should not fabricate or falsify results and should take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.
- (p) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest and dual relationships with participants, should inform participants when a real or potential conflict of interest arises, and should take steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes participants' interests primary.
- (q) Social workers should educate themselves, their students, and their colleagues about responsible research practices.

## **6. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society**

### **6.01 Social Welfare**

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

### **6.02 Public Participation**

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

### **6.03 Public Emergencies**

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

### **6.04 Social and Political Action**

- (a) Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.
- (b) Social workers should act to expand choice and opportunity for all people, with special regard for vulnerable, disadvantaged, oppressed, and exploited people and groups.
- (c) Social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the United States and globally. Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources,

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

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

## **CSWE EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS**

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

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

- make 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;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

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

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

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and



- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

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

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

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

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

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

### **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

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

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

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

of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

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

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

- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply 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;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

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

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

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

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

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and

the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:

- select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.