

# **BASW**

# **Student Handbook**

## **2024- 2025**



**California State University, San Bernardino**

**School of Social Work**

**The Bachelor of Arts in Social Work  
(BASW)  
Student Handbook**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

Welcome to the Bachelor of Arts in Social Work (BASW) Program at CSUSB. We are very excited to accompany you on this challenging and rewarding journey over the next two years. This handbook serves as a primary resource for information about school policies, procedures, and frequently asked questions.

Familiarizing yourself with the contents of this handbook will save you time and prevent potential issues as you progress through the BASW Program. Additionally, we encourage you to become familiar with other essential resources, such as the [CSUSB Bulletin](#) and the semester [CSUSB Class Schedule](#), both are available online at <http://www.csusb.edu>.

The BASW Program is administered by the School of Social Work (located at SB 423, phone number: (909)537-5501), which is part of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SB-207). The policies established by the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and California State University, San Bernardino, also apply to the BASW Program.

Please note that policies outlined in this handbook and other sources are subject to review and revision. It is crucial to stay in close communication with the School of Social Work for the most up-to-date information.

This handbook, along with the Field Manual, the NASW Code of Ethics, and other program information are available on the school's website: <https://csbs.csusb.edu/social-work>. If you have reviewed these resources and still have questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

All social work students are required to read this handbook and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics. Students will then be asked to sign an acknowledgment confirming they have read, understood, and will abide by the contents of these documents. The signed electronic form will be kept in the student's files.

Best wishes as you start your journey in Social Work. We are all excited to work with you.

Dr. Nicole Arkadie, EdD, LCSW, PPSC  
BASW Program Director

## **1.1 History of the Program**

The BASW Program was developed in response to the growing need for social workers in the community and at the request of community leaders to offer social work education at the baccalaureate level. Planning for the program began in the late 1990s, and the first cohort of students was admitted in 2003.

In June 2006, after a rigorous four-year evaluation process, the program received accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Since the accreditation process began before students were accepted, all graduates are considered to have completed an accredited program. A Title IV-E (public Child Welfare) component was added to the program in 2006 and has continued to grow annually. The program was re-affirmed by CSWE without conditions in 2010 and again in 2017.

## **1.2 School of Social Work Mission**

**CSUSB's School of Social Work provides accessible, dynamic, and rigorous academic programs that prepare students with generalist and advanced generalist professional values, knowledge, and practice skills to effectively enhance the well-being of the diverse populations and communities of our region, state, and world.**

**Accessibility** means attracting and retaining a student population reflective of the region's population and providing social work education opportunities to students in previously unserved areas.

**Dynamic Change** means we change and innovate to reflect changes in the professional knowledge base, technology for practice and teaching, regional demographics and needs, and national and global trends affecting human well-being.

**Rigor** means that the education is rigorous as demonstrated by comprehensive assessment of the values, knowledge, and practice competencies that we expect our students acquire during the program.

**Professional Social Work Knowledge, Skills, and Values** means promoting human and community well-being by teaching professional social work values, knowledge, and practice skills. These values include service, social justice, the dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, integrity, competence, human rights, and scientific inquiry. The knowledge base includes risk and protective factors in all stages of human development, practice skills to enhance the functioning of individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities (including policy advocacy), and the skills of scientific inquiry.

**Serving the diverse populations and communities of our region, state, and world** means that our programs prepare students for practice in a regional, state, and global context of dynamic diversity.

## **1.3 School of Social Work BASW Program Goals**

1. We enhance social work educational opportunities for students within our region and in unserved areas by increasing accessibility and program completion, especially for first-

generation college students, students from the dynamically evolving ethnic communities in our region, and students in remote areas.

2. We continually update our curriculum and teaching practices with current research and best practices that reflect the needs and trends of our region, nationally and globally.
3. We offer and measure the attainment of a competency-based, generalist, and advanced generalist-level curriculum consistent with the needs of our area for practice skills with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and the skills of policy advocacy.
4. We offer a curriculum that emphasizes practice consistent with the aims and values of the social work profession and that meets the needs of diverse, vulnerable, and underserved populations, especially in our region.
5. We support faculty in utilizing their research and expertise to lead the profession and the community.

## **2.0 Policies and Procedures**

### **2.1 Academic Advising**

All BASW students are assigned a professional academic advisor. The contact information for your advisor can be found in Your MyCoyote Student Portal.

It is highly recommended that students meet with their assigned advisor at the beginning of each semester to ensure they stay on track for graduation. Students should also familiarize themselves with their PAWS and take a proactive approach to their course planning.

To avoid delays in registration, students are encouraged to schedule an advising appointment as soon as the course schedules for the following semester become available. Students should come prepared with a proposed schedule for discussion during the appointment and bring an expanded copy of their PAWS.

### **2.2 Grading Policies**

Specific grading criteria and procedures are provided in each course syllabus, distributed to students during the first class session. CSUSB students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 (a grade of “C”) in all CSUSB courses to avoid academic probation. BASW and pre-BASW students are required to maintain a GPA of 2.5, or they may face dismissal from the major or pre-major. Additionally, students must have a 2.5 GPA to enter practicum. Those whose GPA falls below 2.5 will be required to meet with their advisor to develop a plan for improving their academic performance.

**SW 2000 and the lower division statistics course (PSYC 2210 or ADMN 2100) must be passed with a “C” or better to be admitted into the BASW Program. All courses taken from the School of Social Work must be passed with a “C” or better grade to progress in the program. Except specifically designated otherwise, all classes are graded on the A through F scale.**

Grade point averages are computed by dividing the number of grade points earned by the number of units attempted. The grade symbols used at the university are as follows (from [CSUSB Bulletin of Courses](#), 2024-2025, available online):

Grade Symbol	Performance Level	Grade points per quarter hour
A	Excellent	4.0
A-		3.7
B+		3.3
B	Good	3.0
B-		2.7
C+		2.3
C	Satisfactory	2.0
C-		1.7
D+		1.3
D	Passing	1.0
D-		.7
F	Failing	.0
CR	Credit	
NC	No Credit	

Please see Undergraduate Studies Regulations in the [CSUSB Bulletin of Courses](#) for further information about grading standards.

## **2.4 Plagiarism and Cheating**

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's work as your own. Any time text is copied word-for-word from another source, it **MUST** be enclosed in quotation marks and properly credited to the author. Additionally, making only minor changes (e.g., altering a few words in a sentence) without crediting the original author is also considered plagiarism. Presenting ideas from other sources as your own is another form of plagiarism.

It is the student's responsibility to understand all forms of plagiarism, as the consequences range from receiving no credit for an assignment to expulsion from the university (see the [CSUSB Bulletin of Courses](#)). "Not knowing" what constitutes plagiarism will not protect you from these consequences. **Students are required to complete an online training on plagiarism at the start of the BASW program (see page 1 of the BASW Handbook).**

Copying or making minor changes to someone else's work and presenting it as your own is unethical and hinders the development of writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills—skills that are fundamental to an undergraduate education.

Cheating in any form can also result in serious consequences, including a hearing before CSUSB's Judicial Affairs Officer. Students should consult the CSUSB Bulletin of Courses to fully understand the definition of cheating and its potential consequences.

## **2.5 If you fail a Social Work Course (get lower than a “C”)**

The BASW Program is a highly structured program designed to be completed in two years. The social work courses are sequential, each course building upon the next. If you fail a social work course (get lower than a “C”), you may not be allowed to continue in the program until you re-take the course and pass it. This means waiting one year until the course is offered again.

## **2.6 Grade Appeals**

If a student has questions or concerns about the grade given on an assignment or for a course, he or she should always discuss the matter first with the instructor. If the matter cannot be resolved through discussion, the student has the right to appeal the final course grade. Such actions must be initiated within 40 calendar days after the grade is recorded. Policies governing grade appeals and the forms needed for this purpose are available from the office of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SB-207). Please see the University’s Webpage on Student Academic Grievance (Grade Appeals) (<https://www.csusb.edu/advising/policies-procedures/grade-appeals>) for the appropriate steps to take in a Grade Appeal process.

## **2.7 Practicum Placement Evaluation**

Progress in SW 4001, SW 4002, and SW 4011 is evaluated by the Practicum Learning Plan Agreement/Comprehensive Skills Evaluation (LPA). The LPA is a comprehensive evaluation of student skills in all areas related to program objectives. The LPA specifies observable behavioral indicators of success in reaching program objectives. Field Instructors and students are given a sample rating system before field placement. LPA and associated field documents are provided on the IPT database, which you will gain access to in your Senior year. Please also review the BASW Practicum Manual (located on the School of Social Work website) for additional policies and procedures regarding the Field placement.

## **2.8 Policy on Course Absences**

The School of Social Work holds the reasonable expectation that all regularly enrolled students will meet the academic coursework and field practicum requirements through their regular attendance in class and site location (field). Missing class/coursework has consequences, including the inability to make up missed assignments, grade reduction, and course failure in excessive unauthorized absence. Missing field coursework/practicum obligations can result in receiving an incomplete or not passing grade, which could jeopardize both the timing and completion of your academic program.

It is the student’s responsibility to inform instructors whenever possible when they will miss class or field practicum obligations and make specific arrangements for missed assignments or field practicum hours.

There are occasions when students, for various reasons, may find themselves needing to miss a number of classes. Examples might include medical conditions, legal issues, or a catastrophic event. In these cases, students should contact all instructors, field instructors, and liaisons (if currently in a field practicum). Field Instructors may request documentation of the event that may lead you to miss class. Possible options depend on the individual circumstance and time regarding



classes missed, required hours for practicum (16 hours per week), and points in the semester. In any given situation, the possibilities could include continuing without condition in the program, receiving incomplete grades (see section 2.9 in the BASW Handbook for incomplete policy), withdrawing from coursework (see Section 2.9 of the BASW Handbook for more information), taking a leave of absence from the program (see Section 2.10 of the BASW Handbook for details), or receiving a failing grade or No Credit in coursework.

In planning for or in response to potential situations that could impact the success of an individual enrolled in the program, the School of Social Work is here to assist and support the student, but failure to fully communicate with faculty, instructors, and administration may result in course failure or program dismissal.

## **2.9 Withdrawals & Incompletes**

Any student needing to withdraw from a course or to request postponement of grading must do so formally and in accordance with university regulations. The policies and procedures governing withdrawal from a course may be found in the [CSUSB Bulletin of Courses](#) under "Academic Regulations."

Students who fail to withdraw from a course officially will receive an "F" grade, which is recorded on their transcript. Incompletes or withdrawals from a required course must be removed before a student can enroll in subsequent required courses in the sequence.

A grade of Incomplete (I) is not given automatically when a student has not turned in all assignments for a given course. Rather, the student must initiate a request to the instructor, indicating reasons why the work could not be completed and include a plan for completing the missing work. The instructor will grant or deny this request and approve a final plan for completing the job. Usually, an incomplete is only given for serious medical or personal reasons. Please see the [CSUSB Bulletin of Courses](#) for additional information (Section entitled "Academic Regulations".)

Any student receiving an "I" in a course that is a prerequisite for another course (which is the case for most Social Work (SW) classes, as they fall in a sequence) must complete that grade by the end of the third week into the next course in the sequence. If not completed, the student will be dropped from the next class and will not be allowed to take the next class in that sequence until necessary remedial work is done. It is also the student's responsibility to ensure the instructor files a change of grade form when the job is complete. Failure to change the incomplete to a letter grade by the date specified (or one year later if not specified) results in an "IC" or an "F" being recorded on the student's transcript, which is calculated in the GPA as a failing grade.

## **2.10 Leave of Absence**

Students must file a leave of absence petition if they plan to be absent from the university for over two consecutive terms, including summer. An approved leave of absence allows students to be absent from campus without losing rights to specific degree requirements under an earlier catalog. See the CSUSB Bulletin of Courses for more details.

Students may take a leave of absence for medical, military, or planned educational reasons. The petition must be filed in advance. However, medical and military leave may be approved retroactively.

Students should also consult with their BASW advisor before taking any leave of absence from the program.

### **2.11 Deferral of Admission**

Students who decline an offer of acceptance into the BASW Program must reapply the following year. Admission is not guaranteed and will be based on evaluating the current pool of applicants. Please talk with a BASW program staff member to determine how to reapply.

### **2.12 Course Substitutions, Waivers, and Transfer of Credits**

For the transfer of credits in general, students must follow the policy established by CSUSB, which is found in the Bulletin of Courses. CSUSB specifies that no more than 60 units taken at a community college may be applied toward the requirements of a degree at the university. Also, CSUSB specifies that no upper-division credit may be allowed for courses taken at a community college. Finally, any course waiver or credit transfer within the School of Social Work does not supersede University requirements.

There may be times when a course a student has taken elsewhere is substantially similar to one we offer or require. However, because our specific course objectives are consistent with our program objectives and with accreditation standards, we must see the actual course syllabus or other material to ensure that the course objectives and course material are substantially similar.

The BASW program will review specific courses for waiver or transfer of BASW major coursework and additional program requirements on a case-by-case basis. The waiver request must be on a **standard form** (a copy is available in the appendices of this document and online.) The BASW Program Director will be responsible for this review in collaboration with colleagues and CSUSB faculty who teach the course the student seeks to waive. If the BASW Director determines that the course is substantially similar, and the student received a grade in the course that is indicative of a high level of mastery of the course content, the BASW director will recommend that the student be granted a waiver so that he or she will not have to take the equivalent course in the CSUSB BASW Program. The waiver recommendation is then given to the Director of the School of Social Work for approval. If approved, the BASW Director informs CSUSB records of the waiver. Approved waiver forms will be placed in the student's file.

Course waiver or substitution varies depending on the type of course. For all Social Work courses, the BASW program will only accept social work courses completed at other CSWE-accredited programs with a grade of C or higher. Courses with similar content taken in other departments than social work or at programs not accredited by CSWE will not be considered for waiver or substitution. Social Work field practicum courses are not subject to waiver or challenge. Other non-Social Work prerequisites and major requirements will be considered case-by-case.

### **2.13 Policy on Credit for Life Experience**

In accordance with the Council on Social Work Education, the School of Social Work does not grant credit for life experience and previous work experience, in whole or in part as substitution of the field practicum or the professional foundation areas.

### **2.14 CSUSB Sexual Harassment Policy**

BASW students are required to view campus policies and procedures regarding sexual harassment at <http://titleix.csusb.edu/>. The school is committed to creating a relaxed environment free of such harassment. Suppose students feel unable to approach the BASW Program Director or the School Director of the School of Social Work with any concerns about sexual harassment issues. In that case, they are strongly encouraged to contact one of the harassment advisors for confidential consultation on rights and alternative procedures available to deal with problems of sexual harassment.

### **2.15 Nondiscrimination Policy**

California State University, San Bernardino's policies and procedures on discrimination are enumerated in the University's Diversity Policy. The School of Social Work believes strongly in the importance of an educational experience that prepares students to work effectively with diverse populations of color, ethnicity, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and physical and mental abilities. Through assignments, lectures, class discussions, exemplars, exercises, and choice of field settings, students are assured an opportunity to understand and work effectively with clients who represent a wide range of attitudes and points of view. Further, the school is committed to learning experiences that expose students to values and ethics reflected by the profession and society at large.

### **2.16 Accommodations for Disabilities**

No otherwise qualified student shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the School of Social Work. A student with a disability may be protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and be eligible for a reasonable accommodation to provide equal opportunity to meet academic criteria for professional behavior and scholastic performance.

Any otherwise qualified student with a protected disability who would like an accommodation must notify the Office of Services to Students with Disabilities (SSD, 537-5238, <http://ssd.csusb.edu/>) and provide that office with disability-specific documentation determined by that office. The Office of Services to Students with Disabilities recommends accommodation, which is then communicated to instructors.

## **3.0 Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic Performance/Professional Ethical Conduct**

### **3.1 Standards for Social Work Education**

The ultimate goal of the Standards is to help students have a successful experience at the School of Social Work. Because of the nature of professional social work practice, the School of Social Work has different expectations of students than non-professional programs. Standards are linked to students' abilities to become effective social work professionals. They are provided so students and faculty can be clear about expectations and procedures to address academic performance concerns.

Since becoming a professional is a gradual process, not all criteria are expected to be met at all times. Persons who teach and supervise students and program administrators will assess student academic performance and apply their professional judgment to determine if standards are being met during a student's educational career. Professional judgment is the capacity to assess a situation by applying the values and knowledge of the social work profession, combined with a professional's experience and practice wisdom. It also represents applying knowledge, values, and skills to making decisions in a helping process.

### **3.2 Criteria for Evaluating Academic Performance**

In order to meet its responsibilities to provide quality professional education and to ensure that its graduates can function in a wide variety of professional situations, the School of Social Work evaluates the academic performance of its students in four general areas: 1) Basic Abilities to Acquire Professional Skills; 2) Mental and Emotional Abilities; 3) Professional Performance Skills; and 4) Scholastic Performance. Meeting the criteria for scholastic achievement is necessary but not sufficient to ensure continued enrollment in a program. Both professional behavior and scholastic performance comprise academic standards.

### **3.3 Basic Abilities Necessary to Acquire Professional Skills**

#### **Communication Skills**

Demonstrates sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings.

- a) **Written:** Writes clearly, uses correct grammar and spelling, and applies appropriate writing style, including American Psychological Association (APA) referencing, appropriate source citation, and documentation. Demonstrates sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and complete adequately all written assignments as specified by faculty.
- b) **Oral:** Communicates effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals. Expresses ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates a willingness and an ability to listen to others. Demonstrates sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to complete adequately all oral assignments, and to meet the objects of field placement experiences, as specified by faculty.

### **Interpersonal Skills**

Demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals and to fulfill the ethical obligations of the profession. These include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and **demonstration of respect for and consideration of others**. Takes appropriate responsibility for own actions and considers the impact of these actions on others.

### **Cognitive Skills**

Exhibits sufficient knowledge of social work and clarity of thinking to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in classroom and field. Demonstrates grounding in relevant social, behavioral, and biological science knowledge and research - including knowledge and skills in relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of practice. Exhibits ability to conceptualize and integrate knowledge and apply that knowledge to professional practice.

### **Physical Skills**

Exhibits sufficient motor and sensory abilities to attend and participate in class and practicum placement with or without accommodations. (See section on *Accommodations for Disabilities* for clarification.)

## **3.4 Emotional and Mental Abilities Necessary for Performance in the Program and Professional Practice**

### **Stress Management**

Demonstrates ability to recognize and deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. Handles stress effectively by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others.

### **Emotional and Mental Capacities**

Uses sound judgment. Seeks and effectively uses help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance. Engages in counseling or seeks out support and help if personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties do any of the following:

- Compromise scholastic and other performance,
- Interfere with professional judgment and behavior, or
- Jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the social work student has a professional responsibility (as outlined in the current Code of Ethics by the National Association of Social Workers).

## **3.5 Professional Performance Skills Necessary for Work with Clients and Professional Practice**

### **Professional Commitment**

Exhibits a strong commitment to the goals of social work and to the profession's ethical standards as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics. Demonstrates commitment to the essential values of social work that includes respecting the dignity and worth of every individual and his/her rights to a just share of society's resources (social justice).

### **Professional Behavior**

Exhibits behaviors that follow program policies, institutional policies, professional, ethical standards, and societal laws in the classroom, university community, field, and community. Appearance, dress, and general demeanor reflect a professional manner. Shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, respecting others, being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, keeping appointments, or making appropriate arrangements, and positively accepting supervision and criticism.

**Works effectively with others, regardless of level of authority. Advocates for him/herself in an appropriate and responsible manner and uses proper channels for conflict resolution. Shows a willingness to receive and accept feedback and supervision in a positive manner, as well as use such feedback to enhance professional development.**

### **Self-Awareness**

Exhibits knowledge of how one's values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and past experiences affect thinking, behavior, and relationships. Accurately assesses one's own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice. Shows awareness of self and how one is perceived by others. Reflects on one's own limitations as they relate to professional capacities. Is willing to examine and change behavior when it interferes in working with clients and other professionals.

### **Ethical Obligations**

Current behavior and classroom performance demonstrate adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional practice, noted in the NASW Code of Ethics. Ethical behaviors include:

- Adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice. History of or concurrent conviction of offences that is contrary to professional practice.
- Systematic evaluation of clients and their situations in an unbiased, factual way. Suspension of personal biases during interactions with others.
- Comprehension of another individual's way of life and values. Empathic communication and support of the client as a basis for a productive professional relationship.
- Appreciation of the value of diversity. Effective and nonjudgmental relation to and work with others who are different from oneself. Appropriate service to all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person's age, class, race, religious beliefs, gender, disability,

sexual orientation, and/or value system. No imposition of personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on clients.

- Demonstration of respect for the rights of others. Commitment to clients' rights to freedom of choice and self-determination.
- Maintenance of confidentiality as it relates to human service, classroom activities, and field placement.
- Demonstration of honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; doing one's own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source materials.
- Demonstration of clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. Does not sexually harass others; make verbal or physical threats; become involved in sexual relationships with clients, supervisors, or faculty; abuse others in physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual ways; or participate in dual relationships where conflicts of interest may exist.

## **4.0 Student Review**

Whenever a faculty member, adjunct faculty, Practicum Liaison, or Practicum Instructor has concerns regarding a student's academic performance, professional/ethical conduct, or field practicum performance, he/she will initiate a student review. Two levels of review can occur at the School of Social Work in reviewing student's academic performance. The level of review depends upon the potential severity of the concern. Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty, program coordinators, or school administrators will be shared with other appropriate personnel if the information raises concerns about professional performance. Faculty and program administrators will share pertinent information with each other to identify student issues and enhance problem-solving regarding concerns. **They will follow university procedures related to student performance issues.**

Student reviews can occur under any of the following circumstances but are not limited to:

- Failure to meet or maintain academic requirements as stated under Scholastic Performance. Students earning a grade of "F" or "NC" in any BASW course are automatically referred to the SRC and must repeat the course. Students may not move forward in the program until they have successfully repeated the failed course and are only allowed one opportunity to repeat a course. Students who fail two courses are automatically dismissed from the program. Students who earn a grade of C+ or C in a course may be referred to the SRC and may be required to repeat the course.
- Scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, or any act designed to give an unfair advantage to the student or another person. (Faculty must adhere to university guidelines. For complete University policy and procedures, see *California State University, San Bernardino Bulletin of Courses*, Academic Regulations, Plagiarism and Cheating.)
- Behavior judged to violate the current NASW Code of Ethics
- Behavior judged to violate the Student Discipline Code (See [CSUSB Bulletin of Courses](#))
- Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or someone else
- Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice
- Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior
- Biopsychosocial functional impairment that may significantly or adversely affect work and/or relationships with clients, field agency personnel, or faculty.
- Failure to meet any of the Standards for Social Work Education: School of Social Work Criteria for Evaluation of Academic Performance. For some of these circumstances, faculty are required to contact other entities, such as the Police Department or the CSUSB Student Conduct Office.

**Note: In some cases, the degree of severity of plagiarism, or other harmful, inappropriate, or unprofessional conduct will result in program dismissal with no student review. These policies and procedures are for the BASW program only, and do not supersede any actions taken at the University level. Please see the [Bulletin of Courses](#) regarding behaviors that may lead to discipline or dismissal from CSUSB.**



#### **4.1 The Two Levels of Review**

Two levels of review can occur at the School of Social Work to address and resolve concerns about the student's academic performance and personal, professional, and/or ethical conduct. Normally, level 1 will precede level 2. Situations needing a more serious or immediate response may go directly to a level 2 review at the BASW Director's discretion or recommendation by other faculty.

##### **Level 1 Review**

Whenever a faculty member, adjunct faculty, field liaison, or field instructor has concerns regarding a student's academic performance or professional/ethical conduct in the classroom or field practicum, he/she shall meet with the student to resolve the concerns. If the issues are not resolved, the director or their designee should be contacted to help address the concern and do further fact-finding (A note of these meetings and activities should be placed on the log at the front of the student's file). If the issues are still not resolved, the faculty member will make a referral to the Chair of the Student Review Committee for a Level 2 Review. If the concern is of a very serious nature, it may be necessary to go directly to a Level 2 Review.

##### **Level 2 Review**

A level 2 Review involves the Student Review Committee (SRC), which is composed of the Chair and at least two other faculty members not parties to the problem. The person making the referral and the student's advisor, as well as other faculty whose expertise is required (e.g., field and program staff), are also invited to attend.

Within two business days of receiving the referral, the SRC Chair will:

- Notify the student of the referral using the student's CSUSB email address.
- Provide the student with the referral form and supporting documentation.
- Inquire about the student's preferences for meeting dates and times

The SRC Chair will schedule the SRC to occur no sooner than two business days after the student has received the referral documentation and no later than 10 days after the referral was made. The SRC will take into consideration the student's meeting preferences; however, it is the student's responsibility to respond to the notice for the SRC meeting and to attend the meeting (in person, via phone, or Zoom), even if the meeting cannot be scheduled during the student's preferred dates/times. Should the student fail to respond and/or attend, the SRC will meet and render a decision without the student's input. Should the student withdraw from the BASW program or the University while under referral to the SRC, the SRC process will continue with or without the student's participation.

If an issue is not resolved at Level 1, the Chair of the Student Review Committee will convene the SRC to meet with the students and involved faculty members. The meeting will include communication regarding the specific concerns related to academic performance and/or professional/ethical conduct in the classroom or field practicum and an opportunity for the student to present their perspective. After the review meeting has occurred, the Chair of the Student Review Committee will inform the student of the decisions, which can include one or more of the following actions:

**Continue the student in the program with no conditions.** In these situations, the concern has been addressed and no further action by the student or program is required.

**Establish formal conditions for the student's continuance in the program.** A remediation plan will be developed in consultation with the student, the advisor, and the concerned faculty member as needed. This plan shall:

- Specify the concerns of the faculty member in as much detail as possible
- Indicate the actions to be undertaken by the student
- Indicate the date by which the student must demonstrate the required level of knowledge, skill, behavior, or ethical conduct
- The plan *may* indicate the name of a mentor (could be the advisor if the student chooses) who will meet regularly with the student and report progress to the SRC (see below Role of a Mentor)
- Be signed by the faculty member who initiated the concern
- Be reported on regularly by the mentor (see below)

The student will be given a copy of the plan and asked to sign it, indicating he/she received a copy of the document. The student will also be informed, in writing, of the right to rebut the Plan or grieve the decision. All students on a remedial plan are also automatically placed on academic probation. The Plan and reports will be filed in the student's file and reported to Undergraduate Studies.

The SRC chair shall review student progress on or before the date specified in the plan for completion of the remediation. One or two actions must be taken to resolve the concern:

- a) The plan is met, and the concern is alleviated. This is communicated in writing to all those in the above paragraph, plus the Director of the School of Social Work and members of the SRC.
- b) The concern is not alleviated. The SRC shall make a recommendation, which may be that the student be dismissed from the program.

**Dismiss the student from the program.** In some situations, the SRC will recommend that the student no longer continue in the social work program. This decision will be forwarded to a meeting for the full faculty and if confirmed by the full faculty, is final at the school level. That decision will be communicated to the student in writing including information on the right to appeal through the university's academic grievance process (see CSUSB Bulletin of Courses).

Any student dismissed from the BASW program and then re-applies to the program will be considered and reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the admissions committee during the routine admissions process/timelines. In such cases, faculty representatives of the Admissions Committee will always interview the student. Suppose a student who applies to the BASW program has been dismissed from another BASW program. In that case, the Admissions Committee will ask that student for permission to contact the previous BASW program regarding that dismissal, and the student's assent will be documented in writing and placed in the student's file.

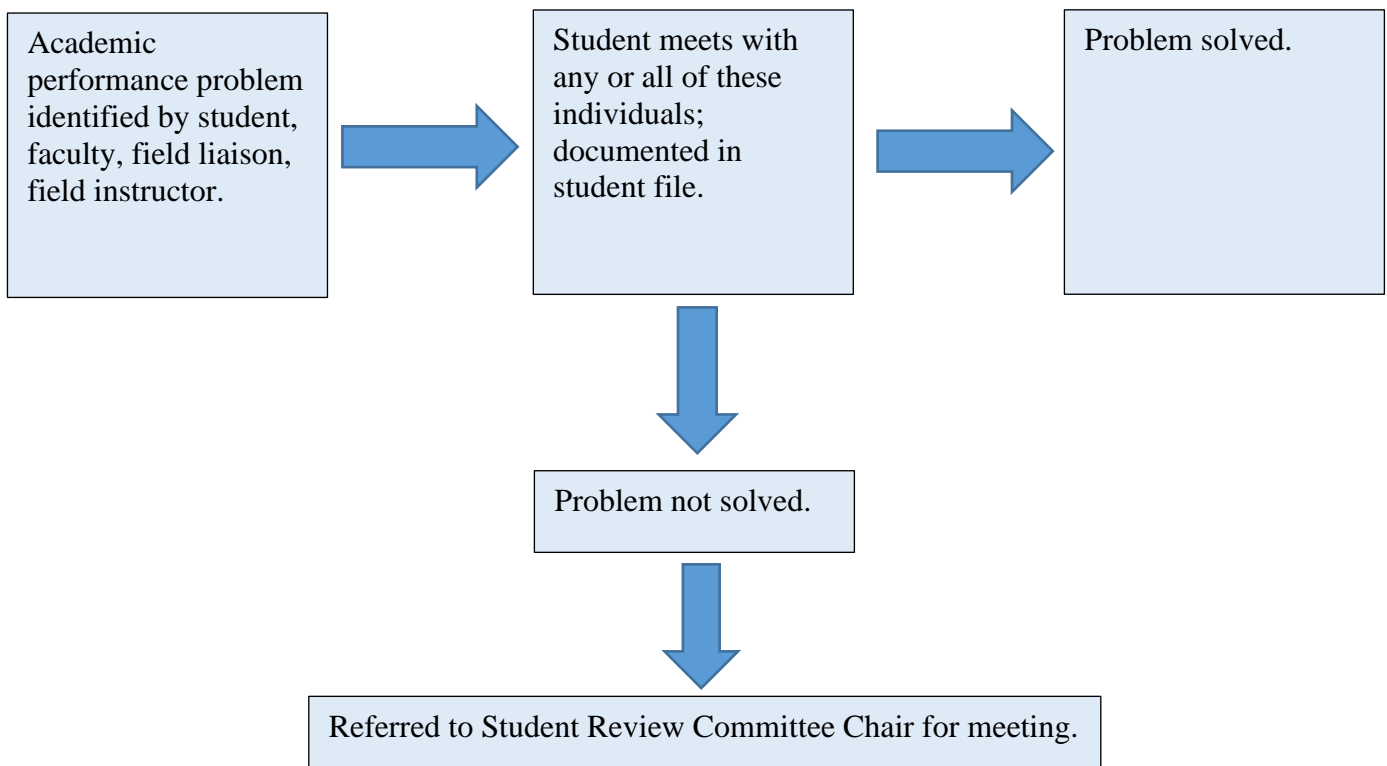
## **4.2 Appeals Process**

A student may appeal the school's decision to the College level. If dissatisfied with the outcome of the college-level procedure, the student may initiate the university-level appeal procedure.

Detailed information and assistance regarding academic grievance procedures and guidelines are available from the Office of Undergraduate Studies.

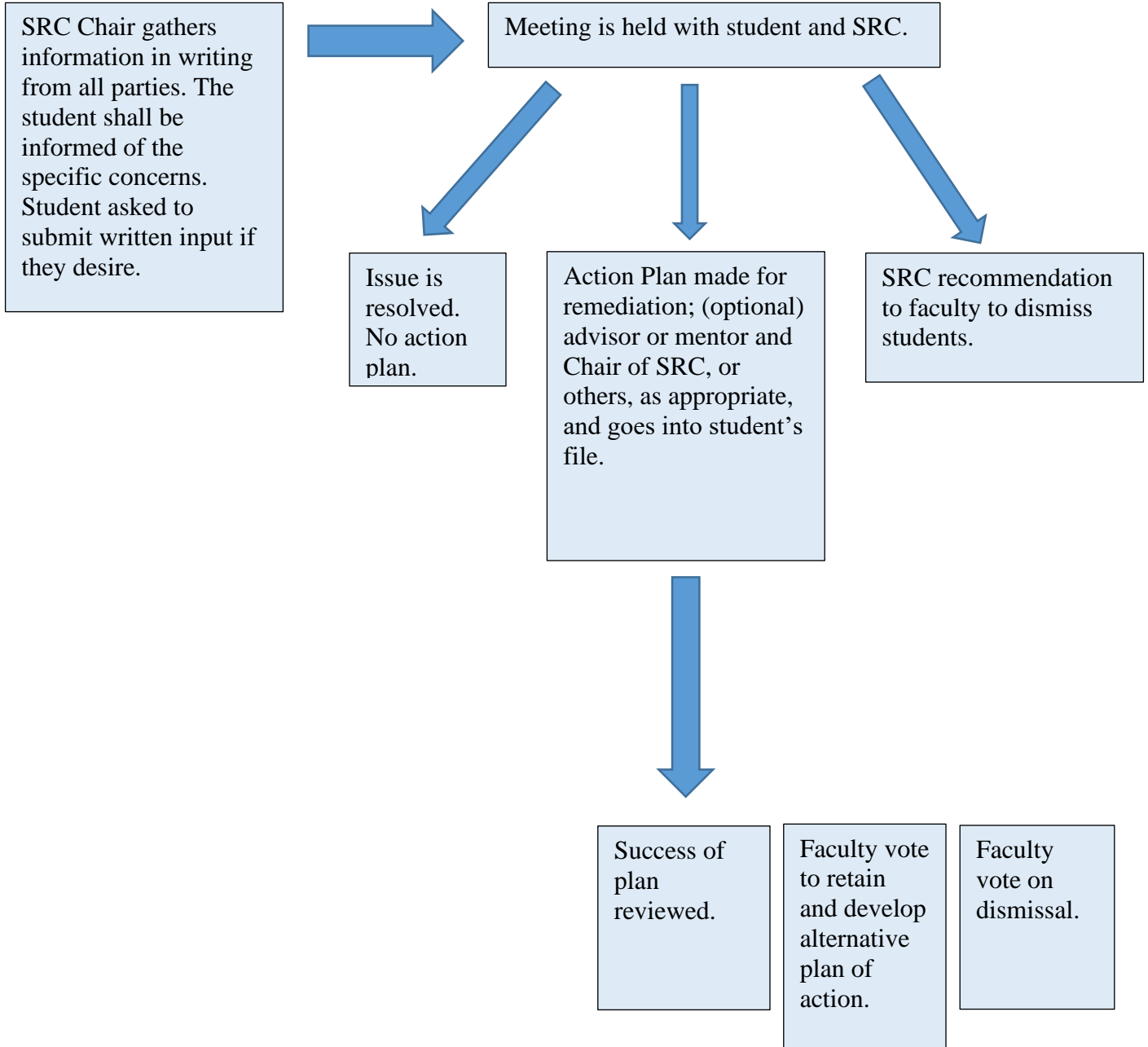
### **Student Review Process Flow Chart**

#### **Level One**



# Student Review Process Flow Chart

## Level Two



## **5.0 Professional Associations**

### **5.1 Phi Alpha, Mu Epsilon Chapter: The Social Work Honor Society**

The first class of the Bachelor of Arts in Social Work students established the Mu Epsilon chapter of the Phi Alpha International Honor Society. Students may apply for membership after completing the first semester of the BASW program. Students must have a 3.0 overall GPA and a 3.25 GPA in required social work (SW) courses (need to have completed 12 credits in SW to apply). Membership fees are required for both international and chapter participation.

### **5.2 National Association of Social Workers (NASW)**

Students are encouraged to join and become active in our profession's primary association, NASW. Membership applications are available from the School of Social Work. Students enjoy a substantially reduced dues rate and become eligible for a reduced transition dues rate upon graduation.

Benefits of membership in NASW include:

- Reasonably priced liability insurance
- NASW News, a monthly, national newspaper.
- NASW California News, a monthly, state newspaper.
- Social Work, a bimonthly professional journal.
- Reduced rates on other NASW journals.
- Access to conferences and continuing education programs; and
- Opportunities for professional development locally and at the state level.

Our local unit of NASW meets regularly to hear informative speakers, discuss current professional issues, and enjoy the company of colleagues. Students are very much welcome at these meetings, which provide an excellent means of increasing your professional network.

## **6.0 Graduation and Beyond**

### **6.1 Graduation Requirement Check**

Students must request a graduation requirement check at the Office of Records, Registration, and Evaluations before the end of the term of their expected graduation. Students should request the check when they have accumulated 90-semester units toward their degree, which may include coursework in progress. Students must pay for and file the graduation check by the deadline established for each semester, which is published in the academic calendar of the catalog and the Class Schedule.

### **6.2 University Honors**

*Summa Cum Laude*: an overall cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.9 or above and a grade point average of 3.9 or above in all work attempted at this university.

*Magna Cum Laude*: an overall cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.75 or above and a grade point average of 3.75 or above in all work attempted at this university.

*Cum Laude*: an overall cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.5 or above and a grade point average of 3.5 or above in all work attempted at this university.

*Dean's List*: An undergraduate student completing 12 or more units for which letter grades (A, B, C, and D) were received and who earns a 3.5 or above in any regular academic term will be placed on a Dean's List.

*Dean's Letter of Recognition*. Any full-time undergraduate student meeting the above requirements who earns a 4.0 in any regular academic term will receive a letter of special recognition from the appropriate dean.

*Presidential Letter of Recognition*. Any full-time undergraduate student meeting the above requirements who earns a 4.0 in three consecutive regular academic terms will receive a letter of special recognition from the university president.

This section is from the CSUSB Bulletin of Courses at <http://bulletin.csusb.edu/academic-regulations/>.

### **6.3 School of Social Work Honors and College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Honors**

Each year, the School of Social Work selects a small number of graduating BASW students for departmental honors. These students have the highest GPAs in their cohort. Service to the program and the community will also be considered when selecting the top students. These students are honored at an annual College of Social and Behavioral Sciences honors night.

Each year, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences selects an undergraduate of the year and an undergraduate paper of the year. The faculty may also recommend that students with excellent papers in courses apply for the College paper competition.

### **6.4 Commencement**

BASW students typically graduate in May, although the university has two commencement exercises per year, in December and May. **Students must have an approved graduation check and have paid their fee by the university's deadlines to be included in the May commencement ceremony.** Summer and December graduation candidates may participate in the December commencement exercises.

## **6.5 Career Services**

The Career Development Center provides comprehensive career services to help students and graduates translate their academic experience at CSUSB into successful careers. Services include career and placement counseling, testing, resume preparation, and mock interviews directed toward specific career interests. The Center maintains a career library and offers a variety of workshops that include job search, goal setting, and networking.

The Career Center is located on the third floor of the University Hall, Room 329, (909) 537-5250, <http://career.csusb.edu/>. Students are encouraged to visit the Career Development Center early. Some services are available on a walk-in basis.

## **6.6 Masters in Social Work**

The master's in social work (MSW) degree prepares graduates for advanced social work practice. BASW students may be eligible for advanced standing programs at universities that offer an accelerated program for students with a social work degree from an accredited school. Applications are typically due in the late fall or early winter before the fall when admission is sought. Your advisor, other faculty, and the CSWE Directory of Accredited Programs are the best sources of information about MSW programs.

At CSUSB, the MSW is based upon the Council on Social Work Education requirements, the national accrediting body for social work programs. We currently do not offer an advanced standing program. The program is structured into three models: Model 1 offers four semesters of coursework leading to the MSW degree within two academic years. This option is intended for students who can devote their time and attention to full-time, intensive study. Model 2 offers the same coursework over three to four academic years (the three-year plan includes summer courses). Model 3 (Pathways Program) offers the same course work over three academic years, including summer courses, and is offered totally online (with an annual on-campus training occurring each summer).

The CSUSB MSW program is very demanding of time and energy. The part-time program is not designed for students who must work 40 hours per week. Those who must work 40 hours per week should consider a planned four-year course of study.

### **CSUSB MSW admission requirements:**

1. Baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university
2. A grade point average of 3.0 (B) or better in all coursework
3. An academic background in the liberal arts
4. Completion of the graduate entrance writing requirement
5. A year of full-time paid experience, a one-year internship in a social service agency, or relevant volunteer service (this requirement may be waived)
6. Evidence of personal qualifications, motivation, and potential that show promise to be a successful social worker, an autobiographical statement, three letters of reference from individuals who are familiar with the student's academic work potential and level of maturity.

7. The following courses or their equivalents (for a list of specific courses that fulfill these requirements, please review the following page:  
<http://socialwork.csusb.edu/docs/MSWAdmissionRequirements.pdf>
- A course in the human biological systems
  - Social Research Methods
  - Human Development/ Socialization

*Note: Felony convictions may prevent MSW graduates from becoming Licensed Clinical Social Workers. Each case is reviewed individually, and the California Board makes decisions of Behavioral Sciences.*

### **6.7 Letters of Recommendation or Phone Recommendations**

Students often want a recommendation letter from a graduate school faculty member or a job. Keep in mind that you build a reputation for yourself based on classroom performance (grades, participation, attendance) and your participation in extra-curricular activities (social work clubs, community involvement). Please observe the following etiquette when requesting a recommendation:

For letters:

- 1) Contact your reference at least a week before the letter is due. Two weeks is preferable.
- 2) Give your reference everything they need to complete the letter: you should fill in all the information at the top of any form, provide an envelope and stamp, and tell the reference when the letter is due.
- 3) Also include any special information as needed, e.g., if the letter references specific skills or experiences.

For phone references:

- 1) It is best to ask a potential reference if they would be willing to be contacted.
- 2) Let your references know in advance that you have listed them as references. Otherwise, they may not feel they can comment on you at all. It does not reflect well on the student if the references get a call "out of the blue" and have to say they cannot comment on the student without the student's permission.
- 3) Find out the best way to contact your reference. There may be times when the person offering the reference does not have access to his or her CSUSB phone.

### **6.8. Scholarship Opportunities at CSUSB**

There are numerous scholarship opportunities available for students at CSUSB. Some are specific to particular majors or colleges, while most are available for all students. The CSUSB Financial Aid office manages most scholarships, and there is an online application to apply. According to the CSUSB Financial Aid Office, "The CSUSB Financial Aid Office accepts scholarship applications for the upcoming academic year beginning in January. The scholarship application can be accessed via MyCoyote." Please visit the CSUSB Financial Aid Office website for additional information.

**Don't forget to enjoy yourself at CSUSB!** Take advantage of the recreation facility and the Robert and Francis Fullerton Art Museum (RAFFMA). You can also attend a variety of music



performances, theater productions, and special academic presentations, many of which are free or low-cost for students. Get involved in campus clubs and events to enrich your experience.

## **APPENDICES**

## 1. **BASW Curriculum**

The Bachelor of Arts in Social Work Program (BASW) curriculum includes a liberal arts perspective and a professional foundation. The liberal arts perspective provides broad-based knowledge and prepares students to think critically and communicate effectively about society, people and their problems, art, literature, science, history, and philosophy. Much of the liberal arts perspective is gained through CSUSB's general education requirements.

The professional foundation teaches students about social work values and ethics, human behavior and the environment, social work practice, research, social welfare policy and services, and provides the opportunity to apply this knowledge through field practicum.

The BASW prepares students for generalist social work practice for work in agency settings with individuals, families, groups, and communities who are encountering problems related to personal or social circumstances. The BASW program is accredited by the Council of Social Work Education, the national accrediting body for social work programs. It is intensive and exciting and applies to a wide variety of social work client populations.

### **Liberal Arts Perspective**

#### General Education Requirements

Please follow this link to 2024-25 General Education requirements and catalog <https://bulletin.csusb.edu/general-education-program/> must be completed before acceptance into the Bachelor of Arts in Social Work program. These general education courses provide the liberal arts base for the professional foundation in social work.

## **2. Social Work Course Descriptions**

### **SW 2000 – Introduction to Social Work**

Introductory survey of levels of social work practice and fields of practice. Review of NASW professional code of ethics and social work resources (*3 units*)

### **SW 3001 – Social Welfare Policy I**

History of social work, development of social welfare services structures, and policy's role in service delivery. (*3 units*).

### **SW 3002 – Social Welfare Policy II**

Frameworks for policy analysis of organizational, local, state, national, and international settings and social service delivery. Introductory social work policy practice skills. (*3 units*).

### **SW 3010 – Social Work Research**

Social work approaches qualitative and quantitative research that builds knowledge for social work practice—interpreting and applying social work practice research to students' practice. Skills needed to implement a social work research project in a social work setting. Four hours of lecture and two hours of laboratory (*3 units*).

### **SW 3021 –Human Behavior in the Social Environment I**

Theories and knowledge of human bio-psycho-social development from birth to young adulthood, including theories and knowledge about the social systems in which individuals live (families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities). Interactions between and among human biological, social, psychological, and cultural systems as they affect and are affected by human behavior. (*3 units*).

### **SW 3022 – Human Behavior in the Social Environment II**

Theories and knowledge of human bio-psycho-social development in relation to adulthood and aging. Includes theories and knowledge about the range of social systems individuals live in (families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities). Interactions between and among human biological, social, psychological, and cultural systems as they affect and are affected by human behavior (*3 units*).

### **SW 4001 – Social Work Practice (Individuals)**

Theories, models, and skills for interventions with individuals using a generalist model of social work practice. (*3 units*).

### **SW 4002 – Social Work Practice (Families and Groups)**

Theories, models, and skills for social work interventions with organizations and communities using a generalist model of social work practice. Designed to run concurrently with the field placement education. (*3 units*).

**SW 4011 & 4012 – Practicum Work**

Practice Experience in public and private social service agencies with individuals, families, groups, formal organizations, and communities. (3 units)

**SW 4200 –Social Work Capstone**

Integration of content learning in the Bachelor of Arts in Social Work program. (1 unit)

**SW Elective Courses****SW 5052. Social Welfare and American Indian/Alaska Native People. Units: 3**

Semester Prerequisite: Junior, senior, or graduate student standing required; optional 10-day course trip requires application and fees. This course examines the social welfare of American Indian and Alaska Native people and tribes, focusing on historical efforts to undermine tribes' existence. Students will explore how tribes use sovereignty, cultural beliefs, and kinship networks to counter these efforts. In addition, students will interrogate the roles of social welfare policies and providers in harming Native communities and analyze contemporary efforts to provide culturally competent services. An optional 10-day service-learning trip to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota allows students to examine these social issues among the Oglala Lakota people thoroughly.

**SW 5053. Social Work Practice with LGBTQ2SIA+ Communities. Units 3**

Semester Prerequisite: Junior, senior, or Graduate student standing required: Integration of psychological, social, and political issues related to working with members of this community.

**SW 5054. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Social Work Practice. Units 3**

Looks at diversity, equity, and inclusion of minority and marginalized groups within social work practice.

**SW 5900 Special Topics: Trauma-informed Practice. Units 3**

Material changes and may be repeated more than once

**SW 5900-Special Topics: Human Rights and Social Work**

Material changes and may be repeated more than once

**SW 5900 Child Welfare Services**

Public child welfare services and issues from a beginning generalist perspective. Prepares social work students for beginning-level evidence-based, culturally competent, family-focused, strength-based, and outcome-oriented child welfare practice. Prerequisite: Admission to B.A. in Social Work. (3 units)

## **SW 5900 Special Topic: Substance Abuse**

A comprehensive and systems-based examination of substance abuse and dependence. Prepares students with beginning skills for effective substance abuse intervention. Formerly a topic under SW 590. (3 units)

## **Practicum**

Field practicum allows students to apply the values, knowledge, and skills gained in the classroom. **Students must complete 480 hours of field (2 days per week during the senior year) experience in supervised agency settings where they work directly with clients. Hours must be completed when the agency actively serves clients and approved supervision is available.**

Students **MUST** complete and submit the practicum survey form after the BASW Practicum Associate Director distributes it. Students who fail to return to the field survey risk being late or no placement.

Students are surveyed on their preference for placements and any special needs (e.g., location) in the spring semester of their junior year. Most placements will be made by the end of the semester. Placement includes interviewing at the agency and possible agency orientations and/or other types of screening over the summer. The field practicum experience **includes a seminar held once per month with the field liaison**, typically held on Friday morning on campus. This is a **required component** of field. Note: Agencies where students work **rarely** can use that agency as their field placement.

Students seeking to transfer to CSUSB's BASW program for their senior year must apply in spring to secure a field placement. The program may not be able to accommodate students who apply after the normal time when students are placed.

While enrolled in a field practicum, students must carry professional liability insurance. This insurance will be mandatory and is offered through the School of Social Work for a nominal fee. More information about this will be forthcoming.

Additional information about Practicum can be found in the BASW Practicum Manual.

### 3. Course Schedules

This is a course plan that focuses on the required School of Social Work courses only. Students will have additional courses required to complete the BASW and University requirements. These will be scheduled based on course availability and student schedule in conjunction with the student's BASW advisor.

#### **Junior Year**

##### Fall Semester:

SW 3001 Social Welfare Policy I  
SW 3021 Human Behavior in the Social Environment I

##### Spring Semester:

SW 3002 Social Welfare Policy II  
SW 3022 Human Behavior in the Social Environment II

Select From any 5000 Social Work Electives

#### **Senior Year**

##### Fall Semester

SW 4001 Social Work Practice (Individuals)  
SW 4011 Field Placement  
SW 3010 Social Work Research

##### Spring Semester

SW 4002 Social Work Practice (Groups, Organizations & Communities)  
SW 4012 Practicum Placement  
SW 4200 Writing Intensive Class/Portfolio

The Field Placement is an integral part of the BASW program and requires 16 hours per week in the second year (typically Tuesday and Thursday from 8 AM-5 PM) and monthly attendance at the field seminar. Students cannot expect to receive a weekend/ evening field placement

4. Sample Freshman 4-Year Plan- Update plan

Bachelor of Arts in Social Work - Freshman 4-Year Academic Roadmap							
Year 1 - Freshman Year				Year Total Units: 31			
Fall Semester	Term(s) Offer	Prerequisites	Units	Spring Semester	Term(s) Offer	Prerequisites	Units
GE-A1	Fall/Spring		3	PSYC 1105 or SOC 1800	Fall/Spring		3
GE-A2	Fall/Spring		3	BIOL 1000 & 1000L	Fall/Spring		4
Math 1201	Fall/Spring		3	GE-C1	Fall/Spring		3
PSYC 1100	Fall/Spring		3	GE-D1	Fall/Spring		3
PSYC 1115	Fall/Spring		3	SOC 1000	Fall/Spring		3
<b>Total:</b>			<b>15</b>	<b>Total:</b>			<b>16</b>
Year 2 - Sophomore Year				Year Total Units: 31			
Fall Semester	Term(s) Offer	Prerequisites	Units	Spring Semester	Term(s) Offer	Prerequisites	Units
SW 2000	Fall/Spring		3	GE-C1 or GE-C2	Fall/Spring		3
GE-B1	Fall/Spring		3	GE-D2 American Gov't	Fall/Spring		3
Elective	Fall/Spring		3	PSYC 2210 or ADMN 2100	Fall/Spring		4
SPAN 1111	Fall/Spring		4	SPAN 1112	Fall/Spring		3
CJUS 1101	Fall/Spring		3	Elective	Fall/Spring		2
<b>Total:</b>			<b>16</b>	<b>Total:</b>			<b>15</b>
Year 3 - Junior Year				Year Total Units: 31			
Fall Semester	Term (s) Offer	Prerequisites	Units	Spring	Term(s) Offer	Prerequisites	Units
SW 3001	Fall		3	SW 3002	Spring	SW 3001	3
SW 3021	Fall		3	Sw 3022	Spring	SW 3021	3
SW 3010	Fall		4	SW 3020 or SW 3025	Spring	SW 3001, SW 3021	3
GE-D3	Fall/Spring		3	GE-B5	Fall/Spring		3
Discipline 1	Fall/Spring		3	Discipline 2	Fall/Spring		3
<b>Total:</b>			<b>16</b>	<b>Total:</b>			<b>15</b>
Year 4 - Senior Year				Year Total Units: 27			
SW 4001	Fall	SW 3002, SW 3022	3	SW 4002	Spring	SW 4001	3
SW 4011	Fall	SW 3002, SW 3022	3	SW 4012	Spring	SW 4011	3
SSCI 3060	Fall/Spring		3	SW 4200	Spring	SW 4001	1
GE-C2 Upper Division	Fall/Spring		3	PA 3800	Fall/Spring		3
Elective			2	PSYC 3390 or PSYC 3391	Fall/Spring	PSYC 1100	3
<b>Total:</b>			<b>14</b>	<b>Total:</b>			<b>13</b>
<b>Degree Units Total: 120</b>							

5. Sample Transfer 2-Year Plan -update plan

Bachelor of Arts in Social Work - Transfer Academic Roadmap							
Year 1 - Junior Year				Year Total Units: 31			
Fall Semester	Term (s) Offer	Prerequisites	Units	Spring	Term(s) Offer	Prerequisites	Units
SW 3001	Fall		3	SW 3002	Spring	SW 3001	3
SW 3021	Fall		3	Sw 3022	Spring	SW 3021	3
SW 3010	Fall		4	SW 3020 or SW 3025	Spring	SW 3001, SW 3021	3
GE-D3	Fall/Spring		3	GE-B5	Fall/Spring		3
Discipline 1	Fall/Spring		3	Discipline 2	Fall/Spring		3
<b>Total:</b>			<b>16</b>	<b>Total:</b>			<b>15</b>
Year 4 - Senior Year				Year Total Units: 29			
SW 4001	Fall	SW 3002, SW 3022	3	SW 4002	Spring	SW 4001	3
SW 4011	Fall	SW 3002, SW 3022	3	SW 4012	Spring	SW 4011	3
SSCI 3060	Fall/Spring		3	SW 4200	Spring	SW 4001	1
GE-C2 Upper Division	Fall/Spring		3	PA 3800	Fall/Spring		3
Elective			3	PSYC 3390 or PSYC 3391	Fall/Spring	PSYC 1100	3
				Elective	Fall/Spring		1
<b>Total:</b>			<b>15</b>	<b>Total:</b>			<b>14</b>
<b>Degree Units Total: 60</b>							



## 6. NASW Code of Ethics

This includes the NASW Preamble and Ethical Principles. Please review the Ethical Standards at: <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

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

*Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2017 NASW Delegate Assembly*

#### **Preamble**

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics**

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

#### **The *NASW Code of Ethics* serves six purposes:**

1. The *Code* identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.

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

\*For information on NASW adjudication procedures, see *NASW Procedures for the Adjudication of Grievances*.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **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. 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 recognize their dual responsibility to clients and 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.