Mission Statement of the Department of Social Work

The Department of Social Work at Minnesota State University, Mankato promotes learning to prepare students to become social workers who practice with competence and integrity at the generalist (BSSW) and the advanced generalist (MSW) levels. The Department supports and enhances the work of social service agencies through consultation, scholarship, research, leadership, and other service activities. The Department affirms its commitment to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, with an emphasis on small and rural areas, by enhancing human well-being, promoting social justice, and alleviating poverty and oppression for all members of our diverse society within its global context.

Goals of the BSSW Program of the Department of Social Work:

**Preamble:** The baccalaureate Social Work major prepares students for generalist professional social work practice at all system levels with an emphasis on small communities and rural areas within the global context, and provides a foundation for graduate Social Work education. The Goals of the Baccalaureate Social Work program are to:

1. Promote identification with the social work profession and commitment to the values and ethics of the profession that serve as a guide to professional practice [EPAS 2.1.1 & 2.1.2].
2. Advocate a commitment to affirming diversity and working to advance human rights and social and economic justice with an emphasis on small communities, rural areas and the global context [EPAS 2.1.4 & EPAS 2.1.5].
3. Teach knowledge, values and skills required to engage in planned change and research informed practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities [EPAS 2.1.6, 2.1.7, & 2.1.10a-d].
4. Encourage critical thinking to analyze and respond to contexts that shape policy and practice [EPAS 2.1.3, 2.1.8, & 2.1.9].

[The numbers in parentheses after Goals 1-4 refer to the sections of the 2008 CSWE EPAS in which the competencies are defined. See Appendix A for a discussion of the EPAS document and Appendix E for the BSSW Program Competencies & Practice Behaviors adapted from the CSWE EPAS.]

Information in this publication will be made available in alternative format, such as large print or cassette tape, upon request.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement ..........................................................................................................................Front Cover
Goals of the BSSW Program ........................................................................................................Front Cover

Welcome Statement ......................................................................................................................3
Social Work Faculty and Staff Directory ......................................................................................4

I. Affirmative Action Policies .......................................................................................................5
   Statement of Non-Discrimination .............................................................................................5
   Disability Accommodation Policy for the University and the Department .........................5

II. Introduction .............................................................................................................................6-8
   A. Generalist Social Work Practice Definition ......................................................................6
   B. General Requirements of the Social Work Major .............................................................7
   C. Advising ...............................................................................................................................7
      C. 1. Social Work Advising ................................................................................................7
      C. 2. General Education Advising .....................................................................................7
      C. 3. Pre-SOWK Advising ................................................................................................8
      C. 4. Transfer Student Advising .......................................................................................8

III. The Undergraduate Social Work Curriculum .....................................................................9-13
   A. Planning Your Social Work Program ..............................................................................9
   B. General Education (Liberal Arts Foundation) at MSU, Mankato ...............................9
   B1. Foundation Courses for the Social Work Major ..........................................................9
   C. Introductory Social Work Courses ..................................................................................10
   D. Integrative Social Work Courses ....................................................................................10
   F. Social Work Practice Sequence .......................................................................................11
   G. Social Work Senior Practicum & Seminar .....................................................................12
   H. Social Work “Required Elective” Options ........................................................................12
   I. Other Recommended Coursework ...................................................................................13
   J. Social Welfare Minor .........................................................................................................13

IV. Academic Policies .................................................................................................................14-19
   A. Credits from Other Sources Applied to Coursework in Major ......................................14
      A. 1. Transfer Credit for Prior Educational Achievement ...........................................14
      A. 2. Transfer Agreements with other Academic Institutions .........................................14
      A. 3. Course Substitutions and Waivers ..........................................................................14
      A. 4. Social Work Transfer Credits to be Applied to the Major ....................................14
   B. Substitution for Social Work Fieldwork, Practice, & Practicum ..................................15
      B. 1. Substitution for SOWK-312, Junior Field Experience ...........................................15
      B. 1. 1. Prior Work Experience .......................................................................................15
      B. 1. 2. Credit for non-SOWK Internships in sub for 312 .............................................15
      B. 2. Substitution for Social Work Practice Sequence Courses ...................................16
TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont’d)

B. 3. Substitution for Senior Practicum & Integrative Seminar......................16
B. 4. Sequencing Policy Exceptions .......................................................16
C. Non-Retention in the Major ..............................................................17
   C. 1. Conditions for Non-Retention ..................................................17
      C. 1. 1. Academic Performance ..................................................17
      C. 1. 2. Professional Behaviors ...............................................17
      C. 1. 2. 1. Unethical Behavior .................................................18
      C. 1. 2. 2. Criminal Behavior .................................................18
   C. 2. Conditions & Procedures for Readmission to the Major ..........18
      C. 2. 1. Academic Performance ..............................................18
      C. 2. 2. Professional Behaviors ...............................................18
      C. 2. 3. Procedures ...............................................................18
V. Student Rights and Responsibilities ...............................................19-20
   A. Grievance and Appeal Procedures for the Social Work Major ........19
      A. 1. Introduction ..................................................................19
      A. 2. Appealing Program Decisions ........................................20
VI. Admission Policies and Procedures ................................................21-29
   A. Admission to the Social Work Major (and the Practice Sequence) ...21
      A. 1. Preparation for Applying for the Major ..........................21
      A. 2. Admission Criteria ........................................................21
         A. 2. 1. GPA Policy .............................................................22
         A. 2. 2. Completed Coursework ..........................................22
         A. 2. 3. Evidence of Successful Involvement in Service .........22
         A. 2. 4. Adequate Mastery of Written and Verbal Skills .......23
         A. 2. 5. Personal, Academic, & Professional Characteristics ...23
         A. 2. 6. Transfer Students ....................................................23
         A. 2. 7. Codes of Ethics .......................................................23
         A. 2. 8. Legal Issues ...........................................................23
      A. 3. Application to the Major Procedure ................................24
         A. 3. 1. Completed Application Folder ..................................24
         A. 3. 2. Decision-Making ....................................................24
         A. 3. 3. Exceptions .............................................................24
         A. 3. 4. Admission Decisions ..............................................25
         A. 3. 5. Appeals .................................................................26
   B. Admission to Senior Practicum ....................................................27
      B. 1. General Information .......................................................27
      B. 2. Application Deadlines ....................................................27
      B. 3. Criteria for Admission ....................................................28
      B. 4. Admission Procedure .....................................................28
      B. 5. Program Decisions .........................................................29
      B. 6. Placement Procedure ......................................................29
WELCOME to the BSSW PROGRAM in the DEPARTMENT of SOCIAL WORK!

Students:

It is clear from the Mission Statement of the Department of Social Work that a major component of our purpose is to recruit, educate, and graduate social workers that will provide skilled professional services to the various client populations that call upon us. In this task, the Department holds many responsibilities to students, to clients, to the university and to the profession. This Student Handbook documents many of the policies at the BSSW level that support those responsibilities, so it should be read carefully by all undergraduate majors. See also our website that has much information and many downloadable files for your use.

This Handbook identifies the social work faculty, contains written guidelines for incoming first-year and transfer students, provides a description of the social work curriculum, presents information about admissions and retention criteria and procedures, and includes program planning guides for your convenience. The Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards document from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) that guides our curriculum development is also summarized and our BSSW Competencies and Practice Behaviors are listed.

The Social Work faculty and staff want you to be successful in your academic endeavors and encourage you to seek advice and clarification if you have questions or concerns regarding your program. Please, work closely with your advisor to avoid experiencing unnecessary delays in your progress toward the degree. We join you in accepting the challenge of preparation for Social Work practice.

William A. Anderson. MSW, PhD, LISW
Chairperson, Department of Social Work
Social Work Faculty and Staff Directory

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Department Secretary

Faculty profiles are available in the display opposite TN-358 and on the website.

The BSSW Program is part of the Department of Social Work, which is part of the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, Armstrong 111, (507) 389-6307, under the leadership of Dr. John Alessio, Dean.

(Revised & updated, February 2010)
I. Affirmative Action Policies

Statement of Non-Discrimination:

The Department of Social Work provides equal opportunity in all aspects of the educational program for all qualified persons regardless of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital status, sexual orientation/preference, reliance on public assistance, or any other class or group distinction as set forth by state or federal anti-discrimination laws or in University or Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) Board policy.

Disability Accommodation Policy for the Department of Social Work:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that the University provide reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities. Requests for accommodations must be initiated by the student and supported by documentation of the disability indicating a current need for accommodation. Students may request accommodation through the Office of Disability Services. Students are advised to contact the Office as early in the semester as possible to discuss accommodation needs and develop an accommodation plan. In addition, students are advised to inform the Instructor of their disability and of the involvement of the Office of Disability Services. The Instructor will make the necessary accommodation based upon the direction of the Office of Disability Services. Visit the Office of Disability Services at 132 Memorial Library, or call (507) 389-2825 (v/tty).

Services are also available to assist students with the various application and administrative procedures implemented within the Department. Any student who wishes assistance with any aspect of these procedures should see their advisor or the Department Chairperson, and is also encouraged to seek the assistance of the Office of Disability Services.
II. Introduction

The major in Social Work prepares students for a career helping people as a generalist social work professional practitioner. The major requires: mastery of a social work knowledge base; understanding and acceptance of a social work professional value system; commitment to social and economic justice; competence for practice with diverse populations and populations at risk; and skills in providing beginning level generalist practice social work services to clients.

A. Generalist Social Work Practice Definition

Minnesota State Mankato BSSW Generalist Practice Definition

Preamble:

Generalist practice is the delivery of social work services across systems with all populations, affirming diversity and advocating for human rights and social and economic justice. Generalist practice is built on a liberal arts foundation and incorporates social work knowledge and theories, values and ethics, and skills. Generalist practice is informed by research and responds to the contexts in which services are delivered.

The baccalaureate generalist social work practitioner:

1. Identifies with the social work profession and is committed to the values and ethics of the profession that serve as a guide to professional practice. (EPAS 2.1.1; 2.1.2)

2. Affirms diversity and works to advance human rights and social and economic justice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. (EPAS 2.1.6; 2.1.7; 2.1.10, a–d)

3. Applies knowledge, values, and skills to engage in planned change and research informed practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (EPAS 2.1.6; 2.1.7; 2.1.10, a-d)

4. Uses critical thinking to analyze and respond to contexts that shape policy and practice. (EPAS 2.1.3; 2.1.8; 2.1.9)

5. Commits to professional competency through life-long learning, scholarship, and service spanning local to global environments.
II. Introduction (cont’d)

B. General Requirements for the Social Work Major

To meet the requirements of the accredited undergraduate degree, all students must have course content in the areas of: social work values and ethics, diversity, promotion of social and economic justice, populations at risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policies and services, social work practice, research, and, field practicum. The major builds upon a liberal arts base and includes courses in the above content areas that may be supplemented by other general education courses and general electives. Students will develop Competencies (reflected in Practice Behaviors) as specified by CSWE and adopted by the BSSW Program (see Appendix E). Specific course requirements are listed in the Bulletin and on the Program Planning Guide (see Appendix B) and are on the website (http://sbs.mnsu.edu/socialwork/guide).

Because Social Work is a broad professional major, no minor is required. However, concentrations, minors, or double majors in related fields of interest may be pursued and should be discussed with your Social Work Faculty advisor. Students who plan to complete combinations of majors, minors, or certificates where field experiences are required in each program should meet with their Social Work Faculty advisor to consider possible options for meeting these requirements.

C. Advising

Advising is an integral part of preparation for the professional practice of Social Work. It is an equally shared responsibility between student and advisor to assess the student’s academic, attitudinal and personal characteristics that relate to their motivation and readiness for assuming the professional role. The relationship between students and their advisors should be close, positive, and productive of professional growth.

C.1. Social Work Advising

Students need to have a Social Work Faculty advisor assigned when they are considering social work as a major (See Sect. C. 3. below). All advising responsibilities are assigned to full-time and, on a few occasions, to fixed-term Social Work faculty. Students can contact the Department Secretary at (507) 389-6504 or in 358 Trafton North to request a Social Work Faculty advisor. Students are informed either verbally or through email of their advisor. Students should contact their newly assigned advisor immediately to schedule an appointment to discuss their interest in the major, to plan for admission, and students should routinely meet with their assigned advisor to assess their progress in meeting program requirements.

C.2. General Education Advising

Students who do not have an A.A. degree should meet with the College of Social and Behavior Sciences Advising staff at “Advising U” (Armstrong 114, 389-6306) to plan their General Education curriculum, especially incorporating the Social Work Foundation courses. Verification that General Education requirements are complete is a condition of the application process for the Social Work major (see VI: Admission Policies and Procedures).
II. Introduction (cont’d)

C. 3. Pre-SOWK Advising

Students who are interested in majoring in social work can declare a major as a “Pre-SOWK” major. This status is open to any students who have not yet met the application requirements, applied, and received formal admission to the program. This would include first and second year students and most new transfer students. The primary advantage of changing from “undecided” or a previous major to Pre-SOWK and obtaining a Social Work Faculty advisor is that advising reports and other student materials will come to that advisor. Early meetings with a Social Work advisor should reduce subsequent problems in course sequencing and prerequisites and may facilitate efficient scheduling of General Education courses that contribute to the major. The Department Secretary can assign a Social Work Faculty advisor and change major status to Pre-SOWK (see above, section C. 1.).

C. 4. Transfer Student Advising

Students planning to transfer to MSU, Mankato who are interested in the undergraduate Social Work major should contact the Department as early as possible so that they can include courses in their General Education that will meet Social Work Foundation requirements. Prior to transfer, students are encouraged to review the Department website and arrange a meeting with a BSSW faculty member to plan for a smooth transition. Faculty members routinely attend the University’s transfer orientation days to assist incoming students with scheduling.

Students who enter with an Associate of Arts or with the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum completed are ready to begin taking Social Work Introductory courses and completing any missing Social Work Foundation courses. Note that having an AA or completing the MnTC waives the University’s General Education requirements but does not waive the Program’s Foundation requirements; transcripts are evaluated on a course-by-course basis to assure that the Foundation content is met, to identify any deficiencies, and to determine appropriateness of potential course substitutions.

Transfer students who have not completed their General Education will need to include any missing General Education coursework in their course plan. The Registrar’s Office will identify what courses substitute for General Education requirements; the Program will identify what courses substitute for Social Work Foundation requirements. Social Work Faculty advisors complete the required institutional substitution/waiver form when such courses are identified (see IV Sect. A.3.). Students should obtain a copy of their Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) report run as a Social Work major or their (unofficial) transfer transcript and meet as soon as possible with a member of the Social Work faculty.
Our curriculum is designed to develop or foster competencies in professional identity, ethical practice, critical thinking, cultural competence, advocacy for human rights, use of research, understanding of human behavior, application of policy analysis, awareness of the context of behavior, and skills in planned change. Undergraduate Social Work education is a process of helping students explore possibilities and develop their own base for understanding the Social Work profession and their own personal role within the field. Preparation for professional practice in social work requires that the goal of education should be more than gaining knowledge; it also must include application of that knowledge using culturally competent skills within the ethics and values of the profession.

A. Planning Your Social Work Program

This BSSW Handbook is designed to be used as you plan for your successful completion of the Social Work major. This section describes the courses you are expected to complete. A worksheet, called the BSSW Program Planning Guide, and a model BSSW curriculum (available both for Four-Year Students and for Transfer Students) are available in the Appendix of this Handbook. Students should keep track of their progress and review these documents regularly with their Social Work Faculty advisor; these forms supplement but do not replace the advising relationship that is so important for professional growth.

B. General Education (Liberal Arts) at Minnesota State Mankato

The general education coursework required at Minnesota State Mankato provides a broad liberal arts base on which undergraduate social work majors build their professional preparation. Through these courses, students have been introduced to new ideas and information. They will have learned theories and models for understanding themselves, relationships with others, and the social, economic and political institutions and organizational structures that are part of their world.

Students now face the dual tasks of, first, selecting an academic program that will prepare them for working in a field of practice of their choice and, second, of linking what they have learned thus far with what they will continue to learn in preparation for professional practice in that field.

B. 1. Foundation Courses: Sociology 101; Economics 100; Ethnic Studies 100; KSP 235 (Human Development); Political Science 111; Biology 100; and Statistics Option (Sociology 202, Psychology 201, or Health Science 475)

Prior to applying for admission to the undergraduate Social Work major and while completing their General Education requirements, students are required to complete these specific courses. Note that all of the courses can count toward General Education categories (of the Statistics Options, only Sociology 202 is a General Education course).
III. The Undergraduate Curriculum (cont’d)

This group of required courses assists in the integrated understanding of liberal arts content as a foundation upon which to build Social Work practice knowledge and experience. Taken before or simultaneously with the Introductory Social Work courses, this cluster provides an overview of interacting social systems and problems, and a foundation for understanding the systems within which Social Work intervention takes place.

The roots of Social Work practice lie deep in our history and culture, in our understanding of human origins and human development and the minority groups in our society, in the nature of power, influence, prejudice, pluralism and the place of social justice and social control. An understanding of the significance and operation of social setting, roles, and small group influence on individual and collective behavior is crucial to intervention through these systems. As students prepare for research-based practice, a basic knowledge of statistics is essential.

C. Introductory Social Work Courses: SOWK 190W; 210; 214

The BSSW program includes a group of courses designed to assist students in making a final decision about their interest in the field of Social Work. These courses provide students with a historical overview and introduction to the social welfare system and the Social Work profession at both the policy and practice levels. This group is identified as Introductory Social Work Courses on the Program Planning Guide and includes Social Welfare Services (SOWK-190W), Introduction to Social Work (SOWK-210), and Community Social Service Projects (SOWK-214).

This sequence of courses will engage students in many aspects of the learning process which will assist them in: identification of personal interests, development of goals, realization and acceptance of responsibility for a personally relevant educational endeavor, evaluation of non-classroom based experiences, and, finally, seeking out other resources to enrich and focus their continued investment in preparing for professional practice in Social Work. Note that SOWK-190W and SOWK-214 also fulfill General Education categories.

D. Integrative Social Work Courses: SOWK 305, 312

These courses are taken after completion of the Introductory courses (see above). Completion of these courses is required prior to formal admission to the major. Human Behavior and Social Work Practice (SOWK-305) integrates knowledge from the general education liberal arts base as well as from the introductory courses. Applying knowledge of biopsychosocial development, the course provides a systems approach to understanding the influence of economic, social and political institutions on individual and organizational behavior.

Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312) gives students the opportunity to further test their interest and ability in social work through a 150-hour observational internship. See the BSSW Junior Field Experience Manual and other links on the department website for more information about the admissions and placement processes. Students should attend a SOWK-312 planning session the semester before they hope to do their internship.
III. The Undergraduate Curriculum (cont’d)


Social Welfare Issues and Policy (SOWK-412) explores the development of social policy and the influence of policy on social work practice. This course usually is taken along with Practice I (SOWK-441) and must be completed before Practicum. Applied Social Work Research (SOWK-469) involves students in the evaluation of social work practice and social service programs. This course usually is taken along with Practice II/III (SOWK-443, 445) and must be taken before entering Practicum as a capstone research project is a component of Practicum.

F. The Social Work Practice Sequence: SOWK-441, 443, 445, & 447

Formal admission to the undergraduate major is required prior to beginning the Practice sequence, and a detailed description of that process is found later in this Handbook (see VI: Admission Policies and Procedures). The Social Work Practice sequence includes four courses that are taken sequentially and which prepare students for generalist Social Work practice. These courses build upon the Foundation courses, the Introductory courses, and the Integrative courses that are taken prior to admission to the major. For most students the Practice sequence begins during the second semester of the Junior year. Students must receive permission to register for each of the Practice courses and only students who have been accepted into the major are allowed into this part of the program. The formal admissions process takes place as students prepare to take Practice I (SOWK-441) the following semester.

Social Work Practice I (SOWK-441) has a primary focus on the values and ethics of the profession and students are expected to know and apply the steps involved in resolving ethical dilemmas. Students also are expected to develop skills in the use of a generalist social work planned change process that begins with engagement and continues through termination.

Social Work Practice II (SOWK-443) focuses on developing generalist micro-skills for working with individuals, families and treatment groups. Skills are mastered within the context of ethics and cultural competency. [taken concurrently with SOWK-445]

Social Work Practice III (SOWK-445) extends the planned change model to community development as students learn skills for community analysis & change. Students apply these skills in small communities throughout the region. [taken concurrently with SOWK-443]

Social Work Practice IV (SOWK-447) ties macro-practice skills in task group and organizational development to the students’ experiences in their Senior Practicum. Students identify, analyze, describe and engage in organizational development activities using the Practicum setting as a laboratory. [taken concurrently with SOWK-450 & 455]
III. The Undergraduate Curriculum (cont’d)

G. Senior Practicum and Integrative Seminar: SOWK-450, 455

The Social Work Practicum is a skills oriented, educationally directed and professionally supervised field experience in which students complete 440 hours (4 days/wk, Monday-Thursday, 15 weeks) of direct practice experience as their final semester in the program. Students also participate in a weekly Integrative Seminar (Friday mornings) in which they discuss their experiences in their agencies and apply the knowledge and skills they have learned throughout the curriculum. More specific information about the criteria and procedures for admission to the Senior Practicum are included in this Handbook (see VI Sect. B below) and the Practicum Manual. The SOWK-455 Practicum Manual is required and can be purchased in advance at the copy shop in Wissink Building. Students must have completed satisfactorily all other Social Work requirements prior to beginning their Practicum (Practice IV-SOWK 447 is offered concurrently with Practicum on Friday afternoons). Only students meeting all Program requirements and in good standing in the major are allowed to begin their Senior Practicum (see VI Sect. B).


Social Work Electives are also provided within the social work curriculum. These courses are designed to provide additional information and greater depth of understanding of special populations, agency settings or practice theory of interest to students. Students are required to choose at least one course as the elective for their major and may select others as interest and time allow. Students are encouraged to discuss the content and anticipated scheduling of these courses (most are offered only once per year) with their Social Work Faculty advisor in preparation for meeting personal and professional educational goals. Elective course(s) should be completed prior to entering Practicum.

- SOWK-415, Child & Family Welfare Services, provides an overview of practice with Children and Families, especially around issues of abuse and neglect;
- SOWK-419, Social Work & Aging, provides an overview of practice with elders, their families, and their communities;
- SOWK-422, Social Work & Chemical Dependency, examines the Social Work perspective on chemical dependency and its impact on clients;
- SOWK-425, Social Work & Health Care, reviews the Social Work role in both health care settings and mental health settings;
- SOWK-427, Social Work & Domestic Violence, explores the issues of family violence that affect many clients (this course usually is taught as part of the interdisciplinary violence elective involving Sociology, Corrections, Law Enforcement and Social Work);
- SOWK-430, Social Work in the School Setting, exposes students to the many responsibilities and roles of the School Social Worker; and,
- SOWK-432, Social Work and Disabilities, reviews the many ways and settings in which Social Workers work with people with disabilities.
III. The Undergraduate Curriculum (cont’d)

I. Other Recommended Coursework: SOWK-255, Other Supportive Coursework

The BSSW program increasingly has included content on global social welfare needs, issues and services throughout the curriculum. As discussed below we annually offer opportunities for international travel as options in the program (see VII Sect. F). In addition, we offer a General Education elective, Global Responses to Human Need (SOWK-255), as an option for majors and non-majors. This course is an overview of international issues of social justice, human rights and the provision of social services.

Students are encouraged to build on their generalist social work practice degree to expand their knowledge and skills as they prepare themselves to work in fields of practice that interest them. The BSSW program website includes a section entitled Career and Specialty Areas in Social Work which identifies other elective courses around the University that students will find supportive of their particular interests within the various areas of social work practice.

In particular, students are urged to consider the importance of non-English language skills as they prepare to practice in a manner that is responsive to ethnic diversity. In addition to the educational and cultural benefits of learning a new language, graduates who speak Spanish, for example, have a distinct advantage in the job market.

J. Social Welfare Minor: SOWK-190W, 210, 214, 305, 412 & two 400-level electives

The Social Welfare Minor provides students in other majors a richer view of social work and social welfare issues beyond the Social Work General Education courses. While this minor provides information to students in other degrees (Corrections, Psychology, Sociology, Women’s Studies, etc.), this minor will NOT qualify such students for licensure as Social Workers, NOR will it make them eligible for positions requiring licensure. Minors are not permitted to take any of the Practice sequence courses or the Senior Practicum or Integrative Seminar as they are not formally admitted to the major.
A. Credits from Other Sources Applied to Coursework in Major

A. 1. Transfer Credit for Prior Educational Achievement

Students planning to transfer to Minnesota State Mankato must make formal application through the: Admissions Office, 122 Taylor Center, Mankato, MN 56001.
Telephone: 1-800-722-0544 or 389-1822;
Website: http://www.mnsu.edu/prospective/

Transfer students must meet the same admission and retention standards required of any students who study at Minnesota State Mankato and must have been honorably dismissed by the institution granting previous admission. To be eligible for graduation in Social Work, transfer students must complete at least 30 credit hours at Minnesota State Mankato. Complete information about transfer policy may be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin available from the Admissions Office or online. Upon receipt of an admission application and appropriate transcripts, that office will evaluate the prior course credits that can be accepted at Minnesota State Mankato.

A. 2. Transfer Agreements with Other Academic Institutions

The Department of Social Work has established formal articulation or equivalency agreements with several regional community colleges that spell out which courses can be transferred such that they will meet some of the requirements of the undergraduate social work major. Check with your advising center to see if your school has such an agreement in place.

A. 3. Course Substitutions and Waivers

Credit for academic courses that are required for the major at MSU, MANKATO but which were completed at other institutions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the student’s Social Work faculty advisor or the Department Chairperson. The student must provide a copy of the course syllabus including assignments and texts used for each course for which they are requesting substitution. If a favorable decision is reached, it will be submitted to the Registrar on a Substitution and/or Waiver Request form. This form will become a part of the student’s permanent record providing assurance that the substitution will be honored when requirements for graduation are evaluated.

A. 4. Social Work Transfer Credits to be Applied to the Major

All students transferring to Minnesota State with a Social Work major will take at least twenty-six credit hours within the program regardless of the number of social work credit hours they have accrued elsewhere. All courses that are considered equivalent to MSU, Mankato undergraduate Social Work courses must have been completed successfully with a grade of “C-” or better in a program accredited by CSWE, or as part of a formal articulation agreement with another institution.
Students transferring to Minnesota State Mankato as seniors or having completed a Practice course at another CSWE accredited program must provide a supporting letter of recommendation from their major advisor or department chairperson at their former program attesting that the student is leaving that program in good standing. The student must meet all criteria for regular admission and have completed equivalent coursework. See IV Sect. B. 2. regarding non-substitution for Practice and Practicum courses.

B. Substitution for Social Work Courses

B. 1. Substitution for Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312)

B. 1.1. Prior Work Experience (see also Section B. 3.)

Occasionally there are students who, by virtue of extensive work experience, may seek to substitute for Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312). For example, a returning student with a degree in a “related” field may have several years of experience as a “county social worker” (a position currently exempt from licensure in MN) and may wish to substitute more advanced coursework for the observational junior level experience. Note that this section would not be applicable to the many students who hold jobs as paraprofessionals in social service settings before or during their schooling.

Students who believe they have work experience exceeding the expectations of SOWK-312 first should meet with their advisor to discuss their experience and then provide a formal letter of request and documentation of their work experience to the Junior Field Experience coordinator. These materials will be conveyed to the BSSW faculty for review and decision-making. Once the decision is made and conveyed to the student, copies of all materials will be placed in the student’s permanent file. If such a substitution is granted, students will take the five credits in other BSSW Program electives.

B.1.2. Credit for non-Social Work Internships in Substitution for SOWK-312

Students who have taken non-social work courses for credit that require service learning, structured volunteer work, or community service hours may petition the Department to count some of those hours toward the 150-hours required for SOWK-312. In no circumstances other than formal articulation agreements will more than 50-percent of the hours previously accrued be counted for SOWK-312. The student should review these materials with their advisor and then provide to the Junior Field Experience Coordinator the following:

A letter of request that the previously accrued hours be considered for application to the 150-hour requirement of SOWK-312; (continued on next page)
IV. Academic Policies (cont’d)

The syllabus explicating the learning objectives and activities of the previous internship or other experience;
Documentation of the hours and where they were accrued; and,
Examples of any assignments, journals, papers, and assessments that were generated as part of the prior learning experience.

The Junior Field Experience Coordinator will review the documentation and make a recommendation to the faculty of the BSSW program regarding how many hours will be accepted and how the student will complete the SOWK-312 requirements. The faculty decision will be communicated to the student and all materials will become part of the student’s permanent file.

B. 2. Substitution for Practice Courses: SOWK-441, 443, 445, and 447

The BSSW program does not accept courses in substitution for the four Practice sequence courses. The particular structure and sequencing of the Practice sequence is a key part of the design of the curriculum and thus these courses are not eligible for substitution. Thus even with substantial appropriate substitution of Introductory, Foundation, and Integrative courses, it is not possible to finish the major in less than three semesters; most students will need at least 4-5 semesters in residence.

B. 3. Substitution for Senior Practicum & Integrative Seminar: SOWK-450, 455

Fieldwork, life experiences, and work experiences may NOT be substituted for the required Senior Practicum (SOWK-455) and the Integrative Seminar (SOWK-450).

B. 4. Sequence Policy Exceptions

The curriculum of the undergraduate Social Work major has been established carefully to meet the accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education and to create a logical progression that will best facilitate the development of the values, skills, and knowledge of generalist Social Work practice as specified in the BSSW program competencies.

It is required that students pursue their studies following the established sequenced curriculum. Advising materials in this BSSW Handbook, on the Web, and used in classes reflect the appropriate pattern of courses, and advisors work with their students to plan with this sequencing in mind.

While advance planning and close work with a BSSW Social Work Faculty advisor generally avoid most problems, on rare occasion a set of extraordinary circumstances in a student’s situation might call for a variance from this pattern.
IV. Academic Policies (cont’d)

The BSSW program affirms the student’s right to petition for a variance from the normal curriculum sequence using the following procedure:

The student must identify the potential conflict between policies and their situation and discuss the conflict with their advisor as early as possible.

A formal letter requesting a variance must be presented to the BSSW program after consultation with the advisor. The letter must present, in detail, the reasons why the variance is requested. These reasons must be far more pressing than convenience or financial issues.

The BSSW program will act promptly on the request if possible; the student may be asked to attend a program meeting to allow for full discussion.

The decision of the BSSW program will be given to the student and their advisor to facilitate planning.

C. Non-Retention in the Major

The BSSW program is charged by its accrediting body and the profession to serve as one of the “gate keeping” institutions for the profession. Students who have been accepted into the major but who subsequently do not meet BSSW program standards will be referred to their advisor to explore options for completing their degree. Normal Departmental and University appeal procedures are available to students who do not agree with the faculty decision.

C. 1. Conditions for Non-Retention in the Major

Students can be non-retained in the major for one or more of the conditions below:

C. 1. 1. Academic Performance

Students who earn a “D” or “F” in any of the Practice courses (441, 443, 445, 447) will not be retained in the major. Students who earn a “D” or “F” in any of the other required 400-level courses must repeat that course with at least a “C-” grade prior to entering Senior Practicum. [Students earning a “D” or “F” in any of the required courses for admission to the major must repeat those courses prior to admission; see VI Sect. A. 2. 1.] Students are expected to maintain or increase their admissions GPA as they move through the program; students whose GPA falls below the admissions requirement must consult with their advisor about strategies for improving their academic performance.

C. 1. 2. Professional Behavior

C. 1. 2. 1. Unethical Behavior

Among other consequences, a student may be disqualified from continuing in the major if found to be in violation of an ethical standard of the University or the profession in relation to: their participation in any portion of the academic program (e.g., cheating, plagiarism); violation of student conduct standards as set forth in University policy; or ethical violations committed while working or volunteering in the community.
C. 1. 2. 2. Criminal Behavior

Conviction on criminal charges may constitute grounds for removal from the major. Discovery by the BSSW program of previously undisclosed criminal convictions may also lead to removal from the major. Depending upon the offense, a criminal conviction may make it difficult or impossible for students to find a Senior Practicum placement or to get licensed upon graduation.

C. 2. Conditions for Re-Admission to the Major after Non-Retention

C. 2. 1. Academic Performance

Students who made a grade of a “D” or “F” in the major may be required to wait one semester before reapplying for admission. The decision to reapply must be reviewed with the BSSW faculty advisor. All BSSW Admission to the Major procedures must be followed.

C. 2. 2. Professional Behavior(s): Unethical or Criminal Conduct

Students dismissed from the major as a result of their criminal or unethical behavior may reapply for admission. The student must apply in writing to the BSSW program to request reconsideration. Following this request, the BSSW program faculty reserves the right to refuse consideration of the request or to deny the request upon consideration. The BSSW program staff may consult with appropriate University and/or professional authorities about the student and their behavior. The BSSW faculty may solicit information from others working with the applicant, including access to legal, administrative, or clinical records, or any other information deemed potentially useful for informed decision-making. Failure to comply with BSSW program requests will be a sufficient basis for non-reconsideration.

C. 2. 3. Procedures

Students who have been suspended or non-retained from the major but who wish to return to the major must write a formal letter to the BSSW program through the Department Chairperson, addressing in detail their understanding of the reasons for non-retention, describing their responsibility in the problem, listing any consequences they have faced, indicating the steps they have taken to address the issues, and summarizing their work with their advisor toward developing a new plan for finishing the major. The request for re-admission will be reviewed by the BSSW faculty and a response plan developed and sent to the student. All documentation becomes a part of the student’s permanent file. If formally re-admitted, students are expected to demonstrate continued academic and personal performance meeting the BSSW program standards.
A. Grievance and Appeal Procedures for the Social Work Major

Student rights and responsibilities are addressed at the Student Resources website, including extensive links to campus policies related to student rights and responsibilities: http://www.mnsu.edu/conduct/studentresources.html

Beyond these general guidelines for Student Conduct Standards at Minnesota State University, the Social Work Department has established specific procedures intended to serve as a guide for action whenever a student or group of students has a grievance with matters pertaining to academic issues within the social work program. These might include such issues as fulfillment of course requirements, contention in regard to credit and/or grade received, evaluation and/or interpretation of curriculum requirements for the major, and acceptance or rejection of a request for admission to or retention in the social work program or to specific courses within the program.

Instructions for appealing a BSSW program decision or a course grade begin in the following section. Please see your Social Work Faculty advisor if you have further questions or concerns about your rights and responsibilities. Your Social Work Faculty advisor will assist you in gaining clarification and/or resolution of the issue of concern. The Social Work Department procedures are modeled after the Minnesota State Mankato Grade Appeals Process.

A. 1. Introduction

On occasion a student may disagree with a faculty decision regarding a grade that the student has received or with a decision regarding the student’s acceptance into the program or retention in the program. Prior to initiating the formal processes described below, students are encouraged to meet informally with the instructor and/or with their advisor to attempt to resolve the matter. The formal process for appealing a grade is clearly spelled out on the campus policy website: http://www.mnsu.edu/policies/approved/gradeappeals.pdf

That process is also summarized in Steps 1-4 below. In the situation where a student disagrees with a program decision the process for requesting a formal meeting is spelled out below. In other situations where students have a grievance they may petition the program for review of the issue; the faculty will vote on whether to consider the grievance.

PROCEDURE: A formal grade appeal will be reviewed in the following manner. Note that the student should keep a copy of all written materials submitted and a log of all contacts regarding the issue. The student should follow the formal process carefully, meeting all deadlines and providing complete information and appropriate copies to all parties.

STEP 1:

The student submits a written grade appeal to the instructor; this appeal should contain whatever documentation is needed to support the student’s claim and should state the change in grade that the student is requesting. Within two weeks the instructor shall...
respond to the student in writing. If the student is not satisfied with the response he/she may proceed to Step 2. If the department chairperson is the instructor whose grade is being appealed the student shall proceed to Step 3.

**STEP 2:**
The student submits a written grade appeal to the department chairperson with a copy to the instructor. In addition to the material presented in Step 1, the new appeal should also contain a summary of the efforts made with the instructor to resolve the matter. The student, the instructor, and the chairperson may meet to discuss the appeal if necessary. Within two weeks the department chairperson will respond to the student in writing with a copy to the instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the response he/she may proceed to Step 3.

**STEP 3:**
The student submits a written appeal to the Dean of the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences with copies to the chairperson and to the instructor. Again, this appeal shall contain the documentation regarding the disagreement plus a summary of the efforts made with both the instructor and the chairperson in Steps 1 & 2. The Dean may review the materials or appoint a College Grade Appeals Committee to conduct the review; the student will receive a response within two weeks with copies to the chairperson and to the instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the response he/she may proceed to Step 4.

**STEP 4:**
The process continues with an appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs with copies to the Dean, chairperson, and instructor. The Vice President may involve a University Grade Appeals Committee for advice and both the student and the instructor shall be allowed to make a rebuttal of the committee’s record. The decision of the Vice President is final and copies will be sent to the student, Dean, chairperson, and instructor.

**A. 2. Appealing Program Decisions**

Students who wish to appeal a BSSW program decision (denied admission, denied retention, etc.) must first consult informally with their advisor; if the students choose to proceed, they must begin with a written request for reconsideration delivered to the Department Chairperson who will then schedule a meeting with the BSSW faculty to review the request. The process may then proceed following Steps 3 and 4 listed under A. 1. Grievance procedure (above).
A. Admission to the Social Work Major (and the Practice Sequence)

Social Work majors and their Social Work faculty advisors work together closely to plan the students’ programs of study so that at this first point of formal review there should be no surprises. Applicants for admission to the undergraduate social work major must review the following criteria, procedure, and possible outcomes carefully.

The BSSW program establishes formal deadline dates for applications at the end of each academic year for the following academic year. Those deadlines are published in a variety of ways including:

- posted signs, on department wall calendars, and on the department website,
- shared with faculty through faculty meetings and flyers and faculty are encouraged to announce in appropriate classes,
- announcements are generally sent through the Department Listserv and are announced in SOWK-305.
- Admissions Coordinator presents information on the application process in all SOWK 210 sections and all SOWK 305 sections.

The Department typically admits 25-30 students per semester and reserves the right to adjust the class size as needed pending institutional, college, departmental or other administrative concerns.

A. 1. Preparation for Applying for the Major

a) Review the standards for admission in this handbook and on the website.
b) Download the BSSW Application for Admission from the website (paper copies are also available).
c) Listen to the information provided in SOWK-305 and other courses and ask questions if you have any.
d) Meet with your Social Work Faculty advisor regularly to plan for admission, to develop a course plan leading to graduation, and to review your completed application before you submit it.
e) Complete your BSSW Application with great care, remembering that many of the faculty members have not yet met you and will be basing their impression of you on the materials you submit. Submit a completed application packet to the Department office by the deadline and keep a copy of everything you submit.

A. 2. Admission Criteria

All students wishing to be admitted to the undergraduate Social Work major must achieve the following standards. Every criteria not met becomes an ‘Exceptions’. Student applications are reviewed and admission review is completed based on the number of exceptions. Students with 0 exceptions will have their applications reviewed first, students with ‘1 exception’ will have their applications reviewed next, and so on.
Students are expected to meet the following criteria in order to be considered for admission to the social work major.

A. 2. 1. Grade Point Average (GPA)

Formal admission to the undergraduate Social Work major requires that applicants have achieved a 2.8 GPA in the required social work and foundation pre-major courses, and a 2.8 cumulative (overall) GPA. In addition, students must have a grade of “C-” or better in all required courses.

Students may be admitted with a lower cumulative GPA upon presentation of convincing evidence of explanatory factors, strong academic performance in recent semesters or strong performance within the major. These students will not receive permission to register for SOWK-441 until they have completed the current semester and demonstrated continued academic success.

A. 2. 2. Completed Course Work

Credit Hours Completed: Students should have completed at least 75 credits by the end of the semester during which they apply to the major.

Course Work Completed: In addition, they should be in or have completed all of the foundation courses (Bio-100, Soc-100, EthnStu-100, KSP-235, PolSci-111, Econ-100 and their choice of statistics course), the Introductory Social Work courses (190W, 210, 214), and the Integrative Social Work courses (305 and 312). Students still completing required course work during the semester of application may be admitted provisionally, but will not receive permission to register for SOWK-441 until the semester is completed and they have documented successful completion of the prerequisites.

SOWK-312, Junior Field Experience: Completion of the Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312) prior to Admission to the Major is preferred, but it may be taken concurrently with SOWK-441 if all other course requirements are met. Students must demonstrate successful completion of SOWK 312 evidenced by a grade of ‘P’ and have at least ‘Average’ or above ratings from the agency supervisor on the Final Evaluation Form completed at the end of the semester.

Course Plan: As part of their Application, students will prepare a course plan indicating their expected course load for each remaining semester until graduation. Faculty members will review this plan to assess whether it meets program sequencing requirements and whether it appears manageable given the student’s previous academic performance history.

A. 2. 3. Evidence of Successful Involvement in Community Service

Students demonstrate their successful involvement in community service by providing their final evaluation from Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312), along with identifying other volunteer or internship experiences they may have completed. Students are encouraged to build their experiences and their resume by participating in a wide range of service activities.
A. 2. 4. Adequate Mastery of Written and Verbal Skills

Competence in written and oral communication is an essential social work skill. Students essays are assessed for their ability to integrate the knowledge, values and skills of the profession as well as indicators of the preparedness for the writing and thinking skills required to successfully complete the advanced social work curriculum.

Students who demonstrate significant weakness(es) in their writing and/or critical thinking skills will be required to meet with their advisor to develop a plan to address identified concerns and to submit this plan for review by the BSSW faculty. Suggestions for addressing writing and critical thinking skills may include taking additional English/Speech courses or a referral to the Center for Academic Success for ongoing support and tutoring.

A. 2. 5. Personal, Academic and Professional Characteristics

Evidence of personal and academic characteristics that are conducive to successful Social Work education and practice may be considered by the faculty in assessing academic and professional readiness for Admission to the Major. Such characteristics include reliability, time management, consistency of performance, successful coping with ordinary personal responsibilities, and a constructively critical openness to new ideas and experiences. The BSSW faculty will review the essays in the Application, the input from the student’s advisor, and any other available information to develop their joint professional opinion about the student’s academic and professional readiness to continue in the major.

A. 2. 6. Transfer Students

Transfer students applying for the major must have met the standards described in (see IV Sect. A) this Handbook; they should be prepared to document the full range of their classroom and field experiences and they should have met with their advisor to prepare a Substitution and Waiver form to cover any requirements not completed at Minnesota State Mankato.

A. 2. 7. Codes of Ethics

As part of their Application, students will attest that they have read and agree to be bound by the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Minnesota Board of Social Work licensure law.

A. 2. 8. Legal Issues

Students who are admitted to the major must be in good standing with the University. Students who have criminal convictions or other possible impediments to professional practice or employment must discuss these issues with their advisor and, in some circumstances, with the BSSW faculty as a whole. Prior convictions do not automatically preclude continuation in the major, but they may make it difficult or impossible to find Senior Practicum placements or to obtain licensure. Students should be aware that SOWK-312 and SOWK-455 require criminal background checks as does the application for licensure; it will not be possible or professional for students to attempt to conceal legal issues.
VI. Admissions Policies (cont’d)

A. 3. Application to the Major Procedure

The Application to the Major is available on the department website and should be reviewed carefully by each student at least one semester before the application deadline, questions should be addressed with the student’s advisor, and neatly organized materials should be submitted prior to the deadline to the Department secretary. All materials should be placed in a manila folder with the student’s name printed neatly on the tab.

A. 3.1. Completed Application for the Major Folder

There is a checklist at the Admission to the Major website that identifies all of the required material. Incomplete or disorganized applications will result in delays in review or delayed/denied admission.

A. 3.2. Decision-Making

The week after the deadline, the Admissions Coordinator reviews files and organizes them for BSSW faculty admissions committee review. All files are reviewed by the Admissions Coordinator and at least 1 to 2 other BSSW faculty prior to full faculty discussion.

Approximately 2-3 weeks after the application deadline, the BSSW faculty members meet to discuss each application individually and make a collective academic and professional decision about the students’ readiness to be admitted to the major.

After review of the applications at a BSSW Program meeting, students are formally notified of the faculty decision, usually within 7-10 working days, through letters mailed to their preferred address.

A. 3.3. Exceptions

The BSSW program has established a procedure by which the applicant’s readiness for admission to the major is assessed. This readiness is based on the applicant having met all the above stated admission criteria.

Students may apply to the major with one or more admission criteria not fully met or not yet met. Any admission criteria not met is referred to as an Exception.

Applications are grouped by the number of Exceptions and are reviewed in order of the number of Exceptions. For example, applications with 0 exceptions are reviewed first, applications with 1 Exception are reviewed next, and so on.
Exceptions include:

- Having less than 75 credit hours prior to the start of the semester in which student would be enrolled in SOWK 441.
- Having less than a grade of ‘C-’ in required SOWK courses (‘P’ in SOWK 312).
- Not having completed required course(s) prior to the start of the semester in which student would be enrolled in SOWK 441.
- Having lower than 2.8 GPA, for SOWK or Overall.
- Having 1 or more ‘Below Average’ checked on the Final Evaluation for SOWK 312.
- Having significant problems with writing and thinking skills.
- Having more than 1 semester with high course load (>16 credits/Spring or Fall and >6 credits/Summer).
- Having General Education requirements to complete.
- Evidence of pre-professional and academic behaviors that are not consistent with the Department’s expectations.

Applicants who submit applications with one or more Exception(s) must submit a letter or statement that identifies the Exception(s), explains the reason for the exception(s), and presents a plan for addressing/correcting the Exception(s).

Exceptions, in and of themselves, are not necessarily automatic denial for admission to the major. Applicants may apply for admission with 1 or more Exception(s). If admitted with one or more Exception(s), applicants are required to meet with their BSSW advisor or with the BSSW Admissions Coordinator to develop and submit a plan to address the Exception(s).

A. 3. 4. Admissions Decisions

After the Department has reviewed the application materials, the Admissions Coordinator informs the applicants as to which of the following possible decisions applies to their application. A formal letter is sent to each applicant at the address provided in his or her application. (Please ensure that this address is current and that if it is a home address rather than your current address that you will be notified promptly of the arrival of the decision letter.)

**Accepted into the Major:** Applicants have met all criteria for admission and are informed that they will be given permission to register for SOWK-441 for the following semester.

**Accepted with Conditions:** Applicants are accepted into the major pending completion of specified criteria. Students will be required to document to the BSSW Admissions Coordinator that they have completed any deficiencies prior to receiving permission to register for SOWK-441. The admission letter will include instructions for “How to Register for SOWK 441”. Typical incomplete components of the application include needing evidence of current course grades and current participation in fieldwork. *This is the most common admission decision, as most applicants are currently completing some required coursework.*
VI. Admissions Policies (cont’d)

Accepted but Delayed: Applicants have met the requirements for admission but have been delayed for at least one semester. This delay could be at the student’s request (e.g., the student is doing an international experience the next semester and is applying for admission for the semester after their return) or could be a class size issue based on the number of applicants and the student’s comparative readiness to move forward in the program.

Admission Consideration Delayed: Applicants have an incomplete application and faculty is unable to determine the applicants’ readiness for admission to the major. Applicants will be given instructions as to the steps to take to complete their applications and will be given deadlines for doing so.

Admission Denied/Reapply: Applicants have significant deficiencies in their applications and are encouraged to address these deficiencies before re-applying to the major. Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor to develop a plan for resolving any application issues and to discuss any issues noted by the faculty. Students may reapply once they have addressed these concerns.

Admission Denied: Applicants do not meet the criteria for admission to the major and do not provide any evidence that they will be able to meet those criteria in the foreseeable future. Students denied admission are encouraged to meet with their advisor to review the concerns about their application and to consider exploring other possible majors.

A. 3. 5. Appeals Procedure

Procedures for appealing the decision of the BSSW program regarding a student’s application to the major can be found in this Handbook (see V: Student Rights and Responsibilities).
VI. Admissions Policies (cont’d)

B. Admission to Senior Practicum and the Integrative Seminar (SOWK-450/455) and Retention in the Program

B.1. General Information

The BSSW Faculty of the Department of Social Work is responsible to assure that the students entering the Senior Practicum (SOWK-455) meet at least the minimum standards required by the Minnesota Board of Social Work and the Council on Social Work Education, and the expectations of the profession. The faculty takes this responsibility seriously because the students enrolled in Senior Practicum will have access to consumers of social and human service agencies. The Social Work profession and Minnesota Statutes require that all consumers have the right to receive competent and ethical services. Therefore, all students entering into Senior Practicum will meet all of the requirements outlined in this handbook and in the Field Manual.

Senior Practicum (SOWK-455) and Integrative Seminar (SOWK-450) have been designated as the Capstone for completion of the Bachelor of Science in Social Work (BSSW) degree at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Successful completion of Senior Practicum and Integrative Seminar requirements (attendance, participation, assignments, and documentation) will meet the Capstone expectation of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Concurrent enrollment in SOWK-450 & SOWK-455 is required.

The requirement for completion of Senior Practicum and Integrative Seminar is never waived nor are substitutions permitted. It is completed during the student’s senior year (usually the last semester of attendance at MSU) after Practice I, II, and III are completed. In conjunction with Senior Practicum (SOWK-455), students will be enrolled in Integrative Seminar (SOWK-450) and Practice IV (SOWK-447).

B.2. Application Date:

The student’s application to Senior Practicum is submitted to the BSSW program early in the semester prior to the semester in which the student wishes to enroll in Senior Practicum. (Fall Semester students will submit their applications during the previous Spring Semester. Spring students will submit their applications during the previous Fall Semester). The Senior Practicum application is to be delivered to the Social Work Department office by noon on the Friday deadline. The specific dates will be posted on the departmental bulletin boards and on the website and announced in classes. Students who will be off-campus in the semester preceding their anticipated enrollment should submit their applications in advance to the BSSW Practicum Coordinator(s). If students want to explore placements beyond the University’s southern Minnesota service area, they should be in touch with the BSSW Practicum coordinator(s) at least two full semesters prior to planned enrollment in SOWK 455.
VI. Admissions Policies (cont’d)

B. 3. Criteria for Admission

1. Completion of all General Education requirements, and all social work required courses through Practice III (SOWK-445). All incompletes and in-progresses must be removed prior to admission. Normally the student will be ready to graduate at the completion of Senior Practicum; exceptions should be reviewed with the student’s advisor.

2. Students are required to continue to meet a satisfactory academic achievement of 2.8 overall GPA and major GPA, with a grade of “C-” or better in all required major courses.

3. Students are required to continue to demonstrate personal characteristics that are required for formal admission to the program. (Please see the Application to the Major and see the Practicum Application for specific expectations of student behavior.)

4. If students have been admitted into the major with specific conditions or recommendations from the BSSW Program, the student is to provide written evidence demonstrating that the recommendations or conditions have been met.

5. Students must have received an ‘average’ or better in all ratings categories on their Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312) evaluation and/or the narrative evaluation must reflect the student’s appropriateness for the social work profession.

B. 4. Admission Procedure

Students are required to download and read the current edition of the BSSW Senior Practicum Manual from the department website. Students are to complete the application procedure that is outlined in the Practicum Manual. Students will submit the following in a standard size manila file folder (NOT a large envelope) to the Social Work Department office by the deadline during the semester prior to anticipated enrollment:

1. A printed copy of the Practicum Application (a copy will be sent to the potential Placement agency).
2. A printed copy of the student’s resume (a copy will be sent to the potential Placement agency).
3. A copy of the graduation approval letter from the Registrar’s office.
4. A copy of the Junior Field Experience (SOWK-312) final evaluation.
5. A Criminal Background Check conducted by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.
6. A signed copy of the Professional Statement that is in the Senior Practicum Manual.
7. Evidence of professional liability insurance.

Consult with the Practicum Coordinator if you have any questions on these items.
B. 5. BSSW Program Decisions

The BSSW Practicum Coordinator(s) will review all applications and submit recommendations to the BSSW Faculty. The BSSW Social Work Faculty will discuss the Coordinator’s recommendations and will conduct an in-depth review of student applications where the Coordinator has noted concerns. The student will receive a timely and confidential notification of their decision. One of the following actions will be taken:

1. The student will be retained in the Social Work Program and admitted to Senior Practicum (SOWK-455). *This is the most common outcome.*
2. The student will be retained in the program and admitted conditionally to Senior Practicum pending satisfactory completion of prerequisites and continuing achievement of required GPA standards.
3. The student will be retained in the program and admitted conditionally to Practicum pending satisfactory completion of an additional Junior Field Experience.
4. The student will be retained in the BSSW program but their admission will be delayed until the next Practicum admission period.
5. The student will not be retained in the program and will not be admitted to Practicum. (This will only occur if it is the consensus of the faculty that the student’s past or ongoing academic or fieldwork performance and/or personal characteristics do not meet the program’s requirements and do not offer minimum expectations for future competent and ethical practice. The student’s application for Practicum will be rejected and the student will be assisted in selecting another major.)

All students have the right to appeal the BSSW program’s decision. Please consult the BSSW Student Handbook (Section V) for appeal procedures.

B. 6. Placement Procedures

During the semester before their placement, students who are applying to Senior Practicum will be notified of several meetings that they will be required to attend. The meetings will focus on possible practicum placements and the procedures for placement. There is an electronic database in the department office that students can access for placement agency ideas.

The student’s interest in a particular area of practice and the location of the agency for convenient housing/commuting will all be considered when possible but students are not permitted to contact agencies independently. Students will select their placements for introduction interviews after having discussed their learning interests with the BSSW Practicum Coordinator. Students must realize, however, that the agency has the right to refuse a student, the student has the right to refuse an agency, and/or the BSSW program has the right to not place a student with a particular agency.

Students should review additional policies and procedures in the BSSW Field Practicum Manual available in the Wissink Copy Shop and on the Social Work Department website.
VII. Student Opportunities

A. The Social Work Club

Getting involved in a student organization can become one of the high points of college life. Meeting other students with similar interests, sharing experiences, working on projects together, raising funds for a favorite charity or field trip, attending professional meetings, sponsoring a campus activity, hosting an alumni dinner or helping to evaluate the social work program, all help build lasting friendships and provide opportunities to gain and exercise leadership skills. The Club has won a variety of campus and state awards for their community activities.

The Social Work Club is a student organization. It is encouraged and supported by the social work faculty but it is organized and administered by students. Election of officers, committee chairpersons and/or representatives to other organizations on campus is accomplished each spring term. Read the Club’s bulletin board, get additional information from the Social Work Department office or from your advisor and get involved. The Social Work Department encourages the Club President or other representative to submit a request to be on the Department meeting agenda whenever desired to provide input on student concerns or upcoming events.

B. Phi Alpha Honor Society

The Department sponsors a chapter of the national Social Work honor society, Phi Alpha, for both BSSW and MSW students. Membership is by invitation, based on academic achievement and a demonstrated commitment to the profession. See the Phi Alpha Bulletin Board in TN-372 and the website for further information.

C. Scholarships

The Social Work Department offers several scholarships each year to assist students with the expenses of their education. See the website for current information about scholarships. Applications are accepted during Spring semester for the following year. While most of the scholarships are for majors well into their program of study, there are always a few set aside for beginning students and new transfer students. The Social Work Department particularly appreciates the contributions from current faculty, retired faculty (e.g., the Sandee Scholarship), alumnae, and community organizations (Region IX MSSA, Downtown Kiwanis Club) that provide the financial support for scholarships.

D. The Child Welfare Training Stipend

The BSSW program participates in a statewide consortium of five undergraduate Social Work programs along with the University of Minnesota’s graduate program designed to prepare professional social workers for practice in Child Welfare. Students apply for the opportunity to receive financial support each semester and complete their BSSW Senior Practicum in a child welfare setting and in return are expected to work in child welfare after graduation. See the BSSW program’s Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Grant Coordinator(s) for more information and application materials.
VII. Student Opportunities (cont’d)

E. Departmental Communications: Listserv, Email, & Facebook

Students are encouraged most strongly to subscribe to the Department’s BSSW listserv. This email service is designed for Social Work Department faculty and students to be the most efficient way to distribute information to everyone interested in Social Work. Information about how to subscribe can be found at: http://mail.mnsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/sowkers. Students are also encouraged to use the campus email system for all class and professional email; students and faculty members have been very frustrated by the high failure rate of the various “free” commercial email servers, especially when sending out important information as attachments and to groups of recipients. Always check your “junk” mail folders to make sure that real mail has not been trashed. Finally, students are encouraged to ‘become a fan’ as a student and as an alumna of the Department’s Facebook webpage: http://www.facebook.com/pages/Minnesota-State-University-Mankato-Department-of-Social-Work/136191733836

F. International Opportunities

The Department continues to offer several international opportunities for students and plans to seek new arrangements and affiliations that will support our commitment to including an international focus in our curriculum. Listed below are brief summaries of several current opportunities; please see your advisor to learn more about them and about new possibilities. International travel usually involves significant lead time for preparation (academic and financial) and arrangements (flights, housing, etc.).

F. 1. Finland (Helsinki Metropolia)

The Department maintains a formal exchange relationship with Helsinki Metropolia University, where students from either program may study for a semester or a full year in the other country. Helsinki Metropolia offers an English-language Social Work program with course work that substitute for some Minnesota State Mankato requirements. Students pay their normal tuition at their home institution and can take courses applicable to their major. Other than airfare, most costs are comparable to the typical expenses associated with attendance in Mankato. See your advisor for further information. See the website for more information.

F. 2. Bristol, England, Comparative Social Policy

The Social Work Department annually arranges for students to study comparative social policy for two weeks in the summer in Bristol, England. Students can use this experience plus preliminary work in the US to supplement Social Welfare Issues & Policy (SOWK-412). While examining British policies and services students also interact with peers from other US institutions so cross-state comparisons can also be made. Opportunities are also available for cultural and tourist experiences in England and beyond. See your advisor and the website for further information.
F. 3. **Other International Opportunities**

In addition to the Department’s international General Education course Global Responses to Human Need (SOWK-255), the Department as a whole or individual faculty sometimes facilitate other international study or travel opportunities. For example, in 2002 the Department co-sponsored (with Political Science) a study tour of South Africa focusing on community development and AIDS programs. Since then the Department has sent small groups of students for internships and a field trip back to South Africa. Other trips have been to New Zealand and are planned to Singapore and Australia. As opportunities become available the Department will notify students.

G. **Opportunities to Contribute to the Department and College**

G. 1. **Participation on Faculty Search Committees**

It is the policy of the Social Work Department and the University to include student members on search committees when hiring new faculty members. The search process can be an excellent learning opportunity for committed students and the process benefits from student input to hiring decisions.

G. 2. **CSBS Student Advisory Council**

The College of Social & Behavioral Sciences has had a Student Advisory Council to assist the Dean in planning and evaluating College activities. Student representatives from the Social Work Club and from Phi Alpha serve on the Council.

H. **Student Professional Involvement Opportunities**

Social Work majors have many opportunities on and off campus to develop their professional skills and relationships. The Social Work Department actively facilitates student involvement in a variety of campus and statewide (and occasionally national) programs. Some examples are:

- Region IX MN Social Services Association (MSSA) Fall conference (North Mankato)
- MN Social Services Association State Conference (In March in Minneapolis)
- MN Conference on Social Work Education (statewide faculty/student gathering)
- Undergraduate Research Conference (campus competition for research presentations)
- National Social Work meetings such as CSWE, BPD, NASW, etc.

See your Social Work Faculty advisor for more information on dates and locations for these and other opportunities.
The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) develops a set of Purpose statements, Policies, and Accreditation Standards that inform accredited social work programs throughout the country. For students this has the benefit that no matter where they find employment in the US, employers and licensing agencies should understand the significance of their accredited degree. The Department of Social Work, with the support of the University administration, expends substantial amounts of resources and energy to maintain the accredited status of its BSSW program (and has since 1974!). [The Department also offers the MSW degree; further information about that program is available on the website or in the department office.]

A full pdf version of the 2008 EPAS can be accessed at the CSWE website at: http://www.cswe.org/Accreditation/Reaffirmation/2008EPAS.aspx

The 2008 EPAS introduced to social work education the idea of “Competencies and Practice Behaviors” (a focus on student learning outcomes expressed as behaviors) in place of the previous emphasis on program and course objectives (a focus on curriculum). The BSSW Program has incorporated (with minor modification) the EPAS language as seen in Appendix E. The Competencies and Practice Behaviors are now incorporated in our course content (objectives, activities, assignments, etc.) and they form the basis for our assessment plan.
The major is preparation for generalist professional social work practice. The program is accredited for baccalaureate level education by the Council on Social Work Education. This major is also excellent preparation for graduate work in social work and related fields. This accredited major meets one of the requirements for social work licensure, which is required to practice social work in most settings in MN.

Criteria for formal admission to the practice sequence are available from the social work faculty and the student handbook, as is information about course sequencing. Admission to the major requires a 2.8 overall GPA and in all supporting and foundation courses. STUDENTS SHOULD WORK CLOSELY WITH THEIR SOCIAL WORK ADVISOR.

### Social Work Intro Courses
- 190W Social Welfare Services (3) *
- 210 Intro to Social Work (3)
- 214 Community Social Service Projects (3) *

### Social Work Integrating Courses
- 305 Human Behavior (3)
- 312 Junior Field (5)

### Social Work Research/Policy
- 412 Social Welfare Issues & Policies (3)
- 469 Applied Social Work Research (3)

### Social Work Practice/Field Sequence
- 441 Practice I (4)
- 443 Practice II (4)
- 445 Practice III (3)
- 447 Practice IV (3)
- 411 Practicum Seminar (2)
- 418 Practicum (10)

### Electives
- 415 Child and Family Welfare (3)
- 419 Social Work & Aging (3)
- 422 Social Work & Chemical Dependency (3)
- 425 Social Work in Health (3)
- 427 Social Work & Domestic Violence (3)

### Foundation Courses (required)
- 101 Sociology (3) *
- 100 Ethnic Studies (3) *
- 100 Biology (4) *
- 235 Education Studies=KSP(3)*
- 100 Economics (3) *
- 111 Political Science (3) *
- Statistics Option
  - Sociology 202 (3) *
  - Psychology 201 (4)
  - Health Sciences 475 (3)

### International Opportunities
- SOWK 255 Global Response to Human Need (3)

### Study Abroad Opportunities
- Finland Exchange Program
- Bristol International Credit Earning Programme

Review the Careers Booklet for additional suggestions for electives.

### Electives (cont’d)
- 430 Social Work & School Setting (3)
- 432 Social Work & Disabilities (3)
- 485 Topics (3)
- 495 Honors Paper (1-3)
- 497 Internship (1-10)

The information listed comes from the University Bulletin and any discrepancies defer to the bulletin. This document is available in alternative format to individuals with disabilities by calling Student Relations, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences at (507) 389-6306 (V) or (800) 627-3529 (MRS/TTY). Job Placement & Occupational Outlook Website: [http://www.mnsu.edu/dept/cdc](http://www.mnsu.edu/dept/cdc)
First Year
First year general education electives should include English 101-102 and the rest should be distributed across the colleges, bearing in mind that most of the social work foundation courses (e.g., Sociology, Biology, etc.) and two of the social work introductory courses (SOWK-190 & SOWK-214) also meet general education requirements. These courses can be taken either semester of the first year. Please work closely with your SOWK advisor!

Sociology 101 Intro to Soc (3cr)*
Biology 100 Our Nat World (4cr)*
GenEd Elective (6cr)*

SOWK-190W Social Welfare Services (3cr)*
GenEd Electives (13cr)*

Second Year
By the end of the second year, students should have completed their general education courses and their foundation courses for the major. These courses can be taken either semester of the second year.

SOWK 210 Intro to Social Work (3cr)
GenEd Electives (13cr)*

SOWK 214 Comm Social Svc Proj (3cr) *
Pol Sci 111 US Govt (3cr) *
Econ 100 Intro to Economics*
EdStudies/KSP 235 Human Devel (3cr) *
EthStu 100 Amer Racial Minorities (3cr)*
GenEd Elective (3cr) *

Third Year
During the first semester of the third year students will apply for formal admission to the major -- those accepted will proceed on immediately with the Practice sequence and the senior year Practicum.

SOWK 305 Hum Behavior (3cr)
SOWK 312 Junior Field (5cr)++
Statistics Requirement (3-4cr)
Electives (8cr)
(Apply to the Major)

SOWK 441 Practice I (4cr)++
SOWK 412 Soc Welf Issues & Policy (3cr)
SOWK 4xx Elective (3cr)
Electives (6cr)

Fourth Year
The required SOWK-Elective can be taken either at the end of the third year or the beginning of the fourth year. Students may take more than one of the 400-level SOWK electives.

SOWK 443 Practice II (4cr)++
SOWK 445 Practice III (3cr)++
SOWK 469 Appl SOWK Research (3cr)
SOWK 4xx Elective (3cr)
Elective (4cr)
(Apply for Practicum)

SOWK 447 Practice IV (3cr) ++
SOWK 455 Practicum (10cr) ++
SOWK 450 Integrative Seminar (2cr) ++

* indicates General Education ++ indicates Permission required
This 2+ year curriculum presumes that students seeking to enter into a professional major have already accomplished the following before arriving at MSU: (1) completed their general education requirements, and (2) completed their social work foundation courses (most could be part of a well-planned general education). Students not prepared to start toward their major upon arrival would need to spend at least a semester resolving deficiencies. Please work closely with your SOWK advisor!

**Preliminary Summer**

Most students will need to use at least one summer to complete the major in two years; the summer could occur either prior to the start of the Third Year (as shown) or between the Third and Fourth years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 190W</td>
<td>Social Welfare Services</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 210</td>
<td>Introduction to SOWK</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(complete foundation deficiencies)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Third Year**

Students should have completed their Foundation required courses by the end of the first semester of the Junior year (Biology, Economics, Political Science, Sociology, Ethnic Studies, Educational Studies/KSP, and the Statistics Option). During the first semester of the third year students will apply for formal admission to the major -- those accepted will proceed on immediately with the Practice sequence and the senior year Practicum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 214</td>
<td>Comm Soc Svc Pro</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 305</td>
<td>Human Behavior</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 312</td>
<td>Junior Fieldwork</td>
<td>5 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>6 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Apply to the Major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 441</td>
<td>Practice I</td>
<td>4 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 412</td>
<td>Soc Welf Issues &amp; Policy</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 422</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 425</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 427</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 430</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 432</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 443</td>
<td>Practice II</td>
<td>4 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 445</td>
<td>Practice III</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 469</td>
<td>Appl SOWK Research</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK-4xx</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Apply for Practicum)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fourth Year**

The required SOWK elective can be taken either at the end of the third year or the beginning of the fourth year. Students may take more than one of the 400-level SOWK electives (415, 419, 422, 425, 427, 430, 432).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 447</td>
<td>Practice IV</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 455</td>
<td>Practicum</td>
<td>10 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOWK 450</td>
<td>Integrative Seminar</td>
<td>2 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>4 cr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates general education  
++ indicates permission required

Given the number of students who have jobs and families, it may be advisable for many to take a lighter course load, which would involve using more summers and semesters to reach graduation.
Appendix E

Department of Social Work: BSSW Competencies & Practice Behaviors

Adapted from CSWE Educational Policy 2.1—Core Competencies

Competency-based education is an outcome performance approach to curriculum design. Competencies are measurable practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills. The goal of the outcome approach is to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The ten core competencies are listed below [EP 2.1.1–EP 2.1.10(d)], followed by a description of characteristic knowledge, values, skills, and the resulting practice behaviors that may be used to operationalize the curriculum and assessment methods. [The BSSW Program has made minor additions to reflect our emphasis on rural and small communities.]

Educational Policy 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession’s history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession’s enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Social workers:

PB#1: Advocate for client access to the services of social work;
PB#2: Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development;
PB#3: Attend to professional roles and boundaries;
PB#4: Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication;
PB#5: Engage in career-long learning; and
PB#6: Use supervision and consultation.

Educational Policy 2.1.2—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers:

PB#7: Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice;
PB#8: Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles;
PB#9: Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts; and
PB#10: Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.
Educational Policy 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers:

PB#11: Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom;
PB#12: Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation; and
PB#13: Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.

Educational Policy 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice.

Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, geographic location, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate 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:

PB#14: Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power;
PB#15: Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups;
PB#16: Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences; and
PB#17: Review themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.

Educational Policy 2.1.5—Advance human rights and social and economic justice.

Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers:

PB#18: Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination;
PB#19: Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice; and
PB#20: Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.
Educational Policy 2.1.6—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers:

PB#21: Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry and  
PB#22: Use research evidence to inform practice.

Educational Policy 2.1.7—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live with an emphasis on rural and small communities; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Social workers:

PB#23: Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation; and  
PB#24: Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

Educational Policy 2.1.8—Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know 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:

PB#25: Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being; and  
PB#26: Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.

Educational Policy 2.1.9—Respond to contexts that shape practice.
Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers:

PB#27: Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services with emphasis on rural and small communities; and  
PB#28: Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services.
Educational Policy 2.1.10(a)–(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Professional practice involves the dynamic and interactive processes of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels. Social workers have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Practice knowledge includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals; using research and technological advances; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(a)—Engagement

Social workers:

PB#29: Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
PB#30: Use empathy and other interpersonal skills; and
PB#31: Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(b)—Assessment

Social workers:

PB#32: Collect, organize, and interpret client data;
PB#33: Assess client strengths and limitations;
PB#34: Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives; and
PB#35: Select appropriate intervention strategies.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(c)—Intervention

Social workers:

PB#36: Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals;
PB#37: Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities;
PB#38: Help clients resolve problems;
PB#39: Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients; and
PB#40: Facilitate transitions and endings.

Educational Policy 2.1.10(d)—Evaluation

Social workers:

PB#41: Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.