

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Professional Behavior and Policies and Procedures for Resolving Academic or Professional Performance Concerns.

Professional Behavior. Because of the nature of professional Social Work practice, the Social Work program has different expectations of students than do non-professional programs. Social Workers traditionally serve vulnerable and/or disadvantaged populations. Social Work programs have a responsibility to protect consumers, and to ensure that Social Work students are competent to begin practice and meet professional ethical standards. The Social Work program's policies are linked to the students' abilities to become effective social work professionals and are provided so that students and faculty can be clear about expectations and procedures to address academic performance concerns, which include professional behavior. Students are expected to exhibit behaviors that are in compliance with the Social Work program's policies, USU policies and standards, the *NASW Code of Ethics*, and professional ethical standards in the classroom, practicum, and community.

Students are accountable as representatives of the Social Work program and the social work profession. Students are also expected to abide by the *NASW Code of Ethics* and to uphold the rules and procedures of their practicum placement agencies. The Social Work program requires students to demonstrate professional demeanor, appropriate relationships, and ethical behavior. Failure to meet these ethical standards may result in a failing grade and expulsion from the Social Work program.

Since social work is a professional program in which students have the potential to work with vulnerable populations, the Social Work program reserves the right to seek additional information such as references from employers and others. Students should also be aware that if there are any personal data such as that included on the application for state licensure that may indicate a potential threat to the public safety and welfare, a student may be denied continuance in the MSW program or encouraged to withdraw from the program. Should that situation arise, students will be assisted in finding a more suitable program/profession.

If a student falls below the academic or professional standards or demonstrates unprofessional behavior at a practicum site in violation of the policies and procedures associate with the practicum (see *MSW Field Practicum Manual*), such behavior would trigger a disciplinary process. This is a multi-step process that can be generated by an individual faculty member, a practicum supervisor, a faculty supervisor, or any Social Work program administrator. Outlined below is the process if the potential disciplinary concern involves the Practicum:

Disciplinary Process within the Practicum

Process when student fails to comply with practicum agency expectations:

1. Practicum Director will meet with the agency to discuss concerns and goodness of fit for the student and agency.
2. Practicum Director will request a written letter or written evaluation from the agency documenting concerns.
3. Practicum Director will meet with the MSW Program Coordinator, the student and the student's faculty advisor to discuss the agency's concerns, as well as, to hear the student's perspective of the situation.

4. The program, in consultation with the agency, will make the final determination of student continuation at the agency.
5. The program reserves the right to deny continuation in the program. The Student Review Committee is charged with making decisions regarding program termination.
6. If the program denies continuation, faculty will work with the student to help determine an alternative major.