

SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The undergraduate Social Work Program at UW-Superior is structured as a competency based program. The program implements this structure through its mission, six goals and thirteen objectives and through its specific course goals and competency objectives.

Mission Statement (Revised in May 2010)

The mission of the University of Wisconsin – Superior Social Work Program is to teach students the generalist skills and knowledge needed to be responsible and ethical change agents who empower clients/consumers across diverse populations with a local, regional, and global consciousness focusing on social justice, self-awareness and lifelong learning.

Program Goals (Revised in May 2011)

GOAL 1: Generalist Preparation

To prepare students for entry-level ecologically-based generalist practice at all levels of intervention (individuals, groups, families, organizations, and communities), utilizing a liberal education foundation.

GOAL 2: Diversity

To prepare students for inclusive practice with diverse, underrepresented and vulnerable groups in society throughout a variety of local, regional & global human service settings, particularly empowering practice with American Indian people, elderly persons, veterans, and persons with differing abilities.

GOAL 3: Ethics

To prepare students for ethical and principled decision-making guided by the values and standards of the social work profession.

GOAL 4: Social Justice

To prepare students to recognize and apply social justice principles in practice situations.

GOAL 5: Professional Development –

To prepare students for lifelong learning, to maintain competence and stay current with best practice.

GOAL 6: Service

To engage students in social justice and change through generalist social work activities with local, regional and international communities.

Program Student Learning Objectives
(Adopted for Use with 2012-2014 Catalog)

At the time of graduation each student must be able to demonstrate competence regarding each of the following learning objectives:

1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
(EPAS¹ 2.1.1).
2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice
(EPAS 2.1.2)
3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments
(EPAS 2.1.3)
4. Engage diversity and difference in practice
(EPAS 2.1.4)
5. Advance human rights and social and economic justice
(EPAS 2.1.5)
6. Engage in research informed practice and practice informed research
(EPAS 2.1.6)
7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment
(EPAS 2.1.7)
8. Engage in policy practice to advance social justice and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services
(EPAS 2.1.8)
9. Respond to contexts that shape practice
(EPAS 2.1.9)
10. Engage, assess, intervene and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
(EPAS 2.1.10)

These objectives are operationalized throughout the curriculum. Students must demonstrate mastery of 41 different practice behaviors associated with them. The entire curriculum has been mapped to ensure that each of the 41 practice behaviors is addressed at the beginning, intermediate, and the advanced levels of undergraduate practice. Each course syllabus notes the learning objectives and practice behaviors covered in that course and at what level it is being taught. Each course syllabus also ties the specific course to its position in the curriculum relative to other courses.

¹ EPAS is the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards which govern all CSWE accredited programs.

UW-SUPERIOR DEFINITION OF GENERALIST PRACTICE

The Program employs an **ETHNIC- AND SOCIALLY- SENSITIVE ECOLOGICALLY-BASED GENERALIST SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE LENS** through which students are expected to frame their learning. This is defined as follows:

The **generalist perspective** employed by the UW-Superior Program helps students to develop the knowledge, values and skills for effective intervention with a wide variety of regional populations. Students learn to work with a wide range of situations at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice using the basic skills of observation, communication, and critical problem-solving. The curriculum is also shaped with concepts from the ethnic sensitive and ecological perspectives.

The Program utilizes the principles of **ethnic-sensitive practice**¹ as laid out in Devore and Schlesinger, in assisting students in developing sensitivity and competence in relating to vulnerable at-risk cultural and social groups. These principles include attention to and respect for past history, a focus on present time, and recognition that ethnic and social reality can be both a source of strength and an obstacle in working with members of a group. With this approach, the most effective interventions are directed simultaneously to both micro and macro issues.

The **ecological perspective**² is concerned with both the client and the context or situation in which the client exists. It involves recognition of the dynamic adaptation occurring between the two, giving attention to both. The ecological perspective, based upon the work of Germaine and Gitterman, emphasizes patterns, processes, flows of energy and information among system elements. Neither the client systems served nor their environments can be fully understood except in relationship to each other.

Particular attention is paid to assist students in developing **empowering approaches** to working with client systems, which serve to strengthen those systems' self-determination and decision-making capacities. Thus, students are also taught additional theories and models like person-centered practice, task-centered practice, the strengths perspective, social development perspective and the feminist perspective, which tend to empower clients.

The ethnic-sensitive, ecologically-based generalist perspective is employed throughout the curriculum as a basis for all courses.

1 Devore, W., & Schlesinger, E. G. (1996). *Ethnic-sensitive social work practice* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

2 Germaine, C. B., & Gitterman, A. (1996). *Life model of social work practice* (2nd ed.). New York: Columbia University.

THE LIBERAL ARTS FOUNDATION

The niche of UW-Superior is that of the public liberal arts campus of the UW System. Because of this, there have been intense, passionate campus conversations and concentrated development of the liberal arts and how it can be best represented by the campus as a whole and by its programs, both the traditional liberal arts and the professional programming areas.

The liberal arts perspective is perceived as the “big picture” framework from which lifelong and collaborative learning will flow. All campus programs are expected to provide learning opportunities for living in a global environment, to partner with the community and the region, to foster critical thinking and intellectual growth in their majors and minors, and to work collaboratively with other campus disciplines. Most recently, the campus has committed itself to five high impact liberal arts practices: campus-wide service learning opportunities, writing across the curriculum, global initiatives, a senior year experience, and a first year experience (including seminars).

Traditionally, the liberal arts have fostered the development of thinking and reasoning, providing a general and broad education rather than a specific technical one which would prepare one for only a single profession. Liberal arts have usually been defined as relating to the social sciences, natural sciences, fine arts, literature, and the humanities. As a professional program in this milieu one might think social work preparation out of synch with a liberal arts perspective. In reality, social work has long believed that social work graduates must have an exceptionally strong grounding in the liberal arts to succeed as social workers, and social work preparation has required a great deal of this liberal arts background. In fact, during the campus’ transition to this niche, other traditional liberal arts disciplines held social work up as a stellar example of how the professional perspectives already strongly represented on campus could peacefully co-exist, interact with, draw from and collaborate within this niche. The department in which social work is housed exemplifies how that can be done successfully. Human Behavior, Justice and Diversity combines both traditional and newer liberal arts disciplines (psychology and legal studies) with a professional/applied social science discipline (social work) and a culturally-based discipline (First Nations Studies).

The Social Work Program curriculum enlarges upon the liberal arts perspective provided to all UW-Superior students to further enrich the person-in-environment perspective of generalist social work practice and to encourage the mastery of social work content.

- As with all other campus disciplines, all social work students must complete a liberal arts core (15 to 16 credits speech, composition, math, and health and wellness over five courses) common to the entire campus (including transfer students).
- They must also complete up to 28 more credits in knowledge areas including the humanities, history, literature, contemporary society, human behavior, the natural and physical sciences, and fine and applied arts.
- They also must complete a non-Western course and a diversity course, which may be combined with another knowledge area.

- There are menus in each knowledge area of specific courses that the General Education Sub-Committee of the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council has deemed an appropriate fit to the given category and from which the students may choose.

The social work curriculum builds upon this general foundation:

- Of particular importance to this Program, given its mission and goals, are courses which aid students in understanding one's own cultural heritage as well as the **cultural contexts** of others.
- To enhance students' knowledge of determinants of human behavior they complete one course in the area of **Physical Determinants of Human Behavior** to better understand and be able to think critically about human beings' physical abilities and wellness and/or other biologically-based needs.
- They must also complete a course in the area of **Intra-interpersonal Determinants of Human Behavior**. These courses focus students' thinking and critical understanding about human development, mental health, and/or communication skills.
- Majors also complete a course which encourage the development of **writing skills**.
- They must also complete a **statistics course** to aid them in the evaluation of their practice and that of others and to foster the development of an evidence-based practice perspective.
- Finally, students must choose a course from the **Systemic Determinants of Human Behavior** menu. The course chosen must contribute to their ability to think critically about social problems and conditions and their relationship to people's private troubles and/or assist them in developing the ability to view social, economic, human rights and other justice issues from multiple perspectives

UW-SUPERIOR SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Respecting and celebrating diversity is an inherent part of the mission of the UW-Superior Social Work Program and is a central theme of service when social workers are working in the community. In promoting the dignity, worth and empowerment of the individual client, while working to improve and sustain the social environment, our program seeks to strengthen students' interest in, respect for, and skills in working effectively with diverse and vulnerable populations. Our program also seeks to sensitize and prepare students to help service systems toward constructive change when relating to diverse populations.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Prologue:

This is a policy designed and approved by the 1996-1997 Student Advisory Committee, which was also approved by faculty in May, 1997, and the Community Advisory Committee in March, 1998. It was revised by the Student Advisory Committee in the spring of 2000, again in the spring of 2003, and most recently in the spring of 2008. The policy was created to ensure that students would be apprised of and understand their rights and responsibilities as members of the Social Work Program.

Students entering the Social Work Program are expected to indicate in writing that they have read and understand this statement as part of the admission process for the junior year of the major.

Students Rights Statements:

UWS social work students have the right to the following from the UWS Social Work Program:

- Ethical, non-discriminatory, and respectful treatment from all Program students and faculty.
- A program accredited through the CSWE, affording them better access to higher education and employment opportunities.
- A Program intake interview once admission standards have been met; see “Program Admission” section.
- A *Social Work Student Handbook* explaining curriculum, program policies, and student generated-policies and procedures.
- A change of advisors when requested, keeping in mind that faculty are expected to maintain a balanced workload.
- Termination from the Program if they so desire.

- Access to grievance procedures using the departmental standards outlined elsewhere in this *Social Work Student Handbook*.

UWS social work students have the right to the following from the UWS Social Work Program faculty:

- Information regarding faculty educational qualifications, practice history, and areas of expertise which have a direct bearing on classroom activity.
- Considerate treatment by social work faculty and staff consistent with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics.
- Consideration of students' privacy pertaining to confidentially about their academic records and safeguarding of personal student information which has been shared with faculty. Faculty may intervene with impaired students (see "Student Assistance Policy".)
- Accurate and timely advisement tailored to the individual student's academic and career goals.
- Adequate office hours and other reasonable access to faculty regarding class work, advisement, and student groups' business concerns.
- Complete and accurate information regarding status in the Program, grading, and questions about specific course work expectations.
- Referral at the student's request for special supportive academic and personal services.
- Delivery of a comprehensive, integrated curriculum designed to meet accreditation standards.
- Distribution of a comprehensive syllabus for each social work course *at the beginning of the course* outlining catalog description, course philosophy, course text and readings, course learning objectives, course practice behaviors to be addressed, a course calendar, expected activities upon which students will be evaluated, grading procedures, and a web link to the UW-Superior University policies for students which include things like policies on disability, religious beliefs and school dismissal statements.

Students' Responsibility Statement:

UWS social work students have the following *ethical* responsibilities:

- To develop the ability to understand and apply appropriate ethical standards to situations involving future clients, other students, colleagues, practice settings, and the larger society.
- To demonstrate an understanding of and to abide by the mission, values, principles, and standards of professional social work practice.
- To develop non-discriminatory personal and practice approaches in interacting with client systems and to engage in on-going self-evaluation about personal biases, strengths and limitations which may impact future practice.
- To develop sensitivity to issues relating to marital status, race, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and political viewpoints.
- To respect, and hold confidential, other students' personal information, *unless so doing will injure that student or someone else.*
- To respect the in-class sharing of another student, instructor or guest speaker; when an anecdote is shared in a class situation, students need to respect the context and not pass that information forward out of class without first discussing it with the person or persons involved.
- To honor the profession's value commitments to service, social justice, self-determination, dignity and worth of the person, the centrality of human relationships, professional competence, and personal and professional integrity.
- To be accountable to the public, the Program, the social work student body, and the University for maintaining ethical behavior.

- To seek support for personal, mental health, and other crises.
- To report or confront unethical conduct which students encounter.

UWS social work students also have the following responsibilities:

- To complete assignments on time and meet appropriate academic expectations as laid out in the social work course syllabi, the core social work curriculum and the UW-Superior catalogue under which they were admitted.
- To negotiate directly with instructors about difficulties and special circumstances affecting the meeting of course expectations.
- To use appropriate departmental grievance procedures when they have difficulties with an instructor/ professor, program policy, or another student.
- To behave considerately to other students and faculty.
- To seek out information about course work and advisement as needed.

University of Wisconsin Superior Social Work Program
Social media policy

In light of the use of social media for various uses, the Social Work Student Advisory Committee developed this policy to guide Social Work students and faculty in the use of social media within a professional social work context.

Students must understand that their academic coursework is within the professional context. Students' behaviors should follow the National Association of Social Work Code of Ethics. Social media is a tool which can be used ethically, but it also poses a danger in regards to confidentiality, privacy, and other standards within the Code.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Identify the requirements for use of social media within the academic setting;
- Provide faculty with guidelines to make decisions regarding the use of social media in coursework;
- Support students in professional development, including ethical behaviors.

The guidelines for the use of social media are:

1. Students can state on their personal social media site where their internship or service learning is located.
2. Students must follow the agency policy (if in an internship or service learning site), if a policy exists.
3. Students cannot post or discuss in any other way information pertaining to their internship site, including client information (Section 1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality in the NASW Code).
4. Students cannot add clients as friends on their social media site (Section C, 1.06 Conflict of Interest).
5. Students should consult a supervisor in cases where clients are attempting to cross social media boundaries (Section 1.07 and 3.01b).
6. Students are obligated to report colleagues or classmates they may encounter who is breaking confidentiality in any way (Section 2.02 and 2.11).
7. Students should be mindful of the information they post on the internet and social media sites, for their own safety and for upholding the social work profession.

SAC recommends that all students and faculty develop their own social media use policy to guide their professional practice.

Passed by UWS Social Work Student Advisory Committee, March 2014
Passed by UWS Faculty, April 2014