

School of Social Work

Professional Standards for Social Work Education

These Standards include the following:

- 1) Criteria for Evaluating Academic and Professional Performance,**
- 2) Policies & Procedures for Review of Academic and Professional Performance, and**
- 3) Grievance Processes**

Effective September, 2003 for all matriculated and non-matriculated students

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Standards for Social Work Education

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Standards for Social Work Education

Criteria for Evaluating Academic Performance, Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic Performance, and Academic Grievances

1.0 Introduction

This document sets out Standards for Social Work Education that apply to students enrolled at the School of Social Work at Salem State College, beginning Summer, 2003.

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

Because becoming a professional is a gradual process, not all criteria are expected to be met at all times. Persons who teach and supervise students, along with program coordinators, will assess student academic performance and apply their professional judgment to determine if standards are being met during a student's educational career. Professional judgment is the capacity to assess a situation by applying the values and knowledge of the social work profession, combined with a professional's own experience and practice wisdom. It also represents the application of knowledge, values, and skills to making decisions in a helping process. This assessment of performance and professional judgement occurs as the student progresses through academic and field education courses.

All social work students will be provided with and expected to read the Standards for Social Work Education and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics during their orientation meeting at the School. Students will then be asked to sign an acknowledgment documenting that they have read, are aware of the contents of, and will abide by the Standards. When the students enter field education they will sign an additional document that states they have read the (NASW) Code of Ethics as well as the Field Education Curriculum Guide or BSW Fieldwork Manual and that they understand and will abide by these documents. These acknowledgement forms will be kept in students' files.

2.0 Criteria for Evaluating Academic Performance in BSW & MSW Programs At The School Of Social Work

In order to meet its responsibilities to provide quality professional education and to ensure that its graduates are able to function in a broad variety of professional situations, the School of Social Work evaluates the academic performance of its students in four general areas: acquisition of professional skills; emotional abilities; professional performance in field; and scholastic performance. Meeting the criteria for scholastic achievement is necessary but not sufficient to ensure continued enrollment in a program. Both professional behavior and scholastic performance comprise academic standards in a professional social work program.

2.1

Acquisition of Professional Skills

2.1.1 Communication Skills

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

- a) *Written:* Writes clearly, uses correct grammar and spelling, and applies appropriate writing style, including referencing, appropriate source citation, and documentation in accordance with the latest edition of the *American Psychological Association Style Manual*. Demonstrates sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and to complete adequately all written assignments, as specified by faculty. Also see College's Minimum Writing Standards on page 48.
- b) *Oral:* Communicates effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals. Expresses ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates a willingness and an ability to listen to others. Demonstrates sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to complete adequately all oral assignments, and to meet the objectives of field placement experiences, as specified by faculty.

2.1.2 Interpersonal Skills

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

2.1.3 Cognitive Skills

Exhibits sufficient knowledge of social work and clarity of thinking to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in classroom and field. Demonstrates grounding in relevant social, behavioral and biological science knowledge and research—including knowledge and skills in relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of practice. Exhibits cognitive capacity sufficient to understand and execute the internship role within the field education setting.

2.1.4 Physical Skills

Exhibits motor and sensory abilities to attend and participate in class, with or without accommodations. Exhibits sufficient abilities to perform the essential functions of the internship in the assigned field education placement, with or without reasonable accommodations. (See section 2.6 on *Accommodations for Disabilities* for clarification.)

2.2

Emotional Abilities Necessary for Performance in the Program and Professional Practice

2.2.1 Stress Management

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

2.2.2 Emotional Abilities

Uses sound judgment. Demonstrates relational abilities in work with clients and colleagues. Takes responsibility to seek and effectively use help, including resources outside the College, for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance. Engages in counseling or seeks out support and help if personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties do any of the following:

- compromise scholastic and other performance,
- interfere with professional judgment and behavior, or
- jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the social work student has a professional responsibility (as outlined in the current Codes of Ethics by the National Association of Social Workers and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Registration for Social Work Licensure).

2.3

Professional Performance Skills Necessary for Work with Clients and Professional Practice

2.3.1 Professional Commitment

Exhibits a strong commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession, as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics for Social Work Licensure in Massachusetts. Demonstrates commitment to the essential values of social work that includes respect for the dignity and worth of every individual and a strong sense of social and economic justice.

2.3.2 Professional Behavior

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

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

2.3.3 Self Awareness

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

2.3.4 Ethical Obligations

Current behavior and classroom performance demonstrate adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional practice standards. Ethical behaviors include:

- Adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics and the Standards for Social Work Licensure in Massachusetts.
- Proper and timely disclosure of any convictions or offenses that may have an impact on the ability to practice professionally. Willingness to engage in responsible collaborative decision making regarding how this history may affect the appropriate field placement.
- Systematic evaluation of clients and their situations in an unbiased, factual way.
- Sufficient suspension of personal biases during interactions with others.
- Empathic communication and support of the client as a basis for a productive professional relationship.
- Appreciation of the value of diversity. Sensitivity to respect for another individual's lifestyle and values. Effective and nonjudgmental intervention with others who are different from oneself. Appropriate service to all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person's age, class, race, religious beliefs, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and/or value system. No imposition of personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on clients.
- Demonstration of respect for the rights of others. Commitment to clients' rights to freedom of choice and self-determination.
- Maintenance of confidentiality as it relates to human service, classroom activities, and field placement.
- Demonstration of honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; doing one's own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source materials.
- Demonstration of clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.
- Does not sexually harass others; make verbal or physical threats; become involved in sexual relationships with clients, supervisors, or faculty; abuse others in physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual ways; or participate in dual relationships where conflicts of interest may exist. (See policy Against Sexual Harassment, Salem State College Catalog.

2.4

Scholastic Performance

2.4.1 Undergraduate Students

A student must maintain at least a "C-" in every required course in the major. A student's grade point average (GPA) is evaluated at several points during her or his matriculation before being admitted to senior fieldwork. First, a student must receive a cumulative GPA of "B-" (2.7) in the first two required social work courses, SWK 100 and SWK200, in order to proceed to SWK 301. A student must receive a B- in SWK 301 in order to move to SWK 302. The student must achieve a cumulative GPA of "B-" in five (5) social work courses to be considered for a field practicum placement. These five courses are: SWK 100, SWK 200, SWK 270, SWK 301 and SWK 302.

Transfer students must have maintained a "B-" in these or equivalent courses for which they have received transfer credit. Students who fail to achieve a "B-" average at these points have the opportunity to retake one course from the cluster to achieve the necessary average. Students must maintain a passing grade in field practicum and in field seminar to complete the major.

Any student who fails to meet these academic requirements will be referred by the student's faculty advisor to the BSW Program Coordinator. The Coordinator may refer the student to the School's Student Progression Committee for review of the situation and for the Committee's recommendation, as detailed in sections 3.0 and 3.1 of this document.

2.4.2 Graduate Students -

MSW students are considered to be in academic difficulty in their GPA drops below 3.0. Students in the Advanced Standing Program are permitted one grade of "C"; a second "C" grade will result in dismissal from the MSW Program. Students in the General Program are permitted two grades of "C"; a third "C" grade will result in dismissal from the MSW Program. A review may be called if a student earns a grade of C in any two required social work courses.

Students must have a grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 to move from the foundation to the concentration year. If a student is having difficulty meeting the GPA standard, they are permitted to take one foundation year course over (one time only).

The receipt of an "F" grade in any course including field placement automatically results in the termination of a student from the graduate program.

A student must have a GPA of 3.0 to graduate. Students who complete their course work without the 3.0 average must meet with their Academic Advisor and the MSW Program Coordinator to discuss the possibility of additional requirements that must be approved in writing by the Director of the School of Social Work and subject to the final approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

A student who is dismissed for academic reasons has the right to a hearing before the Graduate Education Council for the purpose of presenting information in support of possible reinstatement.

2.5

Sources of Information on Academic Performance

Sources of information about whether academic performance criteria are being met by a student in the School of Social Work may include but are not limited to those listed below. Appropriate Standards of informed consent and confidentiality will be adhered to.

- Performance in oral and written assignments, examinations, social work skills labs, or other coursework
- Written or verbal feedback from faculty, field practicum supervisors, or supervisors of volunteer human service activity
- Formal feedback from agency-based field instructors through evaluative tools
- Observation of classroom, volunteer, or field behaviors
- Student personal statements or self-assessments
- Interviews with faculty or other professionals
- Taped interview situations (audio or video)
- Feedback from faculty in other social work programs that the student may have attended
- Feedback from students, staff, other colleges and universities, helping professionals, or community
- Signed contracts between the School and the student, including the Teaching/Learning Contract or any confidentiality or scholastic honesty statements

2.6 Accommodations for Disabilities

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

Any otherwise qualified student with a disability that substantially limits one or more life activities, and who requests a reasonable accommodation, must notify the Office for Students with Disabilities and provide documentation as needed. The Office for Students with Disabilities makes recommendations for accommodations. The School of Social Work will review academic performance criteria in light of individual student circumstances to explore issues of appropriateness and accommodation. An initial assessment, subsequent plan, use of outside experts (with consent from the student), and periodic checks between the School of Social Work and the student are appropriate courses of action in making accommodations.

In the event of a request for accommodations in field placement, the request must be documented, reviewed, and approved by the Office of Students with Disabilities, and be reasonable according to the resources of the field placement and the essential duties of the internship role.

3.0 Policies and Procedures For Review Of Academic Performance

Three levels of review can occur at the School of Social Work in reviewing student's academic performance. The level of review depends upon the potential severity of the concern. Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty, program coordinators, or school administrators will not be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about professional performance. Faculty and/or program coordinators will share pertinent information with each other for the professional purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. They will follow college procedures related to student performance issues.

3.1 Performance that May Result in a Review and/or Possible Dismissal from the School of Social Work

Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty

Salem State College assumes that all students come to the College with serious educational intent and expects them to be mature, responsible individuals who will exhibit high standards of honesty and personal conduct in their academic life. All forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, are considered to be serious offenses against the College community.

Student reviews can occur under any of the following circumstances:

- Failure to meet or maintain academic requirements as stated under Scholastic Performance
- Scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student. All forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, are considered to be serious offenses against the College community.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty: Submitting another person's work as one's own. This includes, for example, copying another person's work during examinations; purchasing papers; copying papers, reports or portions of papers, material from a website; copying laboratory or computer results; and presenting material from another course or paper without proper acknowledgment, citations and references.

Penalties for plagiarism and academic dishonesty can include **an automatic grade of F for the course** as well as being reported to the Vice President, Academic Affairs, and can lead to **suspension or expulsion from the college**. See the current Salem State College Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogues for complete descriptions of College policies on academic dishonest and the appeals procedures.

- Behavior judged to be in violation of the current NASW Code of Ethics
- Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or someone else
- Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice, occurring during the course of study or occurring prior to admission to the School of Social Work and becoming known after admission
- Consistent pattern of unprofessional behavior
- Failure to meet any of the Standards for Social Work Education: School of Social Work Criteria for Evaluation of Academic Performance

3.2

Three Levels of Review

Level 1 – Flagging and Conferencing

A Level 1 review involves a faculty member and a student. When a faculty member has concerns about a student's ability to meet the academic criteria, whether related to professional behavior or scholastic performance, that faculty member will:

- Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the difficulties.
- Inform the appropriate advisor, BSW MSW or Field Coordinator of the concerns via use of a flagging form in order to identify potential patterns and issues related to the student. Concerns to be noted include the following areas:
 - Attendance
 - Assignments
 - Writing Skills
 - Oral Communication Skills
 - Professional Behavior
 - Other

If a problem arises in field, the agency-based field instructor will discuss concerns directly with the student and with the faculty liaison. It is the responsibility of the faculty liaison to inform the appropriate coordinator of the concerns through a flagging form.

In many instances, meetings between faculty and students resolve the concerns and do not necessarily lead to further reviews, pursuant to this section.

Level 2 –Assisted Conferencing - Student Academic Needs

A Level 2 review involves the faculty member, student, and the BSW or MSW program coordinator. The focus here remains on the student learning. Faculty and program coordinator will meet with the student when the student is not meeting or following program or college standards, policies, and procedures or when concerns have not been resolved at Level 1. If a problem arises in field, the agency-based field instructor, faculty liaison, and BSW or MSW field education coordinator will conduct the review with the student.

In this information gathering process, the program coordinator will determine the nature of the concern and gather sufficient information to develop a plan to address that concern, if one is needed. If the problem is

determined to be a faculty/student conflict, the program coordinator will refer the matter to the Chairperson. No further action may be required, or the student may be asked, in writing, to modify his or her behavior and/or seek appropriate help. This process is designed to assist students in dealing with identified concerns that have an impact on their performance.

The BSW or MSW Program Coordinator or Program Field Coordinator will assess the nature of these concerns with appropriate faculty, consult with the Chairperson or Director, maintain documentation, and decide if it is necessary to conduct a more comprehensive review, pursuant to Level 3 – Student Progression.

Level 2 –Faculty/Student Conflict Resolution

The School of Social Work recognizes that instances of faculty and student conflict do occur. These conflicts often include, but are not limited to, personality conflicts, conflicts about grades and perceived insensitivity of faculty to student difference. Sometimes these conflicts impact the student's progress

through the program and hence may be confused with issues which are appropriate to resolve through the Level 3 -- Student Progression Review. However, faculty/student conflict should NOT be addressed in a Student Progression Review. Faculty/student conflict may range in seriousness from the relatively trivial to significant charges of violations of professional ethics. Each situation must be evaluated on its own merits. Some conflicts are resolvable within the School of Social Work, and some are appropriate to take to the formal complaint level both within and outside the School of Social Work. The conflict resolution process should be followed by students who are experiencing some difficulty with a professor but either do not wish to file a formal complaint or do not believe that grounds for filing a formal complaint exist (see Complaint Procedure 4.1).

It is important to emphasize that resolution of faculty and student conflicts must occur through mediation with the Chairperson of the Department in consultation with the Director of the School and may NOT involve other faculty. Contractual provisions prohibit faculty members from discussing the work or behavior of their colleagues.

Procedure:

1. Ideally, a student having a concern or a problem with a faculty member should discuss his or her concern with that faculty member and agree on a mutually satisfactory solution.
2. The entire conflict resolution process should be conducted orally and no written record of the process should be maintained.
3. If the problem is not resolved, or if the student believes there is a compelling reason why (s)he does not wish to speak privately with the faculty member concerned, the student should discuss the concern with the Chairperson. The Chairperson is required by contract to address concerns about faculty members which have been brought to the Chair's attention.
4. Students should NOT discuss conflicts with one faculty member with other faculty members, but only with the Chairperson. Discussing one faculty member with other faculty members would violate contractual prohibitions about "incidental evaluation".
5. The Chairperson will attempt to address the issue between the student and the faculty member by a variety of means including but not limited to meeting with both faculty and student singly or together.
6. If the student is not satisfied by the resolution of the conflict resolution process, the student may file a formal complaint if grounds for filing a formal complaint exist (see Complaint procedure 4.1).
7. If the Chairperson is the faculty member with whom the student has a conflict, the Director of the School shall act as mediator.

Additional comments about possible areas of conflict:

1) Grades - As a general rule, faculty members' decisions about grades are usually accepted as the final word as part of the faculty member's academic freedom to exercise his or her own professional judgment. It is therefore unlikely that an administrator would ask the faculty member to change a grade and the administration itself does not have the authority to change a grade. In order to successfully challenge a grade, the student would have to demonstrate that the grading was not conducted according to the standards set by the School or the stated criteria of the individual syllabus, or that the grade was unduly influenced by the professor's bias.

2) Insensitivity and discrimination - Students sometimes experience faculty members as insensitive to their concerns or experience faculty members as biased against particular groups of which they may or may not be members. Although faculty strive to be open to students, there are difficulties that can arise. Conflicts in this area might range from unintentional and relatively mild insensitivity to outright bias, prejudice or discrimination. Student/faculty conflict growing out of the less intense insensitivity might well be handled at the conflict resolution level. Serious violations of students' rights by virtue of bias or discrimination based on the student's racial, ethnic, religious, language, age, social class, or sexual preference group violate both College regulations and professional ethics. These situations, hopefully quite rare, are taken seriously at every level of the College. Complaints about discriminatory practice should be made to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Human Rights rather than through the School of Social Work. Addressing these issues at the School of Social Work level might contaminate the process if the student wishes to file formal charges against a faculty member.

3) Faculty also have the right to be protected from the bias, prejudice and discriminatory behavior of students. Should the faculty/student conflict be related to the student's insensitivity or bias against the faculty member because of that professor's race, ethnic group, age, social class, or sexual preference, this bias might certainly be considered when determining the student's appropriateness for the field of social work.

4) Sexual harassment charges are treated equally as serious as discrimination charges by both the School of Social Work and the College. Students are encouraged to report any such occurrences to the Office of Affirmative Action and Human Rights. Addressing these issues at the School of Social Work level might contaminate the process if the student wishes to file formal charges against a faculty member. (See Policy Against Sexual Harassment in the College Catalog)

Level 3 – Student Progression Process

Purpose and Philosophy -- The Student Progression Committee is a standing committee of the School of Social Work. It is to be used by students in both BSW and MSW programs. Its function is to work collaboratively with students to enable them to finish their program of study while maintaining the standards of the school. The committee makes recommendations regarding appropriate planning for students who are in academic or other difficulty and individualizes programs of study for unusually well prepared students. Reviews ensure that students meet standards of performance set by the School and the profession of social work and provide a forum for discussion and resolution of difficulties. The goal of the committee is to find a way to balance student needs and the integrity of the academic program. A review may be initiated by faculty or students or may be triggered automatically as indicated below. The committee meets as requests are made.

The Student Progression Committee should be distinguished from the conflict resolution process or the student grievance procedure as outlined in other sections of the Student Handbook. Concerns brought to the Student Progression Committee are related to the student's successful progress through the specific academic program. The focus of the committee's work shall be on the student and his/her learning needs. The Student Progression Committee cannot be a forum to resolve student conflicts with faculty members concerning interpersonal conflict, grades, or perceived discrimination. Any difficulties with student/faculty relations must be resolved through the conflict resolution process or the grievance procedure as explained in other parts of this document.

A Level 3 review involves the members of the Student Progression Committee, student, and faculty or field personnel who have had direct experience with the student in classroom or field. Generally, this level review is called when problematic patterns are identified with students or when the issues are serious enough to require formal consultation with other faculty and the student. A Level 3 review more often is conducted when concerns have not been resolved in prior reviews; when issues relate to a student not meeting the criteria for academic performance (often involving professional or ethical behaviors); or when the student is being considered for withdrawal or discontinuance in the program. In some circumstances, Levels 1 and 2 may be skipped and the student and program proceed directly to Level 3.

Procedures - It is expected that, under the following conditions, a Student Progression meeting will be convened, subject to discussion and discretion of the Chairperson and relevant faculty.

- a. for BSW students when there is a lack of a B- average in the first two courses in the major needed to enter Generalist Practice I or the lack of a B- average in five courses needed to enter field;
- b. for BSW students, when a student has taken a required course in the major two times without achieving a grade of C- or better.
- c. for BSW students who have received 2 incompletes in social work courses in one semester;
- d. for Advanced Standing MSW students after receipt of the first grade of C in an academic course other than field education;
- e. for General Admission MSW students after receipt of the second grade of C in an academic course other than field education;
- f. For all students: any instance of alleged plagiarism or other alleged ethical violations;
- g. A student who is being asked to leave the program for any reason may request a Student Progression meeting to review his/her situation.

The following individuals may initiate a Student Progression Committee Meeting:

1. A student
2. The student's Academic Advisor
3. One of the student's current instructors
4. The student's Faculty Field Liaison.

The individual initiating the Progression Meeting must submit to the Chairperson a written statement regarding the current educational issues (course and/or field work) and prior attempts to resolve them. In advance of the Committee's meeting, the Chairperson will request, from relevant faculty, additional written summaries pertinent to the student's educational progress through the BSW or MSW Programs. Also in advance of the meeting, the Chairperson distributes all written materials to standing members of the Committee, the student's Academic Advisor (who attends the meeting), and the student who is the subject of the meeting. While the student is free to share written materials with others, the materials are considered confidential to other individuals in attendance.

All members attending may participate in the discussion of the information contained in the reports to clarify the issues and arrive at a possible means of solution which may best meet the educational need of the student. The student and guests are excused while the Committee determines specific recommendations which are presented in writing to the student by the Chairperson, if at all possible, within five working days.

The recommendations from the Student Progression Committee can include one or more of the following actions:

- *Continue the student in the program with no conditions.*

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

- *Establish formal conditions for the student's continuance in the program.*

In these situations, specific conditions must be met in order for the student to continue to progress through the program. Action may include establishing goals, a plan, a timeline, and appropriate monitoring; providing mentoring and support; referring the student to counseling and/or advising or supportive services; allowing the student to follow a reduced course load or delay entry to the field practicum; change their academic plan or, in the case of the MSW program, require the student to withdraw from the program with the option of reapplying. In most instances, a Level 3 review is sufficient to deal with student performance and is the last decision making step in the review process at the School of Social Work.

- *Counsel the student to change majors/degree programs*

In some situations, it will be recommended that the student no longer continue in the social work program. The student will be counseled to voluntarily change majors in the BSW Program or change degree programs. If that does not occur, an undergraduate student might be prevented from being assigned to a field placement, thereby eliminating the chance that the student would be able to finish the BSW program. For MSW students, if the Committee supports any grade of F received by that student, the student is automatically dismissed from the MSW program. The Committee may also recommend that an MSW student change their academic plan to delay a field placement. In any Level 3 review, there must be clear, concise documentation of the problem areas as well as verification that these concerns have been discussed with the student and attempted to be ameliorated, where appropriate.

If the student believes that a violation of academic regulations has occurred prior to or during the Student Progression process, (s)he may file a formal complaint at any time. (See Formal Complaint Procedures 4.1.)

Recommendations not accepted by the student may be discussed with the Director of the School. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Director of the School of Social Work, the student may address the issue with the Dean of the Schools of Human Services (for undergraduates); the Dean of the Graduate School and the Graduate Education Council (for graduate students); the Vice President for Academic Affairs; and ultimately the President of the College. It should be noted however, that the lines of appeal outside the School of Social Work are to the same College personnel as would be available if a formal complaint were filed.

4.0 Formal Complaints

Students enrolled in the School of Social Work have the right to file formal complaints against a faculty member, or the School of Social Work per se, when they believe that a violation of an academic regulation has occurred or that the faculty member has behaved in a way that violates the School's Standards for Social Work Education as stated in this document. An "academic regulation" refers to a formal, published policy of the College or the School of Social Work. These regulations may include procedures for grading or evaluating students published in a syllabus or Field Education Manual; the process of any meetings or hearings as outlined in Section 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 above; or the faculty member's adherence to the Standards for Social Work Education promulgated above. Students may file a formal complaint about a conflict with a professor or challenge a grade only if there is reason to believe that a violation of an academic regulation has occurred. Resolution of a formal complaint rests solely with the administration of the School of Social Work or College and may not involve any other faculty member.

Students also have the right to file formal complaints against a faculty member under the College's Discrimination Complaint Procedures or, in the case of Sexual Harassment, the College's Institutional

Complaint Procedures. In order to protect students' rights in these circumstances, students should not address these issues at the School of Social Work level but should immediately consult College's Office of Equal Opportunity and Human Rights.

Students are assured freedom from reprisals for bringing a formal complaint against a faculty member either in the School of Social Work itself or through the Office of Equal Opportunity and Human Rights.

4.1 Procedures for Handling Formal Complaints

PROCEDURES:

- Prior to filing a formal complaint, the student is encouraged to complete all the informal conflict resolution processes including meeting with the professor and participating in mediation with the Chairperson.
- In order to file a formal complaint, the student must meet with the Chairperson and submit a written statement, outlining the complaint and specifying which academic regulation the student believes has been violated. The student should also specify what remedy would be regarded as satisfactory in order to resolve the complaint. All subsequent communications regarding the complaint must also be in writing.
- The Chairperson will confer with the faculty member and other appropriate parties and rule on whether a violation of an academic standard has occurred, and whether the proposed remedy has merit. The Chairperson will then communicate her/his decision to the student and the faculty member.
- If unsatisfied, the student may appeal the decision of the Chair in writing to the Director of the School of Social Work, the Dean of the Schools of Human Services (for undergraduates); the Dean of the Graduate School and the Graduate Education Council (for graduate students); the Vice President for Academic Affairs; and ultimately to the President of the College.
- At any point in this process, faculty may avail themselves of the protections available to them in the faculty contract.