

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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Dear Students in the School of Social Work BSW Program:

The faculty and staff of the School of Social Work BSW Program welcome you to the School. We are delighted that you will be joining us and we hope that the time you spend with us will be productive and enriching. We know that you come to us with unique strengths and life experiences, and we hope to help you build on these qualities in order to be the best social workers you can be.

The School of Social Work offers degrees at both the Bachelor (BSW) and Master (MSW) levels. Both programs are fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Commission on Accreditation. This assures you that your degree is recognized as meeting the Council's stringent national standards for social work education. We are extremely proud of our faculty, their professional expertise, outstanding scholarship and the quality of their teaching. We are also proud of the record of achievement that our graduates have compiled over the years. Graduates of the School are found in every type of social service agency in Massachusetts and are continuing to assume positions of great responsibility. Our goal is to provide each of you with the knowledge, skills, values and practice experience that will enable you to move competently into social work positions upon your graduation.

You are the reason we are here. We want to support you and your personal growth as you undertake the rigorous challenges of social work education.

The purpose of this Student Handbook is to describe the BSW Program, as well as the procedures and policies of the School of Social Work. The Handbook is designed to assist you in negotiating the various resources available through the School and University. It is especially important for you to become familiar with this Handbook, because it spells out various expectations that the School has for your academic progress and professional behaviors.

We hope that you will find us readily available to address your questions and concerns as well as appreciate your achievements and successes.

Again, our warmest welcome and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Faculty and Staff
BSW Program
Salem State University
School of Social Work

STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This student handbook has been developed as a reference guide for the students of the BSW Program of the School of Social Work. It includes particularly relevant materials, some of which also exist in the Salem State University Catalog (undergraduate study). Students in the School of Social Work have both rights and responsibilities that are discussed in detail in the University catalog under:

Absence for Religious Beliefs
Academic Dismissal and Probation
Academic Integrity Regulations
Consumer Information Disclosure/Student Rights and Responsibilities
Discrimination, Complaint Procedures
Disruptive Student in Classroom Policy
Incomplete Grades
Information and Services for/Rights of Students with Disabilities
Leave of Absence
Policy Against Sexual Harassment
Re-admittance
Student Grievance on Academic Matters
Withdrawal from Courses
Withdrawal from the Degree/University

Students have the responsibility to read, be familiar with and follow all policies incorporated into the respective rights and responsibilities statements including, but not limited to, those listed below. For students in the School of Social Work BSW Program, policies described in the BSW Student Handbook supersede those of the University.

Upon entering the BSW major, each student is asked to sign the acknowledgement that they are aware of where the Handbook is posted and that they have reviewed the Handbook and the School of Social Work's Professional Standards and NASW Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics is available at socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp.

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MISSION STATEMENT

SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Salem State University School of Social Work prepares professionals to excel as practitioners, educators, and leaders who are catalysts for social change in our diverse and global community.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Social work education at Salem State University started as an undergraduate major in 1969. William Vaughn and Dr. Edna McGlynn from the University's Social Sciences Department were instrumental in creating the social work major. In July 1975, the University established the Social Work Department under the leadership of Chairperson Patricia Roderick. In November 1979, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the accrediting body for all social work programs in the United States, accredited Salem State University Social Work Department, retroactive to 1977. In May 1980, the University's Board of Trustees, voted to permit the Social Work Department to award the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree.

Following the accreditation of the BSW Program, the University became actively involved in creating a Masters of Social Work (MSW) Program and, in September of 1986, the School of Social Work at Salem State University was established. The School admitted its first class of MSW students in 1987 and graduated its first class of 20 MSW students in 1989. The MSW Program was given initial accreditation status by CSWE in 1991, retroactive to graduating class of 1989. The MSW Program at Salem State was the first CSWE- accredited MSW degree program in Massachusetts' public higher education system and the first program in the state with an advanced generalist perspective.

The BSW and MSW Programs remain fully accredited by CSWE; current accreditation was granted in June, 2010.

MISSION OF THE BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Mission: Teaching for transformation, we prepare generalist social workers who are grounded in the values and ethics of the profession to be proficient in professional social work practice and serve as catalysts for social change in a diverse world.

We strive to provide an excellent generalist foundation for baccalaureate students in the knowledge necessary for beginning professional practice and to enable them to learn about and rehearse the skills necessary for that practice. Central to the mission of the program is to ground all students in the values and ethics of the profession and in the fundamentals of social and economic justice, non-discrimination and openness to other cultures. The professional curriculum builds on a rigorous and comprehensive liberal arts general education curriculum. Courses in the Social Work major address professional knowledge, skills and values, building to a substantive senior field education experience that emphasizes professional attitudes and behaviors.

Our program is student-centered. In recognition of the needs of many of the students served, the program is committed to both academic rigor and to providing support for students who might otherwise struggle to complete a baccalaureate degree. The program is committed to providing a variety of means of access, including creation of articulation agreements with community University programs and offering our undergraduate courses to working students enrolled in our evening division. The program welcomes a diverse student body and fosters an atmosphere of openness, collegiality and respect between students and faculty.

BSW PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
2. Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.
3. Practice w/o discrimination and with respect, knowledge and skills related to client's age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
5. Understand and interpret the history of the social work practice and its contemporary structures and issues.
6. Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with systems of all sizes.
7. Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.
8. Analyze, formulate and influence social policies.
9. Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions.
10. Use communication skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities.
11. Use supervision and consultation appropriate to social work practice.
12. Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.
13. Develop professionalism and a professional identity.
14. Foster continued self-awareness.
15. Explore social work as a career choice.
16. Value diversity and work effectively with diverse populations.

BSW CURRICULUM

The undergraduate degree program in Social Work provides a balanced mixture of general education courses in the liberal arts with a heavy concentration in the behavioral and social sciences, combined with the major courses in social work and a minimum of 425 hours in a field work agency (16 hours per week for two semesters). The curriculum prepares students for entry level social work competencies in a variety of helping skills.

The BSW curriculum provides in-depth knowledge of social work values, methods, skills and practice areas. The flow sheet for the Bachelor of Social Work curricula is included in this handbook.

The curriculum is built on an incremental learning model. This means that certain core concepts are introduced early in the curriculum and reintroduced at different points in the program in increasingly sophisticated ways. Courses in the curriculum are meant to build on one another, with material learned in earlier courses used as foundation material in later courses. To proceed sequentially, all majors should take SWK101: The Profession of Social Work during the first semester of their freshman year or their first semester at the University. After having successfully completed SWK 101-The Profession of Social Work, students must take the following required courses in the designated sequence:

1. SWK102, Social Welfare Past and Present - (first or second semester, freshman/first year)
2. SWK200, Social Service Volunteer Practicum - (usually first semester, sophomore/second year)
3. SWK261, Human Behavior and the Social Environment I - (usually sophomore/second year)
4. SWK270, Understanding Diversity - (usually sophomore/second year)

BSW Milestone: Student applies for BSW Program Continuation
(See "BSW Program Continuation")

5. SWK301, Generalist Practice I - (usually first semester, junior/third year)
6. SWK302, Generalist Practice II - (usually second semester, junior/third year or the Summer prior to beginning Fieldwork)
7. SWK404, 405: Field Work I and II - SWK406, 407: Field Work Seminar I and II - (senior year)

While taking these courses and support courses in other disciplines, students are also taking required courses in Human Behavior & the Social Environment, Research Methods I and II, Social Policy, and two social work electives.

Upon completion of their theoretical study, students receive practical experience through the field education component of the curriculum. Students must apply for and successfully complete a minimum of 425 hours of practicum in a professional setting under the supervision of a qualified social work practitioner. Field education is required of all students graduating from the School, including those transferring from other programs. Terms of the CSWE accreditation prohibit the School from awarding field education credit for previous life experience, previous professional experience, or field instruction completed at another school of higher education.

DIRECTED STUDY IN THE GENERALIST APPROACH

Students who come into the major with previous employment and/or volunteer experience in a social service agency may enroll in the course SWK510: Directed Study in the Generalist Approach, in lieu of the SWK 200: Social Service Volunteer Practicum. Students enrolling in SWK 510: Directed Study in the Generalist Approach must supply supportive documentation of their previous social service experience to the BSW Program Coordinator or Chairperson. Upon acceptance of the supportive documentation, the student will be assigned to a faculty advisor who will supervise the student's analysis of his/her previous experience within the framework of the generalist approach to social work. Students taking SWK510 will be expected to produce a substantial paper to fulfill the requirements of this course but will not be required to do any additional volunteer work.

The other directed study course, SWK 515, is available for students with a particular interest in working independently on a research or study project, under the guidance of a full-time faculty member. A proposal outlining the work plan and expected course outcomes must be approved before the independent study begins.

ADMISSION AND CONTINUATION IN THE BSW PROGRAM

As of January 1, 2011 students are required to apply for program continuation. Once accepted, they can advance to the practice courses in the BSW Program including Generalist Practice I and Generalist Practice II. The process is outlined below:

STEP 1: A student is accepted into the major via one of three routes: (1) freshman admission to Salem State, with social work as a chosen major; (2) the change of major process; or (3) transfer from another two- or four- year institution. Students with a 2.3 GPA or higher will be accepted into the social work program through change of major or transfer process and review.

STEP 2: The student must have completed, or have received BSW program-approved TCE equivalency for, SWK 101, SWK 102, SWK 200 (or 510), SWK 261, and SWK 270. At the same point, the student must have completed, or have TCE equivalency for 45 total SSU credits, including at least 30 credits of SSU core curriculum credits and 6 credits in cognate disciplines.

STEP 3: When the milestone Steps 1 and 2 are satisfied, the student may make application to continue in the BSW major. By either of two designated dates in the academic year (one date by May, the other in early December), the student will submit:

- A. An Application Form.
- B. A Personal Statement (2 typed pages, double-spaced, 12 font; one paragraph a piece, addressing these 4 topics):
 - 1. reason for choosing social work as a major and career
 - 2. assessment of personal strengths and challenges
 - 3. assessment of life experience and their integration with career choice
 - 4. assessment of personal values and their alignment with social work's professional value system
- C. Instructors' Review Forms, from at least 2 instructors in introductory social work courses (face-to-face or hybrid courses only).
- D. Evidence of at least a 2.3 Salem State University overall GPA, a minimum 2.7 average among BSW courses taken to date, and at least a 2.0 in every social work course taken to date (or transferred into SSU) social work program.

STEP 4: The BSW Program Continuation Committee will consider the data in A through D above. The Committee will look for evidence of solid written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills, as determined by faculty input and student writing. The Committee will also glean from those sources evidence of emotional stability sufficient to safely and effectively practice social work, as articulated in the SSU School of Social Work's Professional Standards.

STEP 5: The BSW Program Coordinator will inform applicants about their acceptance status into the major. The status could be:

- A. Acceptance, with notification of the student's new social work advisor.
- B. Conditional Acceptance (with specific written reasons for the decision and criteria for full acceptance, with clear timelines on meeting those criteria). A conditionally accepted student will be informally advised by the BSW Program Coordinator, during the timeline for change/completion. At the end of that timeline, the Program Coordinator will consult with the

Continuation Committee, who will subsequently issue a new Announcement of Status for that student.

C. Rejection

STEP 6: A rejected student is welcome to re-apply if and when factors in the rejection have been ameliorated. A student who has not submitted a Continuation Application packet within time frame or who is not approved may not enroll in SWK 301, Generalist Practice I.

STEP 7: A student accepted to continue in the SWK major, will prepare in their junior year to apply for Field Education placement to be completed in the Senior Academic year.

FIELD EDUCATION READINESS - ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Ideally students proceed sequentially in the major by taking SWK 101 and SWK 102 in freshman year and SWK 200, SWK 261, and SWK 270 in sophomore year and SWK 301 and SWK 302 in junior year.

Regardless, students in the BSW program are required to take seven Social Work courses prior to beginning field education. These are:

- SWK 101 - The Profession of Social Work
- SWK 102 - Social Welfare Past and Present
- SWK 200 - Social Services Volunteer Practicum
- SWK 261 - Human Behavior and the Social Environment I
- SWK 270 - Understanding Diversity
- SWK 301 - Generalist Practice I
- SWK 302 - Generalist Practice II

The student must achieve a cumulative grade point average of at least "B-" (2.7) in these seven Social Work courses prior to being considered for field education placement assignment. In addition to the B- cumulative grade point average the student must earn a B- or better in GP-I and a B- or better in GP-II. Students who earn below a B- in GP-I or GP-II are permitted to repeat the course one time to improve their grade. If they earn below a B- a second time, they must withdraw from the Social Work major.

Social Work majors and pre-majors must earn a grade of C or higher in all other Social Work courses (these courses include, but are not limited to SWK 261, SWK 361, SWK 381, SWK 382 and SWK 410). A student may repeat a Social Work course only once. A second grade below a C in the same course mandates withdrawal from the Social Work major.

Additionally, Field Education I and II (SWK 404/405) and Field Education Seminar I and II (SWK 406/407) are co-requisites. In order to successfully pass one course a student must pass the other. Therefore, a student must earn a "P" in Field Education I and a B- or better in Field Seminar I in order to continue into Field Education II and Field Seminar II. If a student does not earn a "P" in Field Education I and a B- or better in Field Seminar I, then he/she must retake both Field Education I and Field Seminar I. A second grade of lower than a "P" in Field Education I and/or a grade of B- in Field Education Seminar mandate that a student withdraw from the Social Work major. Likewise, if a student does not earn a B- or better in Field Education Seminar II and a "P" in Field Education II then he/she must retake both Field Education II and Field Education Seminar II. A second grade of lower than a B- in Field Seminar and/ or grade of "P" in Field Education II mandates that a student withdraw from the Social Work major.

At the end of his/her field education experience, the student may have no more than 12 credits to complete his/her degree.

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK

There are many social services agencies that do a criminal offense record information check of all paid or volunteer employees or students. The Application for Field Education Placement requests that a student reveal to the Field Office any criminal record history. This is intended to assure an appropriate and fully informed student-agency match and is also intended to protect the students as well as clients and field agency.

If a criminal record check is required but the agency is not able to do so independently, the field education office will facilitate a CORI through our College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) office. Please see the CHHS CORI Policy for further information: saalemstate.edu/assets/documents/ACA_sohs/CHHS_CORI_Policy.pdf.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

Salem State University's insurance covers student liability associated with the field education practicum. Students are encouraged to join the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). As members of NASW, students may obtain additional professional liability (malpractice) insurance coverage at a reasonable cost through the American Professional Agency, Inc., NASW's agent. Application forms for both NASW membership and the insurance may be obtained online at naswasi.cphins.com.

BSW ADVISING PROGRAM

The faculty academic advisor list is posted on the BSW bulletin board on the first floor in the School of Social Work building. Each student is encouraged to utilize his/her faculty advisor regularly. On "Meet Your Major" day in the fall, all entering freshmen, transfer, and change of major BSW students must attend a group meeting led by the BSW Program Coordinator. Each student is required to print a personal hardcopy of this BSW Student Handbook and to bring it to the mandatory "Meet Your Major" day event. During this meeting, the Coordinator will discuss the objectives of the program, distribute flow sheets, advise students concerning the required departmental academic and non-academic standards, and answer students' questions about the curriculum. The Department Chair will assign each student a faculty advisor who will guide and engage the student through the student's matriculation at Salem State. The faculty advisor will:

1. Provide assistance in assessing the student's aptitude and motivation for a career in social work.
2. Assist in evaluating periodically the student's total educational performance and experience.
3. Assist the student during the early registration process in the selection of courses, in following the appropriate sequence, and with the actual registration materials.
4. Provide ongoing evaluation of readiness to continue in the program and field education readiness and assist the student in the selection of a field education population and/or setting.
5. Refer to the Student Educational Review Committee any student who has passed through program continuation and has failed to meet the school's academic or professional standards and requirements (see section of Handbook on Professional Standards for Social Work Education).
6. Refer to the Student Educational Review Committee any student who has passed through program continuation and evidences lack of aptitude or readiness to continue in professional social work education, or who evidences of lack of readiness for field education.
7. Be made aware of and receive any flagging form or SERC referral of an advisee and attend any scheduled problem resolution meeting or SERC involving an assigned advisee
8. Advise and monitor the student's implementation of the Student Educational Review Committee's recommendations in order to support retention in and completion of the program, unless otherwise indicated. Concerns about follow-up on the students' part will be shared with the Program coordinator in order to decide future action.

Students are required to meet with their faculty advisors according to the following schedule:

1. During each registration cycle, to review the flow sheet, to choose appropriate courses, and to evaluate the student's progress and readiness to begin professional practice;
2. Prior to junior year to assist the student in understanding the requirements of Program Continuation application, having reached the milestone of completing Social Work foundation courses.
3. During junior year, to review the flow sheet, to complete the GPA Verification Form, and to discuss field education readiness and the selection of a field education placement.

Students must arrange to meet with their faculty advisor immediately upon notification of academic probation, or of failure to maintain departmental academic and non-academic standards.

A field education faculty liaison will assist the student in integrating the field and classroom experiences during the senior year. The expectations of the field education student and field education faculty liaison are stated in the BSW Field Education Curriculum Guide, which is available online, and which must be individually printed as a hard copy and brought to Field Education Orientation Day by each incoming senior.

FLAGGING

The BSW Program employs a Flagging System in order to identify any academic or non-academic problem(s) that a student is encountering, and to bring those problems to the student's attention. Further, the Flagging System prompts the BSW student's instructor, as well as her or his advisor, to talk with that student about the noted problem. It gives the student and faculty a focus for naming the issue(s) and for putting a strategy in place to improve the situation, maybe including individual help or services that the student needs. Sometimes students are unaware of the kinds of support services - not to mention the personal strengths and resources – that can be mobilized to help overcome or ameliorate difficulties that seem overwhelming, or that previously went unnoticed. The advantage of the Flagging System is the likelihood of catching a problem earlier rather than later, and finding ways to get help (or a wakeup call!) soon enough to do something constructive.

A flagging form is provided to:

1. the student by an instructor,
2. the student's Academic Advisor,
3. the BSW Program Coordinator,
4. the Coordinator of Field Education if it involves a field education course, and
5. the student's file.

The student's academic advisor follows up with the student regarding the recommended advising included in the flagging notice.

A sample flagging form is below.

SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY
School of Social Work

BSW Student Flagging Form

Date: 3/10/15

To: BSW Program Coordinator

From (Faculty): Bev Faculty

Re (Student): Jay Student

Course: SWK 101-03

Academic Advisor: Joe Advisor

Distribution: Original to Student; copies to BSW Program Coordinator, Advisor and Student file*.

CONCERN** (check all that apply)		REASONS FOR CONCERN (Refer to specific academic/professional behavior standards— see the BSW Student Handbook)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attendance	Jay's attendance in class has been sporadic, with some late arrivals and missed group activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assignments/ Writing Skills	I have referred Jay to the Writing Center for assistance with grammar and outlining papers but to date s/he has not used this support.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Oral Communication Skills	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Standards	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) _____	

Recommendations/Plan (with specific date(s) for demonstrated improvement):

I recommend a meeting with Jay, myself, and his Academic Advisor and have asked to schedule this meeting within two weeks. Jay will make an appointment with the writing center within three weeks. Jay will attend be on time for and attend all classes for the remainder of the semester.

* Additionally, the student may elect to submit a written response to the Flagging Form for inclusion in the student file.

* *Please note that this form can be used to identify concerns regarding students' current or future performance in the field practicum and as such, a copy may be given to the Field Education Coordinator. Use space on reverse side or attachment for additional comments.

CHANGE OF MAJORS AND TRANSFER STUDENTS

Given the learning model of the curriculum, the sequencing of courses, and the large number of required courses or course categories, students entering the major after their freshman year are apt to encounter some special challenges. Students, especially those transferring into their junior year, are advised to expect that some of the courses that they have already taken will not fit into a slot on the flow sheet. In some cases, students will still receive course credit for these courses and maintain their class status, but may still need to take additional courses above the 120 credits required for graduation in order to complete all the required courses for the major. Some transfer students or change of majors may need to spend an extra semester completing all the requirements.

Change of Major/Undeclared Majors

Salem State University students who enter the School of Social Work after the first semester of the freshman year must complete a "Request for Change of Major" form and have at least a 2.3 overall GPA. Students will be assigned a faculty advisor upon notification of acceptance into the major. These students should arrange to meet with their advisors immediately to review the flow sheet, to discuss choice of courses, and to receive information regarding the required sequence of courses and academic standards. After this initial appointment, students must follow the advising and counseling schedule required of all students in the School of Social Work.

Transfer Students

Transfer students should arrange to meet with their faculty advisors as soon as possible after entering the University and must then continue to follow the advising and counseling schedule required of all students.

Terms of the CSWE accreditation prohibit the School of Social Work from awarding course credit for practice courses or for field education courses taken at non-CSWE accredited programs. Hence, the policy of the BSW program is that credit will not be awarded for the following courses unless a comparable course was taken at a CSWE- accredited BSW program: SWK301 Generalist Practice I; SWK302 Generalist Practice II; SWK404/405 Field Education I and II; and SWK406-407 Field Education Seminar I and II. Furthermore, CSWE standards prohibit awarding field education transfer credit for any previous work or life experience.

Some transfer students have found that there are difficulties in transferring to a large institution from a smaller one. Students encountering any difficulties in making the transition are encouraged to discuss this with their faculty advisor. In the past, some students have found it useful to participate in a support group of transfer students. Possible resources include the Academic Advising Office, Student Navigation Center, and the Student Advocacy Office. Students are encouraged to make use of informal support networks. Faculty members are available to facilitate the development of such networks.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY & INCOMPLETES

The student is responsible for completing all course requirements and for keeping up with all that goes on in the course, whether or not the student is present. Failure to do this will result in a grade of incomplete (I) which turns into a fail (F) after six weeks. Incompletes will be considered by the instructor of the course only under the circumstances outlined on the following page.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of incomplete (I) is a temporary grade, which may be assigned to a student only if:

1. A substantial portion (usually at least 80%) of the course work has been completed.
2. The instructor is satisfied that circumstances beyond the student's control prevented the student from completing the required course.
3. The student has requested an (I) grade, and specific arrangements for completion of the course work have been made with the instructor prior to the assignment of final grades in the course.
4. The incomplete agreement form is completed and signed by faculty, student, and a copy provided to the student.

A student will receive credit for a course graded (I) only if the course work is completed by the end of the sixth week of the following semester. Ideally, all incomplete grade assignments should be submitted at the end or as soon as possible when the semester ends. If the student fails to make up the course work within this prescribed period of time, the (I) grade will automatically become an (F) grade. Exceptions to the prescribed deadline may be granted by the instructor only in cases where protracted illness or critical personal problems prevent the student from completing the work. Such extensions must be filed with the Registrar's Office.

An (I) grade recorded on a grade report is a temporary grade and does not affect the student's grade-point average until such time as it is converted to a permanent grade. The initiative for making up the incomplete work within the prescribed time period lies with the student. The instructor who assigned the (I) grade shall make available to the student suitable opportunities for completing the unfinished course work, and shall file an appropriate Grade Change form when the work has been done. A corrected grade report will be issued to the student at the appropriate time.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR BSW STUDENTS

School of Social Work Committees

Each year, BSW students are invited to become members of various committees of the School of Social Work. Following is a brief description of the School's committee meetings and open to student participation. If you are interested in serving on any of these committees, please contact the Chairperson or BSW Program Coordinator.

BSW Curriculum Committee

The BSW Curriculum Committee has, at a minimum, the following members: The BSW Program Coordinator, the BSW Field Coordinator, the Chairperson, and one other member of the faculty primarily associated with the BSW Program, and a BSW student representative. The Committee's primary responsibility is to review and develop curricula and policies as well as evaluation standards and procedures specific to the BSW Program. The Committee also bears responsibility for ensuring that the BSW Program's curricula are in keeping with the standards established by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Commission on Accreditation.

School of Social Work Diversity Committee*

The Diversity Committee is composed of faculty from both the MSW and BSW Programs, and students in either program who are interested in participating in the group. The Diversity Committee recommends and develops strategies for ensuring and enhancing diversity among administrators, faculty, staff and students in the School of Social Work, including efforts for recruiting, supporting and retaining diverse membership in all those groups, as well as cultivating skills and activities that overcome discrimination and oppression. Further, the group monitors, advises, and assists in the development of diversity content in the School of Social Work curricula. The Committee also contributes to increased awareness of and sensitivity to diversity among the various constituencies of Salem State University. A variety of methods, including, but not limited to, the following: educational forums; media; one-to-one contact; seminars, symposia; and workshops are used to accomplish these goals.

The International Study Committee*

This committee is composed of faculty members from both the BSW and MSW faculty, as well as interested students from either program. The Committee recommends ways for enhancing the BSW and MSW curricula in the area of international study, as well as inclusion of cross-national and global perspectives in existing courses; explores opportunities for students and faculty members to travel to foreign countries for the purpose of study and/or social work practice experience; assists faculty members and students with the practical tasks of preparation and planning that are necessary for a successful study trip abroad; and explores opportunities for visiting scholars and practitioners from abroad and provides guidance and support to visitors to maximize their interactions with the campus community.

*There are times when these 2 committees coordinate for combined meetings.

BSW Student Organization: Student Action Resource Team (START)

The Student Action Resource Team (START) is the School of Social Work's BSW student organization. START functions as the voice of the BSW social work student body and is involved in a variety of activities to benefit both the students and the community. START is especially active in providing community service in a variety of ways. START has sponsored educational and service-providing trips, as well as discussions, films, and speakers for the entire University community, and has co-sponsored such campus-wide activities as the Human Rights Convocation. In addition, START sponsors the annual BSW Awards Banquet in the spring. Students are encouraged to be active in START and assume leadership roles if possible.

COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE BSW PROGRAM AND STUDENTS

Student Mailboxes

All School of Social Work graduate and declared undergraduate students have a mail folder in the file cabinets located in the lower level student lounge in the School of Social Work building. It is requested that students regularly check their mail folder. Please note that all Salem State University School of Social Work students are required to log onto their Salem State University email accounts, and to regularly check for messages. All undergraduate social work majors must register with the School's own ListServ; many vital announcements are posted on the ListServ prior to, or instead of, being filed in student "mailboxes."

Computing Problems

The IT Help Desk is available to students having computing problems. You can contact it-helpdesk@salemstate.edu or call 978.542.2036 or visit the Help Desk on the first floor of the Stanley Building. Please note that computing problems are not acceptable excuses for late or incomplete assignments. It is your responsibility to be proactive in order to have working equipment, copies of your assignments, replacement printer cartridges, email and Navigator accounts.

Canvas

Online courses are offered via Canvas, an online course management system. Many instructors teaching in-person courses also use Canvas for certain components of instruction, including but not limited to discussions, tests, and assignment submission. You can access Canvas and online courses that you have registered for through your Navigator account.

Faculty and Professional Staff Mailboxes

All School of Social Work faculty have individual mailboxes. The full-time and adjunct faculty and professional staff have mailboxes located on the first floor of the School of Social Work building.

Social Work Faculty Appointments

All School of Social Work faculty will post office hours on their office doors. You may also call or email them for an appointment. Adjunct faculty will provide students with information on office hours and means for reaching them.

SOCIAL WORK FACULTY & STAFF DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Administrators

Name	Room	Phone	Email
Bonner, Carol	FA 112	978.542.6628	cbonner@salemstate.edu
Driskell, Jeff	FA 008	978.542.6638	jdriskell@salemstate.edu
Johnson, Lisa	FA 208	978.542.6988	ljohnson2@salemstate.edu
Leisey, Monica	FA 010	978.542.6553	mleisey@salemstate.edu
Goldman, Susan	FA 120	978.542.6877	sgoldman@salemstate.edu

Administrative Assistants

Name	Room	Phone	Email
Hodgson, Pam	FA 114B	978.542.2240	phodgson@salemstate.edu
Traversy, Karen	FA 114A	978.542.6629	ktraversy@salemstate.edu
Morency, Lisa	FA 118	978.542.6698	lmorency@salemstate.edu

BSW Faculty

Name	Room	Phone	Email
Amato, Phil	FA 207	978.542.6988	famato@salemstate.edu
Connolly, Patricia	FA 206	978.542.6607	pconnolly@salemstate.edu
Glikman, Helen	FA 203	978.542.6696	hglikman@salemstate.edu
Johnson, Lisa	FA 208	978.542.2299	ljohnson2@salemstate.edu
Livingstone, Allyson	FA 211	978.543.2880	alivingstone@salemstate.edu
Mirick, Rebecca	FA 211	978.542.2597	rmirick@salemstate.edu
Mokoro, Shannon	FA 009	978.542.6610	smokoro@salemstate.edu
Steenrod, Shelley	FA 205	978.542.7008	ssteenrod@salemstate.edu

WRITING SKILLS AND WRITING CENTER

As noted in the School's Professional Standards for Social Work Education (see table of contents for this Handbook), we strongly emphasize that students must develop and maintain basic writing skills. Students who fail to master these basic skills will encounter difficulties in their coursework, field education, and, ultimately, in finding a social work position. We bring to your attention the University's policy concerning minimum writing standards and information about the Writing Center where you can find help with specific written assignments. We will not accept a written assignment that does not meet the minimum standards established by the University. These policies apply to both BSW and MSW students.

Minimum Writing Standards

No expository writing assignment submitted for a course at SSU will receive a grade of C or above unless it has the following:

- A clear and readily identifiable thesis statement.
- A clear and coherent overall structure.
- Paragraphs with topic sentences and adequate, specific development.
- Standard but varied sentence structure and expression.
- Standard usage, punctuation, and spelling.
- Accurate documentation when necessary.

Note: These standards may be amended by the instructor to meet the specific needs of assignments (such as in science, mathematics, or professional courses) that have more specialized writing requirements.

Within the BSW Program, citations, references and formatting papers should be completed according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 5th edition. This Handbook includes the School's own guide to this style manual.

Note: These standards may be amended by the instructor to meet the specific needs of assignments (such as in science, mathematics, or professional courses) that have more specialized writing requirements.

Within the BSW Program, citations, references and formatting papers should be completed according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 5th edition. This Handbook includes the School's own guide to this style manual.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center offers individualized assistance in writing to students who are weak in basic writing skills, students who need special guidance for a particular writing task, and students who simply desire some individual help in developing their writing potential. The Center is located in room 113 of the Frederick E. Berry Library and Learning Commons, and is open approximately thirty hours a week. The phone number is 978.542.6491. It is recommended that all students seek assistance from one of the Center's co-directors or graduate assistants.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Disabilities Services Office

Salem State University is committed to providing equal access to the educational experience for all students in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act and to providing all reasonable academic accommodations, aids, and adjustments.

To achieve this goal, the University maintains a Disabilities Services Office. This Office is responsible for assuring that students receive the services and accommodations to which they are entitled. The staff works with students to review documentation, determine reasonable accommodations on the basis of disability, and act as a liaison between students and faculty/administration on concerns relating to those services and accommodations.

The Disabilities Services Office also provides academic support to students with all types of disability including: learning disability; mobility impairments, medical disability, blindness and visual impairments; deafness, psychiatric disability; and traumatic brain injury. Students are responsible for identifying themselves to the Disabilities Services Office's staff and informing them of the need for review. Students must present each individual instructor with evidence of their being registered with the Disabilities Services Office. Individual instructors are prohibited from providing accommodations to students who are not registered with the Disabilities Services Office. Students with disabilities must initiate contact with the Office and schedule an appointment to obtain appropriate review and/or services. The Office is located in the Berry Library and Learning Commons, Room 20, North Campus. The Disabilities Services Office's telephone numbers are: Voice: 978.542.6217; TTY: 978.542.7146.

Student Navigation Center

The Student Navigation Center has several [student service representatives](#)—registrar, financial aid, bursar's office, clipper card—to assist students in a variety of tasks as well as help student's trouble shoot different issues. If a student needs more assistance or wants to discuss certain matters with a particular office, they will be referred to a department specialist from the four different offices. The Student Navigation Center is located on the second floor of the classroom building on Central Campus.

In addition to the new centralized location, the Navigation Center staff is also working to improve your experience online. The Student Navigation Center, along with many others, is behind the new and improved student centered Navigator portal, a re-conceptualized website, and a knowledge-base containing information that all students will find useful. The Center's intention is to serve each student independently and in the most efficient way possible whether in-person, online, via phone, or email. Contact information: 978.542.8000 or navcenter@salemstate.edu

Counseling and Health Services Department

The University's Counseling Center offers a variety of services to the campus community, including individual and group counseling; alcohol and drug counseling; career counseling and life planning; workshops on contemporary issues in response to students' needs; and consultation to students, staff and faculty. The Counseling and Health Services Department is located in the Ellison Center on North Campus – the telephone number is 978.542.6410.

The Frederick E. Berry Library and Learning Commons

The Frederick E. Berry Library and Learning Commons at Salem State University is located on North Campus. The learning commons brings the Center for Academic Excellence, Academic Advising, TRIO programs, Disabilities Services, the Writing Center, and the Honors Program together and recognizes the synergy between and among these academic support services and the University Library. Visit salemstate.edu/library

The library has been designed to take advantage of evolving pedagogies and technologies. Learning spaces have been planned to meet the varied needs of students and faculty, in a fully networked and wireless environment.

The library includes:

- A combined circulation, reserve, interlibrary loan and reference desk where you can check out and return library materials, request resources from other libraries throughout the world, and find research assistance. IT support is also available at this desk during all hours of library operation. For the most current hours, please call the Library 978.542.6808.
- A collection of over 325,000 high-quality scholarly books, periodicals and media. This is in addition to access to an expanding collection of electronic resources covering the full array of academic disciplines, including over 300,000 electronic books and 57,000 journals.
- Three fully-equipped high-tech classrooms where professional librarians provide orientation to the library's resources and services, sessions on how to locate and use print and digital information, and subject-specific upper-division and graduate-level research instruction.
- Over 1,000 study seats, in a variety of forms – including collaborative workstations, lounge seating, study carrels, laptop tables, individual and group study tables, and twelve group study rooms where students can collaborate on class projects, gather in study groups, and meet for scholarly purposes.
- More than 150 public access computer workstations networked to printing as well as an adaptive technology workstation near the service desk and in a specialized group study room on the first floor. Copiers are also available.

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

The primary purpose of financial aid is to provide financial assistance to those students who, without such assistance, would be unable to attend Salem State University.

A student must be maintaining satisfactory academic progress in a course of study according to the institution's policies for continued eligibility for student financial aid funds. The satisfactory academic progress policy is in the University Catalog, online.

For the most recent information relevant to financial aid, consult the University's website's link to the Financial Aid Office saalemstate.edu/finaid. You may also contact the office at 978.542.6112.

Loans

Most financial aid through the University is in the form of low interest federal education loans. In order to apply for these loans, the student must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); apply online at fafsa.gov.edu. Once your form is processed, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR). The Salem State University code is 002188. All forms and applications are available on the University web site at saalemstate.edu/finaid.

Tuition Remission

Full time state employees of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are eligible for 50% tuition remission. Forms to facilitate this process are available through your employer. At the time of registration, you will need to present the completed tuition remission form with signature of the authorizing person from your agency or organization. Please note that a Directed Study is not eligible for 50% tuition remission.

Employer Tuition Reimbursement

Many employers will reimburse their employees in part or in full for courses considered job related. Students are advised to check with their employer's Human Resource office for more information about reimbursement.

Other Resources

We strongly encourage you to explore other resources: grants, foundations, community organizations, and tuition reimbursement from your employer. Helpful guides about financial aid are available at our financial aid office or at local libraries. Online listings of financial aid are available as well, e.g. fastweb.com. or finaid.com.

REMEMBER: Financial aid awards are not renewable. You must reapply each year.

AWARDS and SCHOLARSHIPS

Throughout the year, Salem State undergraduate students are encouraged to apply for appropriate awards and scholarships, given on various bases, and with ranging requirements. Students are asked to gather information at saalemstate.edu/awards. Social work students are especially encouraged to apply for social work-specific awards and scholarships, which are presented during the spring semester. These social work-specific scholarships and awards include:

The Pharnal Longus Community Service Scholarship

This scholarship was established as a memorial to Professor Emeritus Pharnal Longus who retired from the School of Social Work in 2004. The criteria for this award are a BSW student who has made a substantial contribution in community service and whose efforts contribute to the anti-racism work which was the hallmark of Professor Longus' legacy.

The Daniel Aaron Collins Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship was established as a memorial to Daniel Aaron Collins, son of Carol and David Collins. The scholarship provides a financial award each year to an eligible BSW student. The criteria for receiving the scholarship are as follows: a strong record of academic achievement; a well-written nomination letter; and demonstrated engagement with the population of persons with developmental/intellectual disabilities, as an employee, volunteer, family member, or some combination of these.

The Linda Joyce Ettinger Award

This award is given in memory of Linda Joyce Ettinger, who was a 1975 graduate of the Social Service Department and who died in 1976 of cancer. Ms. Ettinger's parents established this scholarship to be awarded to a junior in the School of Social Work who has demonstrated a commitment to social work values and ethics, has shown outstanding dedication in service to others, and has changed career and/or academic direction to social work.

The Patricia Roderick Award

This award was established by colleagues, friends and former students of Professor Roderick, who served the School of Social Work from 1972-1999. The award is intended to provide financial assistance to BSW students who are one of the first in their families to go to University and for whom a financial award might help them complete their studies. Professor Roderick modeled the highest commitment to social work values and ethics - hence the prize is awarded to a sophomore or junior student with both financial need and a demonstrated commitment to these values.

PHI ALPHA HONOR SOCIETY - TAU PHI CHAPTER - SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

The School of Social Work became an affiliate of Phi Alpha, Tau Phi Chapter of the National Social Work Honor Society, in 2013. Phi Alpha is designed to encourage and recognize scholarship and academic excellence. Its members are drawn from both undergraduate and graduate programs. The BSW program coordinator serves as the Phi Alpha faculty advisor for undergraduate social work students. The primary benefits of Phi Alpha membership are: the public recognition of achievement—which is an honor to list on resumes and other career documents, participation in chapter and national honor society activities, scholarships, and networking on a national basis.

In addition to the following eligibility requirements, the student must demonstrate that they meet the professional standards required of them as outlined in the Professional Standards for the School of Social Work. As of the spring semester of the junior year (or academic year before beginning the field education practicum), students in the BSW Program who have achieved program continuation, and have a 3.25 or better overall GPA (transfer credits not applicable) and 3.7 or better SWK GPA are eligible for induction with a reasonable lifetime membership Individual fee.

INFORMATION FOR DCE STUDENTS

Although all of the information in this BSW Handbook relates to both day and evening students, there are special situations and needs that evening (Division of Continuing Education, or DCE) students have around advising and other program issues. This section discusses some issues of particular interest to these students.

Admission into the BSW Program

Students are typically admitted into the Evening Program either as transfer students or as change of majors. The process for transfer students is the same as that outlined overall on page 10 of this handbook. DCE students at the University in another major who wish to change into the social work major fill out a request form and submit it to the BSW Coordinator or Department Chairperson in the Coordinator's absence. This process is the same as the process for day students: any student may apply for a change of major at any point in time while at the University. These criteria for acceptance into the BSW major are the same as outlined on page 10 of this handbook for students overall.

Advising

The University Academic Advising Office has overall responsibility for advising DCE students and students are encouraged to make use of their services. Because social work majors often have specific advising needs around social work curriculum and careers, every DCE student is strongly encouraged to meet with the BSW Program Coordinator at least once a year. Advising hours can be arranged in late afternoon or early evening to meet the needs of working students. Call 978.542.6629 for more information.

Course Schedules

The School of Social Work offers the entire BSW curriculum, except for certain senior-year courses, in the evening. Course offerings rotate on a regular basis to meet the needs of DCE students. The typical schedule is as follows (please note that offerings may change based on course enrollment and program needs):

- SWK 101 – Fall and spring semesters and summer (session I)
- SWK 102 – Fall and spring semesters and summer (session II)
- SWK 261 – Fall and spring semesters and summer (session I)
- SWK 200 – Fall and spring semesters and summer (on a directed study basis)
- SWK 270 – Fall and spring semesters and summer (session I or II)
- SWK 361 – Fall and spring semesters and summer (session II)
- SWK 301 – Fall and spring semesters
- SWK 302 – Spring semester and summer (session I and II)
- SWK 381 – Fall semester
- SWK 382 – Spring semester
- SWK 410 – Fall and spring semesters
- Electives – Fall and spring semesters and summer (sessions I and II, institutes)

Students should recognize that as they approach senior year status and field education courses, they may need to accommodate their schedules outside of the University schedule in order to provide for more day time availability for courses (SWK 410 and some field seminars) and field education itself.

NOTICE OF EQUAL ACCESS AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Salem State University is committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities at the University for all students regardless of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, creed, national origin, age, or disability. Affirmative action is the policy of the University and the School in their recruitment of students, faculty, and staff. All benefits, privileges, and opportunities offered by the University are available to all students and employees on a non-discriminatory basis in accordance with Federal and State legislation.

STUDENT ABSENCES FOR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Chapter 151C of the General Laws of Massachusetts permits any student in an educational institution, who because of his/her religious beliefs, is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work on a particular day to be excused and to be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement, provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon the University. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making this opportunity available to the student. No adverse or prejudicial effects upon a student shall result from following the provisions of this section. If you are denied this right, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Human Rights at 978.542.6106.

POLICY AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Salem State University prohibits any member of the University Community, male or female, from sexually harassing another employee, student or other person having dealings with the University. The University is committed to providing a working, living and learning environment that is free from all forms of sexually abusive, violent, harassing or coercive conduct. This policy seeks to protect the rights of all members of the University Community (trustees, faculty, librarians, administrators, staff, and students) and other persons having dealings with the University, to be treated with respect and dignity.

Salem State University, in response to the issue of sexual harassment, provides the following definition, which applies to any individual of either sex who participates in the University Community as a student, trustee, faculty member, librarian, teaching assistant, resident assistant, administrator, staff member, vendor, contractor, patron, visitor or other person having dealings with the institution:

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome verbal, non-verbal and/or physical behavior of a sexual nature that has the effect of interfering with a person's academic, employment or other status, or of creating a sexually intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Sexual harassment incidents can involve a male harasser and a female victim, a female harasser and a male victim, and also same gender same sex harassment and harassment because of gender identity or orientation. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature by any member of the campus community constitute sexual harassment when:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education;

2. submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for academic or employment decisions affecting that individual;
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or work performance or creating a sexually intimidating, hostile or offensive employment, educational or living environment.

Under this Policy, consenting romantic and sexual relationships between faculty and student, librarian and student, administrator and student, classified staff member and student, or supervisor and employee are deemed unprofessional. Because such relationships interfere with or impair required professional responsibilities and relationships, and could possibly lead to the development of a hostile work environment, they are looked upon with disfavor and may lead to discipline up to and including termination.

Please consult the University's website and the University's Undergraduate Online Catalog (catalog.salemstate.edu/content.php?catoid=30&navoid=4792#PASH) for further details on the University's policies and procedures with regard to sexual harassment.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Salem State University assumes that all students come to the University 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 University 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, journal articles or portions thereof; copying 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 Academic Dishonesty

Penalties for plagiarism and academic dishonesty can include an automatic grade of F for the course as well as being reported to the Provost, and can lead to suspension or expulsion from the University. See the current Salem State Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs for complete descriptions of University policies on academic dishonesty and the appeals procedures. Students who engage in plagiarism, cheating or other forms of academic dishonesty are reported to the Dean of the College of Human Services by the course instructor for follow-up action which may ultimately result in dismissal.

DISRUPTIVE STUDENT IN THE CLASSROOM POLICY

The purpose of this judicial procedure is to provide the University with a method of due process to be used for relieving students in the classroom and their faculty from disruptive and/or potentially hazardous invasions of their time and learning. Please consult the University's Undergraduate Catalog online as well as the School's Professional Standards for Social Work Education included in this Handbook.

AFTER GRADUATION

Licensing

As of July 1980, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts instituted the Social Work Licensure Law. Under this law, persons calling themselves social workers and/or practicing social work, (including social workers in many agency settings), must be licensed by the Commonwealth. BSWs who graduate from a CSWE-accredited School of Social Work (like Salem State) are eligible to register for the LSW, Licensed Social Worker exam, the most basic social work licensure. A written examination is required to attain the LSW.

To obtain more information about eligibility requirements and registration for the examination, go to naswma.org.

Jobs

The immediate career possibilities for social work graduates vary extensively depending on the geographical area, the general economic trends, and the student's particular field of interest. While the need for trained personnel to assist clients does not diminish, funding in both public and private agencies is often determined by economic factors and the willingness of funding sources to recognize needs.

Graduates of the School of Social Work have had an excellent record of finding social service jobs. Our graduates are employed in a wide variety of settings and, thus, represent the breadth and depth of social work practice opportunities. Their employment settings include inpatient and outpatient health and mental health facilities; substance abuse treatment programs; residential and group care; public social service; child and family welfare; elderly home care; end-of-life care; schools; settlement houses; community development; and political advocacy.

Job opportunities shared with the School of Social Work by community agencies are forwarded to and posted online by the SSU Career Center. The social work students' organization (START) periodically sponsors a "job fair" or information sessions pertinent to students' future employment. The University's Career Services Center 978.542.6406 is also available to undergraduate students. In connection with NASW student membership, students have access to the NASW Massachusetts Chapter website and newsletter ("Focus") job postings. Additionally, the SSW alumni group, Friends of the School of Social Work, sponsor forums each spring for graduates to speak with current students about career development.

Salem State University
School of Social Work

Professional Standards for Social Work Students

These Standards include the following:

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

The Salem State University School of Social Work developed and implemented Professional Standards for Social Work Students that initially became effective in September 2003 for all matriculated and non-matriculated social work students. The Standards were revised in summer 2013 and the revised version is effective for all social work students enrolled in the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) and Master of Social Work (MSW) programs beginning fall 2013. Unless otherwise noted, the standards, criteria, procedures, and policies apply to both BSW and MSW students.

August 26, 2013

Grateful acknowledgement to the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work (1999) faculty and staff who shared standards which served the basis for this document as well as to the Salem State University School of Social Work faculty and staff who established the 2003 and 2013 editions of this document.

Professional Standards for Salem State University School of Social Work Students

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1.0 Introduction

This document delineates Salem State University School of Social Work Professional Standards for Social Work Students – standards that apply to all students enrolled at the School of Social Work on a matriculated or non-matriculated basis.

Because of the nature of professional social work practice, the School of Social Work has different expectations of students than do non-professional educational programs. The Standards are linked to practice behaviors that demonstrate students' abilities to perform as competent social work professionals. The Standards are articulated and provided to all students in order to clarify expectations and outline procedures related to the School's concerns about students' academic performance. The ultimate goal of the Standards is to insure that expectations and procedures are transparent and, therefore, optimize students' successful education and experience at the School of Social Work.

The School's administrators, faculty and staff recognize that becoming a professional is a gradual process and that not all of the criteria articulated in these standards will be demonstrated at all times. However, the delineated professional standards outlined in sections 2.1 and 2.2 will be used to evaluate students' readiness to enter field education practica. Prior to entering field education, the professional standards outlined in sections 2.1 and 2.2 will be assessed in classroom performance as well as through observations of student to student and student to faculty interactions.

Specific readiness for field education practicum is critical, as a student's overall judgment and ability to engage in competent practice behaviors directly affects clients who are seeking psychosocial support. In addition, a student's lack of professional readiness for field education affects the organizations and agencies that partner with the School on a pro bono basis in providing field education practica placements. Our partner organizations and agencies have a right to assume that the School's administrators, faculty and staff have adequately assessed students' readiness to competently engage and work with vulnerable clients and client systems.

The School's administrators, faculty (includes field instructors), and staff are obligated to exercise their professional judgment and continually assess students' competence in order to determine if the standards articulated in this document are being met. Such assessment of students' competence will occur in a variety of venues including but not limited to the classroom, online coursework, and field education. 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. This ongoing assessment of competence and the practice behaviors associated with professional competence occurs as the student progresses through academic and field education courses.

All social work students will be required to stipulate that they have read and understood the School's Professional Standards for Social Work Students as well as the appropriate student handbook and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics during their orientation meetings at the School. Students will be asked to sign an acknowledgment documenting that they have read, are aware of the contents of, and will abide by the Standards. When students enter field education, they will sign an additional document that states they have read, understood and will abide by the NASW Code of Ethics as well as the BSW or MSW Field Education Curriculum Guide. The signed acknowledgement forms will be kept in students' files.

2.0 Criteria for Evaluating Professional Competence and Performance During BSW and MSW Education

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 professional and academic performance of its students in four general areas: basic professional competence and skills; emotional maturity and management of emotions; professional performance specific to practice in agencies and organizations; and scholastic performance. In other words, meeting the criteria for scholastic achievement is necessary but not sufficient to ensure continued enrollment in a social work program. Practice behaviors that demonstrate professional competence and adequate scholastic performance comprise academic standards in a professional social work program.

2.1 Basic Professional Competence and Skills

The presence and absence of the following basic professional skills are evaluated in accordance with undergraduate- and graduate-level educational standards as well as the developmental trajectory of social work education.

2.1.1 Communication Skills

The student demonstrates sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings. All students are required to use the Salem State University email system for sending and receiving messages to and from faculty, staff and administrators. Professional competence encompasses using email in an appropriate manner and responding to email communications from faculty, staff and administrators in a timely manner. Email is considered an official means of communicating University and School of Social Work deadlines, procedures and policies. However, as noted in specific sections of this document, there are circumstances in which students as well as faculty, staff and administrators must use written and signed as well as certified letters for communication purposes.

The following distinctions and similarities are made between written and oral communication skills:

a) Evaluation of Written Communication Skills: The student writes clearly, uses correct grammar and spelling as well as appropriate writing style, including referencing, appropriate source citation, and documentation in accordance with the latest edition of the American Psychological Association Style Manual. The student possesses sufficient skills in written English to demonstrate an understanding of content presented in social work courses and program in which the student is enrolled. The student is able to complete adequately all written assignments, as specified by classroom and field education faculty, and meets the University's established Minimum Writing Standards for undergraduate and graduate students (see appropriate SSU undergraduate or graduate catalogue).

b) Evaluation of Oral Communication Skills: The student communicates effectively and respectfully with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals from other disciplines. The student expresses ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates a willingness and an ability to listen to others. The student possesses sufficient skills in English to demonstrate understanding of content presented in the course or program in which the

student is enrolled. The student is able to complete adequately all presentation assignments, as specified by classroom and field education faculty.

2.1.2 Interpersonal Skills

The student demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals from other disciplines. The student demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to uphold the values of the social work profession and to fulfill the ethical obligations of the profession. These skills include demonstrated compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and respect for others. The student takes appropriate responsibility for his or her actions and considers the impact of these actions on others.

The student works effectively with others, regardless of level of authority. The student advocates for him/herself in an appropriate, respectful and responsible manner. The student uses proper channels for complaints, conflict resolution, and grievances (see Section 3.0 below). The student shows a willingness to receive feedback from faculty (including field instructors), administrators, staff and colleagues in a positive and respectful manner. The student evidences the ability to use such feedback to enhance professional development and appropriately provides feedback to others.

2.1.3 Cognitive Skills

The student exhibits sufficient cognitive skills in order to acquire and critique social work knowledge, research and conceptual frameworks. The student's cognitive skills are sufficient to evidence clarity of thinking and the ability to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in classroom and field education. Information to be processed includes but is not limited to course syllabi, readings, program handbooks and curriculum guides. The student demonstrates appropriate grounding in the liberal arts especially regarding relevant social, behavioral and biological science knowledge and research. The student demonstrates a cognitive understanding of relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, and evaluation in classroom and online curricula as well as field education.

The student understands the meaning and significance of accreditation standards for professional social work education as promulgated by the 2008 Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Commission on Accreditation (COA) Educational Policies and Standards (EPAS), which are presented on the SSU SSW website. The student comprehends the meaning of competence, the measurement of practice behaviors and field education as the discipline's signature pedagogy.

2.1.4 Physical Skills

The student exhibits motor and sensory abilities to attend and participate in class with or without reasonable accommodations. The student exhibits sufficient abilities to perform the essential functions of the field education practica with or without reasonable accommodations. (See section 2.6 on Accommodations for Disabilities for clarification).

2.1.5 Social Skills

The student exhibits behaviors that are in compliance with and respectful of University policies as well as School of Social Work and program-specific policies. The student's appearance, dress, demeanor and behaviors demonstrate and reflect an understanding of professional roles and responsibilities. The student demonstrates accountability by being punctual, attending class as expected, observing deadlines, prioritizing responsibilities, completing assignments on time, responding to requests for information, keeping appointments, and notifying appropriate offices and personnel of changes and circumstances that impact student

status. The student takes responsible initiative for explaining limitations in accountability and making appropriate alternate arrangements.

2.2

Emotional Maturity and Management of Emotions during Coursework and Field Education

2.2.1 Stress Management

The student demonstrates ability to deal with past or current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. The student handles stress effectively by implementing appropriate self-care and supportive relationships with appropriate colleagues, peers, family members, and/or professional caregivers.

2.2.2 Self-Efficacy and Use of Professional, Personal and Academic Resources

The student takes responsibility to seek and effectively use help for physical, medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance. The student is willing to make use of resources within and outside of the University when personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, and/or mental health difficulties evidence any of the following:

- compromise scholastic and field education performance;
- interfere with professional judgment and appropriate practice behaviors;
- jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the social work student has a professional responsibility as outlined in the current National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Codes of Ethics and this document.

2.2.3 Self Awareness

The student exhibits knowledge of how one's values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and past experiences affect thinking, behavior and relationships. The student accurately assesses his or her own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice. The student demonstrates an awareness of self and how others perceive him or her. The student is able to reflect on his or her own limitations as they relate to professional abilities and practice. The student is willing to examine and change behavior when it interferes in working with clients and other professionals.

2.3

Professional Performance Specific to Practice in Social Service Agencies and Organizations

2.3.1 Demonstrated Professional Competence and Emotional Management

All of the professional standards and criteria listed in Sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the Professional Standards for Social Work Students will be used to specifically evaluate students' performance and progress in field education practica as well as performance in classroom and online coursework. While Section 2.3 is specific to professional performance with clients and staff in field education practica, it should be noted that all standards and criteria described throughout Sections 2.0 are also considered required practice behaviors central to competent professional practice with clients and staff in organizational contexts.

2.3.2 Professional Commitment

The student demonstrates commitment to understanding and enacting the essential values of the social work profession as delineated in the 2008 NASW Code of Ethics under section on Ethical Principles. The student also demonstrates an appropriate understanding of the values

and principles delineated by the International Federation of Social Workers and International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work and Statement of Principles (2004).

The student demonstrates a commitment to continuing education beyond BSW or MSW degree achievement.

2.3.3 Ability to Apply Social Work Values and Ethics

Social work values inform and support professional social work competence and practice behaviors. The student's practice behaviors in the classroom, during online coursework and in field education practica demonstrate adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional social work practice standards. The student exhibits an ability to implement social work values, the ethical standards of the profession, and laws governing social work practice as specified in the following:

- National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics as revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts Rules and Regulations Governing Social Workers (258 Code of Massachusetts Regulations [CMR] 1-31.00)
- Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) [aka General Laws of the Commonwealth (GLC)] governing social workers including but not limited to laws regarding the report of child and elder abuse
- Proper and timely disclosure of any convictions or offenses that may have an impact on the ability to practice professionally as well as willingness to engage in responsible collaborative decision-making regarding how this history may impact field education and the practicum setting.

The following social work values are stated in the NASW Code of Ethics and are listed here, along with the Code section number, as examples of the values that are regularly evaluated as evident, or not, in students' practice behaviors:

- Social workers' primary responsibility is to promote the well-being of clients (1.01);
- Social workers respect and promote the right of clients to self-determination and assist clients in their efforts to identify and clarify their goals (1.02);
- Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures (1.05);
- Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information (1.07);
- Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with current clients whether such contact is consensual or forced (1.09);
- Social workers should not engage in physical contact with clients when there is a possibility of psychological harm to the client as a result of the contact (1.10);
- Social workers should use accurate and respectful language in all communications to and about clients (1.12);

- Social workers should make reasonable efforts to ensure continuity of services in the event that services are interrupted by factors such as unavailability, relocation, illness, disability, or death (1.15);
- Social workers who are members of an interdisciplinary team should participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the social work profession (2.03);
- Social workers should base practice on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge, relevant to social work and social work ethics (4.01);
- Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability (4.02).

2.4 Scholastic Performance

2.4.1 Undergraduate Students

Students proceed sequentially in the major by typically taking SWK 101 and SWK 102 in freshman year and SWK 200, 261 and 270 in the sophomore year and SWK 301 and 302 in the junior year. Regardless of difference in study plans, students in the BSW program are required to take the following seven (7) social work courses prior to beginning field education:

SWK 101 - The Profession of Social Work
SWK 102 - Social Welfare Past and Present
SWK 200 - Social Services Volunteer Practicum
SWK 270 - Race, Class & Ethnicity: Their Impact upon the Social Services
SWK 261 – Human Behavior & the Social Environment
SWK 301 - Generalist Practice I
SWK 302 - Generalist Practice II

The student must achieve a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.7 in the five (5) introductory 100 and 200 level social work courses prior to being considered for field education placement assignment. In addition to the 2.75 cumulative grade point average, the student must earn a B- or better in SWK 301 and a B- or better in SWK 302. Students who earn below a B- in either of these courses are permitted to repeat the course one time to improve their grade. If they earn below a B- a second time, they must withdraw from the social work major or they will be administratively withdrawn from the social work major.

Social work majors and pre-majors must earn a grade of C or higher in all other social work courses (these courses include, but are not limited to SWK 361, SWK 380 and SWK 410). A student may repeat a social work course only once. A second grade below a C in the same course mandates withdrawal from the social work major.

Additionally, Field Education I and II (SWK 404/405) and Field Education Seminar I and II (SWK 406 /407) are co-requisites. In order to successfully pass one course a student must pass the other. Therefore, a student must earn a "P" in Field Education I and a B- or better in Field Seminar I in order to continue into Field Education II and Field Seminar II. If a student does not earn a "P" in Field Education I and a B- or better in Field Seminar I, he/she must retake both Field Education I and Field Seminar I. A second grade of lower than a "P" in Field Education I and/or a grade of B- in Field Education Seminar mandate that a student withdraw or be withdrawn administratively from the social work major. Likewise if a student does not earn a B- or better in Field Education Seminar II and a "P" in Field Education II then he/she must retake both Field Education II and Field Education Seminar II. A second grade of lower than a B- in Field Seminar and/ or grade of "P" in Field Education II mandate that a student withdraw or be administratively withdrawn from the social work major.

At the end of his/her field education experience, the student may have no more than 12 credits to complete his/her BSW degree requirements.

Any student who fails to meet these academic requirements may be referred to the Student Educational Review Committee (SERC) for review and for the Committee's recommendation, as detailed in sections 3.0 and 4.0 of this document. Students are expected to use all appropriate levels of review available to them within the School of Social Work prior to

requesting a hearing with any of the University's deans, vice-presidents or the president. In requesting any reviews, it is the student's responsibility to put in writing the specific reasons for requesting the review and provide appropriate evidence. See Section 3 regarding policies and procedures for review of academic performance and Section 4 regarding formal complaints. Students who wish to request a SERC meeting should consult with their academic advisor who will advise them on the process for seeking a SERC meeting.

2.4.2 Graduate Students

MSW students are considered to be in academic difficulty if their GPA drops below 3.0 and will be placed on academic probation. Students in the advanced standing study plans are permitted one grade of "C"; a second "C" grade will result in dismissal from the MSW Program. Students in the any of the general study plans are permitted two grades of "C"; a third "C" grade will result in dismissal from the MSW Program. A Student Educational Review Committee meeting may be called if a student is at risk of academic dismissal due to earned C grades.

Students must have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 to move from the foundation to the concentration curriculum. If a student is having difficulty meeting the GPA standard, they are permitted to repeat one required foundation year course over and may do so only one time (such repetition is not allowed for field education). The option of repeating a required foundation course is not automatic and may be subject to review by the School's Student Educational Review Committee (SERC).

The receipt of an "F" grade in any course including field education results in the automatic termination of a student from the MSW Program and Salem State University.

A student must have a GPA of 3.0 to graduate. Students who are at risk of completing their course work without a 3.0 average must meet with their academic advisor and the MSW Program Coordinator to discuss the possibility of additional requirements. Such additional requirements must be approved in writing by the Associate Dean of the School of Social Work and subject to the final approval by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

Students are expected to use all appropriate levels of review available to them within the School of Social Work prior to requesting a review or hearing with any of the University's deans, vice-presidents or the president. MSW students who request a hearing before the University's Graduate Education Council must demonstrate that the student has previously met with the School of Social Work SERC. In requesting such reviews, it is the student's responsibility to put in writing the specific reasons for the review and provide evidence for performance evaluations or grades that were not in keeping with the School or program's articulated academic standards.

The findings of the School's SERC will be shared with other persons or systems with which the student is seeking review, appeal or grievance. See Section 3 regarding policies and procedures for review of academic performance and Section 4 regarding formal complaints. Students who wish to request a SERC meeting should consult with their academic advisor who will advise them on the process for seeking a SERC meeting.

2.5

Sources of Information on Academic and Professional Performance

Sources of information about whether academic and professional performance criteria are being met by a student in the School of Social Work may include but are not limited to those listed below. Faculty and administrators are obligated to insure that all aspects of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) are properly adhered to in using any of the following sources of information:

- Performance in oral and written assignments, examinations, social work skills labs, and other coursework
- Written or verbal feedback from faculty, field instructors, faculty field liaisons, and supervisors of volunteer human service activity
- Formal feedback from agency-based field instructors through evaluative tools
- Observation of classroom, volunteer, and field education behaviors
- Student's personal statements and self-assessments
- Interviews with faculty and other professionals involved in the student's education and/or potential field education placement
- Taped interviews (audio or video) that were designed for educational purposes;
- Educational information including evaluations from faculty and field educators in other social work programs that the student attended or reports to have attended
- Signed agreements between the School and the student, including the Field Education Teaching/Learning Agreement as well as any signed confidentiality or scholastic honesty statements required by program administrators, field educators, classroom faculty and/or the University.

2.6

Accommodations for Disabilities

No otherwise qualified student shall be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the School of Social Work solely on the basis of disability. A student with a disability is eligible for protection under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and may be eligible for reasonable accommodations that will provide an equal opportunity to meet the academic criteria related to professional behavior and scholastic performance. This current document, the School of Social Work Professional Standards for Social Work Students, represents the essential duties of all social work students. Accommodations cannot override these essential duties.

Any otherwise qualified student with a disability that substantially limits one or more life activities, and who seeks reasonable accommodation, must meet with the University's Disability Services in order to obtain the proper accommodation form from Disability Services – the form does not include information provided by the student to Disability Services, only the need for a specific accommodation and the nature of the accommodation. Students are required to present the form from Disability Services to each instructor who will sign the form

that the student returns to Disability Services. Instructors are advised to retain a copy of the Disability Services form they have signed. It is against School and University policies for individual instructors to provide accommodations that have not been recommended by Disability Services.

In the event of accommodations involving a field education practicum, the student must present documentation from the University's Disabilities Services to the field education staff. For BSW students, this documentation should be included in the BSW Field Education Readiness application; for MSW students, this documentation should be included in application to MSW Field Education (see Program Handbook and Field Education Curriculum Guides for additional information on these application processes). Accommodations will not be made that are beyond reasonable according to the resources of the field education office, the practicum site, and the essential duties of the student's practicum role.

Students are required to present accommodation forms to instructors every semester even if the student has previously been enrolled in a class with the same instructor.

For additional information on the University's Disability Services, visit the University's website at saalemstate.edu/3719.php or call 978.542.6217.

3.0

Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic and Professional Performance

Three levels for review of students' academic performance are available at the School of Social Work. The level of review depends upon the severity of the concern and the potential for termination. Depending on the nature or urgency of a particular problem, all levels of review may not be utilized. For example, there are circumstances in which a student's immediate dismissal may need to be considered regardless of presence or absence of any previous level of review.

Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty (including field instructors), field education staff, program coordinators, or school administrators will not be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about professional performance. In keeping with FERPA, faculty and educational staff have the right and responsibility to share pertinent information with each other for the professional purpose of identifying educational or professional issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. This is especially important in documenting students' readiness to engage in field education.

3.1

Performance Relevant for Review and/or Dismissal from the School of Social Work

Salem State University assumes that all students come to the University with serious educational intent and expects them to be mature, responsible individuals who exhibit high standards of honesty and integrity in their personal, academic, and professional conduct. A review of a student's performance and possible dismissal may occur under any of the following circumstances:

- Failure to meet or maintain criteria and standards as delineated and established in this document, the School of Social Work Professional Standards for Social Work Students (see all criteria under Section 2.0 above);
- 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;
- Behaviors that violate the University's standards and policies specific to plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty

All forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, are considered to be serious offenses against the University community.

Academic Dishonesty includes but is not limited to copying another person's work during examinations; purchasing papers; presenting as one's own work material that has been copied from other papers, reports, websites, laboratory or computer results as well as

presenting material from another course or paper without proper acknowledgment, citations and references.

Penalties for plagiarism and academic dishonesty may include an automatic grade of F for the course. In addition, faculty are required to report any instances of plagiarism and academic dishonesty to the appropriate Dean and the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, which may lead to suspension or expulsion from the University. See the current Salem State University Undergraduate and School of Graduate Studies' catalogues on the University's website for complete descriptions of University policies on academic dishonesty and the appeals procedures.

3.2 Levels of Review

Level One – Flagging and Conferencing

A Level One 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 student's academic advisor, program coordinator (BSW or MSW) and/or field education coordinator of the concerns via use of a "flagging form" in order to identify potential patterns and issues that are of concern. The student will be provided with a copy of the Flagging Form and a copy of the form will be placed in the student's file. Concerns to be noted include the following areas:
 - Attendance
 - Assignments
 - Writing Skills
 - Oral Communication Skills
 - Professional Behavior

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

Faculty will make every effort to meet with a student to discuss the content of a flagging form; in any case, a copy of the flagging form will be sent to the student at his/her address of record. In many instances, meetings between faculty and students resolve the concerns and do not necessarily lead to further reviews, pursuant to this section.

Level Two – Assisted Conferencing on Student Academic Progress

A Level Two review involves the faculty member, student, and the BSW or MSW Program Coordinator. The focus here remains on the student learning. Such meetings typically occur under the following circumstances:

- when questions are raised about the student's compliance with specific program or University standards, policies, and procedures;
- when concerns raised during a Level One review have not been resolved.

If a problem arises in field education, the agency-based field instructor, faculty liaison, and SSW Field Education Coordinator will conduct the review with the student.

During a Level Two review, information is gathered by the appropriate program coordinator who will 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 School's 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 a current or potential impact on their performance or progress.

The BSW or MSW Program Coordinator and/or Field Education Coordinator will assess the nature of Level Two concerns with appropriate faculty, consult with the Chairperson or Associate Dean, maintain documentation, and decide if it is necessary to conduct a more comprehensive review, pursuant to Level Three – a Student Educational Review Committee meeting.

Level Two –Faculty/Student Conflict Resolution

This Level Two review is distinct from assisted conferencing on academic progress, as the School of Social Work recognizes that instances of faculty and student conflict do occur. These conflicts often include, but are not limited to, conflicts about grades, communication, and evaluation. 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 either within or 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 below under Complaint Procedure 4.1).

Sometimes faculty/student conflicts impact the student's progress through the program and, hence, may be confused with issues that might be resolved through a Level Three Review, i.e., a Student Educational Review Committee meeting and review. However, in accordance with University policies, faculty/student conflict cannot be addressed in a Student Educational Review Committee meeting or review. The resolution of student and full-time faculty conflicts must occur through mediation with the School's Chairperson and may NOT involve other faculty. In an instance of conflict between an MSW student and an MSW adjunct faculty member, mediation occurs with the MSW Program Coordinator who may consult with the School's Chairperson.

It is important for students at Salem State University to know that faculty (including academic advisors), in accordance with their respective faculty union contracts, are prohibited from discussing the work or behavior of their colleagues with students.

Procedure for faculty/student conflict resolution:

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. If the problem is not resolved, or if the student believes there is a compelling reason why she or he does not wish to speak privately with the faculty member concerned, the

student should discuss the concern with the Chairperson (in the case of full-time faculty or BSW adjunct faculty) or with the MSW Program Coordinator (in the case of MSW Program adjunct faculty).

3. When the conflict results in a meeting with the Chairperson, the entire conflict resolution process will be conducted orally and no written record of the process will be maintained.
4. The Chairperson or MSW Program Coordinator 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.
5. 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).
6. If the Chairperson is the faculty member with whom the student has a conflict, the Associate Dean of the School shall act as mediator; if the MSW Program Coordinator is the faculty member with whom the student has a conflict, the Chairperson shall act as mediator.

Additional comments about possible areas of conflict:

1) Grades - As a general rule, faculty members' decisions about grades are accepted as the final word as part of the faculty member's responsibility to exercise his or her professional judgment. It is therefore highly unlikely that an administrator will ask a faculty member to change a grade and the administration itself does not have the authority to change a grade. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss grades, grading standards, and performance expectations with instructors in person. In order to successfully challenge a grade, the student must demonstrate that the grading was not conducted according to the published standards set by the appropriate program (BSW or MSW), the School, or the written criteria of the individual syllabus, course or instructor. See Section 4 on Formal Complaints for additional information on the appeal of earned grades.

2) Insensitivity and discrimination – A student sometimes experiences a faculty member as insensitive to their concerns or as biased against particular groups of which the student may or may not be members. Although faculty strive to be fair with students, difficulties 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 University regulations and professional ethics. These situations, while hopefully quite rare, are taken seriously by the School and the University. Complaints about discriminatory practice must be made directly to the University's Student Life Office and not to the School of Social Work; complaints regarding discrimination should be addressed in writing to the University's Dean of Student Life or to Director for Student Advocacy. Consult the University's website for name of persons currently holding these titles. Addressing these issues within the School of Social Work might interfere with due process for either the student or faculty member if the student proceeds to file a formal complaint against a faculty member.

3) Sexual harassment charges are treated equally as serious as discrimination charges by both the School of Social Work and the University. Reports or complaints of sexual harassment must be made directly to the University's Student Life Office and not to the School of Social Work; complaints regarding sexual harassment should be addressed in writing to the Dean of Students or to Director for Student Advocacy. Consult the University's website for name of persons currently holding these titles. Addressing these issues within the School of Social Work might interfere with due process for either the student or faculty member if the student files a formal complaint against a faculty member. (See the University's Policy against Sexual Harassment online or in the Undergraduate or School of Graduate Studies Catalog).

4) Faculty also has 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 in connection with the professor's race, ethnicity, age, social class, gender or sexual orientation, the student's bias or behaviors may be considered in determining the student's appropriateness for the field of social work and a violation of the Professional Standards for Social Work Students.

Level Three Review – Student Educational Review Committee (SERC) Procedures

The Student Educational Review Committee is a standing committee of the School of Social Work. The standing members of the Committee include three members of the School's full-time faculty with at least one full-time faculty member who represents the BSW Program and one full-time faculty member who represents the MSW Program.

The SERC is used on behalf of students in both BSW and MSW Programs. Its function is to work collaboratively with students to enable them to finish their education while maintaining the standards of the School. The SERC makes recommendations regarding appropriate planning for students who are in academic or other difficulty, and individualizes study plans for unusually well prepared students. Reviews ensure that students meet standards of performance set by the School and the social work profession in addition to providing a forum for discussion and resolution of difficulties. The goal of the SERC is to find a way to balance student needs and the integrity of the School's programs. The Committee meets as requests or demands indicate. The findings of the School's SERC will be shared with other persons or systems with which the student seeks additional review, appeal or grievance.

The SERC should be distinguished from other levels of review as outlined in this document. Concerns brought to the SERC are related to the student's successful progression through the BSW or MSW Programs. The focus of the Committee's work shall be on the student and her or his learning needs. The SERC cannot be a forum to resolve interpersonal student/faculty conflicts, grading and evaluation disputes, or perceived discrimination or sexual harassment. Any difficulties with student/faculty relations must be resolved through the conflict resolution process or the formal complaint procedures as explained in other parts of this document.

A SERC meeting is often is conducted when concerns have not been resolved in prior reviews. However, Level One and Two Reviews need not necessarily occur in order to proceed to the SERC as a Level Three Review.

Grounds for a SERC Meeting

A SERC meeting is required under the following circumstances:

- for BSW students who have received two "Incompletes" in social work courses in one semester;
- for Advanced Standing MSW students who have received a C in an academic course other than field education;
- for General Study Plan MSW students who have received a second grade of C in an academic course other than field education;
- for MSW students who are at risk for not maintaining a 3.0 GPA;
- for all students involved in any instance of alleged ethical violations or violation of professional standards delineated in this document.

Guidelines for the Student Education Review Committee (SERC) Process

1) SERC process is triggered by a request (per student handbooks). No effort is made to schedule a SERC meeting until the request plus all appropriate documentations are received by the SERC chair.

a) A request can be made by

- i) Student*
- ii) Academic advisor
- iii) Current instructor
- iv) Current Faculty Field Liaison

Field Liaisons are responsible for getting documentation from field instructors when the issues are related to field

- v) Program Coordinator
- vi) Field Coordinator
- vii) Any faculty with direct knowledge or concerns about the student

*Student challenges to received grades are considered "formal complaints" and are not handled by SERC – see section 4.0 on Formal Complaints. In addition, BSW students who want to appeal decisions made the BSW Program Continuation Committee regarding continuation in the BSW program must follow procedures outlined in the BSW Student Handbook. The School's SERC does not handle appeals on decisions made by the BSW Program Continuation Committee.

b) Request must be in writing and not by email (per student handbooks)

i) The request should include

- a) The issue as identified and understood by the requestor
- b) Suggestions as to what other information might be valuable to the SERC process and from whom that information should be requested

ii) SERC chair will pass the information to the SERC member who is responsible for facilitating the SERC process as determined by the rotating schedule (referred to below as "facilitator")

2) Prior to a SERC meeting, the SERC facilitator will

a) Access and review student file

- b) Determine with input from other SERC members what information will be included in the SERC procedure according to salience, preponderance of past issues, and past progression information
 - c) Advise the student's advisor of the pending SERC
 - d) Contact faculty identified by the requestor for information
 - e) Contact the student to explain the reason and nature of the SERC meeting
 - i) Explains that the student may bring one person as a support to the meeting and makes clear to the student that this person is not an active participant in the SERC process but only there for support.
 - ii) Notifies the student of when they can expect to see all of the materials that the SERC will be receiving and reviewing
 - iii) Students should receive these materials at least one week prior to the scheduled SERC, again not by email but either hand-delivered or by certified mail
 - f) Schedules the SERC meeting at a date/time, including finding a location
 - i) Notifies the mandatory SERC attendees:
 - a) Student
 - b) Requestor
 - c) SERC committee
 - ii) Notifies optional SERC attendees:
 - a) Advisor (if the advisor is not available, the SERC will follow up with the recommendation)
 - b) Program Coordinator or faculty member attending in the case of multiple and conflicting roles
 - g) Collects written material, makes copies for each attendee and the appropriate program coordinator and distributes them confidentially prior to the day of the meeting
- 3) On the day of the SERC meeting:
- a) SERC facilitator will meet with the student, as planned, for a few minutes before the meeting to clarify the nature and intent of the meeting; the facilitator tells the student that s/he will come get the student and escort her/him to the meeting shortly
 - b) The SERC meeting (minus the student) convenes under the leadership of that meeting's facilitator, to briefly share an overview of the situation & plan the flow of the meeting
 - c) The facilitator escorts the student to the meeting
- 4) During the SERC meeting
- a) The SERC chair opens the meeting with a statement that clarifies the purpose of the SERC, the meeting's agenda, and the process going forward after the meeting is finished
- 5) At the end of the SERC meeting
- a) Facilitator attempts to insure that the student feels heard and thanks her/him for attending and repeats the process to follow
 - b) Student and supporter leave the meeting
 - c) SERC meeting continues until a recommended plan of action is agreed upon and a point person has been identified who will follow-up with the student and make sure that resources needed for the completion of the recommendations are in place. If the student agrees with the SERC's recommendations, the facilitator oversees the student's compliance with SERC recommendations.
- 6) After the SERC meeting

- a) The facilitator shares the recommendation with the appropriate program coordinator and the student's advisor if s/he is not in attendance
- b) The facilitator composes a letter to the student, specifying the recommendations and decisions of the SERC, and circulates it among those who participated in the meeting (except the student and her/his support person). A confidential hardcopy of the letter is reviewed by SERC members who offer input or agreement with the letter as written; the facilitator sends the letter that meets consensus, via certified mail, to the student at the most recent address on record at the University. A confidential hardcopy of the letter is initialed by the SERC facilitator and placed in the student's file. The student's advisor, appropriate program coordinator, and the School's Associate Dean are also provided confidential hard copies.
- c) As appropriate, the facilitator will notify the field education coordinator of the SERC meeting and the concerns and recommendations of the SERC if they are relevant to the student's current or future field education practica.
- d) As appropriate, the facilitator will also notify external University departments of any referrals that have been made to an external University department. This notification will not divulge confidential information, but is to serve as notice that the student has been referred.
- e) The facilitator tracks the timing of the letter, confirmation of delivery, and return (or not) of the signed acknowledgement by the student; confirmation of receipt of letter as well as signed acknowledgement should be placed in student's file. The facilitator sends copy of signed acknowledgement to the School's Associate Dean OR notifies Associate Dean of lack of signed acknowledgement by deadline.
- f) In the event that the signed acknowledgement is not received, the SERC chair will send a letter to the student notifying them that the lack of receipt is understood to be agreement with the recommendations and that continuation in the School of Social Work will not be possible until the recommendations are complete.

7) If a student wishes to appeal the SERC recommendations, he or she must do so in writing (not email) within ten working days of receipt of the above letter from the SERC. The student's letter should be addressed to the Associate Dean for the School of Social Work and must delineate areas of disagreement and/or concern. The Associate Dean will have access to all materials pertinent to the SERC recommendations and may or may not meet with the student who presents an appeal. In any case, the Associate Dean will respond to the student's appeal in writing and by certified, return receipt mail within ten working days of receiving the letter of appeal. The Associate Dean's letter will be sent to the most recent address on record at the School.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Associate Dean, the student may address the issue with the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services (for undergraduate students) or the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (for graduate students). Future appeals are directed to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs and ultimately to the President of the University. It should be noted that the lines of appeal outside of the School of Social Work include the same University personnel involved in responses to students' formal complaints.

Important notes:

- No recommendation of change of grade should come from the SERC.
- It is possible that a SERC could be called when the student is planning to or has filed a complaint against an instructor. The SERC will use its discretion to determine whether or not the SERC process can move forward simultaneously with the complaint process.

- While it is often preferred, it is not required that a flagging form or an assisted conferencing (meeting with program coordinator) happen prior to the SERC.
- If the SERC is requested by the student, the facilitator will first ensure that all other problem solving steps have been taken by the student, such as meeting with their advisor and exploring opportunities for help throughout the greater University. The facilitator is to ensure that the request is not related to a conflict between the student and a faculty member or to the student wanting a change of grade and/or a change on a field education evaluation. If a SERC is deemed warranted by the facilitator, all other steps will be followed, beginning with a written request being provided by the student detailing the reasons for the request and providing appropriate documentation.

In the Level Three 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. In most instances, a Level Three 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. If the student believes that a violation of academic regulations has occurred prior to or during the SERC meeting and/or process, she or he may file a formal complaint at any time (See Formal Complaint Procedures 4.1.)

4.0

Formal Complaints and Procedures

The present document, Professional Standards for Social Work Students, delineates the professional standards that are one aspect of the School's academic regulations. 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 or standard has occurred. An "academic regulation" refers to a formal, published policy of the University, the School of Social Work and/or course syllabi. Sources of academic regulations include standards or procedures for grading or evaluating students as published in a course syllabus, the School's student handbooks and the School's field education curriculum guides as well as the written documentation of any meetings or hearings as outlined in any parts of Section 3.0 above.

If a complaint moves beyond levels one, two or three as outlined above, the resolution of a formal complaint regarding an academic regulation rests solely with the administration of the School of Social Work or University and may not involve another faculty member unless otherwise specified by University policies and procedures, e.g., faculty who are on the School's Administrative Committee or the Graduate Education Council, which may agree to hear formal complaints. It should be noted that the only grounds for the consideration of a change of grade is substantiated evidence that an academic regulation or standard was violated by the instructor or record. This evidence must be presented in writing to the School's Chairperson who will have all materials related to the challenge reviewed by the School's Administrative Committee, which is chaired by the Associate Dean. The Administrative Committee may or may not meet with the student. was violated if a student can demonstrate that an academic regulation or standard has been violated.

Students also have the right to file formal complaints against a faculty member under the University's Discrimination Complaint Procedures or, in the case of sexual harassment, the University'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 but rather immediately consult the University's Dean of Student Life.

4.1 Procedures for Handling Formal Complaints

Prior to filing a formal complaint that does not allege discrimination or sexual harassment, the student is encouraged to complete all informal and formal conflict resolution processes available in the School of Social Work, including meeting with the professor and participating in mediation as noted in Section 3.2.

In order to file a formal complaint, the student must submit an accurately dated, written, and signed statement, outlining the complaint and specifying the academic regulation the student believes was violated. The statement must be submitted within 30 days of the alleged violation. In complaints regarding grades, the 30-day period commences at the point in time that the grade was recorded and available to the student through the University Registrar's Office; in the case of a Field Education evaluation, the 30-day period commences at the point in time that the evaluation was reviewed with the student. The student's formal complaint statement should also specify what remedy would be regarded as satisfactory in order to resolve the complaint.

Formal complaints regarding full-time faculty members and BSW program adjuncts are addressed to the School's Chairperson and formal complaints regarding an adjunct teaching in the MSW Program are addressed to the MSW Program Coordinator. The School's current student handbooks list the names of all full-time faculty members and administrators. The Chairperson or, as relevant, the MSW Program Coordinator, will confer with the faculty member who is the object of the complaint and the School's Administrative Committee. The Chairperson or, as relevant, the MSW Program Coordinator will communicate recommendations and/or any findings that an academic regulation or policy was violated and whether the proposed remedy has merit to the student and the faculty member in writing within three weeks of receiving the complaint. All communications between students and administrators regarding complaints must be in writing (not email).

The student, who wishes to appeal the ruling on a formal complaint, must do so in writing to the School's Associate Dean within twenty-one calendar days of receiving the Chairperson or MSW Program Coordinator's recommendation. The Associate Dean will respond within three weeks of receipt of the appeal. Subsequent appeals are made to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services (for undergraduates) or the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies who will refer to Graduate Education Council (for MSW students). After review by either dean, any additional appeals are sent to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and ultimately to the President of the University. MSW students should note that appeals to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Education Council must be filed within 14 calendar days of exhausting all processes available at the School of Social Work.

At any point in a formal complaint process, faculty may avail themselves of the protections available to them in the relevant faculty contracts.