



Student Performance Policy
2017-2018



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1.0 INTRODUCTION TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The school's responsibility to promote competent social work practice begins with graduating quality students prepared for the profession. One quality assurance measure is the use of reasonable standards of academic achievement and professionalism. This document sets out standards for social work education that apply to students at the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work at the University of Oklahoma. These standards provide students with an explicit understanding of what is personally required of them to be successful in the program. Because of the nature of professional social work practice, the School of Social Work has different expectations of students than do non-professional programs. The standards are linked to students' skills and abilities to become effective social work professionals and are provided so that students and faculty can be clear about expectations and procedures to address professional performance concerns

The Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work upholds freedom of expression, is committed to due process, and always aims to treat students with fairness and equity throughout the program. This policy applies to students in the school's program at any point in time, from application to program entry, program entry to candidacy, and candidacy to graduation. Each admitted student is required to read the *Student Performance Policy*. In addition, all social work students are expected to read, understand, and comport their behavior to align with the expectations outlined in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>.

Students are responsible for the reading, understanding, and abiding by all the expectations set forth in the Student Performance Policy.

1.1 DEPARTMENT, COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENT CONDUCT POLICIES

A variety of bodies, each with their own sets of policies and procedures regulating student behavior, are listed below. It is important to note that there are several institutional Levels for student conduct review at the University of Oklahoma (University Level, College Level, Department/School Level). Students are required to become familiar with the policies and procedures that govern their conduct among the various Levels.

University Level

Students are familiar with and abide by the University of Oklahoma's policies and procedures pertaining to student conduct - available at: http://www.ou.edu/content/gradweb/student_resources.html

Graduate College Level

Graduate students are familiar with and abide by the University of Oklahoma's Graduate Student Handbook - available at: http://www.ou.edu/content/gradweb/student_resources.html

Graduate students are familiar with and abide by the University of Oklahoma's Graduate Assistant Handbook – available at http://www.ou.edu/gradweb/student_resources.html

Graduate students are familiar with and abide by the University of Oklahoma's Graduate College Bulletin http://www.ou.edu/gradweb/student_resources.html

Department Level

Students are familiar with and abide by the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics – available at <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>

Graduate students are familiar with and abide by the Anne and Henry Zarrow Master of Social Work Handbook - available at <http://socialwork.ou.edu/policies-and-procedures>

Undergraduate Students are familiar with and abide by the Anne and Henry Zarrow Master of Social Work Undergraduate Handbook - available at <http://socialwork.ou.edu/policies-and-procedures>

Students are familiar with and abide by field education policies and guidelines set forth in the Anne & Henry Zarrow School of Social Work Practicum Manual available at: <http://socialwork.ou.edu/policies-and-procedures>

2.0 STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CRITERIA

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 student performance in four general areas:

- Abilities Required to Acquire and Develop Professional Skills
- Mental and Emotional Abilities and Aptitudes
- Professional Performance Skills
- Academic Performance.

Meeting the criteria for scholastic achievement is necessary but not sufficient to ensure continued enrollment in the program. Both professional behavior and scholastic performance comprise academic standards. The faculty of the school evaluate student learning as they move through the program.

2.1 BASIC SKILLS NECESSARY TO ACQUIRE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

2.1.1 COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- **Written:** Students must communicate clearly using correct grammar and spelling, follow American Psychological Association (APA) writing style, use appropriate source citations, and complete documentation. Students must demonstrate sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and to adequately complete all written assignments, as specified by faculty.
- **Oral:** Students must communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, practicum affiliates and allied professionals, express ideas and feelings clearly, demonstrate willingness and an ability to listen to others. Students must demonstrate sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, complete all oral assignments, and meet the objectives of practicum experiences, as specified by faculty.
- **Digital:**

2.1.2 INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Students must consistently demonstrate the interpersonal skills necessary to relate effectively, respectfully, and professionally with other students, faculty, staff, clients, practicum affiliates and allied professionals. Openness to feedback and professional guidance are expected. Students should take appropriate responsibility for personal actions and consider the impact of these actions on others at all times. Students should adhere to following the school's administrative hierarchy when addressing conflict and abide by the NASW Code of Ethics which detail professional behavioral expectations for redressing conflict with other students, faculty, supervisors, etc.

2.1.3 COGNITIVE SKILLS

Students must exhibit basic knowledge of social work and clarity of thinking to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in classroom and practicum. Students must demonstrate basic grounding in relevant social, behavioral and biological science knowledge and research. This includes knowledge and skills in relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, termination and evaluation of practice. Students must exhibit the ability to conceptualize and integrate knowledge and apply that knowledge to professional practice. Students with cognitive or learning disabilities may seek

assistance through the University of Oklahoma Disability Resource Center (DRC). Students may contact DRC at drc@ou.edu. For further information regarding DRC policies, see <http://www.ou.edu/drc/home/students/policies.html>. Accommodations on the basis of disability may only be approved through DRC, not an individual instructor or department.

2.1.4 PHYSICAL SKILLS

Students must exhibit sufficient motor and sensory skills to attend and participate in class and practicum placement, with or without accommodations. Students with physical disabilities may seek assistance through the University of Oklahoma Disability Resource Center (DRC). Students may contact DRC at drc@ou.edu. For further information regarding DRC policies, see <http://www.ou.edu/drc>. Accommodations on the basis of disability may only be approved through DRC, not an individual instructor or department.

2.2 EMOTIONAL & MENTAL ABILITIES NECESSARY FOR PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

2.2.1 STRESS MANAGEMENT ABILITIES

Students must demonstrate the ability to monitor and manage current life stressors through use of appropriate coping mechanisms and strategies; handle stress effectively by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, professional helpers and others; and monitor and self-regulate emotional reactivity and intensity.

2.2.2 EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL ABILITIES

Students must use sound and rational judgment; seek and effectively use help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional judgment and performance; engage in counseling or seek out support and help if personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or a mental health difficulty has one or more of the following effects:

- Compromises scholastic performance
- Has a direct impact on the educational experience of others
- Interferes with professional judgment and behavior
- Jeopardizes the best interests of those to whom the social work student has a professional responsibility, outlined in the profession's ethical code.

2.3 PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE SKILLS NECESSARY FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

2.3.1 PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT

Students must exhibit a strong commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics. Students must demonstrate commitment to the essential values of social work including respect for the strengths, dignity and worth of every individual and his/her rights to self-determination and a just share of society's resources (social and economic justice); and demonstrate active engagement with the learning process.

2.3.2 PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Students must conduct themselves in a manner that is compatible with the University, the School of Social Work, practicum facilities, and the Social Work profession. Students should show appearance, dress and demeanor that are appropriate to the roles and settings encountered during the educational experience and reflect a professional manner. Students should demonstrate responsible and accountable behavior by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work. In addition, students should demonstrate responsible and accountable behavior by, among other things, respecting others, being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class and practicum, reporting absences to classroom and field instructors, meeting deadlines, completing assignments on time, displaying appropriate interaction and behavior in online venues, and refraining from non-academic use of computers and other electronic devices in the classroom and during practicum (emailing, texting, social

networking, and use of the Internet,) keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements. Students should accept instruction, supervision and constructive criticism in a professional manner. Students should work effectively and cooperatively with others, regardless of authority Level. Students should advocate for self in an appropriate and responsible manner and use proper channels for conflict resolution. Students should actively engage in their roles as learners and show a willingness to receive and accept feedback and supervision in a professional manner, as well as use such feedback to enhance professional development.

2.3.3 SELF AWARENESS

Students should exhibit knowledge of how values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and past experiences affect thinking, behavior and relationships. Students should accurately assess their own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice, and be open, non-defensive, and accepting of feedback from peers, faculty, staff, community partners, and clients in regards to these areas. Students should show awareness of self and how they are perceived by others. Students should reflect on their own limitations as they relate to professional capacities. Students should articulate clear responsibility and goals for educational progress plans. Students should be willing to examine and change behavior when it interferes with working with clients, allied professionals and others.

2.3.4 ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS

Behavior and classroom performance must demonstrate adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional practice noted in the NASW Code of Ethics. Ethical behavioral expectations include but are not limited to:

- A student does not have, or attempt to engage in, social work practice/activities for which any prior felony or misdemeanor conviction could inhibit the ethical delivery of services.
- Systematic evaluation of clients and their situations in an unbiased, factual way. Suspension of personal biases and personal impressions during interactions with others.
- Comprehension of another individual's unique motivations, way of life and values in order to engage in a professional manner. Professional communication and support of clients as a basis for productive professional relationships.
- Ability to relate in a professional, nondiscriminatory manner with a variety of individuals regardless of personal opinions and beliefs; demonstration of respect for the rights of others.
- Commitment to clients' rights to freedom of choice and self-determination.
- Maintenance of confidentiality as it relates to human service, classroom activities, and practicum.
- Demonstration of honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; doing one's own work; giving credit for the ideas of others.
- Demonstration of adherence to the Student Code and generally accepted principles of professional behavior.

2.3.5 PRACTICUM ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Through the practicum the standards are subsequently linked to the well-being of clients served by students both during the course of their educational experience and after they graduate. The practicum is an academic experience that seeks to develop, but also depends on, the student's ability to interact in a competent and professional manner with clients, supervisors, and colleagues. If, in the professional judgment of the school faculty, a student does not possess the basic skills or abilities (set forth in these standards) necessary to acquire and perform professional practice skills, the student will not be allowed to go forward with a practicum experience until those skills or abilities have been developed. In these situations, students will be expected to demonstrate that they have reflected upon their deficits, achieved insight into the nature of their difficulties and integrated this insight into a workable plan to meet basic requirements before they will be allowed to begin practicum. If, in the professional judgment

of the faculty, a student is unable to design a workable plan to meet these basic requirements, the faculty may recommend disenrollment from the program in accordance with applicable policy.

All relevant information regarding the practicum placement process is available on the website at <http://socialwork.ou.edu/field-education>, at practicum orientations and meetings, and in student conferences. Students are responsible for all documentation and deadlines associated with identifying and securing a practicum placement. Failure to secure a practicum may result in a significant delay of either the undergraduate or graduate degree.

Upon placement, students are expected to progress toward a satisfactory grade in both the practicum and any related practicum seminar. The practicum may be terminated and a grade assigned at any point when it is evident to the Field Education Coordinator and School Director that the student is unable to complete the practicum due to failure to achieve the academic and professional performance criteria outlined in this policy. Serious failure to adhere to professional standards of conduct in a practicum may be grounds for termination from either undergraduate or graduate programs. In cases of unsatisfactory performance in practicum, the student may be terminated from the program in accordance with applicable policy.

At the beginning of the practicum experience, each student develops a Field Practicum Contract with the assistance of the assigned site-based field instructor and Faculty Field Liaison. Each Field Practicum Contract is specific to the work of the practicum site to which the student is assigned and reflects the competency development that must be incorporated into the practicum and the methods of evaluation. The Field Practicum Contract, along with ongoing supervision, the mid-practicum evaluation, final evaluation, weekly documentation, and faculty liaison monitoring are used to measure the student's progress in practicum.

2.4 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

2.4.1 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

- Students must achieve a Combined-Retention GPA of 2.50 in the social work major, and an overall OU Retention GPA of 2.50 to graduate. They must also earn a minimum grade of "C" in pre-requisite and courses credited to the social work major.
- Students who earn a grade of "D" or "F" in sequenced courses (HBSE I, Generalist Practice I, and/or Research I) may not enroll in the subsequent course in the sequence until a grade of "C" is earned in its pre-requisite. They may, however, continue with courses that do not have a prerequisite requirement with the approval of their Faculty Advisor and the Undergraduate Program Coordinator. Students should be advised that this may delay their graduation by one year or more.
- Students who earn a "U" (unsatisfactory) or an "I" (incomplete) in SWK 4311 (Practicum Seminar I) and/or SWK 4315 (Practicum I) may not enroll in SWK 4331 (Practicum Seminar II) and SWK 4325 (Practicum II) until they earn a satisfactory grade in both prerequisites.
- No independent study, directed reading, or honors course may be substituted for credit in required social work courses.
- At the end of each semester, the Undergraduate Program Coordinator will be apprised of any student earning a "D" or "F" in social work courses, or if the student has achieved a Combined-Retention GPA of 2.25 or less, Students will be advised to withdraw from the program if their grade point average falls below a Combined-Retention GPA of 2.0.

2.4.2 GRADUATE STUDENTS

- A progress review is possible and a Graduate College progress contract initiated if a student's GPA falls below a 3.0. Students and the graduate programs Liaison/Coordinator are notified by the graduate college when this occurs.
- Falling below a 3.0 GPA for a second time may result in dismissal from the program.
- An overall GPA of 3.0 is required for graduation.
- A student admitted conditionally or retained under Graduate College probation is terminated from the program when those conditions are not met.
- OU Graduate College policy allows students to take the comprehensive exam a maximum of two times (and only once in any semester). Students who fail their comprehensive exam two times fail the program. See the full comprehensive exam policy listed in the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work Graduate Program Bulletin.
- In order to receive a passing grade in practicum, all practice competencies must be demonstrated through practice behaviors set forth in the Field Practicum Contract.
- Failure to maintain a satisfactory grade in practicum may result in program dismissal.
- Students are bound by the University of Oklahoma policy on academic retention, probation and suspension regulations as outlined here:
http://www.ou.edu/enrollment/policies/grading_policies.html

3.0 STUDENT PERFORMANCE CONCERNS: LEVEL REVIEW POLICY

Performance is assessed utilizing program academic standards throughout the school career of all social work students. It is important that students receive feedback and clear direction when concerns are raised about performance, or when there is concern about students' well-being. When concerns emerge, the school will initiate a review of the concern(s) in question.

Three Levels of review can occur at the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work. The Level of review depends upon the severity of the concern, with 1 being the least severe and 3 being the most severe. Depending upon the circumstances, any one of the Levels of Review may be skipped.

3.1 INFORMATION SOURCES USED TO ASSESS ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE

Information about students' meeting academic performance criteria in the School of Social Work may include but is not limited to any of the following:

- Feedback or reference letters from faculty, work supervisors, or supervisors of volunteer human service activity or practicum experiences
- Feedback from site-based field instructors and preceptors, faculty liaisons, practicum unit coordinators, CWPEP staff, practicum agency administrators, employers of employment-based practicum students
- Observation of classroom, organized student activities and practicum behaviors
- Performance in oral and written assignments, examinations, social work skills labs, practicum seminars or other coursework.
- Student personal statements or self-assessments
- Interviews with faculty, practicum sites or allied professionals
- Taped interview situations (audio or video)
- Feedback from students, staff, university (OU or other colleges and universities), helping professionals, or community
- Feedback from faculty in other social work programs that student may have attended

Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty, program liaisons, practicum site affiliates, or school administrators will not be kept confidential within University guidelines. If the information raises

concerns about student performance. Faculty, school administrators, practicum site affiliates, and/or program liaisons will share pertinent information with each other for the professional purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving and decision-making about such concerns. They will follow university procedures related to student performance issues.

3.2 LEVEL REVIEW PROCEDURES

When student performance concerns are identified, a level review is initiated. There are three Levels of Review. Performance or conduct concerns and the need for student support correspond to the appropriate review Level. Each Level is defined below as well as the policies and procedures that regulate review Levels. The student's academic advisor will guide the student through the Level review process.

At any stage of the Level Review process it may become necessary for the student's advisor, faculty, program coordinator, or the Director/Assistant Director to consult with other members of the University in order to assist with addressing concerns. The University may consult a variety of resources to help make sure that students are supported in their pursuit of education, including the Provost's office, Student Affairs, and the Disability Resources Center.

The following section highlights the policies and procedures for Level I, II, and III Reviews. The process for review of performance in practicum is separated from other reviews and is detailed at the end of each section. All Level Review meetings are closed academic processes. The student's academic advisor will be present at level reviews for support and guidance regarding applicable policies.

3.2.1 LEVEL I REVIEW FOR MINOR CONCERNS

A Level I Review is for minor performance concerns related to the student that may require additional support or referral. This level of review involves a school representative (faculty, BSW or MSW program liaison/coordinator, practicum affiliates) the student, and the student's advisor.

Examples of criteria that warrant a Level I Review include:

- plagiarism (pursuant either separately or jointly with University Level sanctions depending on severity)
- rude, demeaning, or unprofessional behavior (body language, verbal expressions, e-mail or any electronic or digital communication) towards students, staff, faculty and practicum staff; and academic performance concerns
- expressed mental or emotional distress, lack of self-care, or stressful life events that may interfere with the capacity to meet the academic demands of the program or to perform in a professional environment

3.2.1.a Level I Review Process: Academic

When Level I concerns emerge, the following process is initiated:

1. The faculty with the Level I concern will notify the student and student's advisor that a Level I meeting will be scheduled and the concern to be reviewed. The student should be referred to the student performance policy for further information.
2. In the case where the student's advisor is the individual with the concern being reviewed, an alternative advisor will be assigned by the Director/Assistant Director.
3. The student's advisor schedules a meeting with concerned faculty and student.
4. The advisor will conduct the review, and document in the student's file the concern and any plans to address the concern. This may include a performance improvement plan. A summary is provided to the student.
5. The student's advisor provides the appropriate program coordinator and the Admission & Enrollment specialist a copy of student's review summary for maintenance in student's file.

3.2.1.b Level I Process: Practicum

Faculty Field Liaisons and field instructors act as co-educators in field practicum. Concerns about performance which arise in practicum may originate with either educator.

Examples of criteria that warrant a Level I Review in Practicum include:

- Student is not responding to or following instructor instructions, directives
- Student is not observing agreed upon practicum schedule
- Student has excessive absences from practicum
- Student is unable to productively receive/utilize critical instructor feedback
- Student is not complying with field program policies, guidelines, procedures
- Student is not adhering to practicum course requirements, labs, seminars, documentation
- Student is not adhering to practicum stipend requirements
- Student is avoiding contracted practicum activities/assignments
- Student is not responding to field education office or faculty liaison communication

When Level I concerns emerge in practicum, the following process is initiated:

1. The faculty liaison will notify the student, the field instructor, the student's academic advisor, and the field education coordinator that a Level I meeting will be scheduled, and provide information about the concerns and/or problematic performance to be reviewed.
2. The student will be referred to the Student Performance Policy for further information.
3. The faculty liaison will schedule a Level I meeting to include the advisor, the faculty liaison and the student.
4. The faculty liaison will conduct the Level I Review; document the meeting and outcome of the review.
5. When relevant, a performance improvement plan will be initiated, as informed by the Level I Review. If the performance improvement plan requires involvement of the practicum site, the faculty liaison will meet with the student and field instructor to more fully develop/adapt and monitor the plan generated by the Level Review.
6. The faculty liaison provides a copy of the student's review summary to: the field coordinator, program coordinator, and the Admission & enrollment specialist for maintenance in students file.

3.2.2 LEVEL II REVIEW FOR MODERATE CONCERNS

A Level II review focuses on moderate performance or concerns about the student that interfere with their capacity to successfully engage in and meet the demands of the program. This level of review involves the student, the faculty advisor, appropriate faculty and (the BSW or MSW program coordinator)

3.2.2.a Level II Process: Academic

When a Level II concern emerges, the following process is initiated:

1. The faculty member presents documented concerns to the appropriate program coordinator (Undergraduate or Graduate).
2. In the case where the student's advisor is the individual with the concern being reviewed, an alternative advisor will be assigned by the Director/Assistant Director or coordinators.
3. The program coordinator notifies the student and student's advisor that a Level II meeting is being scheduled and the performance concern(s) to be reviewed.
4. The student's advisor contacts the student to discuss the performance concern and prepare the student for the Level II review purpose and process.
5. The student's advisor schedules the review meeting with appropriate faculty, student and program coordinator.

6. The program coordinator or Director/ Assistant Director, when applicable, conducts the review and documents in the student's file the problematic performance and performance improvement to address deficit performance issues and a review summary is provided to the student.
7. The program coordinator provides the admission & enrollment specialist a copy of student's review summary for maintenance in students file.

3.2.2.b Level II Process: Practicum

Faculty Field Liaisons and Field Instructors act as co-educators in field practicum. Concerns about performance which arise in practicum may originate with either educator.

Examples of criteria that warrant a Level II review in practicum include:

- Student has not resolved performance concerns raised in a previous Level Review
- Concerns about student's wellbeing
- Concerns about the student's practicum readiness
- Student has not complied with ethical standards as prescribed in the NASW Code of Ethics
- Multiple or repeated concerns about the student's inability to apply instructor feedback
- Concerns about the student's professional behavior
- Student is found to have falsified practicum related documentation
- Student has engaged in academic misconduct per University policy
- Concerns about the student's ability to embrace social work values
- Student exhibits a pattern of poor performance
- Student is at risk of failing the practicum
- Student has failed to meet the requirements of a Performance Improvement Plan

When Level II concerns emerge about a student meeting either academic or professional standards in practicum, the following process will initiated:

1. The faculty liaison will notify the student, the field instructor, the student's academic advisor, and the field education coordinator that a Level II meeting will be scheduled, and provide information about the concerns and/or problematic performance to be reviewed.
2. The student will schedule a meeting with his/her advisor or alternate appointed advisor in order to discuss the practicum concerns and prepare for the Level II Review. The student will be referred to the Student Performance Policy for further information.
3. The student's advisor will initiate a Level II meeting with field education coordinator, faculty liaison and student; this may also include relevant parties as needed: the field instructor, field seminar instructor, field unit or CWPEP coordinator, preceptor, or as necessary, the employer of an employment-based practicum student.
4. The field education coordinator will conduct the Level II Review; document the meeting and outcome of the review in IPT, and provide a summary of the review to the student.
5. When relevant, a performance improvement plan will be initiated, as informed by the Level II Review. If the performance improvement plan requires involvement of the practicum site, the faculty liaison will meet with the student and field instructor to more fully develop/adapt the plan generated by the Level Review. The faculty liaison will monitor and document the student's progress in relationship to the plan.
6. The field education coordinator will provide the program coordinator and the admission & enrollment specialist a copy of student's review summary for maintenance in the student's file.

3.2.3 LEVEL III REVIEW FOR SERIOUS CONCERNS

A Level III Review is for serious student performance and behavioral problems/concerns. This review level involves the student, his/her advisor, appropriate faculty, appropriate program coordinators and the School of Social Work Director or Assistant Director. This Level of review can involve program dismissal.

Examples of criteria that warrant a Level III review include:

- when performance deficits have not been resolved in prior reviews
- when a student does not meet the criteria for satisfactory academic performance
- when a student is being considered for withdrawal or discontinuance in the program
- when a student has falsified documents associated with a practicum placement
- when there has been a report of serious behavior problems (e.g. arrest; hostile, intimidating or threatening behavior)
- illegal practicum activity
- when a student has engaged in conduct involving unethical behavior or serious violations of professional standards
 - academic dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, or any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (Faculty must adhere to university guidelines.)
 - behavior in violation of the current NASW Code of Ethics
 - violation of any university policy as outlined in the OU Student Code of Conduct
 - any threat or attempt to harm self 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 exhibited in classroom, practicum or professional community contexts
 - violation of a practicum facility's policies and regulations
 - A grade of unsatisfactory (U) in a practicum courses

In accordance with University policy for either undergraduate or graduate levels, , in cases of egregious student misconduct, unethical behavior or violation of professional standards, a determination for the Level III review is made based upon an investigation by the Director or Assistant Director of the incidents involved. The Director or Assistant Director may take direct action (example: temporarily suspend a student from a practicum or the program) pending a Level III review.

3.2.3.a Level III Process: Academic

When Level III concerns emerge, the following process is initiated:

1. Upon notification of a Level III concern, the Director or Assistant Director investigates the performance concerns.
2. When the investigation supports the concern(s), the Director or Assistant Director notifies the student and student's advisor that a Level III meeting is recommended, including the performance concern to be reviewed.
 - In the case where the student's advisor is the individual with the concern being reviewed, an alternative advisor is assigned by the Director/Assistant Director.

Student appeals: If student issue involves a matter for which the student or the University has initiated a separate University administrative process (e.g. grade appeal, academic integrity charge, EEO or Title 9 charge or investigation), the Level III meeting is delayed until the charge/investigation are completed

3. The student meets with their advisor for a pre- Level III Review to discuss the purpose and process of the review, their specific performance deficits, and develop a plan to remedy those deficits. When indicated, other appropriate faculty, program coordinators or Director/Assistant Director may be included in the pre-level III review.

The student is advised that their plan must realistically address the performance issues and demonstrate commitment and plan to remediate performance deficiencies. It must also include a realistic strategy to prevent the identified difficulties from interfering with performance in the program.

4. The student's advisor schedules the Level III meeting with student, appropriate faculty, program coordinator and Director or Assistant Director.

Expectations and Outcomes for Review in Level III Meeting

1. In the Level III Review, the student will be asked to:
 - Demonstrate that he/she has reflected upon the performance concerns
 - Identify his/her own contribution to the problematic performance
 - Demonstrate that she/he has achieved insight into the cause or nature of the performance difficulties
 - Demonstrate that she/he has integrated insight about the cause(s) or nature of the performance difficulties into a strategy to overcome these problems if allowed to continue in the program
 - Demonstrate the development of a plan/strategy that realistically addresses the performance issues involved, including strategies incorporated by the student that yield sufficient evidence that the past performance difficulties will not be a problem in the future
2. The Level III Review faculty will observe the following school policy in determining whether or not the student may continue in the program:
 - A student will only be allowed to proceed in the program if he/she has developed a plan that realistically addresses the performance issues raised and demonstrated that the past performance difficulties will not be a problem if they student were allowed to continue in the program. The plan must demonstrate that the student has reasonable prospects of improved performance or the student will not be allowed to continue.
3. The social work faculty will exercise academic judgment in reviewing the discussion in the Level III Meeting along with the above criteria and in determining whether or not the student remediation plan is sufficient to warrant continuing in the program. The plan must demonstrate that the student has reasonable prospects of improved performance. If the criteria listed above are judged to be insufficient, the student will not be allowed to continue and the student will be terminated from the program in accordance with the Graduate College policy. If the criteria listed above are judged to be sufficient, the student will be allowed to plan to continue and the school will establish the conditions which must be met, and a date by which the plan must be completed.
4. Faculty present at the meeting will advise the Director or Assistant Director who will in turn determine one of three outcomes and also provides a review summary including the outcome to the student.
 - **Continuation without conditions:** In these situations, the concern is addressed and no further action by the student or program is required.
 - **Continuation with formal conditions:** In these situations, specific conditions must be met in order for the student to remain in the program. The expectations are clearly communicated to the student in writing, and may include the student's proposal with or without modification.
 - **Termination:** In these situations, sufficient evidence indicates the student is unable to meet or sustain academic and professional standards. The student is provided with documentation regarding the specific reasons for his/her dismissal and the conditions, if any, under which he/she may re-apply.

5. If the decision is to recommend termination of the program, a letter is written to the appropriate Dean with a copy to the student. The letter will describe the academic or professional standards which that have been violated; the results of any investigation that has occurred and the results of the Level III meeting with the student; and include a recommendation that the student be disenrolled.
6. If a letter recommending disenrollment is written to the appropriate Dean, the Dean may then approve or disapprove the recommendation or may conduct a further investigation. If the recommendation is approved, the Graduate Dean will notify the student of disenrollment from the academic program and advise the student of the right to file an academic appeal of the matter. The Academic Appeals Board for the Graduate College will hear appeals of disenrollment made under the provisions of this policy.

3.2.3.b Level III Process: Practicum

Additional information relevant to practicum Level III concerns include all of the following: A failed practicum (grade of Unsatisfactory) or a terminated practicum initiates a Level III review.

There are three (3) ways a student receives a grade of Unsatisfactory in a practicum:

- The student completes the first half of the practicum and, due to unresolved insufficient performance, is awarded a grade of Unsatisfactory.
- The student completes the entire practicum and, due to unresolved insufficient performance in the second half of the practicum, is awarded a grade of Unsatisfactory.
- The school or the practicum site terminates a practicum placement if it becomes evident to the practicum site, Field Instructor, Faculty Liaison, Practicum Coordinator, or the School, that the student is unable to successfully complete the practicum. The practicum is ended and a grade of Unsatisfactory assigned.

Suspension of Placement

A practicum placement is suspended, i.e. temporarily stopped, to conduct an investigation of reported unethical behavior or violation of professional standards. Practicum placements may also be suspended when there are serious student performance difficulties. These placements may remain suspended while the School conducts an investigation of the student's practicum situation. The school may determine that the placement can resume; or, that the placement will be terminated

During the time a placement is suspended, the student will not accumulate practicum hours. If it is determined that the placement can resume, the student will resume accumulating practicum hours, but be delayed in completing the practicum course.

In cases of egregious misconduct, unethical behavior or violations of professional standards, a determination to suspend the practicum may be made based upon the investigation alone.

Level III Process: Practicum

When Level III concerns emerge, the following process is initiated:

1. Upon notification of a Level III concern, the Field Practicum Coordinator investigates the performance concerns and consults with the Director or Assistant Director.
2. When the investigation supports the concern(s), the Director or Assistant Director notifies the student and student's advisor that a Level III meeting is recommended, including the performance concern to be reviewed.
 - In the case where the student's advisor is the individual with the concern being reviewed, an alternative advisor is assigned by the Director/Assistant Director.

Student appeals: If student issue involves a matter for which the student or the University has initiated a separate University administrative process (e.g. grade appeal, academic integrity charge, EEO or Title 9 charge or investigation), the Level III meeting is delayed until the charge/investigation are completed

3. The student meets with their advisor for a pre- Level III Review to discuss the purpose and process of the review, their specific performance deficits, and develop a plan to remedy those deficits. When indicated, other appropriate faculty, field faculty or instructors, program coordinators or Director/Assistant Director may be included in the pre-level III review.

The student is advised that their plan must realistically address the performance issues and demonstrate commitment and plan to remediate performance deficiencies. It must also include a realistic strategy to prevent the identified difficulties from interfering with performance in the program.

4. The student's advisor schedules the Level III meeting with student, appropriate faculty, program coordinator and Director or Assistant Director.

Expectations and Outcome Process for Review of Practicum in Level III Meeting

1. In the Level III Review, the student will be asked to:
 - Demonstrate that he/she has reflected upon the failed practicum experience
 - Identify his/her own contribution to the problematic performance
 - Demonstrate that she/he has achieved insight into the cause or nature of the performance difficulties
 - Demonstrate that she/he has integrated insight about the cause(s) or nature of the performance difficulties into a strategy to overcome these problems in a subsequent placement
 - Demonstrate the development of a plan/strategy that realistically addresses the performance issues involved, including strategies incorporated by the student that yield sufficient evidence that the past performance difficulties will not be a problem in a subsequent placement
2. The Level III Review faculty will observe the following school policy in determining whether or not the student may repeat the failed practicum:
 - A student will only be allowed to proceed with possible repetition of the practicum if he/she has developed a plan that realistically addresses the performance issues involved in the failed practicum, and demonstrated that the past performance difficulties will not be a problem in a subsequent practicum placement. The plan must demonstrate that the student has reasonable prospects of improved performance or the student will not be allowed to repeat the practicum, and the grade of Unsatisfactory will stand.
3. The social work faculty will exercise academic judgment in reviewing the discussion in the Level III Meeting along with the above criteria and in determining whether or not the student remediation plan is sufficient to warrant repeating the practicum. The plan must demonstrate that the student has reasonable prospects of improved performance. If the criteria listed above are judged to be insufficient, the student will not be allowed to repeat the practicum and the student will be terminated from the program in accordance with the Graduate College policy. If the criteria listed above are judged to be sufficient, the student will be allowed to plan a repeated practicum, and the school will establish the conditions which must be met, and a date by which the practicum must be completed.
4. If the decision is to recommend termination of the program, a letter is written to the appropriate Dean with a copy to the student. The letter will describe the academic or professional standards which that have been violated; the results of any investigation that has occurred and the results of the Level III meeting with the student; and include a recommendation that the student be dis-enrolled.

5. If a letter recommending disenrollment is written to the appropriate Dean, the Dean may then approve or disapprove the recommendation or may conduct a further investigation. If the recommendation is approved, the Graduate Dean will notify the student of disenrollment from the academic program and advise the student of the right to file an academic appeal of the matter. The Academic Appeals Board for the Graduate College will hear appeals of disenrollment made under the provisions of this policy.

ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR STANDARDS

Through the practicum, these standards are subsequently linked to the well-being of clients served by students both during the course of their educational experience and after they graduate from the school. The practicum is an academic experience that seeks to develop, but also depends upon, the student's ability to interact in a competent and professional manner with clients, supervisors, work colleagues and community professionals. Because of the nature of professional social work practice, schools of social work have different expectations of students than do non-professional programs. Social workers traditionally serve vulnerable and/or disadvantaged populations. Schools of social work, in conjunction with agency officials and field instructors, have ongoing responsibilities to protect consumers, and to ensure that social work students are competent to begin practice and meet professional standards at graduation.

If, in the academic judgment of the school faculty, a student does not possess the basic abilities which are set forth in the Student Performance Policy, and which are necessary to acquire and perform professional practice skills, the student will not be allowed to go forward with a field practicum until those basic requirements are met.

INFORMATION SHARING

All faculty are involved in the formation of students' professionalism and are responsible for reporting concerns to the Director /Assistant Director of the school, and other faculty as appropriate to assure professional behavior, ethical practice and academic achievement. Faculty, field education coordinators, school administrators, school staff, field instructors and field liaisons will share pertinent information with each other and the student for the academic and professional purposes of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. Information disclosed during student meetings with faculty, field office coordinators, school administrators, school staff, field instructors and field liaisons **will not** be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about the student's professional and/or academic performance. Relevant parties will share pertinent information with each other for the purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving and decision-making about the concerns. In this process, they will follow university procedures related to student performance issues.

The practicum agency serves as the academic setting for the field internship course. The field instructor, along with the overall academic program and faculty liaison, collaborate to support and guide the student's development as a professional social worker. To work together effectively, it is essential that relevant information be shared among all parties involved in the student's field education. Relevant information will be shared to protect clients as well as students, and to facilitate placement and learning in all aspects of field education. Relevant information is information that affects the student's work relationships, the learning process, or has potentially negative impact on clients, field instructors, agency staff, faculty, and/or student colleagues. Relevant information can originate as student disclosures and/or faculty and field instructor/preceptor observations. Relevant information can include student records maintained by the School, including both written communication and documentation of verbal

interactions. Relevant information can also include that which may arise in the course of resolving concerns and issues, as well as problem solving in the field or the classroom.

When formally considering a particular field placement, the School of Social Work has a responsibility to share information about previous internship experiences with prospective field instructor(s). This will be accomplished by providing prospective field instructors with relevant field education documentation, which may include completed evaluations of the student's practicum performance, the Field Practicum Contract, Performance Improvement Plans, and Supervisory Conference Report forms. In determining the types of information that warrant sharing among involved parties, faculty and field instructors will subscribe to the existing policies of the School and the larger University, as well as adhere to the guidelines stipulated in the NASW Code of Ethics, and they will follow University procedures related to student performance issues.