



## Student Handbook

Undergraduate Program in Social Work

## 2025/26

*Cultivating the knowledge for global change...one community at a time.*







## Table Of Content

<b>I. The Profession of Social Work.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. BASW Program Mission, Goals and Objectives .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>III. Communications and Advising .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Advisor.....	3
Files.....	3
General Catalog .....	3
Bulletin Boards.....	4
Career Services .....	4
Updating Addresses and Phone Numbers .....	4
Faculty Office Hours and Phone Numbers .....	4
<b>IV. Registration, Impacted Major and Departmental Requirements.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Impacted Major.....	5
Registration.....	5
Graduation.....	5
Policy on Life/Work Experience.....	5
Sequence of Coursework/Check off List.....	6
Criminal Justice and Environmental Social Work Specializations .....	7
Pre-Majors.....	7
Policy and Procedures for Changing from Pre-Major to Major .....	7
Major Requirements .....	7
Title-IV BASW Stipend .....	8
Foreign Language Requirement .....	8
Undergraduate Field Education .....	8
Elective Classes .....	9
Transfers from Community Colleges and Universities.....	11
Pre-Major Alternatives.....	13
Transfer from Four Year College.....	13
Request for Academic Adjustment.....	14
<b>V. Student Rights and Grievance Process.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Leave of Absence.....	15
School of Social Work Grading Policy .....	15
Incompletes.....	17
Student Files.....	17
Understanding Plagiarism .....	17
AI Statement.....	18
Suspension or Disqualification.....	18
Student Situation Report.....	19
Grievance Process .....	21
Harassment and Discrimination Defined .....	22
Examples of Sexual Harassment .....	23
<b>VI. MSW Program.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>VII. Student Associations.....</b>	<b>25</b>
Asian Pacific Islander Social Work Association.....	25
Black Social Work Association .....	25
Graduate Social Work Association .....	25
Indigenous Social Work Alliance.....	25
Intergenerational Gerontology Alliance.....	25
Latino Social Work Student Network.....	25
OUTreach .....	25
Social Action Committee (SAC).....	26
Student Association of School Social Workers.....	26
Student Social Work Association at SDSU – Imperial Valley .....	26
Social Workers of Color Student Coalition (SWC) .....	26
Undergraduate Social Work Association.....	26
College of Health and Human Services Student Council .....	26
<b>VIII. Things to Remember .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>IX. Undergraduate Administration .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>X. Scholarship and Stipends .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Appendix .....</b>	<b>31</b>
NASW Code of Ethics.....	34
Social Media Guidelines.....	59
Notes.....	62



# welcome

to the undergraduate program in Social Work at San Diego State University. The program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. We hope the time you spend with us will be rewarding. To help you progress as smoothly as possible through the program, it is important that you read this handbook. Please read it carefully and keep it for future reference.

# I. The Profession of Social Work

The social work major prepares students for entry-level social work practice and for social work education at the graduate level.

Social workers provide services to individuals, groups and communities in a wide variety of public and private settings—wherever there are human needs to be met. The scope of these services is constantly expanding to keep pace with demographic shifts and growing needs. Social workers provide direct services to people in settings such as hospitals, mental health clinics, child welfare agencies, public schools, and rehabilitation centers. In addition, social workers are involved in planning, policy formation, research, evaluation and administration in these settings.

The profession of social work is deeply committed to both social justice and the relief of human oppression and inequality. While this concern for others is a vital ingredient of social work, it must be implemented with the values, knowledge, and skills of the profession. To accomplish these goals, the School of Social Work offers an undergraduate major in social work practice leading to the BA degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences.



## II. BASW Program Mission, Goals and Objectives

### **The Mission of the Baccalaureate Program:**

The mission of the BASW program is to prepare generalist social work practitioners for ethical, professional, and evidence-informed social work practice. The program focuses on entry-level social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities and is the foundation for advanced social work education. The program is committed to advancing equity and social justice, promoting human rights, and engaging in social action to enhance individual and community well-being in the diverse US-Mexico border-connected region, Tribal and Indigenous communities, and beyond.

### **Program Goals:**

Consistent with the mission of the School, the Baccalaureate Program of the School of Social Work prepares generalist practitioners for responsible, competent, entry-level social work practice with diverse populations in the Southern California area, in public and nonprofit social service agencies. It also provides the necessary foundation for

advanced social work education. The goals of the Baccalaureate Program are to prepare graduates to:

1. Function effectively as entry-level professionals in beginning social work practice.
2. Demonstrate sensitivity to the diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural background of the Southern California border region and are able to work effectively in a variety of roles to meet the needs of the region's varied communities.
3. Understand and use social work values and ethics throughout their professional practice.
4. Identify, evaluate and apply existing research evidence to guide their practice decision-making.
5. Understand the contexts and purposes of social work practice, the changing nature of those contexts, and the nature and the dynamics of organizational behavior.
6. Demonstrate commitment to lifelong professional growth and learning.

**The BASW program will prepare graduates to:**

1. Perform effectively in entry-level social work practice using a liberal arts perspective, critical thinking skills, and evidence guided focus.
2. Use the generalist practice model in direct services with client systems of all sizes.
3. Understand the biopsychosocial and cultural factors that affect human growth and development, and use theoretical frameworks to understand the person-in-environment as well as the interactions between individuals and their social systems.
4. Demonstrate awareness of Anti-racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI), and sensitivity to oppression and discrimination, particularly within the context of professional practice with diverse populations in the Southern California border region.
5. Practice without 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.
6. Intervene in agencies, neighborhoods, and communities to advance social and economic justice.
7. Identify evidence of effective practice, and evaluate the findings and the application of such evidence to their own work.
8. Understand history of social work, its uniqueness, and the current state of the Profession.
9. Analyze social policies and their impacts, and develop strategies to implement positive change.
10. Recognize and address ethical dilemmas in accordance with social work values and the NASW Code of Ethics and utilize these values and ethics in their own practice.
11. Communicate effectively, using written, oral, and nonverbal skills.
12. Value and use supervision in an appropriate manner.
13. Function effectively as professionals within the structure of an organization and service delivery system and are able to seek organizational change when necessary.

### III. Communications and Advising

**Website:** [socialwork.sdsu.edu](http://socialwork.sdsu.edu)

**Undergraduate Advisor:**

Your designated advisors are Dr. Jennifer Cosio and Christie Jimenez. You can schedule an appointment with them via the EAB Navigate system at [my.SDSU.edu](http://my.SDSU.edu). All social work students new to the major or new to SDSU should attend a new student orientation held every July and August. This will help you avoid taking the wrong classes or social work classes out of sequence, and prevent delays in graduation.

**Please Keep A File:** From time to time we send you information containing important information. Also, you may receive letters or memos from the Admissions or Registrar office. It is extremely important that you keep your own running file of all official actions regarding your status, all copies of documents sent to you by the School of Social Work or by University Admissions and Records, all grade reports, all important memos from the School regarding requirements, curriculum, field, due dates for documentation meetings, etc. This is one of the best and most important things you can do for yourself during your time in school. It is absolutely necessary that you look after your own academic status, that you keep up with what is going on and what is required of you, and that you keep your own records of your progress. It is important for you to track your academic progress on your my.SDSU account, this is done by downloading your Degree Evaluation Report (DAR).

**Please access the SDSU General Catalog online at <http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/quickref.html>** All of the rules and regulations regarding undergraduate study at San Diego State University are thoroughly outlined in the Catalog. It explains withdrawals, probation, grading policies, etc. and it also summarizes the School of Social Work curriculum requirements.

**Email:** The school sends email messages to students regarding school events, policies, scholarships, jobs and more. If you do not receive our emails, please contact the School of Social Work office at [SOCWORK@sdsu.edu](mailto:SOCWORK@sdsu.edu) and request to be added to the undergraduate social work email list.

**All students must use an SDSU email account for all SDSU related communication. To access your SDSU email account, please go to: <https://it.sdsu.edu/help/google>**

**Communications Central:** As a social work student you are enrolled in Communication Central (a way to communicate with other students and your advisor). Please go to Canvas at <https://sdsu.instructure.com> (enter your student ID number and password) to use this resource. Important announcements will be posted there.

**Bulletin Boards:** Important information is posted on the following bulletin boards:

- > General School – glass case outside HH 119
- > Undergraduate Social Work – on the wall next to HH 119 & HH133
- > Field Education Board – on the wall outside of HH 119
- > All Student Organizations – Hepner Hall

Notices may not be posted on school Bulletin Boards without prior approval of the School of Social Work.

**Career Services:** offers supportive job-readiness tools and opportunities to prepare students for the workforce. Please visit the Career Services website for more information: <https://sacd.sdsu.edu/career>

**Updating Addresses and Phone Numbers:** You should notify the School of Social Work Office (Hepner Hall 119) and the Admissions Office. You may update these changes i.e. telephone and address on your my.SDSU account.

**Faculty Office Hours and Phone Numbers:** All faculty have offices in Hepner Hall, mailboxes in HH 119 and phones with voice mail as well as email addresses. This information is posted at <http://socialwork.sdsu.edu/faculty-profiles/current-faculty/>





## IV. Registration, Administrative and Departmental Requirements

### Impacted Major

All majors at San Diego State University have more students wanting to declare that major than can be accommodated. As such, they are designated as impacted majors. All students who are admitted to SDSU are placed in a premajor (including undeclared).

<http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/quickref.html>

**If you are a transfer student in a different major than social work, and you decide to switch to social work or add it as a second major (double major), our department will not be able to accommodate this change due to being impacted.**

### Registration

Registration is done through my.SDSU at [my.SDSU.edu](http://my.SDSU.edu) each semester. You will use your student ID number to register. You can check the class schedule for each semester via my.SDSU. There is a separate schedule for each semester.

Please visit the Office of the Registrar website for registration deadlines, requirements, and other important information regarding registering for classes.

<http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/registrar/current.html>

### Graduation

Graduation does not occur automatically upon completion of all requirements. You must apply for graduation on your my.SDSU account and pay the required fee. The graduation fee is \$175 and it is a one-time, nonrefundable fee. The application is available online via your my.SDSU. If you have any questions you can contact the Faculty Advancement and Student Success at <https://studentsuccess.sdsu.edu>. The deadlines for each semester are in the catalog; it is your responsibility to keep yourself informed of these dates. To graduate in the spring, the deadline is typically the same day as the add/drop deadline of your final semester. <http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/quickref.html>

### Policy on Life / Work Experience

The School of Social Work does not accept life / work experience in lieu of any course requirements or academic credit. The School does not accept transfer credit based on life / work experience. Students will have to take courses for any life / work experience for which they thought that they were going to receive academic credit.

### Time Limit on Completion of Requirement for the Major

As specified in the General Catalog <http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/quickref.html>, departments may require that specific academic **requirements be met within seven years** of granting an undergraduate degree. Social work students with academic programs more than seven years old will be required to repeat the courses in the major: SWORK110 / SWORK120, SWORK350, SWORK360, SWORK361, SWORK381, SWORK370, SWORK382, SWORK391, SWORK483A / SWORK489A, SWORK483B / SWORK489B. This requirement ensures that social work students are up to date in the rapidly changing field of social work practice, knowledge and skills.

## Felony / Misdemeanor Conviction

Certain legal issues may prohibit students from being accepted by social work internship agencies. Students with a felony or misdemeanor conviction, should be aware that they may be excluded from certain jobs or internship sites, or experience delayed internship placement. They may also not be able to receive the license in social work (LCSW).

## Sequence of Coursework: Check off list

### I. Pre-Major—21 units \*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 110 (Fall and Summer) | <input type="checkbox"/> Psych 101                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 120 (Spring only)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Soc 101                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Econ (any 3 unit course)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Statistics (Stats 250, Psych 280, Soc 201) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BIOL 100, 101, 204, or 261  |   |

*One must have a grade of "C" or better in each social work pre-major course with a minimum overall GPA of 2.7 (2.4 prior to 2013) to be eligible to declare a social work major. Please check Transferology for equivalent course information at community colleges.*

### II. Major: 300 Level Social Work Courses — 21 units

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 350 (Fall, Spring, and Summer) | <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 381 (min. grade of "C") (Spring only) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 360 (Spring and Summer)        | <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 370 (Fall only)                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 361 (Spring only)              | <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 382 (min. grade of "C") (Fall only)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 391 (Fall and Spring)          |  |

### III. Social Work Practice and Field Courses—14 units/senior year

- ☐ Must have attained senior status (90 units) by the end of spring semester prior to enter field and have successfully passed all 300 level Social Work courses (SWORK 350, 360, 361, 370, 381, 382, and 391).
- ☐ Must attend the Mandatory Planning Meeting (usually at the start of spring semester during junior year) in order to be considered eligible for field.
- ☐ Students will NOT be eligible for field (SWORK 483 and SWORK 489) if they are not at senior status or do not attend the Mandatory Planning Meeting.
- ☐ SWORK 483A/SW 489A (fall semester only; must have a "C" or better in 483A to continue to SW 483B)
- ☐ SWORK 483B/SW 489B (spring semester only; must have a "C" grade or higher in order to pass and graduate)

### IV. Upper Division Electives and Research—9 units

Complete 3 upper division electives (at least 2 Social Work Courses):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 400 (Fall only)  | <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 499 (Fall and Spring) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 410 (Spring only)  | <input type="checkbox"/> GERO 520 (Fall only)        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 430 (Fall and Spring)  | <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 590 (Spring only)     |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> SWORK 596 (Fall only)       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 approved out of department elective additional elective (see pages 9-11) |  |

**NOTE: Please refer to School of Social Work website ([socialwork.sdsu.edu](http://socialwork.sdsu.edu)) for course sequence scheduling information.**

## Criminal Justice Specialization

**STUDENTS TAKE 9 UNITS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE COURSES. STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE:**

CJ 300 Crime, Law and Justice

**AND TWO OF THE FOLLOWING:**

CJ 321 Juvenile Justice

CJ 330 Corrections

CJ 531 Probation and Parole

CJ 543 Community Resources

CJ 596 Cultural Criminology

Students will also be placed in a criminal justice setting for internship (SWORK489A and SWORK 489B) (8 units)

## Pre-Majors

All new students to this program are considered pre-majors until the 21-24 unit preparation for the major is completed. Pre-majors may also enroll in upper division out of department electives, SWORK 350 and SWORK 360, as long as they have earned 60 units or more prior to enrolling. Students must maintain a 2.7 overall GPA and a 2.5 GPA in pre-major courses with a grade of “C” or better in each of the pre-major courses to be eligible for the major.

## Policy and Procedures for Changing from Pre-Major to Major

To change from a pre-major status to major status, the Declaration of Major Form must be completed by the undergraduate advisor as follows:

### Online

Change from pre-major to major status occurs automatically once the student earns 60 units, completes and passes all 300 level social work courses, and has an overall GPA of 2.7.

### Complete requirements at the end of the semester

Students **cannot** register for any major courses until they have changed their status by declaring their major. Please consult with the social work major advisor if you have any obstacles reaching major status.

### Major requirements

The major in Social Work consists of 44 units of 300 and 400 level courses. Students must complete and pass the seven (7) social work 300 level courses before taking the senior level practice/internship program (SWORK 483A & B and SWORK 489A & B). For specific eligibility criteria see the section on Undergraduate Field Education.



## California Title IV-E Education Program IV-E BASW Stipend

The SDSU School of Social Work, Child Welfare Bachelor of Arts in Social Work (BASW) CA Title IV-E Education Program IV-E Stipend program is designed to advance the education of the public child welfare workforce. Similar to the existing MSW Title IV-E Child Welfare Stipend, this program provides specialized education at the undergraduate level with financial support (total taxable stipend of \$20,270 for the final internship year). Applicants must be enrolled full-time at SDSU, be a declared undergraduate social work major with a minimum of 2.4 GPA, and be at least 21 years old.

The application process occurs in the early Spring semester conjointly with the undergraduate social work field internship application. Announcements are made through the School of Social Work Undergraduate Announcements by email to social work majors and on the BASW CA Title IV-E Education Program IV-E website. For more information, please visit <http://socialwork.sdsu.edu/stipend> or Contact the Child Welfare Coordinator, Amalia Hernandez, MSW at [amalia.hernandez@sdsu.edu](mailto:amalia.hernandez@sdsu.edu). Funding will be available on a year-to-year basis.

## Foreign Language Requirement

Competency (equivalent to that which is normally attained through three consecutive semesters or five consecutive quarters of college study) is required in one foreign language as part of the preparation for the major. Refer to the section of the General Catalog on Graduation Requirements. (<http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/quickref.html>) Native speakers from countries where English is not the principal language and who have finished high school or equivalent in that country will satisfy the requirement. Please consult with your academic advisor if you have any questions.

## Undergraduate Field Education (SWORK 489)

Field education is an essential element of the curriculum in the SDSU School of Social Work. It is the field practicum learning experience that allows the student to integrate classroom theory and knowledge and practice skills in developing professional competence and identity. This application includes social work theory in real-life practice situations, skill building, and upholding professional standards of social work ethics and values, under the professional supervision of qualified social workers in their role of field instructors.

**Please see the Field Manual located at**

**<https://socialwork.sdsu.edu/field/student-resources/field-manual/>**

## Elective Courses

All majors are required to take three upper division electives. Two must be from Social Work and the other can be an out of department elective. At least two of your electives must be selected from among the six electives offered in Social Work: SWORK 400 Child Welfare, SWORK 410 Family Issues, Gero 520 Programs for the Aging, SWORK 430 Alcohol and Other Drugs, SWORK 590 Loss and Grief, and SWORK 596 Social Work in Healthcare. You may also select one elective from the out of department list (pages 9-11). You are allowed to use one out of department elective to satisfy a GE Exploration requirement as well as a major elective requirement. Below is a list of out-of-the-department courses that will satisfy the upper division elective requirement.

Note: For your elective to satisfy the Exploration requirement, it must also be listed as an Exploration in the most recent edition of the General Catalog:

<http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/quickref.html>

### Approved Out of Department Undergraduate Electives for Social Work Majors

**Note:** You may need approval from each department to register. Check to see if you have taken any prerequisites, if applicable.

#### AFRICANA STUDIES

- 321 Black Political Participation in America
- 331 The Black Family
- 332 Black Women: Myth and Reality
- 341 Cultural Patterns and African American Identity
- 360 Communications and Community Action

#### AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES

- 320 American Indians in Contemporary Society
- 420 Indian Peoples of California

#### ASIAN STUDIES

- 460 Contemporary Issues in Fillipino-American Communities

#### BIOLOGY

- 307 Biology of Sex
- 335 The Human Body
- 336 Principles of Human Physiology

### **CHICANA & CHICANO STUDIES**

- 301 Political Economy of the Chicano People
- 303 Mexican American Community Studies
- 306 Mexican Immigration
- 320 Chicana and Chicano Life Styles
- 355 The United States-Mexico International Border (same as LATAM 355)
- 375 US/Mexico Border History
- 376 Chicana and Chicano Culture and Thought

### **CHILD AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT**

- 335 Interactions in Culturally Diverse Families
- 370 Research, Assessment, and Evaluation of Children and Families
- 437 Violence in Relationships
- 536 Divorce and Remarriage
- 578 Conflict Resolution Across the Life Span

### **COUNSELING AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

- 401 Quest for Identity

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION**

- 300 Crime, Law and Justice
- 301 Law and Society
- 310 Law Enforcement
- 321 Juvenile Justice
- 531 Probation and Parole

### **GENERAL STUDIES**

- 340 Confronting AIDS
- 420 Disability and Society

### **GERONTOLOGY**

- 360 Diversity and Aging
- 370 Images of Aging in Contemporary Society
- 402 Aging Network
- 520 Analysis of Programs for the Aging

### **LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES**

- 355 The United States-Mexico International Border (same as CCS 355)

### **LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER STUDIES**

- 321 Lesbian and Gay Identities in the Modern World

### **PUBLIC HEALTH**

- 331 Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response



**PSYCHOLOGY**

- 321 Organizational Psychology
- 331 / 332 / 333 Developmental Psychology
- 340 Social Psychology
- 350 Abnormal Psychology
- 351 Psychology of Personality
- 355 Psychology of Human Sexual Behavior
- 365 Drugs and Behavior

**SOCIOLOGY**

- 320 Sex and Gender in Contemporary Society
- 355 Minority Group Relations
- 421 American Families
- 433 Wealth, Status, and Power
- 443 Crime and Society
- 444 Juvenile Delinquency
- 445 Sociology of Deviance

**WOMEN'S STUDIES**

- 310 Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective
- 325 Psychology of Women
- 360 Women's Sexuality and the Body
- 522 Women, Madness, and Sanity
- 572 Women and Violence

## Transfer and Substitution of Units from Community Colleges and Other Universities

Please see the undergraduate advisor for assistance with transfers. Transcripts are reviewed by the Office of Evaluations and processed once the review is complete. Some students may need to request their academic advisor submit a Request for Adjustment of Academic Requirements (RAAR) form to substitute a course for the major.

Please note that **all** courses in the Major itself are upper division. No lower division courses taken at the community colleges can be transferred to the Major itself, but **lower division courses taken at the community college can be transferred to substitute for courses in *Preparation for the Major***. If you have taken equivalent classes at a community college, they will automatically meet the preparation for the major classes at SDSU once the official transcripts have been submitted and processed at SDSU's Office of Evaluations. The following is a listing of these equivalent classes at local San Diego area community colleges. Check with your own community college's articulation agreement with SDSU for appropriate course equivalents. You may also research equivalent courses at Transferology, <https://www.transferology.com/school/sdsu>

## Community College Equivalent Courses

Requirement	SDSU	City College	Cuyamaca	Grossmont	Mira Costa	Palomar	Mesa	South-western
<b>Biology</b>	BIOL 100 or BIOL 101 or BIOL 204  or BIOL 261	BIO 107 or NA or BIO 210B  or BIO 235	BIO 130 or NA or BIO 210 BIO 240  or BIO 141 & BIO 141L	BIO 120 or NA or BIO 240  or BIO 141 & BIO 142	BIO 100 BIO 101 or BIO 103 or BIO 202  or BIO 220	BIOL 100 BIOL 101 or NA or BIO 201 BOT 100 & ZOO 100 or ZOO 203	BIOL 107 or NA or BIO 210B BIOL 215 & BIOL 250 or BIOL 235	BIOL 100 or NA or BIOL 210 & BIOL 212  or BIOL 261
<b>Economics</b>	ECON 101 or ECON 102	ECON 120 or ECON 121	ECON 120 or ECON 121	ECON 120 or ECON 121	ECON 101 or ECON 102	ECON 101 or ECON 102	ECON 120 or ECON 121	ECON 101 or ECON 102
<b>Psychology</b>	PSY 101	PSYC 101	PSY 120	PSY 120	PSYC 101 PSYC 101H	PSYC 100	PSYC 101	PSYC 101
<b>Mathematics</b>	PSY 280  or SOC 201  or STAT 250	NA  or MATH 119  or BIOL 200 PSYC 258	MATH 160 BIO 215 PSY 215 or MATH 160  or MATH 160	ANTH 215 PSY 215 SOC 215  or MATH 160 BIO 215 or any listed above	PSYC 104 SOC 104  or any listed above or any listed above	PSYC 205 & PSCY 205L SOC 205 & SOC 205L or PSYC 205 SOC 205 or MATH 120	NA  or MATH 119 PSYC 258 or BIOL 200	NA  or SOC 270 PSYC 270 or NA
<b>Sociology</b>	SOC 101	SOCO 101	SOC 120	SOC 120	SOC 101 SOC 101H	SOC 100	SOCO 101	SOC 101
<b>Social Work</b>	SWORK 110	HUMS 110	SW 110	NA	NA	SWHS 120	NA	SWHS 120
	SWORK 120	HUMS 120	SW 120	NA	NA	SWHS 100	NA	SWHS 110

Students may cross-enroll at SDSU for SWORK 110 and SWORK 120 as a community college student. SWORK 110 is only offered in the Fall while SWORK 120 is only offered in the Spring. The School of Social Work usually offers SWORK 110 in the summer session. If you wait to take SWORK 110 or SWORK 120 until after you transfer to SDSU, it will delay your admission to the major and graduation. As a result, you will not be able graduate in two years.

## Pre-Major Alternatives

1. For **SDSU Econ**—any Economics course (e.g., ECON 100)
2. For the **SDSU Statistics Requirement**—If Statistics are taken at SDSU, we recommend Soc 201, Psych 280 or Stats 250. Other Statistics courses in Math, Economics, Political Science, or Behavioral Science may be substituted depending on course requirements. Visit Transferology, <https://www.transferology.com/school/sdsu> for more information. Algebra, General Math, a course that had a chapter on Statistics, etc., is not acceptable to the University and to the Social Work Department. Please note: You may use Statistics to meet your Social Work and GE requirement in Communication and Analytical Reasoning. You must check with the community college counselor or SDSU Evaluations to be sure the community college course will transfer for GE.
3. For **SDSU Biology 100**—any 3 unit course in human biology, such as Biology of Sex (307), Ecology and Human Impacts (Bio 315), Human Heredity (Bio 321), or The Human Body (Bio 341). The biology course taken should emphasize human, not plant, animal or marine biology.
4. Please see the University Catalog for detailed information on pre-major requirements. Upper division Major courses must be taken for a grade with the exception of SWORK 489A/B. <http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/quickref.html>

## Transfer of Units from 4 Year College

1. The same rules apply for unit transfers from other institutions as for transfers from the community colleges. In some cases upper division units taken at 4 year universities may be substituted for *Preparation for the Major* requirements. Lower division units may not be used to satisfy upper division unit requirements.
2. In general, except for three units of **upper division** electives, only upper division social work courses from an accredited social work program, may be transferred to the Major itself.



## Request for Academic Adjustment

Students coming from California Community Colleges with an articulation agreement with SDSU do not need to file a department form. All substitutions are done automatically by the evaluation unit of Office of Evaluations.

All requests for substitutions and transfer social work units from 4-year institutions must be submitted for approval to the social work advisor, who in turn submits it to the Evaluations Office for University approval. These requests are submitted on a form entitled *Request for Adjustment of Academic Requirements* (RAAR) obtained in [my.SDSU](#) which can be accessed only by the advisor. Several requests may be submitted on one form. Please note that in the instances cited above, you are not requesting a waiver. You are requesting a substitution.



## Student Rights and Grievance Process

In order to enhance student retention, the Student Affairs Committee of the School of Social Work has adopted a monitoring system to identify students who might have difficulty in a class or field education/practicum. Each faculty will be consulted by the undergraduate advisor on any undergraduate student with a pending grade of “F” or any other type of difficulty in a class or field that could put him/her/them in jeopardy at the end of the semester. The student will be instructed to contact the undergraduate advisor.

### Leave of Absence

With certain exceptions, undergraduate students may opt out of SDSU for one semester in a calendar year and maintain their continuing status. If you are going to be absent for more than one semester, you must request a Leave of Absence (LOA) using [my.SDSU](http://my.sdsu.edu). If you do not go through this process you will have to re-apply to the University and pay the required fee. You are allowed to take a LOA for up to four semesters. Please refer to the catalog, schedule for more detailed information on the Leave of Absence procedure. <http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/quickref.html>

### School of Social Work Grading Policy

Faculty members in the School of Social Work take great care in the assignment of grades. The grading policy is as follows:

Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade
94-100	A	73-76	C
90-93	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
84-86	B	64-66	D
80-83	B-	60-63	D-
77-79	C+	0-59	F

The grades at the School of Social Work will reflect the University policy. No formula for a “curve” is appropriate for all classes, but faculty members are expected to use all grades among academic levels. The grade for average achievement in undergraduate programs is C.

Undergraduate grades, as per University policy, are:

- A: Outstanding achievement (available only for the highest accomplishment), 4 points
- B: Praiseworthy performance (definitely above average), 3 points
- C: Average (awarded for satisfactory performance; the most common undergraduate grade), 2 points
- D: Minimally passing (less than the typical undergraduate achievement), 1 point
- F: Failing, 0 points

These grades will be further defined by the criteria described below.

### **Grading Guidelines:**

1. Grades of A or A- are reserved for student work that is judged to be outstanding. The work demonstrates excellent mastery of content, and also shows that the student has (a) undertaken complex tasks, (b) applied critical thinking skills to the assignment, and/or (c) demonstrated creativity in her or his approach to the assignment. The degree to which the student demonstrates these skills determines whether he/she/they receives an A or an A-.
2. A grade of B is given to work that is judged to be praiseworthy. This grade denotes that a student has demonstrated a sound understanding of the material being tested in the assignment, and has demonstrated a moderate level of complexity or creativity in his/her/their approach to the assignment. The degree to which the student demonstrated this complexity or creativity determines whether he/she/they receives a B+ or a B-.
3. A grade of C+ denotes that a student's grasp on the content and expectation of the assignment is more than satisfactory. A grade of C is given to student work that meets the requirements of the assignment. It denotes that the student has done satisfactory work on the assignment and meets the expectations of the course. A grade of C- denotes that a student's performance was less than satisfactory on an assignment, reflecting a less-than-satisfactory grasp of content and/or expectations.
4. A grade of D is given to work that is judged to be minimally passing. It reflects a minimal grasp of the assignments, poor organization of ideas and/or several significant areas requiring improvement.
5. Grades of D- or F denote a failure to meet minimum standards, reflecting service deficiencies in a student's performance on the assignment.



## Incompletes

Incompletes are for family and personal emergencies only. If you find that you must resort to an Incomplete because of an emergency situation, see your instructor and complete the required form. The instructor may grant you the Incomplete and work out the terms with you by which it will be made up. An Incomplete is not a substitute for failing a course, and should not be assigned if the student would need to attend or re-enroll in a significant portion of the class to complete the requirements.

Students should not be required to “sit in” or retake the course to resolve an Incomplete. Faculty must complete an Incomplete Grade Agreement with the student, outlining the specific work to be completed and a deadline. While Senate policy allows up to one year for completion, instructors may set a shorter deadline within that period.

If the work is not completed within the designated timeframe, the Incomplete will convert to an “Incomplete Charged” (IC), which is equivalent to an “F” and will negatively impact the student’s GPA and progress. For courses taken as Credit/No Credit, an unresolved Incomplete may convert to a No Credit (NC) grade.

## Student Files

If student files are electronically kept, they will be stored in HH-119 and are the property of the School of Social Work. It is the University’s policy not to remove any materials from a student’s file. Students may examine their own files at any time but cannot remove the file or its contents from the social work office. Students who would like to a copy of their letters of recommendation can request a copy directly from the faculty or field supervisors whom wrote on their behalf. For additional information about what is accessible, please see the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

## Understanding Plagiarism So You Can Avoid It

Fundamentally, plagiarism is the offering of the words or ideas of another person as one’s own. The worst violation is the use of another student’s work. Also flagrantly dishonest are writers who knowingly use sources without documentation and without remorse. Plagiarism or any other academic dishonesty will result in a Student Situation Report as well as a report to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities.

A gray area in plagiarism is a student’s carelessness that results in an error. For example, the writer fails to enclose quoted material within quotation marks, yet provides an in-text citation (perhaps because the note card was mislabeled or carelessly written); or the writer’s paraphrase never quite becomes paraphrased—too much of the original is left intact. Although these cases are not flagrant instances of plagiarism, these students may face consequences from instructors who demand precision in citations. The serious consequences of plagiarism, then, require you to exercise caution any time you borrow from the sources. (Lester, 1993)

**A few rules for scholarly writing:**

1. Acknowledge borrowed material by introducing the quotation or paraphrase with the name of the authority. This practice serves to indicate where the borrowed materials begin.
2. Enclose within quotation marks all quoted material.
3. Make certain that paraphrased material is rewritten into your own style and language. The simple rearrangement of sentence patterns is unacceptable. Do not alter the essential idea of the source.
4. Provide specific in-text documentation for each borrowed item (the social work profession uses APA format).
5. Provide a reference page with entry for every source cited in the paper.
6. Omit sources consulted but not used (Lester, 1993, p. 130).

\* Verbatim and edited excerpts are from *Writing Research Papers: A Complete Guide* (1993) by James D. Lester, New York: Harper Collings Colleges Publishers, pp. 129–134. Copyright © 8 May 1993 by Harper Collins College Publishers.

For more information, please see the SDSU Plagiarism Tutorial at <https://sdsu.libwizard.com/f/Plagiarism-tutorial>

**AI Statement**

Students should not use generative AI applications in this course except as approved by the instructor. Any use of generative AI outside of instructor-approved guidelines constitutes misuse. Misuse of generative AI is a violation of the course policy on academic honesty and will be reported to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities.

**Suspension or Disqualification from the Program****Academic Disqualification**

Social work education requires continuous evaluation of the student. This evaluation includes periodic objective evaluations such as grades, performance, and field work. Continuation in social work is contingent upon positive ongoing faculty evaluation of the student's grades, professional attributes, and performance in real or simulated professional situations. A student may be suspended or disqualified from the social work program for deficiencies in any of the foregoing. A grade of no credit in field practicum may result in delay of graduation and/or disqualification from the program.

**Disciplinary Disqualification**

The School of Social Work defines student misconduct as student behavior that is in violation of regulations established by the Board of Trustees, of college/university regulations, and of rules governing residence on college/university property.

Social work students, as citizens, are subject to all federal and state laws in addition to all college/university regulations governing student conduct and responsibility. A student may be suspended or disqualified from the social work program for violating laws, rules, or regulations.

In addition, social work students are bound by the social work Code of Ethics (see Appendix). The Code of Ethics operates as an academic standard for behavior for all social work majors. Students may be suspended or dismissed from the social work program for violation of the professional Code of Ethics.

It is also important to note the University's commitment to diversity and inclusion:  
<https://diversity.sdsu.edu/initiatives/inclusive>

If you witness any anti-diversity or anti-inclusion matters/incidences on campus, please report to: [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?SanDiegoStateUniv&layout\\_id=25](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?SanDiegoStateUniv&layout_id=25)

## Student Situation Report Policy

Adopted by Social Work Faculty on March 16, 2005.

**Policy:** If a student receives three Situation Reports during their course of study in the School of Social Work, the student will be immediately referred to the Student Affairs Committee for academic and conduct review. If the advisor determines that the report involves a serious infraction of the SDSU Student Code of Conduct and/or the NASW Code of Ethics, or other San Diego State University Policies defined in the University Catalog, the Academic Senate Policy File, and/or other published university policies, the student may be referred to the Student Affairs Committee after one report. The Student Affairs Committee will make a recommendation regarding administrative probation or separation from the undergraduate or graduate School of Social Work program for a student who violates these policies.

Students are required to be professional when enrolled in the SDSU School of Social Work. This entails both behavioral and ethical appropriateness in all interactions. The School requires continuous monitoring of the student by faculty. Optimal social work education is contingent upon positive ongoing faculty evaluation of the student's grades, professional attributes, and performance in real or simulated professional situations.

By enrolling in the SDSU School of Social Work, students are required to be professional and act in accordance with and in compliance with social work ethics, values, and academic standards set forth by the University (<https://sacd.sdsu.edu/student-rights/student-conduct>) and the School. This includes the SDSU Student Code of Conduct as well as the NASW Code of Ethics ([www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code](http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code)). Students are responsible as adult learners to abide by ethical standards 1-6 of the NASW Code of Ethics. Examples of behaviors or situations that are not consistent with these ethical standards are provided on the next page.

When a faculty member considers the actions of a School of Social Work student to be inconsistent with the SDSU Student Code of Ethics and/or Ethical Standards 1-6 of the NASW Code of Ethics, the faculty member may implement the following procedure:



**Procedures:**

1. The faculty member will meet individually with the student to discuss the situation.
2. The faculty member may elect to informally discuss the situation with the undergraduate or graduate advisor (hereafter referred to as “advisor”).
3. If the faculty member or advisor decides that the situation should be documented, the faculty member will complete the Student Situation Report in its entirety within seven working days of the incident. These incidents must also be reported to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities at <https://sacd.sdsu.edu/student-rights>.
4. If the advisor is the faculty member involved, they may elect to go to the Associate Director to implement the same procedure.
5. The faculty member will immediately forward the report to the undergraduate advisor for undergraduate students and the graduate advisor for graduate students.
6. The advisor will forward the report to the student and keep a copy. The student will be encouraged to meet with the advisor to discuss the report. The student may elect to submit a written response that will be attached to the advisor’s copy.
7. The advisor will be responsible for compiling and tracking student situations. Once the student has left the University by graduation or otherwise, any situation reports held by the advisor will be destroyed.
8. The advisor will inform the School’s Associate Director of each student’s report, and the Associate Director shall apprise the Director.
9. Depending on the advisor’s evaluation of the action reported, the advisor may immediately recommend administrative probation or the discontinuance of the student in the social work program. If three Situation Reports are recorded on an individual student, the advisor will recommend that the Student Affairs Committee review the student’s academic standing. The Student Affairs Committee will make a recommendation to the Graduate or Undergraduate Advisor and the Director on the student’s continuing status. In its deliberations, the Student Affairs Committee will be provided with all situation reports regarding the student.
10. The advisor will evaluate the situation as it relates to the University and School policies and report back to the instructor.
  - 1 Violating the SDSU Code of Conduct and/or NASW Code of Ethics, SDSU School of Social Work academic standards.
  - 2 Applying practice and/or service delivery outside the scope of social work practice.
  - 3 Violating the social worker’s ethical responsibility to clients, colleagues, the agency setting, and the social work profession.
  - 4 Misrepresenting oneself as other than a social work student and/or intern while in School program.
  - 5 In an internship, being disrespectful to colleagues and superiors by verbal and non-

verbal communication (e.g., language used in email and written work, voice tone, volume, etc.).

- 6 Attending school or internship under the influence of drugs and exhibiting acting-out behavior. Professional and ethical behavior requires students to be free of substance abuse.
- 7 Displaying unprofessional behavior in classroom setting, (e.g., talking on cell phone; creating classroom disruption, etc.).
- 8 Being disrespectful to faculty and/or fellow students by verbal and non-verbal communication (e.g., language used in email and written work, voice tone, volume, etc.).

## Grievance Process

If a student believes that a School of Social Work policy or a professor's treatment is grossly unfair or that a professor's behavior is clearly unprofessional, the student may bring the complaint to the proper university authorities by following this procedure:

- 1 **Talk to the Professor First**

Start by having a respectful, open conversation with the professor. Many problems are due to misunderstandings and can be cleared up directly.

- 2 **Speak with the Department Chair**

If the issue is not resolved, contact the Department Chair. They are familiar with department and university policies and can offer additional support, insight, or assist with a resolution.

- 3 **Go to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs**

If you are still not satisfied, reach out to the Assistant Dean in your college. They focus on student experiences and can help navigate college-level policies. The College of Health of Human Services Assistant Dean is Jason Ramirez (jramirez@sdsu.edu).

- 4 **Meet with the Student Ombudsman**

If you need further help, the Student Ombudsman can guide you through your options and next steps. You can contact them at any point in the process.

## Grades & Conflict Resolution

Faculty are responsible for providing evaluation and timely assignment of grades. If you believe that the appropriate grade was not assigned, you should first try to resolve the issue with your course instructor. If the matter cannot be resolved, note the following additional steps (same as above for Grievance Process):

1. Present information to the Department Director
2. Talk to the Assistant Dean for Students (College of Health & Human Services)
3. Meet with the SDSU Ombudsman (<https://sacd.sdsu.edu/>)

## Sexual Harassment at SDSU – A Commitment to Prevention and Redress

### Sexual Harassment defined

The California Education Code at section 212.5 states in part that "sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature made by someone from or in the work or educational setting under any of the following conditions:

1. Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic status or progress.
2. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by the individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting the individual.
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment."

Sexual harassment is a violation of several state and federal laws including the California Education Code, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Sexual harassment is specifically prohibited in the California State University system by Executive Order 345 which became effective in 1981.

### If repeated, pervasive or sufficiently severe, the following may constitute sexual harassment:

- Jokes of a sexual nature
- Suggestive gestures
- Derogatory comments of a sexual nature
- Slurs of a sexual nature
- Impeding or blocking movements
- Unwelcome touching
- Displaying sexually suggestive pictures or objects
- Graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body

### What to do if you have been sexually harassed

Students who think that they have been sexually harassed may file a Title IX report to the Center for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination, <https://cphd-titleix.sdsu.edu/>. A preliminary review of the complaint will commence immediately. All students who have been sexually harassed are strongly encouraged to file formal complaints. However, students who are not ready to file formally, but who wish to discuss incidents of sexual harassment in a confidential setting, may do so with a counselor from Counseling and Psychological Services (619.594.5220) or Student Health Services (619.594.5281).

**Retaliation is prohibited**

It is illegal to retaliate against anyone reporting or thought to have reported sexual harassment or who is a witness or otherwise is involved in a sexual harassment proceeding. Encouraging others to retaliate also is illegal. Examples include, but are not limited to, retaliatory grading, evaluation, assignment or ridicule, threats and withholding information to which a person is entitled.

**Sanctions**

Sanctions imposed for sexual harassment or retaliatory behavior by a faculty or staff member include, but are not limited to, reprimand, suspension, demotion, and dismissal (loss of tenure). The sanctions imposed for sexual harassment or retaliator behavior by a student include, but are not limited to, probation, suspension, and expulsion. Furthermore, harassers have been held by courts to be personally liable to pay millions of dollars in damages.

**Workshops and Questions**

If your department or campus organization would like to participate in a Sexual Harassment Prevention Workshop, please contact the Office of Compliance and Policy Analysis at the number listed on the following page.

**Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Division of Student Affairs and Campus Diversity

San Diego, California 92182-7437

619.594.3069

<https://sacd.sdsu.edu/student-rights>

**Office of Employee Relations & Compliance**

Division of Student Affairs and Campus Diversity

San Diego, California 92182-7430

619.594.6464

<https://sacd.sdsu.edu/>

**Examples of Sexual Harassment**

The following examples of specific behavior may assist in establishing what constitutes sexual harassment at San Diego State University:

1. A teacher offers you a better grade, extra help, or an academic opportunity in return for your sexual attention or threatens action against you for refusal;
2. A person supervising your campus job, academic, or off-campus field placement makes repeated sexual comments that interfere with your work or learning experiences;
3. An advisor or counselor asks questions of a sexual nature inappropriate to the topic at hand that offend you or make you uncomfortable.



**Negative Impact of Sexual Harassment**

Below are some examples of the negative impact of harassment and/or sexual harassment on students:

1. They may experience sexual harassment as demeaning and discouraging classroom participation
2. Preventing them from seeking advice or assistance outside of class
3. Causing them to drop or avoid certain classes, to change majors or specialities within majors, and, in some instances, even to leave the University
4. Minimizing their development and inhibiting collegial relationships with faculty
5. Impeding and dampening academic and career aspirations
6. Undermining self confidence
7. Affecting grades
8. Limiting capacity for full intellectual development and professional success

## VI. MSW Program

If you are graduating this academic year or just wish to learn more about the MSW program, please attend one of the information sessions scheduled periodically from August to December. The sessions will provide information on the profession of social work, job prospects, salary, the MSW program at SDSU, the admission requirements and procedures, the difference between the MFT and MSW programs, the LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker), and more. The dates and times schedule for the info session will become available mid-August on the School of Social Work website: <https://socialwork.sdsu.edu/degrees-programs/graduate-programs/master-of-social-work/msw-information-sessions/>. Applications will be available on the School's webpage from October 1st to December 15th.

## VII. Student Groups and Organizations

### **Asian Pacific Islander Social Work Association (APISWSA) - Dormant**

Awareness of the API culture within the social work profession; to recognize API social work professionals; to network and provide outreach and community service. **Contact Advisor: Dr. Jong Min, [jwmin@sdsu.edu](mailto:jwmin@sdsu.edu)**

### **Black Social Work Association**

Awareness of black culture within the social work profession; to recognize black social work professionals; to network and provide outreach and community service.

**Contact Advisor: Dr. Norman Jackson, [ndjackson@sdsu.edu](mailto:ndjackson@sdsu.edu)**

### **Graduate Social Work Association (GSWA)**

The GSWA interfaces between the student body and the administration and faculty of the School of Social work. GSWA officers make effort to identify the needs and concerns of students and bring those issues to the attention of the faculty. Additionally, the GSWA organizes both academic and social activities for graduate students.

**Contact Advisor: Prof. Shelly Paule, [slpaule@sdsu.edu](mailto:slpaule@sdsu.edu)**

### **Indigenous Social Work Alliance (ISWA)**

The purposes of this organization are to educate the community about Native American/Indigenous identifying cultures, promote social and educational development of Native students, exchange ideas and traditions with members of the Native community, advocate for social justice issues in relation to Social Work and Child Welfare, and foster leadership among Native students and non-Native students in the field of Social Work.

**Contact Advisor: Prof. Tamara Strohauser, [tstrohauser@sdsu.edu](mailto:tstrohauser@sdsu.edu)**

### **Intergenerational Gerontology Alliance**

The purpose is to provide opportunities for students to network with professionals and agencies in the field of Gerontology, implement awareness initiatives and give back to our community. Our mission is to prepare students to become integral advocates in their field to empower them to make a positive, significant impact in our dynamic aging population. We strive to bridge the intergenerational gap in hopes of cultivating a better understanding and respect for older adults within our peers and in our communities. **Contact Advisor: Dr. Norman Jackson, [ndjackson@sdsu.edu](mailto:ndjackson@sdsu.edu)**

### **Latino Social Work Student Association (LSSWSA)**

To educate and mobilize social work students in the areas concerning the Latino population. Promote and improve the perception of the Latino culture. Group is also to provide support for the Latino social work students. **Contact Advisor: Dr. Dahlia Fuentes, [dahlia.fuentes@sdsu.edu](mailto:dahlia.fuentes@sdsu.edu)**

### **OUTreach**

LGBTQIA+ peers and allies who are San Diego State University students come together to provide support and community outreach. **Contact Advisor: Dr. Norman Jackson, [ndjackson@sdsu.edu](mailto:ndjackson@sdsu.edu)**

Continues on next page

### **Social Action Committee (SAC)**

To educate and mobilize social workers in San Diego county to improve the social condition in the community and promote social justice. **Contact Advisor: Dr. Jennifer Cosio, [jcosio@sdsu.edu](mailto:jcosio@sdsu.edu)**

### **Student Association of School Social Workers**

To promote interest in and to increase the professional growth and capacity of social workers in the school system. **Contact Advisor: Prof. Paul Brazzel, [pbrazzel@sdsu.edu](mailto:pbrazzel@sdsu.edu)**

### **Student Social Work Association at SDSU – Imperial Valley - Dormant**

The purpose of the Student Social Work Association at SDSU – Imperial Valley is to educate, advocate for, and empower social work students, the social work profession and the Imperial Valley community. **Contact Advisor: Prof. Ernie Zuniga, [ezuniga@sdsu.edu](mailto:ezuniga@sdsu.edu)**

### **Social Workers of Color Student Coalition (SWC)**

SWC is open to BSW and MSW students. It is for anyone who self-identifies as BIPOC within our department to have a space that fosters community and gives a voice to the experiences within the field of social work, the BSW and MSW programs, and SDSU and the community at large. **Contact Advisor: Prof. Kayla Whaley [mmwhaley@sdsu.edu](mailto:mmwhaley@sdsu.edu)**

### **Undergraduate Social Work Association (USWA) - Dormant**

To foster student interaction in Social Work administration activities on campus and in the community. **Contact Advisor: Dr. Jennifer Cosio, [jcosio@sdsu.edu](mailto:jcosio@sdsu.edu)**

### **\* College Health and Human Services Student Council (CHHSSC)**

To unite all the college's student organizations on a Board. It meets on a biweekly basis. The function is to support and advocate for students and organizations within the CHHS. The CHHSSC also has an AS Representative for SDSU.

\*NOTE: This club is college-wide, not necessarily specific to the school.



## VIII. Things to Remember

1. Contact the undergraduate advisor: If you are new to SDSU, or need to change your status from pre major to major.
2. Notify the School of Social Work of any change in name, address or email. You should also update any contact info on my.SDSU.
3. Follow the undergraduate field director's instructions as to field meetings and appointments for arranging for your field placement. You are responsible for making sure you attend the Mandatory Planning Meeting and Agency Fair to be eligible for your internship, (usually at the start of spring semester before senior year).
4. Obtain approval for transfer units from other schools and for out-of-department electives not on the approved list.
5. Keep a file of all official documents.
6. Process a *Request for Adjustment of Academic Requirements (RAAR form)* to convert coursework to the requirements for the major or to request other changes in your program requiring approval.
7. Make sure you have transcripts sent from community or four year colleges you have attended. These transcripts are not automatically sent. You should check to see that they have been received and credited toward your degree by downloading your Degree Audit Report (DAR) from my.SDSU at [my.SDSU.edu](http://my.SDSU.edu).
8. Remember you must file for graduation via my.SDSU by the deadline date.
9. Read the University General Catalog—pay special attention to deadline dates.  
<http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/quickref.html>
10. Maintain close contact with your professors and advisors. **Do not rely on classmates and friends for academic information.**
11. Utilize available University resources — e.g., health services, counseling service, career services, and academic skills.
12. Remember to check your my.SDSU account after each semester to ensure proper credit toward your Degree Audit Review (DAR).
13. If in Doubt, Ask! (You can always ask your advisor, Dr. Jennifer Cosio).



## IX. Undergraduate Administration

**Dr. Jon Wong Min**, Director, School of Social Work

**Dr. Dahlia Fuentes**, Associate Director

**Amanda Lee, LCSW**, Director of Field

**Silvia Barragan, LSCW**, Undergraduate Field Coordinator

**Dr. Jennifer Cosio, MSW, PPSC**, Undergraduate Coordinator

## X. Scholarships/Stipends and Other Resources for Social Work Students

The Aztec Scholarship offers over 700 scholarships and offers students an opportunity to apply for these via one common application. For more information, go to <https://sacd.sdsu.edu/financial-aid/scholarships/sdsu-aztec-scholarships>

### Financial Aid Tips

- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):  
<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>



### **Current School of Social Work Stipends:**

- California Title IV-E Education Program  
<https://socialwork.sdsu.edu/stipend/>
- Consider inquiring about scholarship programs at your job; available through professional, civic, educational or religious groups; and your local public library.
  - National Scholarships  
<https://onsf.sdsu.edu/>
  - Allied Healthcare Scholarship  
<https://hcai.ca.gov/loans-scholarships-grants/scholarships/ahsp/>

### **Online you can begin a general search at:**

- <http://www.finaid.org>  
<http://www.collegeboard.com>  
<https://www.fastweb.com/>

### **Career Services for Social Work Students**

- Should you need assistance with preparing for the internship or job searching process, please contact Ms. Esmeralda Sanchez, [essanchez@sdsu.edu](mailto:essanchez@sdsu.edu). She is the Career Services Coordinator for our College of Health and Human Services, servicing our students from the School of Social Work.







## appendix

---

*Cultivating the knowledge for global change...one community at a time.*

# Code of Ethics



## of the National Association of Social Workers

Approved by the 2021 NASW Delegate Assembly  
and revised by the 2022 NASW Delegate Assembly



## Overview

The National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics is intended to serve as a guide to the everyday professional conduct of social workers. This code includes four sections. Section one, “Preamble,” summarizes the social work profession’s mission and core values. Section two, “Purpose of the Code of Ethics,” provides an overview of the Code’s main functions and a brief guide for dealing with ethical issues or dilemmas in social work practice. Section three, “Ethical Principles,” presents broad ethical principles, based on social work’s core values, that inform social work practice. The final section, “Ethical Standards,” includes specific ethical standards to guide social workers’ conduct and to provide a basis for adjudication.



## Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- > Service
- > Social justice
- > Dignity and worth of the person
- > Importance of human relationships
- > Integrity
- > Competence

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

## Purpose of the Code of Ethics

Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession has an obligation to articulate its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. The NASW Code of Ethics sets forth these values, principles, and standards to guide social workers' conduct. The Code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

### **The NASW Code of Ethics serves six purposes:**

1. The Code identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.
2. The Code summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide social work practice.
3. The Code is designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.
4. The Code provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable.
5. The Code socializes practitioners new to the field to social work's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards.
6. The Code articulates standards that the social work profession itself can use to assess whether social workers have engaged in unethical conduct. NASW has formal procedures to adjudicate ethics complaints filed against its members. In subscribing to this Code, social workers are required to cooperate in its implementation, participate in NASW adjudication proceedings, and abide by any NASW disciplinary rulings or sanctions based on it.

The Code offers a set of values, principles, and standards to guide decision making and conduct when ethical issues arise. It does not provide a set of rules that prescribe how social workers should act in all situations. Specific applications of the Code must take into account the context in which it is being considered and the possibility of conflicts among the Code's values, principles, and standards. Ethical responsibilities flow from all human relationships, from the personal and familial to the social and professional.

Further, the NASW Code of Ethics does not specify which values, principles, and standards are most important and ought to outweigh others in instances when they conflict. Reasonable differences of opinion can and do exist among social workers with respect to the ways in which values, ethical principles, and ethical standards should be rank ordered when they conflict.

Ethical decision making in a given situation must apply the informed judgment of the individual social worker and should also consider how the issues would be judged in a peer review process where the ethical standards of the profession would be applied.

Ethical decision making is a process. There are many instances in social work where simple answers are not available to resolve complex ethical issues. Social workers should take into consideration all the values, principles, and standards in this Code that are relevant to any situation in which ethical judgment is warranted. Social workers' decisions and actions should be consistent with the spirit as well as the letter of this Code.

In addition to this Code, there are many other sources of information about ethical thinking that may be useful. Social workers should consider ethical theory and principles generally, social work theory and research, laws, regulations, agency policies, and other relevant codes of ethics, recognizing that among codes of ethics social workers should consider the NASW Code of Ethics as their primary source. Social workers also should be aware of the impact on ethical decision making of their clients' and their own personal values and cultural and religious beliefs and practices. They should be aware of any conflicts between personal and professional values and deal with them responsibly. For additional guidance social workers should consult the relevant literature on professional ethics and ethical decision making and seek appropriate consultation when faced with ethical dilemmas. This may involve consultation with an agency-based or social work organization's ethics committee, a regulatory body, knowledgeable colleagues, supervisors, or legal counsel.

Instances may arise when social workers' ethical obligations conflict with agency policies or relevant laws or regulations. When such conflicts occur, social workers must make a responsible effort to resolve the conflict in a manner that is consistent with the values, principles, and standards expressed in this Code. If a reasonable resolution of the conflict does not appear possible, social workers should seek proper consultation before making a decision.

The NASW Code of Ethics is to be used by NASW and by individuals, agencies, organizations, and bodies (such as licensing and regulatory boards, professional liability insurance providers, courts of law, agency boards of directors, government agencies, and other professional groups) that choose to adopt it or use it as a frame of reference. Violation of standards in this Code does not automatically imply legal liability or violation of the law. Such determination can only be made in the context of legal and judicial proceedings. Alleged violations of the Code would be subject to a peer review process. Such processes are generally separate from legal or administrative procedures and insulated from legal review or proceedings to allow the profession to counsel and discipline its own members.



With growth in the use of communication technology in various aspects of social work practice, social workers need to be aware of the unique challenges that may arise in relation to the maintenance of confidentiality, informed consent, professional boundaries, professional competence, record keeping, and other ethical considerations. In general, all ethical standards in this Code of Ethics are applicable to interactions, relationships, or communications, whether they occur in person or with the use of technology. For the purposes of this Code, “technology-assisted social work services” include any social work services that involve the use of computers, mobile or landline telephones, tablets, video technology, or other electronic or digital technologies; this includes the use of various electronic or digital platforms, such as the Internet, online social media, chat rooms, text messaging, e-mail and emerging digital applications. Technology-assisted social work services encompass all aspects of social work practice, including psychotherapy; individual, family, or group counseling; community organization; administration; advocacy; mediation; education; supervision; research; evaluation; and other social work services. Social workers should keep apprised of emerging technological developments that may be used in social work practice and how various ethical standards apply to them.

Professional self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Professional demands, challenging workplace climates, and exposure to trauma warrant that social workers maintain personal and professional health, safety, and integrity. Social work organizations, agencies, and educational institutions are encouraged to promote organizational policies, practices, and materials to support social workers’ self-care.

A code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Moreover, a code of ethics cannot resolve all ethical issues or disputes or capture the richness and complexity involved in striving to make responsible choices within a moral community. Rather, a code of ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be judged. Social workers’ ethical behavior should result from their personal commitment to engage in ethical practice. The NASW Code of Ethics reflects the commitment of all social workers to uphold the profession’s values and to act ethically. Principles and standards must be applied by individuals of good character who discern moral questions and, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments.

## Ethical Principles

The following broad ethical principles are based on social work’s core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These principles set forth ideals to which all social workers should aspire.

**Value:** *Service*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.*

Social workers elevate service to others above self-interest. Social workers draw on their knowledge, values, and skills to help people in need and to address social problems. Social workers are encouraged to volunteer some portion of their professional skills with no expectation of significant financial return (pro bono service).

**Value:** *Social Justice*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers challenge social injustice.*

Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers' social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.

**Value:** *Dignity and Worth of the Person.*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.*

Social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers promote clients' socially responsible self-determination. Social workers seek to enhance clients' capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs. Social workers are cognizant of their dual responsibility to clients and to the broader society. They seek to resolve conflicts between clients' interests and the broader society's interests in a socially responsible manner consistent with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards of the profession.

**Value:** *Importance of Human Relationships*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.*

Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.

**Value:** *Integrity*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.*

Social workers are continually aware of the profession's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers should take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally. Social workers act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

**Value:** *Competence*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.*

Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.

## Ethical Standards

The following ethical standards are relevant to the professional activities of all social workers. These standards concern (1) social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients, (2) social workers' ethical responsibilities to colleagues, (3) social workers' ethical responsibilities in practice settings, (4) social workers' ethical responsibilities as professionals, (5) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the social work profession, and (6) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the broader society.

Some of the standards that follow are enforceable guidelines for professional conduct, and some are aspirational. The extent to which each standard is enforceable is a matter of professional judgment to be exercised by those responsible for reviewing alleged violations of ethical standards.

### 1. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Clients

#### 1.01 Commitment to Clients

Social workers' primary responsibility is to promote the well-being of clients. In general, clients' interests are primary. However, social workers' responsibility to the larger society or specific legal obligations may on limited occasions supersede the loyalty owed clients, and clients should be so advised. (Examples include when a social worker is required by law to report that a client has abused a child or has threatened to harm self or others.)

### **1.02 Self-Determination**

Social workers respect and promote the right of clients to self-determination and assist clients in their efforts to identify and clarify their goals. Social workers may limit clients' right to self-determination when, in the social workers' professional judgment, clients' actions or potential actions pose a serious, foreseeable, and imminent risk to themselves or others.

### **1.03 Informed Consent**

**(a)** Social workers should provide services to clients only in the context of a professional relationship based, when appropriate, on valid informed consent. Social workers should use clear and understandable language to inform clients of the purpose of the services, risks related to the services, limits to services because of the requirements of a third-party payer, relevant costs, reasonable alternatives, clients' right to refuse or withdraw consent, and the time frame covered by the consent. Social workers should provide clients with an opportunity to ask questions.

**(b)** In instances when clients are not literate or have difficulty understanding the primary language used in the practice setting, social workers should take steps to ensure clients' comprehension. This may include providing clients with a detailed verbal explanation or arranging for a qualified interpreter or translator whenever possible.

**(c)** In instances when clients lack the capacity to provide informed consent, social workers should protect clients' interests by seeking permission from an appropriate third party, informing clients consistent with the clients' level of understanding. In such instances social workers should seek to ensure that the third party acts in a manner consistent with clients' wishes and interests. Social workers should take reasonable steps to enhance such clients' ability to give informed consent.

**(d)** In instances when clients are receiving services involuntarily, social workers should provide information about the nature and extent of services and about the extent of clients' right to refuse service.

**(e)** Social workers should discuss with clients the social workers' policies concerning the use of technology in the provision of professional services.

**(f)** Social workers who use technology to provide social work services should obtain informed consent from the individuals using these services during the initial screening or interview and prior to initiating services. Social workers should assess clients' capacity to provide informed consent and, when using technology to communicate, verify the identity and location of clients.



**(g)** Social workers should obtain clients' informed consent before making audio or video recordings of them or permitting observation of services to clients by a third party.

**(h)** Social workers should obtain client consent before conducting an electronic search on the client. Exceptions may arise when the search is for purposes of protecting the client or other people from serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm, or for other compelling professional reasons

#### **1.04 Competence**

**(a)** Social workers should provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, consultation received, supervised experience, or other relevant professional experience.

**(b)** Social workers should provide services in substantive areas or use intervention techniques or approaches that are new to them only after engaging in appropriate study, training, consultation, and supervision from people who are competent in those interventions or techniques.

**(c)** When generally recognized standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, social workers should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps (including appropriate education, research, training, consultation, and supervision) to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm.

#### **1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity**

**(a)** Social workers should demonstrate understanding of culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.

**(b)** Social workers should demonstrate knowledge that guides practice with clients of various cultures and be able to demonstrate skills in the provision of culturally informed services that empower marginalized individuals and groups. Social workers must take action against oppression, racism, discrimination, and inequities, and acknowledge personal privilege.

**(c)** Social workers should demonstrate awareness and cultural humility by engaging in critical self-reflection (understanding their own bias and engaging in self-correction), recognizing clients as experts of their own culture, committing to lifelong learning, and holding institutions accountable for advancing cultural humility.

**(d)** Social workers should obtain education about and demonstrate understanding of the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical ability.

**(e)** Social workers who provide electronic social work services should be aware of cultural and socio-economic differences among clients' use of and access to electronic technology and seek to prevent such potential barriers. Social workers should assess cultural, environmental, economic, mental or physical ability, linguistic, and other issues that may affect the delivery or use of these services.

#### **1.06 Conflicts of Interest**

**(a)** Social workers should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. Social workers should inform clients when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the clients' interests primary and protects clients' interests to the greatest extent possible. In some cases, protecting clients' interests may require termination of the professional relationship with proper referral of the client.

**(b)** Social workers should not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.

**(c)** Social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. In instances when dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable, social workers should take steps to protect clients and are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. (Dual or multiple relationships occur when social workers relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.)

**(d)** When social workers provide services to two or more people who have a relationship with each other (for example, couples, family members), social workers should clarify with all parties which individuals will be considered clients and the nature of social workers' professional obligations to the various individuals who are receiving services. Social workers who anticipate a conflict of interest among the individuals receiving services or who anticipate having to perform in potentially conflicting roles (for example, when a social worker is asked to testify in a child custody dispute or divorce proceedings involving clients) should clarify their role with the parties involved and take appropriate action to minimize any conflict of interest.

**(e)** Social workers should avoid communication with clients using technology (such as social networking sites, online chat, e-mail, text messages, telephone, and video) for personal or non-work-related purposes.

#### **1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality**

**(a)** Social workers should respect clients' right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from or about clients except for compelling professional reasons. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.

**(b)** Social workers may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a client.

**(c)** Social workers should protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. The general expectation that social workers will keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or other identifiable person. In all instances, social workers should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose; only information that is directly relevant to the purpose for which the disclosure is made should be revealed.

**(d)** Social workers should inform clients, to the extent possible, about the disclosure of confidential information and the potential consequences, when feasible before the disclosure is made. This applies whether social workers disclose confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or client consent.

**(e)** Social workers should discuss with clients and other interested parties the nature of confidentiality and limitations of clients' right to confidentiality. Social workers should review with clients circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. This discussion should occur as soon as possible in the social worker-client relationship and as needed throughout the course of the relationship.

**(f)** When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual's right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. This agreement should include consideration of whether confidential information may be exchanged in person or electronically, among clients or with others outside of formal counseling sessions. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.

**(g)** Social workers should inform clients involved in family, couples, marital, or group counseling of the social worker's, employer's, and agency's policy concerning the social worker's disclosure of confidential information among the parties involved in the counseling.

**(h)** Social workers should not disclose confidential information to third-party payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.

**(i)** Social workers should not discuss confidential information, electronically or in person, in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semipublic areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.

**(j)** Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law. When a court of law or other legally authorized body orders social workers to disclose confidential or privileged information without a client's consent and such disclosure could cause harm to the client, social workers should request that the court withdraw the order or limit the order as narrowly as possible or maintain the records under seal, unavailable for public inspection.

**(k)** Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media.

**(l)** Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients' records are stored in a secure location and that clients' records are not available to others who are not authorized to have access.

**(m)** Social workers should take reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of electronic communications, including information provided to clients or third parties. Social workers should use applicable safeguards (such as encryption, firewalls, and passwords) when using electronic communications such as e-mail, online posts, online chat sessions, mobile communication, and text messages.

**(n)** Social workers should develop and disclose policies and procedures for notifying clients of any breach of confidential information in a timely manner.

**(o)** In the event of unauthorized access to client records or information, including any unauthorized access to the social worker's electronic communication or storage systems, social workers should inform clients of such disclosures, consistent with applicable laws and professional standards.

**(p)** Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of electronic technology, including Internet-based search engines, to gather information about clients.

**(q)** Social workers should avoid searching or gathering client information electronically unless there are compelling professional reasons, and when appropriate, with the client's informed consent.

**(r)** Social workers should avoid posting any identifying or confidential information about clients on professional websites or other forms of social media.

**(s)** Social workers should transfer or dispose of clients' records in a manner that protects clients' confidentiality and is consistent with applicable laws governing records and social work licensure.



**(t)** Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker's termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.

**(u)** Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients for teaching or training purposes unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information.

**(v)** Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients with consultants unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information or there is a compelling need for such disclosure.

**(w)** Social workers should protect the confidentiality of deceased clients consistent with the preceding standards.

#### **1.08 Access to Records**

**(a)** Social workers should provide clients with reasonable access to records concerning the clients. Social workers who are concerned that clients' access to their records could cause serious misunderstanding or harm to the client should provide assistance in interpreting the records and consultation with the client regarding the records. Social workers should limit clients' access to their records, or portions of their records, only in exceptional circumstances when there is compelling evidence that such access would cause serious harm to the client. Both clients' requests and the rationale for withholding some or all of the record should be documented in clients' files.

**(b)** Social workers should develop and inform clients about their policies, consistent with prevailing social work ethical standards, on the use of technology to provide clients with access to their records.

#### **1.09 Sexual Relationships**

**(a)** Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities, inappropriate sexual communications through the use of technology or in person, or sexual contact with current clients, whether such contact is consensual or forced.

**(b)** Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a close personal relationship when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. Sexual activity or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a personal relationship has the potential to be harmful to the client and may make it difficult for the social worker and client to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Social workers--not their clients, their clients' relatives, or

other individuals with whom the client maintains a personal relationship--assume the full burden for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

**(c)** Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with former clients because of the potential for harm to the client. If social workers engage in conduct contrary to this prohibition or claim that an exception to this prohibition is warranted because of extraordinary circumstances, it is social workers--not their clients--who assume the full burden of demonstrating that the former client has not been exploited, coerced, or manipulated, intentionally or unintentionally.

**(d)** Social workers should not provide clinical services to individuals with whom they have had a prior sexual relationship. Providing clinical services to a former sexual partner has the potential to be harmful to the individual and is likely to make it difficult for the social worker and individual to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

#### **1.10 Physical Contact**

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 (such as cradling or caressing clients). Social workers who engage in appropriate physical contact with clients are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern such physical contact.

#### **1.11 Sexual Harassment**

Social workers should not sexually harass clients. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, sexual solicitation, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact of a sexual nature.

#### **1.12 Derogatory Language**

Social workers should not use derogatory language in their written or verbal communications to or about clients. Social workers should use accurate and respectful language in all communications to and about clients.

#### **1.13 Payment for Services**

**(a)** When setting fees, social workers should ensure that the fees are fair, reasonable, and commensurate with the services performed. Consideration should be given to clients' ability to pay.

**(b)** Social workers should avoid accepting goods or services from clients as payment for professional services. Bartering arrangements, particularly involving services, create the potential for conflicts of interest, exploitation, and inappropriate boundaries in social workers' relationships with clients. Social workers should explore and may participate in bartering only in very limited circumstances when it can be demonstrated that such arrangements are an

accepted practice among professionals in the local community, considered to be essential for the provision of services, negotiated without coercion, and entered into at the client's initiative and with the client's informed consent. Social workers who accept goods or services from clients as payment for professional services assume the full burden of demonstrating that this arrangement will not be detrimental to the client or the professional relationship.

**(c)** Social workers should not solicit a private fee or other remuneration for providing services to clients who are entitled to such available services through the social workers' employer or agency.

#### **1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision-Making Capacity**

When social workers act on behalf of clients who lack the capacity to make informed decisions, social workers should take reasonable steps to safeguard the interests and rights of those clients.

#### **1.15 Interruption of Services**

Social workers should make reasonable efforts to ensure continuity of services in the event that services are interrupted by factors such as unavailability, disruptions in electronic communication, relocation, illness, mental or physical ability, or death.

#### **1.16 Referral for Services**

**(a)** Social workers should refer clients to other professionals when the other professionals' specialized knowledge or expertise is needed to serve clients fully or when social workers believe that they are not being effective or making reasonable progress with clients and that other services are required.

**(b)** Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should take appropriate steps to facilitate an orderly transfer of responsibility. Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should disclose, with clients' consent, all pertinent information to the new service providers.

**(c)** Social workers are prohibited from giving or receiving payment for a referral when no professional service is provided by the referring social worker.

#### **1.17 Termination of Services**

**(a)** Social workers should terminate services to clients and professional relationships with them when such services and relationships are no longer required or no longer serve the clients' needs or interests.

**(b)** Social workers should take reasonable steps to avoid abandoning clients who are still in need of services. Social workers should withdraw services precipitously only under unusual circumstances, giving careful consideration to all factors in the situation and taking care to minimize possible adverse effects. Social workers should assist in making appropriate arrangements for continuation of services when necessary.

**(c)** Social workers in fee-for-service settings may terminate services to clients who are not paying an overdue balance if the financial contractual arrangements have been made clear to the client, if the client does not pose an imminent danger to self or others, and if the clinical and other consequences of the current nonpayment have been addressed and discussed with the client.

**(d)** Social workers should not terminate services to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client.

**(e)** Social workers who anticipate the termination or interruption of services to clients should notify clients promptly and seek the transfer, referral, or continuation of services in relation to the clients' needs and preferences.

**(f)** Social workers who are leaving an employment setting should inform clients of appropriate options for the continuation of services and of the benefits and risks of the options.

## **2. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues**

### **2.01 Respect**

**(a)** Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues.

**(b)** Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues verbal, written, and electronic communications with clients or with other professionals. Unwarranted negative criticism may include demeaning comments that refer to colleagues' level of competence or to individuals' attributes such as race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, and mental or physical disability.

**(c)** Social workers should cooperate with social work colleagues and with colleagues of other professions when such cooperation serves the well-being of clients.

### **2.02 Confidentiality**

Social workers should respect confidential information shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships and transactions. Social workers should ensure that such colleagues understand social workers' obligation to respect confidentiality and any exceptions related to it.

### **2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

**(a)** 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. Professional and ethical obligations of the interdisciplinary team as a whole and of its individual members should be clearly established.

**(b)** Social workers for whom a team decision raises ethical concerns should attempt to resolve the disagreement through appropriate channels. If the disagreement cannot be resolved, social workers should pursue other avenues to address their concerns consistent with client well-being.

#### **2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues**

**(a)** Social workers should not take advantage of a dispute between a colleague and an employer to obtain a position or otherwise advance the social workers' own interests.

**(b)** Social workers should not exploit clients in disputes with colleagues or engage clients in any inappropriate discussion of conflicts between social workers and their colleagues.

#### **2.05 Consultation**

**(a)** Social workers should seek the advice and counsel of colleagues whenever such consultation is in the best interests of clients.

**(b)** Social workers should keep themselves informed about colleagues' areas of expertise and competencies. Social workers should seek consultation only from colleagues who have demonstrated knowledge, expertise, and competence related to the subject of the consultation.

**(c)** When consulting with colleagues about clients, social workers should disclose the least amount of information necessary to achieve the purposes of the consultation.

#### **2.06 Sexual Relationships**

**(a)** Social workers who function as supervisors or educators should not engage in sexual activities or contact (including verbal, written, electronic, or physical contact) with supervisees, students, trainees, or other colleagues over whom they exercise professional authority.

**(b)** Social workers should avoid engaging in sexual relationships with colleagues when there is potential for a conflict of interest. Social workers who become involved in, or anticipate becoming involved in, a sexual relationship with a colleague have a duty to transfer professional responsibilities, when necessary, to avoid a conflict of interest.

#### **2.07 Sexual Harassment**

Social workers should not sexually harass supervisees, students, trainees, or colleagues. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, sexual solicitation, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**2.08 Impairment of Colleagues**

**(a)** Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's impairment that is due to personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties and that interferes with practice effectiveness should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.

**(b)** Social workers who believe that a social work colleague's impairment interferes with practice effectiveness and that the colleague has not taken adequate steps to address the impairment should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

**2.09 Incompetence of Colleagues**

**(a)** Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's incompetence should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.

**(b)** Social workers who believe that a social work colleague is incompetent and has not taken adequate steps to address the incompetence should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

**2.10 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues**

**(a)** Social workers should take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues, including unethical conduct using technology.

**(b)** Social workers should be knowledgeable about established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues' unethical behavior. Social workers should be familiar with national, state, and local procedures for handling ethics complaints. These include policies and procedures created by NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, agencies, and other professional organizations.

**(c)** Social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should seek resolution by discussing their concerns with the colleague when feasible and when such discussion is likely to be productive.

**(d)** When necessary, social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should take action through appropriate formal channels (such as contacting a state licensing board or regulatory body, the NASW National Ethics Committee, or other professional ethics committees).

**(e)** Social workers should defend and assist colleagues who are unjustly charged with unethical conduct.

### 3. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings

#### 3.01 Supervision and Consultation

**(a)** Social workers who provide supervision or consultation (whether in-person or remotely) should have the necessary knowledge and skill to supervise or consult appropriately and should do so only within their areas of knowledge and competence.

**(b)** Social workers who provide supervision or consultation are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

**(c)** Social workers should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with supervisees including dual relationships that may arise while using social networking sites or other electronic media.

**(d)** Social workers who provide supervision should evaluate supervisees' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by relevant laws, agency policies, and contracts.

#### 3.02 Education and Training

**(a)** Social workers who function as educators, field instructors for students, or trainers should provide instruction only within their areas of knowledge and competence and should provide instruction based on the most current information and knowledge available in the profession.

**(b)** Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should evaluate students' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

**(c)** Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients are routinely informed when services are being provided by students.

**(d)** Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student. Social work educators and field instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

#### 3.03 Performance Evaluation

Social workers who have responsibility for evaluating the performance of others should fulfill such responsibility in a fair and considerate manner and on the basis of clearly stated criteria.

### **3.04 Client Records**

- (a)** Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in electronic and paper records is accurate and reflects the services provided.
- (b)** Social workers should include sufficient and timely documentation in records to facilitate the delivery of services and to ensure continuity of services provided to clients in the future.
- (c)** Social workers' documentation should protect clients' privacy to the extent that is possible and appropriate and should include only information that is directly relevant to the delivery of services.
- (d)** Social workers should store records following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by state statutes or relevant contracts.

### **3.05 Billing**

Social workers should establish and maintain billing practices that accurately reflect the nature and extent of services provided and that identify who provided the service in the practice setting.

### **3.06 Client Transfer**

- (a)** When an individual who is receiving services from another agency or colleague contacts a social worker for services, the social worker should carefully consider the client's needs before agreeing to provide services. To minimize possible confusion and conflict, social workers should discuss with potential clients the nature of the clients' current relationship with other service providers and the implications, including possible benefits or risks, of entering into a relationship with a new service provider.
- (b)** If a new client has been served by another agency or colleague, social workers should discuss with the client whether consultation with the previous service provider is in the client's best interest.

### **3.07 Administration**

- (a)** Social work administrators should advocate within and outside their agencies for adequate resources to meet clients' needs.
- (b)** Social workers should advocate for resource allocation procedures that are open and fair. When not all clients' needs can be met, an allocation procedure should be developed that is nondiscriminatory and based on appropriate and consistently applied principles.
- (c)** Social workers who are administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that adequate agency or organizational resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision.



**(d)** Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that the working environment for which they are responsible is consistent with and encourages compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics. Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to eliminate any conditions in their organizations that violate, interfere with, or discourage compliance with the Code.

### **3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development**

Social work administrators and supervisors should take reasonable steps to provide or arrange for continuing education and staff development for all staff for whom they are responsible. Continuing education and staff development should address current knowledge and emerging developments related to social work practice and ethics.

### **3.09 Commitments to Employers**

**(a)** Social workers generally should adhere to commitments made to employers and employing organizations.

**(b)** Social workers should work to improve employing agencies' policies and procedures and the efficiency and effectiveness of their services.

**(c)** Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that employers are aware of social workers' ethical obligations as set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics and of the implications of those obligations for social work practice.

**(d)** Social workers should not allow an employing organization's policies, procedures, regulations, or administrative orders to interfere with their ethical practice of social work. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that their employing organizations' practices are consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.

**(e)** Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate discrimination in the employing organization's work assignments and in its employment policies and practices.

**(f)** Social workers should accept employment or arrange student field placements only in organizations that exercise fair personnel practices.

**(g)** Social workers should be diligent stewards of the resources of their employing organizations, wisely conserving funds where appropriate and never misappropriating funds or using them for unintended purposes.

### **3.10 Labor-Management Disputes**

**(a)** Social workers may engage in organized action, including the formation of and participation in labor unions, to improve services to clients and working conditions.

**(b)** The actions of social workers who are involved in labor-management disputes, job actions, or labor strikes should be guided by the profession's values, ethical principles,

and ethical standards. Reasonable differences of opinion exist among social workers concerning their primary obligation as professionals during an actual or threatened labor strike or job action. Social workers should carefully examine relevant issues and their possible impact on clients before deciding on a course of action.

## **4. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals**

### **4.01 Competence**

**(a)** Social workers should accept responsibility or employment only on the basis of existing competence or the intention to acquire the necessary competence.

**(b)** Social workers should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work. Social workers should routinely review the professional literature and participate in continuing education relevant to social work practice and social work ethics.

**(c)** Social workers should base practice on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge, relevant to social work and social work ethics.

### **4.02 Discrimination**

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, age, marital status, political belief, religion, or mental or physical disability.

### **4.03 Private Conduct**

Social workers should not permit their private conduct to interfere with their ability to fulfill their professional responsibilities.

### **4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception**

Social workers should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception.

### **4.05 Impairment**

**(a)** Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.

**(b)** Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.

#### **4.06 Misrepresentation**

**(a)** Social workers should make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the social work profession, a professional social work organization, or the social worker's employing agency.

**(b)** Social workers who speak on behalf of professional social work organizations should accurately represent the official and authorized positions of the organizations.

**(c)** Social workers should ensure that their representations to clients, agencies, and the public of professional qualifications, credentials, education, competence, affiliations, services provided, or results to be achieved are accurate. Social workers should claim only those relevant professional credentials they actually possess and take steps to correct any inaccuracies or misrepresentations of their credentials by others.

#### **4.07 Solicitations**

**(a)** Social workers should not engage in uninvited solicitation of potential clients who, because of their circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence, manipulation, or coercion.

**(b)** Social workers should not engage in solicitation of testimonial endorsements (including solicitation of consent to use a client's prior statement as a testimonial endorsement) from current clients or from other people who, because of their particular circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence.

#### **4.08 Acknowledging Credit**

**(a)** Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed.

**(b)** Social workers should honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others.

## **5. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Social Work Profession**

### **5.01 Integrity of the Profession**

- (a)** Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.
- (b)** Social workers should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession. Social workers should protect, enhance, and improve the integrity of the profession through appropriate study and research, active discussion, and responsible criticism of the profession.
- (c)** Social workers should contribute time and professional expertise to activities that promote respect for the value, integrity, and competence of the social work profession. These activities may include teaching, research, consultation, service, legislative testimony, presentations in the community, and participation in their professional organizations.
- (d)** Social workers should contribute to the knowledge base of social work and share with colleagues their knowledge related to practice, research, and ethics. Social workers should seek to contribute to the profession's literature and to share their knowledge at professional meetings and conferences.
- (e)** Social workers should act to prevent the unauthorized and unqualified practice of social work.

### **5.02 Evaluation and Research**

- (a)** Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.
- (b)** Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research to contribute to the development of knowledge.
- (c)** Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice.
- (d)** Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.



**(e)** Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants' well-being, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.

**(f)** When using electronic technology to facilitate evaluation or research, social workers should ensure that participants provide informed consent for the use of such technology. Social workers should assess whether participants are able to use the technology and, when appropriate, offer reasonable alternatives to participate in the evaluation or research.

**(g)** Social workers should never design or conduct evaluation or research that does not use consent procedures, such as certain forms of naturalistic observation and archival research, unless rigorous and responsible review of the research has found it to be justified because of its prospective scientific, educational, or applied value and unless equally effective alternative procedures that do not involve waiver of consent are not feasible.

**(h)** Social workers should inform participants of their right to withdraw from evaluation and research at any time without penalty.

**(i)** Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.

**(j)** Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.

**(k)** Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.

**(l)** Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.

**(m)** Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants' confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.

**(n)** Social workers should report evaluation and research findings accurately. They should not fabricate or falsify results and should take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.

**(o)** Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest and dual relationships with participants, should inform participants when a real or potential conflict of interest arises, and should take steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes participants' interests primary.

**(p)** Social workers should educate themselves, their students, and their colleagues about responsible research practices.

## **6. Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society**

### **6.01 Social Welfare**

Social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels, and the development of people, their communities, and their environments. Social workers should advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfillment of basic human needs and should promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice.

### **6.02 Public Participation**

Social workers should facilitate informed participation by the public in shaping social policies and institutions.

### **6.03 Public Emergencies**

Social workers should provide appropriate professional services in public emergencies to the greatest extent possible.

### **6.04 Social and Political Action**

**(a)** Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.

**(b)** Social workers should act to expand choice and opportunity for all people, with special regard for vulnerable, disadvantaged, oppressed, and exploited people and groups.

**(c)** Social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the United States and globally. Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate for programs and institutions that demonstrate cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people.

**(d)** Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, or mental or physical ability.



## Social Media Guidelines

For those of you who grew up in the digital age and are familiar with the positives and pitfalls of social media, this information may be redundant. However, we hope these guidelines serve as a helpful reminder to all of us, whether we consider ourselves social media experts or novices. When using social media as a means of communication and interaction inside and outside the classroom, there is potential for misinterpretation of relationships and posted information; therefore, we recommend students consider these guidelines.

### General Guidelines

Students' online and digital communications and postings should comply with ethical standards of the social work profession and SDSU School of Social Work guidelines. Students should recognize that digital and internet-based social networks and communications are not necessarily private and may cause boundary confusion and inappropriate dual relationships. Social work students who choose to participate in online and other digital forums should assume that anything posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, or subscribed to might be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to clients, professional colleagues, professional reputations, and careers.

Social work students who use online and digital tools (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, email, Canvas, text messages, and among other social media platforms) should be aware of how their communications, messages, and postings may be perceived by clients, colleagues, SDSU faculty and administrators, and members of the general public. Social work students should take steps to prevent any online or digital communications or postings that are unethical for a professional social worker or social work student.

Students should not post any unethical information or photos. Students should carefully consider the potential implications of posting personal information online or through other digital means. Students should take steps to prevent client access to their online social networks and maintain clear boundaries when their professional duties include communicating with clients using email or mobile phone technology.

Students should take steps to prevent any unauthorized or otherwise unethical disclosure of confidential information about clients or other parties when using online websites or other digital technology. Further, students should ensure that any comments about professional colleagues, field placement agencies, or members of the School of Social Work community that they post online or through the use of other digital technology adhere to standards in the NASW Code of Ethics and SDSU policies.



## Expectations for Students

### **1. Realize that social media can put anyone on the world stage.**

Do not post anything that you would not want your employer or family to see and do not write anything that you would not say to someone face-to-face. Managing your privacy settings, adjusting your privacy settings to require approval before posting, and remembering to log off any social media accounts are some steps that can be taken to protect your privacy.

### **2. Be aware of liability and your reputation.**

You are responsible for the content you publish, using any form of user-generated content such as blogs, discussion forms, posts, chats, audio files. Many employers are conducting web searches on job candidates before extending any offers. Be aware that what you publish can remain public for a long time, and anything inappropriate could come back to haunt you!

### **3. Respect your audience.**

Use respect as a guiding principle when interacting with others through social media. Treat others the way you expect to be treated. If you feel upset or angry about a subject, postpone commenting until you feel calm and rational enough to do so. Do not use slurs, personal insults, or obscenities. Social media should not be used to attack or insult others.

### **4. Protect your own and the SDSU School of Social Work's good name.**

Identify yourself and your role at SDSU's School of Social work when appropriate, especially during times you are working for and referencing the SDSU School of Social Work. Even in your personal social media sites, be aware that you may be known as a member of the SDSU School of Social Work. For that reason, when referencing SDSU, it is important to clearly state that your personal opinions are in no way attributable to our School. Students should exercise caution, sound judgment, and common sense when using social media.

### **5. Protect your privacy as well as the privacy of others.**

Do not share passwords, personal, confidential or proprietary information about employees, students, faculty, staff, or college partners. Releasing this information can violate state and/or national laws (e.g., HIPPA, FERPA) and could cause you to be liable for damages. Once something is publicly shared, it can never again be private.

### **6. Be truthful while being positive.**

Any comments made should add value to the conversation. Honesty or dishonesty may be quickly noticed in a social media environment. Make sure to separate and differentiate your personal identity from your college identity.

### **7. Avoid or report inappropriate material.**

Students may find themselves in online conversations or on websites that contain inappropriate material or malicious material regarding the SDSU School of Social Work. Your best course of action is to report your concerns to someone in authority at the School.

**8. No electronic stalking or bullying.**

Using the Internet or other electronic means to bully, stalk, or harass an individual is not tolerated at the SDSU School of Social Work. Examples of this type of stalking include making false accusations against another individual, monitoring someone's activities, making threats, stealing someone's identity, the solicitation of sex or gathering information in order to harass.

**9. Do not post inappropriate images.**

Do not share sexually explicit photos or videos of yourself or others. Keep in mind that once such images are made public by sharing them with even one other person, you can never get them back. Images may be copied, re-posted and shared in a variety of ways. Sharing sexually explicit material may result in serious legal consequences.

**10. Consequences for inappropriate use.**

Violating the expectations outlined in this document while using social media, may result in disciplinary action such as a Student Incident Report (please refer to detailed Student Situation Report procedures and policies in MSW Student Handbook p. 38 and BASW student Handbook p.19). Students should also be mindful of not violating federal, state, or local laws.

**Right of SDSU School of Social Work to Administer its Social Media Content**

Except where precluded by law, the School of Social Work may routinely monitor School-related social media and online sites such as the School's website, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts, as well as other websites with content that references the SDSU School of Social Work. Although individual student's social media communication is not routinely monitored, the School of Social Work expects that communication concerning its members will be professional, courteous and socially appropriate for an institution of higher education.

**Acknowledgement**

These social media guidelines were originally developed by the University of Michigan and Rhode Island, School of Social Work, and have been edited and revised for the San Diego State School of Social Work community. We thank our colleagues at the University of Michigan and Rhode Island, for sharing them with us and giving us permission to adopt and modify them for San Diego State University.

Prepared by Candy Elson & Jessica Robinson  
March 2015

## Notes:

[illegible]



School of Social Work  
San Diego State University  
5500 Campanile Drive  
San Diego, CA 92182  
**[socialwork.sdsu.edu](http://socialwork.sdsu.edu)**