

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

# MSW Program Manual

2020-2021

Westfield State University



# Welcome from the Administration

Read welcome letters from:

Robert C. Kersting, Interim Provost;

Stefanie Sanchez , Interim Dean, College of

Graduate and Continuing Education;

&

Maria del Mar Farina de Parada, MSW

Program Director



## **Message from the Provost**

Congratulations on your decision to pursue a master's of social work at Westfield State. The university's program is well- respected across the New England region and more than 95 percent of our graduates are working in the field within a year of completing their degrees. The program recently topped the list of "The 14 Most Affordable Accredited Programs in the Northeast" by Social Work Degree Guide.

Our programs have been tailored to help our students achieve their professional goals. To accommodate working professionals, Westfield State's MSW program offers a flexible schedule comprised of both online and classroom coursework.

During this time of the Covid pandemic we are offering classes on line using both synchronous and asynchronous learning. As we move past the pandemic we will move back to a hybrid model that will utilize both face-to-face and on line learning. The faculty in this program are both dedicated educators and highly regarded experts and practitioners in their fields. Their commitment to share their professional knowledge and experience with our graduate students is exemplary.

As a social worker myself, I commend you for choosing such a noble, service-focused career path. As the majority of our graduate students go on to live and work in Massachusetts, you will be directly supporting the commonwealth's growing need for social workers. The number of social workers with crisis-level caseloads is on the rise and because of your commitment to serving the people and families of Massachusetts, you will help bridge that gap upon graduation.

Thank you for choosing Westfield State University. I hope you enjoy your time here and take advantage of all the university has to offer. I look forward to seeing you around campus.

Regards,

Robert C. Kersting Ph.D., A.C.S.W.  
Interim Provost &  
Vice President of Academic Affairs

## Message from the Dean

Dear Students:

On behalf of The College of Graduate and Continuing Education, I would like to welcome you to Westfield State University. Whether you are a student from our newest class, or a returning student, you are a part of an exceptionally talented group of students; and I am thrilled you have selected Westfield State.

We are proud of the many highly respected professionals that have earned advanced degrees from Westfield establishing us as a proven leader in education. Our dedicated and well-qualified faculty and staff will provide you with a high-quality educational program and an excellent student experience. We have an abundance of resources to support you along your academic journey and I encourage you to take part in the many exciting educational opportunities throughout the year. Whether you are seeking personal growth or professional advancement, we are dedicated to supporting your success and glad you are here.

Again, welcome to Westfield State! I hope your year ahead is both challenging and successful.

Sincerely,

Stefanie Sanchez, Ed.D.  
Interim Dean, College of Graduate and Continuing Education

## **Message from the MSW Program Director**

This program handbook is provided to all WSU MSW students. Whether you are attending the program in Westfield or in Worcester this manual is a resource to help you navigate and complete this program. This handbook also is provided to all field instructors and advisory board members to keep them informed regarding the MSW program. This handbook includes a descriptive overview of the program's mission, goals, objectives, and requirements. This material provides an overview of the coursework in the program, what students learn while in the program, and the reasons for the curriculum of the program. This document includes the admission and retention policy, policies regarding student rights and responsibilities while in the program, students' responsibilities regarding course work, and an overview of the college's nondiscrimination policies. Practical information regarding technology requirements and policies of the College of Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE) are included. This material can be helpful in a number of ways from knowing what courses to take a given semester to understanding grounds for disciplinary action. Finally, the handbook includes an unabridged copy of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics. This document will be referred to in many classes.

This program manual is provided as a reference, but is not intended to replace personal contact between students and faculty. The WSU MSW program is small and our size allows a level of interaction between students and faculty that students in larger programs may not be able to enjoy. Students are our first priority, and we invite you to express your concerns, and ideas with us the faculty.

Dr. Maria del Mar Farina de Parada  
MSW Program Director



## Chapter 1

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# MSW Program Description

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This section of the manual begins with the MSW Program Mission, Goals, Competencies, & Practice Behaviors. The section includes a full description of the curriculum, course description and all program completion plans





## MSW Program Description

### Chapter outline

- Program Overview
- Mission
- Mission Description
- Program Concentration Description
- Program Goals
- Program Competencies & Practice Behaviors
- Program Curriculum
- Catalogue Course Descriptions
- Program Completion Plans

## Program Overview

The MSW Program at Westfield State University has a single concentration in clinical social work though it is more aptly termed applied clinical social work. We believe that the clinical knowledge values and skills that we teach can be applied in a wide variety of social work settings beyond traditional clinical settings. As of the fall of 2017, the Department of Social Work began offering the MSW Program at the YWCA in Worcester as well as our primary location on the WSU campus in Westfield.

### Mission

The mission of the MSW program at Westfield State University is to prepare advanced level social work practitioners who have specialized knowledge for clinical practice that is based on a firm generalist foundation.

### Mission Description

The program places emphasis and value on the development of students who will practice in their areas of competence, maintain ethical standards, and demonstrate leadership within their community as collaborative practitioners who are committed to addressing social, racial, and economic injustice.

The clinical training program is built on a strong generalist foundation and is grounded in biological, psychological, and social theoretical paradigms that will promote a spirit of inquiry and critical analysis for developing theories for social work practice. Students will gain competencies in developing and applying practice modalities that are rooted in various forms of evidence.

As graduates complete their advanced training, they will develop a commitment to life-long learning through self reflection, meeting changing social needs, critically evaluating and integrating emerging practice proficiencies, increasing their levels of cultural competence, and engaging in ongoing skill development to meet the demands of advanced roles and responsibilities.

The program at Westfield is committed to providing leadership throughout the practice community in evaluating and analyzing existing and emerging areas of knowledge to advance social service delivery, social policies, and direct practice with the vulnerable, disenfranchised and marginalized populations that are served by social workers.

The MSW program is designed to be completed in 2 years of full-time study and 4 years part-time study. Graduates of a CSWE accredited BSW program may apply for Advanced Standing and have the foundation curriculum waived. Advanced Standing students are able to complete the program in 1 year of full-time study or 2 years of part-time study. Prior to starting the advanced curriculum, Advanced Standing students are required to complete a summer bridge class.

self-reflective abilities to prepare developmentally-based formulations and intervention approaches.

## **Program Concentration Description**

The MSW Program at Westfield State University has a single concentration in Clinical Social Work Practice. The curriculum is divided into the foundation curriculum and the advanced curriculum.

The foundation curriculum is grounded in a generalist practice model and enables students to gain knowledge about human development, biopsychosocial problems, family dynamics, environmental factors that influence individual and family functioning, and the skills to build strengths-based collaborative relationships with diverse client systems. The foundation practicum exposes students to methods of prevention and intervention in multiple contexts including in-home and out-of-home settings and prepares students to create change on multiple systems levels (individual, family, group, and community).

The advanced curriculum builds on the generalist foundation and equips students with the specialized knowledge and skills for effective clinical practice with individuals, families, couples and groups affected by complex life changes and challenges, including mental disorders and other behavioral disturbances. The concentration in Clinical Social Work Practice enables students to master the competencies required for state licensure to provide clinical services to clients in the environments, communities, and social systems that affect their lives. These services consist of assessment; diagnosis; treatment, including psychotherapy and counseling; client-centered advocacy, supervision, consultation and evaluation. The advanced clinical practicum provides in-depth clinical experience in agencies that specialize in students' chosen areas of interest under the umbrella of clinical practice and include mental health and substance dependence treatment programs, schools, family service and child protective agencies, hospitals, hospices and medical clinics. Over the course of their MSW training, students will learn to use interpersonal process and their



## Program Goals

The MSW program has the following two overarching goals

*Goal # 1: The program prepares graduates who will have mastered the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work professional generalist practice core.*

*Goal #2: The program prepares graduates who will have advanced knowledge, values, and skills for clinical social work practice.*

## Program Competencies and Practice Behaviors

To accomplish these goals with students, the program has identified the following competencies for each student to master. Each competency is followed by a list of the specific behaviors students will learn and develop to master the competency. These competencies were updated for fall 2018

### Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

#### Foundation Competency:

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their generalist field practicum:

- F1.1 the ability to make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- F1.2 the use of reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- F1.3 demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- F1.4 the use of technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- F1.5 the use of supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

#### Advanced Competency:

Clinical social workers understand that the professional relationship and professional ethics are the foundation of clinical practice. Clinical social workers recognize the importance of the therapeutic relationship, the person-in-environment and strengths perspectives, the professional use of self with clients, and adherence to ethical guidelines of professional behavior. Clinical social workers understand their role and the role of other professionals on inter-professional teams and the ethical use of technology for clinical social work practice. Clinical social workers understand and apply ethical standards and model the ethical use of treatment modalities in practice.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their advanced field practicum:

- A1.1 apply ethical decision-making skills to issues specific to clinical social work, including responding to ethical dilemmas;
- A1.2 demonstrate professional use of self with clients that integrates an awareness of their own professional strengths, limitations, and challenges;
- A1.3 develop, manage, and maintain therapeutic relationships with clients that reflect understanding of relationship dynamics, including power differentials; and
- A1.4 use strategies of ethical reasoning to address the use of technology in clinical practice and its effect on clients' rights.

## Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

### Foundation Competency:

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their generalist field practicum:

- F2.1 the ability to apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity, intersectionality and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- F2.2. presentation of themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- F2.3 the ability to apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

### Advanced Competency:

Clinical social workers build on the generalist foundation competency to further understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including, but not limited to, age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion /spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Clinical social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a

culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Clinical social workers understand and integrate into their assessments and interventions the effects on clients of oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation, as well as privilege, power, and acclaim.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their advanced field practicum:

- A2.1 identify the structural and systemic dynamics present in the client's context and implications for clients' intersecting identities and experiences;
- A2.2 explore with clients the meanings they attribute to their various social identities, such as race, ethnicity, culture, gender, etc.; how their understanding of who they are interacts with dominant societal perceptions of the self; and the effect these identities and perceptions have on their lives; and
- A2.3 engage in self reflection to examine their own values and personal biases and the possible effects these may have on their clinical relationships.

### **Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

#### **Foundation Competency:**

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their generalist field practicum:

- F3.1 the ability to apply their understanding of social, economic, spiritual, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- F3.2 the ability to engage in practices that advance social, economic, spiritual, and environmental justice.

#### **Advanced Competency:**

Clinical social workers build on the generalist foundation competency to advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice through their clinical practice. They understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Clinical social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice, as well as strategies for promoting social and economic justice and human rights. Clinical social workers identify and integrate strategies for practice that recognize with clients the oppressive structural barriers present in their lives and work to ameliorate the impact of those structural dynamics on the client system.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their advanced field practicum:

- A3.1 engage in clinical practices that promote social justice;
- A3.2 identify systemic and structural barriers in field placement and work settings that bar specific groups from full societal participation and examine how social inequality operates at the macro, mezzo and micro level of society, as well as within multiple social work service contexts; and
- A3.3 demonstrate an understanding of systemic and structural oppression and their effects on those with dominant and subjugated identities and integrate this knowledge into direct clinical practice with individuals and families.



## **Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

### **Foundation Competency:**

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their generalist field practicum:

- F4.1 the use of practice experience, theory, and multiple perspectives, to investigate the social world and practice efficacy;
- F4.2 the ability to apply critical thinking skills to analyzing research methods and findings; and
- F4.3 the ability to use and translate research evidence and integrate evidence-based approaches to improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

### **Advanced Competency:**

Clinical social workers use quantitative and qualitative research methods, multi-disciplinary sources, and multiple ways of knowing to advance the science of social work and to inform and evaluate the efficacy of their clinical practice. Clinical social workers apply the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Clinical social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-based interventions, best practices, and the evidence-based research process. Clinical social workers use a critical perspective in applying evidence-based practice in assessment and intervention with clients, participate in the generation of new knowledge through research and practice, and use research methodology to evaluate practice.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their advanced field practicum:

- A4.1 use research methodologies from varied perspectives to identify and critically examine clinical interventions and/or outcomes for particular client systems, problems, and settings;
- A4.2 use practice experience to critically evaluate relevant clinical knowledge and the need for additional research to address gaps in the existing knowledge base; and
- A4.3 evaluate the strengths and weakness of multiple theoretical perspectives and differentially apply them to client situations.

## Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

### Foundation Competency:

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their generalist field practicum:

- F5.1 identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- F5.2 assess the impact of social welfare and economic policies on the delivery of and access to social services;
- F5.3 critically analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

### Advanced Competency:

Clinical social workers understand that both client systems and social service delivery systems are affected by policy implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Clinical social workers help clients to understand the impact of policy on their wellbeing, including, as appropriate, the political nature of policy. Clinical social workers engage in policy analysis within their practice settings, help clients to resist internalization of self-blame for social and economic circumstances that reflect policy decisions at the mezzo and macro level, and empower clients to advocate for policy change.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their advanced field practicum:

- A5.1 understand social welfare systems and policies, the impact of policy on clients and communities, and the skills of policy analysis;

- A5.2 use evidence-based practice to advocate for policies that advance social and economic well-being;
- A5.3 communicate to stakeholders the implication of policies and policy change in the lives of clients; and
- A5.4 analyze policies at the agency level and advocate for agency policies that enhance client access and the delivery of effective services.

## **Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

### **Foundation Competency:**

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their generalist field practicum:

- F6.1 the use of knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- F6.2 the use of empathy, reflection, and interpersonal interviewing skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

### **Advanced Competency:**

Clinical social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of clinical social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Clinical social workers rely on advanced clinical knowledge to build relationships with clients systems and inter-professional partners. They possess a clinically-informed understanding of reasons why clients might be motivated or hesitant to engage in services and they demonstrate a range of clinical skills that allow them to effectively engage those they serve.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their advanced field practicum:

- A6.1 apply clinical knowledge to the process of client engagement;
- A6.2 use clinical concepts and skills that reflect an understanding of the importance of the clinical relationship; the dynamics of interpersonal relationships, including the therapeutic relationship; and the need for safe, accepting spaces for implementing a full range of social work interventions; and
- A6.3 effectively engage a wide range of inter-professional partners and collaterals in promoting client goals and client well-being.



## **Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

### **Foundation Competency:**

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their generalist field practicum:

- F7.1 the collection and organization of data, and the application of critical thinking to interpret data gathered from clients and constituencies;
- F7.2 the use of knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- F7.3 the development of mutually agreed-on service plans (intervention goals and objectives) based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- F7.4 the selection of appropriate intervention strategies based on the placement agency, assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

### **Advanced Competency:**

Clinical social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of clinical relationships and apply a wide array of bio-psycho-social-spiritual theories to their understanding of diverse clients and their social environments. Clinical social workers draw upon theories, frameworks, and models of human behavior, as well as information from clients, collaterals, and other professionals, to develop a rich, strengths-based understanding of the people they

serve and the challenges they experience. Clinical social workers also reflect on their own reactions to the client system and consider the effects of environmental contexts in the processes of assessment and intervention planning.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their advanced field practicum:

- A7.1 use a range of clinical perspectives and theoretical frameworks to understand client strengths and needs;
- A7.2 develop a broad understanding of client systems that integrates psychological, cultural, social and political lenses;
- A7.3 use assessment data to consider readiness for change and optimal interventions for client systems of different sizes; and
- A7.4 reflect on their own reactions to client systems and consider the effects of environmental contexts, as well as their own and the client system's preferences, in the processes of assessment and intervention planning.

## **Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

### **Foundation Competency:**

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their generalist field practicum:

- F8.1 the ability to critically choose and implement interventions, including use of self, to achieve service plan goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- F8.2 the use of knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- F8.3 the use of inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- F8.4 the roles of negotiator, mediator, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- F8.5 the facilitation of effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals and appreciate the nature of the professional relationship.

### **Advanced Competency:**

Clinical social workers demonstrate that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals and families. Clinical social workers apply evidence-based interventions to help achieve the goals of client systems. Clini-

cal social workers integrate theories of human behavior and the social environment in implementing interventions with client systems. Clinical social workers use a critical perspective in identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-based interventions to achieve client system goals. Clinical social workers engage in inter-professional teamwork, and communication in developing and implementing interventions, and demonstrate effective interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their advanced field practicum:

- A8.1 collaborate with client systems to define therapeutic goals and treatment outcomes that address micro, mezzo and macro systems;
- A8.2 initiate and implement strengths-based treatment plans and contracts, based on appropriate human behavior theory, and selectively apply and integrate evidence-based practice methods to meet these goals;
- A8.3 demonstrate self-awareness and differential use of self, utilizing clinical concepts such as intersubjectivity, transference, and countertransference; and
- A8.4 advocate, communicate, and collaborate with other professionals to promote client well-being and achieve client system goals.

## **Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

### **Foundation Competency:**

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their generalist field practicum:

- F9.1 select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes defined in service plans;
- F9.2 use knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- F9.3 critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- F9.4 apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

### **Advanced Competency:**

Clinical social workers demonstrate that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of clinical practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals and families. Clinical social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Clinical social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Clinical social workers utilize qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Students will demonstrate the following behaviors by the end of their advanced field practicum:

- A9.1 use a critical perspective and multiple methods for developing and implementing ongoing evaluation methods for clinical practice;
- A9.2 work collaboratively with client systems and community stakeholders to identify and apply outcome measures that reflect client and agency goals and desired outcomes; and
- A9.3 collaboratively utilize evaluation data to improve practitioner, agency and community practice.



## Program Curriculum

The program curriculum is the same for both locations (Worcester and Westfield). The curriculum is divided into two parts. The first part is designed to give students the generalist practice foundation that is common to all social work programs. The foundation curriculum includes classroom work and a 400 hour hands-on practicum. The following courses make up the foundation curriculum:

SOCW 0511 Research I	3
SOCW 0512 Research II	3
SOCW 0521 Human Behavior & the Social Environment (HBSE) I	3
SOCW 0522 Human Behavior & the Social Environment (HBSE) II	3
SOCW 0523 Diversity & Social Justice	3
SOCW 0531 Social Welfare Policy Analysis	3
SOCW 0541 Generalist Practice I	3
SOCW 0542 Generalist Practice II	3
SOCW 0561 Foundation Practicum I	4
SOCW 0562 Foundation Practicum II	4
Total Credits for Foundation Curriculum	32

The second part of the curriculum is designed to build on the foundation curriculum and give students advanced knowledge, values, and skills for practice with families and children. The advanced curriculum includes required classroom work, three electives, and a 500 hour hands-on practicum. Students who have completed a BSW from a CSWE accredited program can apply for advanced standing and start the program in the second year after completing a summer bridge course. The following courses make up the advanced curriculum:

SOCW 0621 Mental Health & Children	3
SOCW 0622 Mental Health & Adults	3
SOCW 0631 Child Welfare Policy	3
SOCW 0642 Advanced Practice with Adults	3
SOCW 0643 Advanced Practice with Families	3
SOCW 0661 Advanced Practicum I	5
SOCW 0662 Advanced Practicum II	5

Three Electives from following list*	9
SOCW 0651 School Social Work	3
SOCW 0652 Substance Abuse Treatment	3
SOCW 0651 School Social Work	3
SOCW 0652 Substance Abuse Treatment	3
SOCW 0653 Social Work Practice with Children & Youth	3
SOCW 0654 Social Work Practice with Groups	3
SOCW 0655 Social Work Practice in Health Care and Aging	3
SOCW 0656 Social Work Practice with Grief and Loss	3
SOCW 0657 Social Work Practice in Administration and Supervision	3
SOCW 0659 - Trauma Treatment in the Public Sector	3
SOCW 0699 Special Topics in Social Work	3

**\*One elective must be a hybrid elective . There is no limit on the number of hybrid elective taken.**

Total credits for Advanced Curriculum	34
<b>Total Credits for MSW</b>	<b>66</b>

### Other Courses:

SOCW 0543 Advanced Standing Bridge Course (required for Advanced Standing)	3
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## Catalogue Course Descriptions

### SOCW 0511 Research I

The course will introduce students to the basics of social science research by examining the research process, purposes of research, and the philosophy of research. Students will learn about the basics of measurement, sampling, and causation. Students will review the basic approaches to research, including qualitative research, experiments, surveys, and historical and comparative research.

### SOCW 0512 Research II

This course builds on Research 1, In this course students will develop knowledge and skills to complete quantitative and qualitative research. Students will learn how to apply research to social work practice. Specifically, Students will learn how to design and implement Single Subject Design research, design and imple-

ment program evaluation research and learn how to evaluate existing research for its usefulness to social work practice.

#### SOCW 0521 Human Behavior & the Social Environment (HBSE) I

This is the first course of a two-course sequence that will focus on how aspects of the social environment affect human behavior and on individual development across the life cycle. This course examines human behavior in families, groups, communities, organizations, and cultures, and the biological, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of human development. The course emphasizes the diversity of human experience, the negative impact of oppression on individuals, families, and groups, and the importance of resilience and empowerment.

#### SOCW 0522 Human Behavior & the Social Environment (HBSE) II

This is the second course of a two course sequence that will focus on how aspects of the social environment affect human behavior and on individual development across the life cycle. The major goal of the course is to help students understand the complex interactions between people and their environments and the importance of knowledge and theories about human behavior to social work practice.

#### SOCW 0523 Diversity & Social Justice

This course examines the histories of diverse social identity groups in the United States and the differential impacts of past and present attitudes, beliefs, practices, and policies on the lives of individuals, families, groups, and communities. The existence of multiple, intersecting, and interlocking systems of advantage and disadvantage and the centrality of diversity competent practice to the field of social work are emphasized.

#### SOCW 0531 Social Welfare Policy Analysis

Social science, historical, and ideological models, theories, and perspectives are used as a foundation to examine and analyze present social policies and social programs at the organizational, state, national, and international levels.

#### SOCW 0541 Generalist Practice I

This is the first of a two-part course sequence that introduces student to the knowledge, values, and skills that form the core of generalist social work practice. In this course, students examine the roles social workers take with client systems, critical thinking, evidence-based practice, and basic theories of social work, and explore the values and ethics of social work, including managing ethi-

cal dilemmas. The course continues with an examination of engaging and assessing systems of different sizes.

#### SOCW 0542 Generalist Practice II

This is the second of a two-part course that introduces student to the knowledge, values, and skills that form the core of generalist social work practice. In this course, the development of service plans with systems of different sizes is examined in-depth. The course continues with an examination of the application of theory, use of self, use of professional values, and development of skills for interventions with individuals, families, groups, and communities. The course concludes with an exploration of the values, knowledge, and skills needed to evaluate social work with clients systems of various sizes and of termination/transition with the client system.

#### SOCW 0543 Generalist Practice Bridge Course (required for Advanced Standing students)

This course is required for Advanced Standing students as a bridge that allows students to be fully ready to enter the advanced level of MSW education. This course focuses on the core knowledge, values and skills that form the foundation of generalist practice.

#### SOCW 0561 & 0562 Foundation Practicum I & II

First year MSW students are required to complete a 400 hour, hands-on social work internship in an approved agency under the supervision of a professional social worker. This internship may be scheduled as a one-semester block placement or a two-semester part-time placement. Included is a seminar that provides further integration of practice experience with the skills, knowledge, and values and ethics of the field.

#### SOCW 0621 Mental Health & Children

This course examines mental health problems in childhood and adolescence from a biopsychosocial developmental perspective. A range of relevant theories will be studied as they shed light on the development of child and adolescent disorders. Specific clinical entities such as pervasive developmental delays, physiological disorders, and personality, cognitive, affective, and behavior disorders are considered in terms of their etiologies and features and in relation to the practice challenges they raise. Theories are critically examined with particular attention given to the influences of gender, race, ethnicity, and other forms of diversity on the development of deviations.

#### SOCW 0622 Mental Health & Adults

This course will provide the student with advanced exposure to several issues in the area of adult psychopathology and diagnostics. It is intended to provide students with the tools necessary to comfortably utilize the DSM system of classification while maintaining a coherent case conceptualization that is not bounded by this system. Course material will be organized by diagnostic categories.

#### SOCW 0631 Child Welfare Policy

This course examines the history and current status of child welfare policy in the United States. The theories, assumptions, politics, and economics underlying child welfare policies and practices are explored and evaluated in relationship to major theories and empirical knowledge about child development, children's rights, human needs, and social work values and ethics.

#### SOCW 0642 Advanced Practice with Adults

This course examines theory, knowledge, and skills for advanced practice with adults. The therapeutic process and treatment strategies are examined, incorporating content from multiple theoretical orientations. Theories are compared and contrasted in terms of theoretical assumptions, intervention methods and techniques, and empirical evidence regarding practice outcomes.

#### SOCW 0643 Advanced Practice with Families

This course focuses on the knowledge, skills, and values needed for advanced social work practice with families. The course includes an in-depth look at clinical social work with families through the process of engagement, assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation, and termination. Further, the course examines multiple theories for clinical social work with families and the integration of current evidence into family practice.

#### SOCW 0661 Advanced Practicum I

This is the first of a two-part final year MSW practicum experience. Second year MSW students are required to complete a 500 hour, hands-on social work internship in an approved agency under the supervision of a professional social worker. Each semester the student is expected to complete 250 hours of practicum. Included is a weekly seminar that provides further integration of practice with the skills, knowledge, and values and ethics of the field. In this first semester skills around engagement, assessment and service planning will be the focus.

#### SOCW 0662 Advanced Practicum II

This is the second of a two-part final year MSW practicum experience. Second year MSW students are required to complete a 500 hour, hands-on social work internship in an approved agency under the supervision of a professional social worker. Each semester the student is expected to complete 250 hours of practicum. Included is a weekly seminar that provides further integration of practice with the skills, knowledge, and values and ethics of the field. In this second semester skills around intervention, evaluation and termination will be the focus.

#### **Electives:**

#### SOCW 0651 School Social Work

This course explores the role of social workers in school settings including the changing nature of this role, the various roles school social workers play, and the interventions school social workers employ. Building on the social work foundation knowledge, the ecological model and the strengths perspective, this course examines the role of the social worker in helping students, families, and schools including adjusting to and coping with students with special needs and at-risk populations.

#### SOCW 0652 Substance Abuse Treatment

This course will provide an overview of the various types of addictive substances, the acute and chronic effects, and the relational impact to human behavior and the social environment. Using a trans-theoretical framework, students will increase their practice knowledge about prevention, assessment, treatment models and techniques, and the importance of aftercare when working with clients who are addicted and/or dually diagnosed.

#### SOCW 0653 Social Work with Children and Youth

This course examines the knowledge, values, and skills needed to conduct effective interventions with children, adolescents, and significant adults within the context of their specific social environments. Special attention is given to issues of diversity and empowerment as they relate to assessment, building relationships with children and adolescents and their families, treatment planning, intervention, and practice evaluation.

### SOCW 0654 Social Work Practice with Groups

This course explores the application of domain specific social work knowledge, values and skills to small group interventions often referred to as Group Work. This course will explore the use of both clinical and nonclinical group interventions with clients.

### SOCW 0655 Social Work Practice in Health Care and Aging

This elective builds on the foundation courses [and draws on the advanced theory and practice courses to prepare students for effective engagement and advanced clinical practice with clients facing problems related to health and aging

### SOCW 0656 Social Work Practice with Grief and Loss

This course equips the professional practitioner to understand and respond effectively to individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities experiencing both symbolic and tangible losses and accompanying grief reactions. The topics covered in the course include theories of normal and complicated grief, factors that influence grief at different stages of the life span, cultural and spiritual influences, vicarious trauma, the impact of loss and working in close contact with grief on professionals, and skills and strategies that address therapeutic needs of vulnerable and resilient populations experiencing grief.

### SOCW 0657 Social Work Practice in Administration and Supervision

Masters level social workers often find themselves in the position to supervise staff including clinical staff and to take on administrative responsibilities. This course will introduce students to the basic knowledge and skills of management with a focus on supervision including clinical supervision.

### SOCW 0659 - Trauma Treatment in the Public Sector

This advanced practice elective course: (a) Introduces students to trauma theory and interpersonal trauma; (b) Introduces integrative relational approaches to work with interpersonal trauma; (c) Presents a contemporary conceptualization of the transference and countertransference; (d) Explains and illustrates how to examine and use the social worker's reactions (countertransference) and the client's reactions (transference) to promote clinical change; (e) Examines how so-

cialization and social identity (i.e., race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, etc.) influence how client and social worker alike, come to understand themselves and others, affecting the clinical encounter and therapeutic relationship; and, (f) explores how larger social dynamics of oppression and marginalization can be recreated in the clinical relationship, reinforcing trauma narratives that interfere with the healing process, while reproducing social inequality.

### SOCW 0698 Social Work Practice Special Topics

This course is an in depth treatment of a limited and/or specialized area within social work practice and has been designated as an advanced practice elective. This course may be repeated with a different topic.

### SOCW 0699 Special Topics in Clinical Social Work

This course is an in depth treatment of a limited and/or specialized area within social work. This course may be repeated with a different topic.

## Program Completion Plans

The WSU MSW Program offers multiple plans to complete the program. A student's Program of Study identifies which plan the student is on. The following options exist. This list is divided by the options available at each location.

### Westfield

#### Traditional Program

2 year Full-Time

3 year Accelerated Part-Time

4 year Part-Time

#### Advanced Standing

1 year Full-Time

2 year Part-Time

### Worcester

#### Traditional Program

3 year Accelerated Part-Time

#### Advanced Standing

2 year Part-Time

Students are accepted into a specific plan of study and are expected to follow that plan. If a student wishes to change to their plan they need to contact the Program Director.

Each Program of Study option follows:



Course #	Course Name	Credits
<b>Advanced Standing Program</b>		
<b>Two Years Part-Time</b>		
<b>Year 1</b>		
<b>Summer</b>		
<b>SOCW 0543</b>	Generalist Practice Bridge	3
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Semester 1</b>		
<b>SOCW 0621</b>	Mental Health & Children	3
<b>SOCW 06xx</b>	Elective (recommend hybrid)	3
<b>SOCW 06xx</b>	Elective	3
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>		
<b>SOCW 0631</b>	Child Welfare Policy	3
<b>SOCW 0622</b>	Mental Health & Adults	3
<b>SOCW 06xx</b>	Elective	3
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Year 2</b>		
<b>Semester 1</b>		
<b>SOCW 0643</b>	Advanced Practice with Families	3
<b>SOCW 0661</b>	Advanced Practicum 1	5
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>		
<b>SOCW 0642</b>	Advanced Practice with Adults	3
<b>SOCW 0662</b>	Advanced Practicum 2	5
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>total credits for program</b>	<b>37</b>

Course #	Course Name	Credits
<b>Advanced Standing Program</b>		
<b>One Year Full Time</b>		
<b>Year 1</b>		
<b>Summer</b>		
<b>SOCW 0543</b>	Generalist Practice Bridge	3
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Semester 1</b>		
<b>SOCW 0621</b>	Mental Health & Children	3
<b>SOCW 0643</b>	Advanced Practice with Families	3
<b>SOCW 06xx</b>	Elective (recommend hybrid)	3
<b>SOCW 06xx</b>	Elective	3
<b>SOCW 0661</b>	Advanced Practicum 1	5
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>		
<b>SOCW 0622</b>	Mental Health & Adults	3
<b>SOCW 0631</b>	Child Welfare Policy	3
<b>SOCW 0623</b>	Advanced Practice with Adults	3
<b>SOCW 06??</b>	Elective	3
<b>SOCW 0662</b>	Advanced Practicum 2	5
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>17</b>
	<b>total credits for program</b>	<b>37</b>

Course #	Course Name	Credits
	<b>Traditional Program</b>	
	<b>Four Year Part-Time Plan</b>	
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Foundation Year A</b>	
<b>Semester 1</b>		
<b>SOCW 0521</b>	HBSE 1	3
<b>SOCW 0511</b>	Research 1	3
<b>SOCW 0541</b>	Generalist Practice 1	3
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>		
<b>SOCW 0522</b>	HBSE 2	3
<b>SOCW 0512</b>	Research 2	3
<b>SOCW 0542</b>	Generalist Social Work Practice 2	3
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Foundation Year B</b>	
<b>Semester 1</b>		
<b>SOCW 0523</b>	Diversity & Social Justice	3
<b>SOCW 0561</b>	Foundation Practicum 1	4
	total credits	7
<b>Semester 2</b>		
<b>SOCW 0531</b>	Social Welfare Policy Analysis	3
<b>SOCW 0562</b>	Foundation Practicum 2	4
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>7</b>

Course #	Course Name	Credits
	<b>Traditional Program</b>	
	<b>Four Year Part-Time Plan</b>	
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Advanced Year A</b>	
<b>Semester 1</b>		
<b>SOCW 0621</b>	Mental Health & Children	3
<b>SOCW 06xx</b>	Elective (recommend hybrid)	3
<b>SOCW 06xx</b>	Elective	3
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>		
<b>SOCW 0631</b>	Child Welfare Policy	3
<b>SOCW 0622</b>	Mental Health & Adults	3
<b>SOCW 06xx</b>	Elective	3
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Advanced Year B</b>	
<b>Semester 1</b>		
<b>SOCW 0643</b>	Advanced Practice with Families	3
<b>SOCW 0661</b>	Advanced Practicum 1	5
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>		
<b>SOCW 0642</b>	Advanced Practice with Adults	3
<b>SOCW 0662</b>	Advanced Practicum 2	5
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>total credits for program</b>	<b>66</b>

Course #	Course Name	Credits
	<b>Traditional Program</b>	
	<b>Three Year Accelerated Part-Time</b>	
<b>Year 1</b>		
<b>Semester 1</b>		
SOCW 0521	HBSE 1	3
SOCW 0511	Research 1	3
SOCW 0523	Diversity & Social Justice	3
SOCW 0541	Generalist Practice 1	3
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>		
SOCW 0522	HBSE 2	3
SOCW 0512	Research 2	3
SOCW 0542	Generalist Practice 2	3
SOCW 0531	Social Welfare Policy Analysis	3
	<b>total credits/courses</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Year 2</b>		
<b>Semester 1</b>		
SOCW 0621	Mental Health & Children	3
SOCW 06xx	Elective (recommend hybrid)	3
SOCW 0561	Foundation Practicum 1	4
	<b>total credits/courses</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>		
SOCW 0622	Mental Health & Adults	3
SOCW 0631	Child Welfare Policy	3
SOCW 0562	Foundation Practicum 2	4
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>10</b>

Course #	Course Name	Credits
	<b>Traditional Program</b>	
	<b>Three Year Accelerated Part-Time</b>	
<b>Year 3</b>		
<b>Semester 1</b>		
SOCW 0643	Advanced Practice with Families	3
SOCW 06xx	Elective	3
SOCW 0661	Advanced Practicum 1	5
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>		
SOCW 0642	Advanced Practice with Adults	3
SOCW 06xx	Elective	3
SOCW 0662	Advanced Practicum 2	5
	total credits	11
	<b>total credits for program</b>	<b>66</b>

Course #	Course Name	Credits
	<b>Traditional Program</b>	
	<b>Two Years Full Time</b>	
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Foundation Year</b>	
<b>Semester 1</b>		
<b>SOCW 0521</b>	HBSE 1	3
<b>SOCW 0511</b>	Research 1	3
<b>SOCW 0523</b>	Diversity & Social Justice	3
<b>SOCW 0541</b>	Generalist Practice 1	3
<b>SOCW 0561</b>	Foundation Practicum 1	4
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>		
<b>SOCW 0522</b>	HBSE 2	3
<b>SOCW 0512</b>	Research 2	3
<b>SOCW 0542</b>	Generalist Practice 2	3
<b>SOCW 0531</b>	Social Welfare Policy Analysis	3
<b>SOCW 0562</b>	Foundation Practicum 2	4
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>16</b>

Course #	Course Name	Credits
	<b>Traditional Program</b>	
	<b>Two Years Full Time</b>	
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Advanced Year</b>	
<b>Semester 1</b>		
<b>SOCW 0621</b>	Mental Health & Children	3
<b>SOCW 0643</b>	Advanced Practice with Families	3
<b>SOCW 06xx</b>	Elective (recommend hybrid)	3
<b>SOCW 06xx</b>	Elective	3
<b>SOCW 0661</b>	Advanced Practicum 1	5
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Semester 2</b>		
<b>SOCW 0622</b>	Mental Health & Adults	3
<b>SOCW 0631</b>	Child Welfare Policy	3
<b>SOCW 0642</b>	Advanced Practice with Adults	3
<b>SOCW 06xx</b>	Elective	3
<b>SOCW 0662</b>	Advanced Practicum 2	5
	<b>total credits</b>	<b>17</b>
	<b>total credits for program</b>	<b>66</b>



## Chapter 2

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# MSW Program Information & Policies

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This section of the manual provides students with program information and the policies of the WSU MSW Program. The chapter begins with a list of all faculty and staff in the Department of Social Work. The following policies are presented: Admissions; Probation/Dismissal; Transfer & Life Experience, Advisement; Expectations of Students; & Appeals





# MSW Program Information & Policies

## Chapter Contents

- **Faculty & Staff Information**
- **Admission Policy**
- **Academic Standing Policy**
- **MSW Transfer & Life/Work Experience Policy**
- **Student Academic & Professional Advisement**
- **Expectations for Students Regarding Coursework**
- **Student Responsibilities, Rights & Appeals**

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The following policies also are available at the Department of Social Work webpage which can be found at:

<http://www.westfield.ma.edu/academics/social-work-department/msw-admission-policy>

## **Admission Policy**

### **Admission Process & Requirements:**

Applicants are invited to apply to the Westfield location, the Worcester location or identify a willingness to attend at either location (please specify preferred location in your application). All applicants should follow the following process and meet the described requirements (Specific additional requirements for Advanced Standing applicants are identified)

1. Applicants should obtain an application packet from the MSW Program or the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education.
2. Applicants must have a Bachelor's Degree from a regionally accredited college or university. To apply for **Advanced Standing** the candidate must have a BSW from a CSWE accredited program.
3. Applicants must have an undergraduate degree that included a clear liberal arts base and a firm foundation in the social sciences, government, and human biology. (Applicants should identify their social science, government and human biology courses on the application form. Students who do not meet this requirement may be accepted into the program but will be required to take courses to meet these requirements prior to starting the program.)
4. Applicants need a 2.8 overall undergraduate G.P.A. For **Advanced Standing** candidates, the applicant should also have a 3.0 social work GPA. In extraordinary circumstances both requirements can be waived by the Admission Committee.
5. Applicants need to complete the Graduate Admission form, specifying Traditional MSW program or Advanced Standing MSW Program and whether they would like to be full-time or part-time.

6. Applicants need to have three letters of reference completed, including one academic reference. **Advanced Standing** applicants need to have one of their letters of reference from their BSW Program Director (or his/her designee). A letter from their Field Placement Supervisor is highly recommended.

7. Applicants need to submit a current resume.

8. Applicants need to complete a professional statement that describes:

- ✓ reason(s) for interest in entering the field of social work;
- ✓ assessment of personal strengths and limitations related to the profession;
- ✓ examination of life experiences and relationship of these experiences to career choice. Discuss here evidence of your commitment to aiding people who are oppressed and/or members of vulnerable populations (good examples are prior work, civic or volunteer experiences); and
- ✓ assessment of personal values and congruence of these beliefs with the social work profession's value system (We suggest that you review the NASW Code of Ethics prior to writing the professional statement).

*The personal statement will be evaluated regarding the above material and also will be considered a writing sample to evaluate your ability to express yourself in written form. Applicants who believe that they have extraordinary circumstances regarding the GPA requirements must include their rationale for their request to have the GPA requirement waived.*

*Though human services experience is not required, applicants are strongly encouraged to describe any prior volunteer or work experience in their personal statement and include it on their resume. Professional experience is viewed positively and considered when making decisions regarding admissions and waiving GPA requirements.*

To apply to the MSW Program, applicants should follow the application process described in the Application Process and Requirements outlined in the Graduate Bulletin.



### **Application Deadlines:**

The closing date for receipt of all admission materials is February 1. Applicants whose admission files are not completed by February 1 may not be considered for the academic year which begins the following September. Normally, four to six weeks are required for the School of Social Work to receive transcripts; applicants should therefore make every effort to ensure that all relevant documents are requested well before the deadline date. The Department of Social Work reserves the right to change the closing date for the receipt of application materials. Notice of any deadline extension will be posted on the program's website.

### **Notification of Acceptance**

Notice of acceptance will occur on or about April 15 for study beginning the following September (there are no midyear admissions). Within ten days of receiving notification, accepted applicants must confirm in writing their intention to enroll in the program. Confirmation of acceptance should be mailed or emailed to the Admissions Coordinator, Shelly Janke, at [mhenrichon@westfield.ma.edu](mailto:mhenrichon@westfield.ma.edu).

### **MSW Admission Committee**

The policy of the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education is that applicants' qualifications are reviewed by individual departments as well as by the Dean of the College of Graduate and Continuing Education. Criteria used in weighing each application include: undergraduate grade point average, professional training, references, standardized test scores as well as the individual's narrative statement.

All MSW admission decisions at the department level are made by the "MSW Social Work Admission and Academic Standing Committee." This committee is comprised of a minimum of **three social work faculty including the MSW Program Director.**

The committee will recommend to the Dean of CGCE whether a student should be accepted or rejected.

The college and the social work program maintain and promote a policy of nondiscrimination against any person on the basis of race, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, political orientation, veteran status, marital status, or sexual orientation.

## **Academic Standing Policy**

**This policy is in effect but also is under review and will be updated during the 2019-2020 Academic Year**

On rare occasion students may demonstrate difficulties in their academic and field performance in their program. In some instances where student demonstrate these difficulties, it may be necessary to place a student of either the BSW or the MSW programs on probation or dismiss a student from a program. While referrals to the ARC often originate from classroom performance or field placement performance, all reasons for review are classified as academic. The WSU Department of Social Work defines the entire learning experience that prepares one to be a social worker as an academic process and any reason for probation or dismissal is an academic issue. The academic process in social work includes but is not limited to academic achievement, development of professional skills, and adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics.

Some potential reasons for probation or dismissal include:

- violation of the social work ethics as outlined in the NASW Social Work Code of Ethics; breaking a law in an agency related matter or conviction of a felony during course of study (the discovery of a conviction prior to the student's admission to the program which the student did not make the program aware of will also be considered grounds for action)
- evidence in school or field placement of substance abuse, dependency, or illegal use of drugs while enrolled in the program;
- a serious breach of a field agency's policies;
- a hostile or resistant attitude towards learning or supervision;
- inappropriate or disruptive behavior towards colleagues, faculty, and staff at school or at the field placement;
- failure to carry out one's assignments in an agency or classroom setting; behavior that is emotionally or physically detrimental to clients;
- failure to receive a required minimum grade in a student's program and failure to retain the program's minimum GPA.
- demonstrated lack of insight into one's performance problems
- failure to take responsibility for field or classroom problems

## **Academic Concerns Identification, Review & Tracking**

When faculty or staff develop a concern about a student's academic performance, they are ethically required to present these concerns to the student. The Department utilizes a form for sharing these concerns and for documenting the process of sharing the concerns. The student has the opportunity to write a response and have that included in the record.

### **“Academic Performance Concerns” form**

Purpose of “Academic Performance Concerns” Form:

This form is used to document faculty and staff concerns around a student's academic performance; the student's response to the concern; and the follow up plan for the concern if warranted. The form once completed is kept on file in the Student's Department of Social Work file..

Procedure for “Academic Performance Concerns” Form:

- Form is completed by faculty/staff including a clear and specific description of the concern and remediation plan if warranted.
- Form is reviewed with student who signs the form to acknowledge receipt and review.
- Student may write a response and include it with the form.
- If the student does not respond within 7 days, the form is forwarded to the appropriate program director without the signature. Failure to sign will be noted on the form.
- If in the opinion of the faculty/staff member the seriousness of the report warrants, he/she may refer the issue for review by the appropriate Program Committee (BSW or MSW)
- In the case where in the judgment of the Program Committee the incident is more serious or is a repeat event and requires further action, the form is routed to the ARC Chair who convenes the committee.
- In all cases, the form is filed in student's departmental file

## Academic Review Committee (ARC)

Purpose of Committee: The committee is charged with reviewing the academic standing of students (BSW & MSW) when issues around academic performance require a formal review. The committee has the ability to require a plan of action for improvement (probation), may remove the student from the program (dismissal), or may have no finding of issues around academic standing.

### Committee Membership:

- The committee will be comprised of four department faculty members appointed to the committee by the Chair and should represent both BSW & MSW Programs,
- Committee members serve a two year term with member terms staggered.
- ARC student reviews require that three members of the committee are in attendance.
- The reporting faculty member is exempt from serving on the committee if a member of the ARC.

### Committee Procedure:

- The Program Director will notify the Committee Chair of the referral to ARC committee.
- The ARC Chair will notify all department faculty/field instructor (if relevant)/staff of the referral and give all the opportunity to supply the committee with pertinent information in writing and request the opportunity to attend the hearing. The referring faculty will attend the hearing.
- All written material and list of attendees for the hearing will be provided to the committee members and student prior to the meeting for their review.
- If the student wishes to have additional information included in the hearing he/she may submit information in writing to the chair of the ARC for distribution and inclusion at the meeting.
- The committee will convene a meeting to review the referral and to determine what background data needs to be gathered. This should include all “Academic Performance Concerns” forms and input from referring faculty,

- The Chair schedules all dates for meetings. All attendees will be given a minimum of 3 days notice of a meeting.
- The initial meeting with the student will be held within 14 working days of the referral.
- The committee will review all relevant information (talk with advisor, field liaison, faculty, etc.)
- The student may request an advocate who is a member of the WSU learning community attend the meeting (relatives and legal counsel are not allowed)
- The ARC Chair will be in contact with the student prior to the committee meeting to provide an orientation to the process. This can be completed in person, via phone, or electronically.
- The committee will meet with the student, and interested parties and then deliberates. A decision will not be made immediately after the meeting.
- Committee makes a determination of “no action required”, “probation” or “dismissal” and may define a time limited plan of action or probation plan.
- The committee will report their determination in writing to the student, the MSW and/or BSW Director, and the Department Chair within 5 business days of the meeting. A copy of the determination will be placed in the student’s department file. The committee will inform the student of their rights regarding appeals including the timelines for appeals (see Student Manual for Policy)
- The ARC Chair will meet with the referring program committee to review findings and plan at the request of the program committee.
- All plans will be monitored by either the BSW or MSW committee as routine agenda items during subsequent meetings. When resolved the appropriate program committee will send a final report to the ARC and file the report in the student’s department file.
- Continued issues with the student around the plan will be referred back to the ARC via a written referral with a copy placed in the student’s department file.

## **Student Rights**

### Confidentiality

Student rights guaranteed under FERPA will be respected during this process and in regard to all paper work completed as a part of this process. All records will be held in the student's Social Work Department file only.

### Appeals

If a student feels he/she was unfairly treated during any part of the Academic Standing process, she/he has the right to have his/her situation reviewed through the academic appeals process. For details on appeals the student is referred to the section titled "Student Responsibilities, Rights, and Appeals" in either the BSW or MSW Program Manuals based on the student's program (approved 1/26/16).

## **Leave of Absence**

A student can request a leave of absence from the program due to personal reasons. The request has to be made in writing to the MSW Program Director, attaching a completed Leave of Absence Form. Upon review, the MSW Program Director may grant a 1 year leave of absence. The student is responsible for reviewing and following the terms of the leave, including contacting the MSW Program Director and Director of Field Education (when applicable), by the date agreed upon in the approved leave of absence.

Failure to do so, may jeopardize the student's ability to resume their program of study as agreed upon in the leave of absence agreement. A leave of absence will also result in an adjustment to the student's original program of study.

## **Modifications to Programs of Study, POS**

A student's program of study may be modified as a result of:

1. an approved leave of absence (automatic modification)
2. upon request, review and approval by the MSW Program Director

To request a modification of a POS, the student needs to submit a written request to the MSW Program Director. Upon review and approval of the request, the MSW Program Director may modify the POS. The student needs to sign and return the new POS to the MSW Program Director; otherwise, the modifications will not be implemented.

## **MSW Transfer & Life/Work Experience Credit Policy**

This policy will outline the program's policy and procedures regarding the acceptance of transfer credits and credit for life/work experience.

### Transfer Policy & Procedures

The following policy is designed to avoid redundancy in students' academic experience but maintain the integrity of the MSW Social Work program and follow the DGCE Policy for graduate transfer credits at WSU. The policy is designed to insure that graduates possess appropriate knowledge, values and ethics, and skills to practice social work upon graduation.

The MSW Program follows the WSU Graduate Transfer Policy which states:

Up to six (6) semester hours of prior graduate credit may be accepted in transfer from one or more regionally accredited graduate schools toward a Master's degree. To be accepted, such courses must be appropriate to your Program of Study and must be approved by your program advisor. Transfer coursework may not have been counted toward a prior degree. After matriculation, students may not take courses at other institutions for the purpose of transfer. Transfer courses must carry a grade of B (3.0) or better and must be both relevant to your program of study and taken within the program's six-year time frame (seven-year time frame for Psychology programs). Courses graded Pass/Fail are not acceptable for program credit. Official transcripts for transfer consideration must be sent directly from the transfer institution to the DGCE Office.

Specific to the MSW Program, students may apply to have previous MSW courses (maximum of 6 credits) from a CSWE accredited MSW program accepted toward the MSW Program. The program requires that courses have equivalent content to the WSU program. Students are required to submit their request in writing as part of their application to the MSW Program. The program director may request a copy of the course syllabus. All requests will be reviewed by the program faculty for equivalence status. Students are informed in writing of the program's decision.

If a student feels he/she was unfairly treated during the process of requesting transfer credits count toward the social work liberal arts foundation courses or social work major courses she/he has the right to have his/her situation reviewed, see the "Student Responsibilities, Rights, and Appeals" for appeals procedures.

## Credit for Life/Work Experience Policy

It is the policy of the MSW Program at WSU to not accept or offer credits for life or work experience in the transfer process or while a student is in the program.

## **Student Academic and Professional Advisement**

### Description and Purpose

Advisement of MSW students is provided by the full time social work faculty. Advisement is a process that should occur every semester as part of the preregistration process for the following semester. Advisement is a time where the student and advisor review the student's progress toward graduation including looking at overall credits and completion of the MSW Program. Beyond these traditional advisement issues, advisement in social work also includes looking at student's interests in the field for the purpose of exploring possible field placements, and possible work opportunities at graduation. Finally, advisement attempts to aid students in exploring whether or not Social Work is a good professional fit with their interests, values and career plans.

### Preparation Process

1. At the beginning of the advisement period listed on the college's calendar, the student should obtain a copy of the "DGCE Course Catalogue" booklet.
2. At the beginning of the advisement period the student should make an appointment with her/his academic advisor. Advising can happen face-to-face, via phone, via video conferencing (e.g.: Skype Face Time, etc.), via instant messaging or via email. The decision for the mode of advising is based on the student's needs and preferences. Your advisor is listed on your "Program of Study" and can be found on the list posted outside of the Social Work Office Suite in Mod Hall.
3. In preparation for the advising appointment, the student should review their current "DegreeWorks" evaluation in myWestfield and review their "Program of Study" for their plan for completing the MSW Program. From these documents and the "DGCE Course Catalogue" booklet the student should develop a tentative schedule for the following semester. Finally the student should develop a list of questions for his/her advisor about field placements, work opportunities, or other professional issues in social work he/she would like to discuss with the advisor.

## Expectations for Students Regarding Coursework

### Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is expected of all members of the academic community. Academic dishonesty includes cheating on examinations, plagiarism, fabrication, multiple submissions of a single paper, interference with use of materials, facilitating academic dishonesty, improper use of human and animal subjects, and failure to report incidents of academic dishonesty. Violations may result in failure of the assignment, failure of the course, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university.

Intentional and unintentional violations of the Academic Honesty policy are prohibited. Students are responsible to ensure they do not purposely or accidentally misrepresent another's work as their own. The following links provide some guidance to avoiding accidental misrepresentations (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/03/>) and properly citing legitimate references to work that is not one's own (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/2/>).

Violations of the Academic Honesty policy are often related to challenges students are having conceptualizing, researching and preparing academic papers. The University has resources available to help you with this work. The Westfield State University Reading and Writing Center is available to support you in your studies (<http://www.westfield.ma.edu/prospective-students/academics/academic-resources/reading-writing-center/>).

You also have access to SmartThinking, a national online service that allows you to receive feedback for your draft assignments from professors outside the University (<http://cit.westfield.ma.edu/smarthinking/>). **Most importantly, you should contact your professor if an assignment or other expectation is unclear.**

The complete Westfield State University Academic Honesty Policy, which defines plagiarism, fabrication and all other violations of the policy, can be accessed at <http://www.wsc.ma.edu/prospective-students/campus-life/student-handbook/academic-life/academic-honesty-policy>.

### Guidelines for Written Work

Formal written assignments should follow APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition style. Please note that APA style guidelines include expectations for: titles, headings, page numbers, font, and margins. There are several excellent guides for APA style including <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1> and the Westfield library website.

Assignments must be submitted (*in hard copy, via Plato's Assignment drop box*) by the due date indicated on the course syllabus. Late assignments will result in (*state your policy here*)

If submitted electronically, the filename should include your name and the assignment name (for example, use *smiths assign1.docx* rather than *assign1.docx*).

All written work must be edited for spelling and grammatical errors. You may use the Reading and Writing Center at any stage in your writing process. To make an appointment, enter this link <http://www.rich17.com/wsc/> or visit the center in 218 Parenzo Hall. You may also use the online tutoring resources, Smart Thinking.

Sources used for written work should be reasonably current and reflect reliable and appropriate resources. Most of your sources should be from: professional peer reviewed journal articles, major newspapers, professional association and/or the reports from government agencies. These sources can be found by utilizing the library databases including Social Work Abstracts, PsychINFO, PsychARTICLES, LexusNexus and EBSCO Host.

### Exams

Make up exams are scheduled due to medical reasons for students who provide documentation of the medical issues. Other make up exams are at the discretion of individual instructors.



## Language and Classroom Etiquette

Cell phones and web-enabled devices have become a part of our daily lives and standards concerning their usage are an important part of developing a classroom community. If you utilize a web enabled device (laptop or iPad) to take notes during class, read powerpoint slides, access course readings, or complete in class activities, the use of the device should be limited to these function only, unless the faculty directs you to use it for another function. Class time is not a time to update social media sites or send emails and text messages. Cell phones should be silenced during class, and stored out of sight. In case of a family emergency such as a sick child, inform me before start of class and set your device to vibrate, and sit near the classroom door so that you can leave to take your call without disrupting the class.

## Attendance and Participation

In accordance with WSU policy, attendance at each class is expected. Poor attendance or participation will be reflected in your course grade. You must call or e-mail the instructor if you have to miss class. If a student misses a course session it is their responsibility to collect information about missed material from a peer in the course *and* to complete any work assigned during the missed course session. It is not the responsibility of the instructor to inform the student of work assigned during the missed class period. Assigned readings should be completed in advance of class and familiarity with the readings should be reflected in participation in in-class and online discussions and exercises. Makeup papers are only allowed for students with an approved excuse. Incomplete grades are given on rare occasions when the student is near completion of the course and is unable to complete the assignments before the end of the semester due to an approved reason. The student must contact the instructor before grades are submitted at the end of the semester to request an "I".

## **Student Responsibilities, Rights, and Appeals**

All social work students are expected to follow and are protected by the academic and non-academic policies of the college (for detailed list of policies and procedures see the "Graduate Catalogue." Students have the right and responsibility to be involved in the formulation and modification of academic and student affairs policies generally in the college and specifically in the MSW Program. Methods for involvement in campus policy are outlined in the student handbook and occur through student government. Social Work students are involved in setting and modifying program policy through student representatives on the MSW Curriculum Committee, involvement in the MSW Student Organization who are regularly asked for program feedback, and a general invitation to discuss any issues with the MSW Program Director. Finally, social work students are expected to follow the NASW Code of Ethics.

Students have the right to be protected by due process and may question and appeal decisions made regarding their education at WSU. This may include questioning a grade or a committee decision regarding their academic standing. Prior to appealing a grade, a decision of a faculty member regarding academic honesty, a decision of the Dean, or a decision made by the Admissions and Academic Standing Committee, students are urged to meet with the MSW Program Director to discuss their concerns. The formal appeals processes available to students follow.

## Nondiscrimination Policy

1. In compliance with Westfield State University's policy and federal law, all faculty are available to discuss appropriate accommodations that you may require. Requests for academic accommodations should be made during the 'add/drop' period, unless there are unusual circumstances, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Students who are seeking accommodations must register with the Banacos Center for disability verification and determination of reasonable academic accommodations. For details, please refer to the disability resource office at <http://www.westfield.ma.edu/prospective-students/academics/academic-resources/disability-services/>

2. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my language use in the classroom.

3. It is a requirement by the Council on Social Work Education that all social work schools and programs prepare students to "practice without discrimination, with respect [for], and knowledge and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation." *Each instructor must insert a statement of how the course seeks to fulfill this requirement as related to the course description.*

### **Appealing a Grade**

Appeals of grades should begin with discussing the concerns with the instructor and should follow the CGCE process. See Chapter 3 of this Handbook or the CGCE Graduate Catalogue.

### **Appealing a Decision of the Academic Review Committee**

Appeals regarding decisions made by the Social Work Department Academic Review Committee (ARC) regarding program probation/dismissal are handled by the Appeals Committee of the Department of Social Work. This committee is made up of two non-faculty members of the Campus Community, the Department Chair, the BSW Program Director and the MSW Program Director. The committee members will follow the following procedures:

1. Students who wish to appeal a decision made by the ARC must submit their request for an appeal in writing to the Department Chair within 14 days of being notified by the ARC of the decision.
2. The Department Chair will schedule a hearing with the Appeals Subcommittee within 30 days of the request for an appeal.
3. The appeals hearing will include the student requesting the appeal, an advocate for the student (a faculty member, another student, a field

instructor, or a college employee are allowed, friends, family, or legal counsel are not allowed), and the committee members.

4. All written materials parties wish to have considered at the hearing needs to be submitted to the Department Chair no less than 2 business days before the hearing to allow distribution of the material to all parties.
5. The hearing is chaired by the Subcommittee Chair who is elected by the Subcommittee members. The hearing is conducted in an informal manner allowing parties the opportunity to present information and ask questions.
6. After all parties have been allowed to present information and ask questions, they will leave the hearing room to allow the committee time to deliberate.
7. All parties will be notified in writing of the Subcommittee's decision within 5 days of the hearing.
8. Parties who wish to appeal the decision of the Appeals Subcommittee have the right to appeal their decision through the college's academic appeals process. Appeals of decisions regarding the Social Work Appeals Subcommittee should be submitted in writing within 7 days of the hearing committee's decision to the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education.



## Chapter 3

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# CGCE Information & Policies

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This section of the manual is from the CGCE Graduate handbook. The entire handbook is available at the [WSU CGCE website](#).





# DGCE

## Information, Policies and Procedures

### Chapter Contents:

- Graduate School Information
- Graduate School Costs & Financial Assistance
- Admission
- Academic Policies and Procedures
- Regulations & Procedures

For more information on CGCE Policies, Procedures and Programs or to review upcoming semester schedules visit the CGCE website at the following url:

<http://www.westfield.ma.edu/academics/continuing-education-massachusetts>

## GRADUATE SCHOOL INFORMATION

### The Graduate Council

Constituted in accordance with the Agreement between the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education and The Massachusetts Teachers Association/ Massachusetts State College Association, the Graduate Council serves the college as the governance body charged with oversight of graduate programs and graduate curricula. The Graduate Council of Westfield State University reviews programs and proposals, reports and recommends changes of course requirements, addition of new courses, and the revision or retirement of existing courses within the graduate curricula. The Council is comprised of five faculty members, three administrators and one graduate student.

### Accreditation

Westfield State University is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Westfield's teacher licensure programs are accredited by the State Department of Education, Bureau of Teacher Certification and initial licensure programs are accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Graduate teacher education programs hold provisional accreditation by NCATE. Massachusetts is a member of the Interstate Certification Compact.

Westfield State University has a BSW Program and an MSW Program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

### Memberships

Northeastern Association of Graduate Schools, Association of Graduate Deans of Northeastern State Colleges, American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, New England Conference on Graduate Education, The Council of Graduate Schools in the United States, the Association for Continuing Higher Education, Learning Resource Network, College Board Adult Learning Network and the Council on Adult and Experiential Learning.

# GRADUATE SCHOOL COSTS AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

## Expenses and Fees

Course costs are based on the number of credits per course. All payments must be made by bank money order, postal money order, cashier's check, personal check, Discover, MasterCard, VISA, or American Express. No cash is accepted unless it is \$10 or under for official transcripts, course descriptions, etc. Costs below are current as of the publication date of this catalog and are subject to change.

Student I.D. Card	\$10.00 (for your first - replacements cost \$30.00)
Graduate Tuition and Fees	\$475.00/credit* for MSW
Audit	\$50.00/credit
Early Payment Discount	\$50.00 per semester: if payment received within published timeframe - cannot be combined with other discounts/tuition waivers
Delayed Payment Fee	\$100.00 per semester
Late Registration Fee	\$50.00
Late Withdrawal Fee	\$25.00 per course
Consequences of non-payment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$100 late payment fee applied to account if payment not received within 5 days of registration</li> <li>• Placement in Administrative Withdrawal (no release of: grades, transcripts or diplomas and no future course enrollments)</li> <li>• Student accounts submitted to a Collection Agent will be charged an additional 20% of their unpaid balance.</li> </ul>
Mandatory Health Insurance (3/4 time-6.75 crs. or more) changes with semester-see registration form **	
Returned Check Fee	25.00
Application to Degree Program	50.00
Commencement Fee	75.00

\* Tuition waivers are based on \$105.00/GR credit-tuition waiver forms must be submitted at time of registration for waiver credits; retroactive credit is not allowed

\*\* May be waived online: [www.universityhealthplans.com](http://www.universityhealthplans.com) - excludes online courses

## Delayed Payment

The College of Graduate and Continuing Education offers a “delayed payment” program for matriculated students that allows for payment of tuition over a period of time during the semester. Students must meet the following requirements to participate in the program:

- 1 Matriculation in a degree program through the College of Graduate and Continuing Education.
- 2 Application to Delayed Payment Program and payment of processing fee (non-refundable).
- 3 Ability to pay within 60 days of registering into a regular semester and within three weeks into any summer semester. First payment due at time of registration & includes the \$100 non-refundable fee. The remaining payments are as follows: Fall: Last Friday in September and October Spring: Last Friday in February and March Summer: Midpoint in term
- 4 Students must follow all regulations regarding withdrawals as stated in the College's refund and withdrawal policy, and are responsible for total payment even if students withdraw before the end of the semester and regardless of grades achieved.
- 5 No student may apply for delayed payment who has been sent to a Collection Agent or placed in Administrative Withdrawal.
- 6 Consequences of non-payment:
  - \$100 late payment fee applied to account
  - Placement in Administrative Withdrawal (no grades, transcripts or diplomas will be released and students may not register for further classes at the University until their obligation has been satisfied.)

- Student accounts turned over to a Collection Agent will be charged an additional 20% of their unpaid balance.

### **Financial Aid**

- Information regarding all forms of financial aid for Westfield State University students and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) are available at the Student Administrative Services Center, 577 Western Avenue (first floor west). For further information, please call (413) 572-5218. Please note that Financial Aid administered by the university, regardless of the funding source, requires that students are matriculated into a program and are in good academic standing.
- Please Note: Due to sequestration, it is possible that the terms of the Federal Direct Loan programs could change for each academic year.

### **Federal Subsidized Loan**

- ❖ Need-based, long-term federal loan, for which the Federal government will pay the interest while students are enrolled, as well as during the deferment periods.
- ❖ FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) must be filed to determine eligibility. Available to students who demonstrate financial aid need.
- ❖ Repayment of both principle and interest begins six months after a student graduates, withdraws, or drops below half-time enrollment.
- ❖

### **Federal Unsubsidized Loan Program**

- ❖ Federal Loan available to students regardless of calculated need.
- ❖ Interest begins to accrue immediately and accumulates during deferment periods. Paying toward interest while the student is enrolled is optional, but advised.

### **Graduate Assistantships**

Graduate Assistantships are awarded through the College of Graduate and Continuing Education to students who have superior academic records, who are matriculated in a graduate degree program, and are registered for a minimum of six semester hours with preference to full-time study (9-12 semester hours).

The assistantships are designed to serve the needs of the university's graduate programs and to assist in the development of the student. The duties of the graduate student may be to assist in instruction, research or administrative duties and will vary according to the department's individual needs. Graduate Assistants contribute to specific programs and serve the Graduate Division, as well. Applications are available in the Graduate Office (577 Western Ave, first floor east) and the application deadline is listed in each semester's catalog.

Appointments to assistantships are made during the Fall and Spring semesters. Half-time assistantships carry a \$1,000 stipend and up to 6 credits of tuition and instructional fees per semester; full-time assistantships provide a stipend of \$2,000 and 9-12 credits of tuition and instructional fees per semester. In the first case, the student works 7-8 hours per week and must register for at least six (6) credits per semester. In the second case, the graduate student contributes 14-16 hours per week to the assigned department and must take a minimum of nine (9) credits per semester. Graduate Assistants pay registration and educational service fees.



## ADMISSION

Each graduate degree offered by the school represents a different level of achievement. The Master's degree is the first degree beyond the Bachelor's degree. Each Master's program is designed to develop in-depth knowledge of a particular field of graduate study. Concentration programs offer in-depth study of specific licensure areas in Education. Master of Education programs combine academic disciplines with graduate study in pedagogy appropriate for obtaining initial or professional licensure.

### Matriculation

Matriculated students are those who have been admitted to a graduate program at Westfield State University. Formal application as a candidate for a graduate degree is a requirement for all degrees conferred by the University. If you intend to work toward a degree, you should apply as soon as possible. **A maximum of six (6) Westfield State University credits taken prior to acceptance may be applied toward your degree program upon request and approval. Advising is recommended.**

The application process for matriculation into a degree program is coordinated by the College of Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE) using the criteria below (**please see departmental requirements, as criteria may differ**).

Acceptance requires a satisfactory undergraduate G.P.A., (>2.8 overall or a 3.0 G.P.A. for the last two years of undergraduate studies), a satisfactory score on required standardized test.

Once your application is in process, you may take an additional three credits (generally, one course) at WSU using the Pending Application Waiver form. This form requires the signatures of the program advisor, department chairperson, and CGCE Dean, and is available at the College of Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE) office. Once you have been granted a waiver, we ask that you complete your application within the next semester. Keep in mind, however, that a **maximum of nine (9) Westfield State University credits appropriate to the degree sought may be applied toward a graduate degree prior to your acceptance into a program.**

### Transfer Credit

Up to six (6) semester hours of prior graduate credit may be accepted in transfer from one or more regionally accredited graduate schools toward a Master's degree. To be accepted, such courses must be appropriate to your Program of Study and must be approved by your program advisor. Transfer coursework may not have been counted toward a prior degree. After matriculation, students may not take courses at other institutions for the purpose of transfer. Transfer courses must carry a grade of B (3.0) or better and must be both relevant to your program of study and taken within the program's six-year time frame (seven-year time frame for Psychology programs). Courses graded Pass/Fail are not acceptable for program credit. Official transcripts for transfer consideration must be sent directly from the transfer institution to the DGCE Office.

EXCEPTIONS TO THESE POLICIES FOR EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES MUST BE APPROVED BY THE COLLEGE'S DEAN.

# ACADEMIC POLICES AND PROCEDURES

## Academic Advising

The staff and faculty of Westfield State University Graduate Studies office understand and respect the concerns and needs that many adults have about pursuing a graduate degree. We emphasize the importance of good advising to both new students and students who are at various stages of their Master's degree or C.A.G.S. curriculum.

Upon admission into an academic graduate program, you are assigned a major advisor. It is your responsibility to arrange an appointment with the advisor as soon as you are admitted to graduate study to outline your Program of Study, taking into consideration previous work and your objectives. Although your advisor will assist you in planning your program, **you must assume responsibility for knowing and meeting the curriculum requirements of your program.**

Because we are strongly committed to counseling support as an integral component of our educational programs, we encourage you to contact your advisor prior to your first registration or as early as possible during your first term. We are eager to help orient you to our programs and services and to help you develop sound educational plans that will suit your reasons for returning to school and your unique concerns.

## Academic Integrity

### Statement

Graduate programs build upon the levels of knowledge and competence acquired at the undergraduate level and prepare students to enter into a community of scholars. Academic freedom, a fundamental component of the production of knowledge in higher education, depends upon integrity. The academic community adheres to a tradition of academic integrity designed to protect the integrity of its collective scholarship. Graduate and post-baccalaureate students are responsible for understanding and adhering to this tradition. While academic integrity is expected of all students, Westfield State University holds graduate students to a higher standard. Any graduate student

or post-baccalaureate student who violates this academic integrity policy may be subject to immediate dismissal from the University.

The purpose of the Graduate Academic Integrity Policy is to provide a clear statement of expectations on academic integrity and a fair process to handle alleged violations involving graduate students. Graduate and post-baccalaureate students are responsible for understanding and following this policy.

### 1. Underlying Principles

A. Academic integrity, a necessary foundation of a learning community, is expected of all members of the university community. Academic freedom depends on integrity. The university makes academic integrity a priority and takes seriously any allegations of potential violations.

B. Maintaining the standards of academic integrity requires the mutual cooperation of all members of the campus community. Both students and faculty/librarians are called upon to promote the pursuit of truth and learning, and respect for the intellectual accomplishment of others. Students are responsible for understanding the principles of academic integrity and for the academic integrity of all work submitted for credit. All members of the academic community are also expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the faculty member teaching the course or the graduate program faculty chair/administrator for the College of Graduate and Continuing Education (hereinafter referred to as “graduate program chair”). In addition to the entire community’s responsibility, faculty will promote academic integrity through clear expectations stated on the course syllabus for homework, collaborative assignments, research papers, exams, use of the internet, and so on. If any member of the academic community finds evidence of a violation of academic integrity, they are expected to report it promptly (see process and deadlines below).

C. Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy are unacceptable and are subject to academic penalties, including reduced grade, failure of the course, and suspension or dismissal from the university.

D. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating on academic assessments, plagiarism, fabrication, submission of papers for credit in two or more courses, interference with the ability of other students to make use of permitted course materials, facilitating another’s violation of academic integrity, engaging in research on human or animal subjects without

permission from the appropriate campus committee, and failure to report academic integrity violations.

E. Once a student has been charged with a formal violation of this policy, no sanctions will be applied until the conclusion of Graduate Education Council proceedings and no degree will be awarded until the matter is resolved. Withdrawal from the course or the university may not be used to avoid a sanction for violating academic integrity or a formal charge thereof.

F. Parties involved in this process, including the student, faculty member, Department chair, graduate program faculty administrator, the Dean of the College of Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE Dean), and the Graduate Education Council, shall maintain strict confidentiality during and after this process.

## 2. Violations

The following examples represent a partial list of serious breaches of academic integrity:

A. Cheating on Academic Assessments, inclusive of but not limited to examinations

Violations of academic integrity with regard to academic assessment may include the following:

- i. Receiving unauthorized assistance or assisting others while an assessment is in progress.
- ii. Obtaining or attempting to obtain, prior to an assessment, copies of the assessment or the questions to appear on the assessment.
- iii. Disseminating any written or verbal information regarding the contents of an assessment to students who have not yet completed or taken the assessment.
- iv. Using or consulting any unauthorized information, electronic devices, notes, books, etc., during an academic assessment.

B. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting the intellectual work of others (works, ideas, artwork, computer programming code, etc.) as if it were one's own work. Some common forms of plagiarism are submitting someone else's paper

as one's own, copying a passage from another source without citing the source, and expressing a published idea or theory in different words without crediting the source of the idea. Plagiarism constitutes a violation of academic integrity and a theft of intellectual property. Plagiarism is a very serious charge in academia, for it undermines the integrity of academic inquiry and scholarship. All students and professional scholars are to be held to the same standards. Issues of plagiarism may be subtle; therefore, students are encouraged to discuss any questions they have with the faculty member teaching the course and other support services on campus.

C. Fabrication

Students may not fabricate - that is, falsify or invent - information or citations included in any academic assignment. This includes falsifying information used in laboratory experiments or reports and misidentifying the source of a quotation or idea (i.e., citing a book or article as the source of a quotation or idea when the quotation or idea was cited by the author(s) of the book or article source as taken from another source).

D. Multiple Submissions of a Single Paper

Students may not submit the same paper, presentation, or other work for credit in more than one course without prior written consent from the instructors of the courses involved.

E. Interference with Use of Materials

A student may not interfere with the ability of other students to make use of permitted course materials. This includes denying others access to scholarly resources or deliberately interfering with the progress of another student or scholar such as by giving false or misleading information, making library materials unavailable by stealing or defacing books or journals, deliberately misplacing or destroying reserve materials, or altering computer files that belong to another.

F. Facilitating Violations of Academic Integrity

Students may not knowingly or negligently allow their work to be used by another student or otherwise help others violate any aspect of the Academic Integrity Policy. Students who are suspected of such acts may be charged with a violation of academic integrity even if they do not personally benefit from the dishonest act.

## G. Improper Use of Human and Animal Subjects

Research involving human beings requires review and approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. Such research requires informed written consent. Students and faculty engaged in research involving animals must seek review and approval by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Council (IACUC).

## H. Failure to Report Violations of Academic Integrity

Students failing to report violations of academic integrity to the faculty member teaching the course or graduate program faculty administrator may be charged with a violation of academic integrity and are liable to the sanctions herein.

### 3. Recommended Syllabus Text

It is recommended that instructors discuss academic integrity on the first day of class and include the following text in their syllabus:

Academic integrity is expected of all members of the academic community. Academic integrity may include but is not limited to: cheating on examinations, plagiarism, fabrication, multiple submissions of a single paper, interference with others' access to materials, facilitating violations of academic integrity, improper use of human and animal subjects, and failure to report violations of academic integrity. Violations may result in failure of the assignment, failure of the course, or suspension or dismissal from the university. Students are encouraged to complete academic integrity trainings available through the WSU Ely Library. <http://lib.westfield.ma.edu/home>

### 4. The Role of the Graduate Education Council

A. The Graduate Education Council (GEC) shall stand as the governing body in the graduate academic integrity process.

B. The GEC is charged with evaluating evidence, determining responsibility, and deciding sanctions. All evidence and deliberations before the GEC are confidential.

### 5. Process for Charges of Violating Academic Integrity Policies

The faculty member will notify the student of the alleged violation in person or by telephone, email, or other appropriate means. The notification must include documentation of the date of discovery and should allow the student

the opportunity to discuss the allegations (either in person or by telephone, email, or other appropriate means) within ten (10) business days. Either the student or the faculty member may invite the graduate program chair, another appropriate senior faculty member, or CGCE Dean to be present during the discussion, but neither is required to do so.

A. Withdrawal from the course or the university may not be used to avoid a sanction for academic integrity violations or a formal charge thereof. A student may not avoid the charge by refusing to respond to the faculty. If a student fails to respond to faculty, a formal charge with hearing may commence.

B. Faculty members are encouraged to discuss and document the alleged violation with the student. The outcome of the discussion shall result in one of the three findings, as follows:

i. Warning: An agreement by the faculty member and the student that the violation does not merit a formal charge.

ii. Formal Charge Without Hearing: An agreement by the faculty member and student that an academic integrity violation did occur and the student's acceptance of the sanction as imposed by the faculty member, resulting in a formal charge but no hearing.

iii. Formal Charge with Hearing: The student and faculty member dispute the allegations of the academic integrity violation, and results in the filing of a formal charge and a hearing with the GEC.

C. If the faculty member and the student agree during their discussions that the violation does not rise to the level of a formal charge, the matter is ended when the student receives a documented Warning and must sign the form included at the end of this policy. The form will be filed with the CGCE Dean and placed in the student's CGCE file. In addition, a copy of the Academic Integrity Report form will be forwarded to the graduate program chair and filed with the Department. Along with the documented Warning, the faculty member will discuss the Academic Integrity Policy with the student and may elect a course of action that could include repeating the assignment, completing additional work, such as library tutorial about academic integrity, accepting a grade penalty for the assignment or the course, or agreeing to some other settlement. If the Warning also includes a subsequent course of action, this should be noted on the form included at the end of this policy.

D. If the faculty member and the student agree that an academic integrity violation did occur, the student must sign the form included at the end of this policy admitting to the violation of the policy and accepting the sanction stated on the form. The faculty member and CGCE chair also must sign the form. The form will be filed with the CGCE Dean and placed in the student's CGCE file. In addition, a copy of the Academic Integrity Report form will be forwarded to the graduate program chair and filed with the Department. If the faculty member and the student agree that an academic integrity violation did occur, the faculty member cannot impose a sanction greater than failure of the course.

E. If the student and faculty member do not agree that a violation of the Academic Integrity policy occurred, the faculty member must file a formal charge of an academic integrity violation with the CGCE Dean within fifteen (15) business days from the date the student and faculty member reached an impasse, which sets in motion the hearing process. The faculty member may not issue sanctions without admission of a violation by the student or a finding by the GEC that an academic integrity violation did occur. Included in the charges will be a letter of explanation and all case materials that document or led to the charges. Charges may be filed against students who facilitate or engage in violations of academic integrity even if they are not enrolled in the class in which the violation takes place.

F. The CGCE Dean will schedule a hearing to take place within fifteen (15) business days of the formal filing of the charge. No hearings will be held between June 1 and August 31, or between the end of the fall and the beginning of the spring semesters. At any point in the process the student may admit the violation as charged or the faculty member may withdraw the charges.

G. The student charged will receive notification from the CGCE Dean of the date, time and place of the hearing; the source and nature of the charge; a list of the GEC members; and the possible sanctions. Evidence to be submitted at the hearing by the faculty member bringing the charge must be available at least five (5) business days prior to the hearing for review by the student in the College of Graduate and Continuing Education.

H. At the hearing, at least five (5) members of the GEC, including a student member, must be present to establish a quorum. Those members of the GEC present at the hearing will hereafter be referred to as the Hearing Council. Of these five members, no less than three must be faculty and one must be the

GEC student representative. If the GEC student representative is in the same program or otherwise familiar with the student accused of academic integrity, the CGCE Dean shall appoint a different student to serve as representative. Likewise, no GEC member directly involved in the case, such as the faculty bringing charges against a student, graduate program administrator, student advisor, etc., shall serve on the Hearing Council. The hearing will be a closed meeting and may be attended by the faculty member, the student charged, and the CGCE Dean as well as by members of the Hearing Council. The student and presenting faculty member may each be accompanied by one person of his or her choice. This person may be present to advise and counsel his or her respective party, but may not represent said party to the GEC or serve as legal counsel. If the student charged and/or the faculty member making the charge choose not to participate, the hearing will proceed as scheduled.

I. The Dean will convene the hearing. The charge will be presented, along with relevant evidence and witnesses. In the case of team-taught classes, one of the teaching faculty members should be responsible for presenting charges. The student has an opportunity to respond to the charge and present evidence. The student, faculty member making the charge, and Hearing Council members may ask questions. The hearing will conclude with optional closing statements by the faculty member bringing the charge and then by the student charged, if both parties are present.

J. Immediately following the hearing, the Hearing Council and the Dean will meet privately. The Hearing Council will deliberate and determine the outcome by a majority vote through secret ballot. The Dean will be present to answer questions and to count the votes, but will not serve as a voting member of the Council. Hearing Council members may not abstain from voting. In the case of a tie vote, the Council members will deliberate further and then take another vote. If the tie continues, the decision will favor the student, who will be found not responsible for academic integrity. Once the finding is reached, the Hearing Council will discuss, and then decide upon, by majority vote, an appropriate sanction for the violation. The CGCE Dean will mail written notification of the decision and any sanction to the student and the faculty member involved.

K. Appeals may be based only on procedural error or sanction imposed by the Hearing Council and must be filed within five (5) business days of the notification of the decision. The appeal must be in writing and submitted to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for adjudication. In appeal decisions, the Vice President of Academic Affairs' decision is final.

## **6. Sanctions Imposed by GEC Hearing Council**

Recommended sanctions after a finding of an academic integrity violation are listed below. Council members are urged to take into account the seriousness of the offense and to seek the recommendation of the faculty member making the charge.

A. First Offense: Failure of the course, a one-year suspension from the University, and/or dismissal from the University

B. Second Offense: Dismissal from the University

If a student receives a reduced or failing grade for a course because of an admission or finding of an academic integrity violation, he or she may not repeat the course.

No sanctions will be imposed until all steps in the process outlined above are completed.

## **7. Official Records**

The College of Graduate and Continuing Education will maintain official records of disciplinary action. Documentation will be placed in the student's CGCE file and a copy will be forwarded to the relevant Department. Records will not be released to individuals outside the university except by the written authorization of the student involved or under the conditions specified in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Access to the official records of disciplinary action must be authorized by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, or Dean of the College of Graduate and Continuing Education. GC-SAS does not consider appeals or convene between June 1st and August 31st.

## **Academic Dismissal Appeals Process**

This academic dismissal policy is universal for all students enrolled in all academic programs, unless otherwise specified.

Students who wish to appeal being dismissed from their program must submit a written appeal to the Graduate Council Sub-Committee on Academic Standing (GC-SAS) no later than ten (10) business days from the date of the notice of dismissal following the instruction contained in the notification. Dismissed students must address and document the basis for the appeal and

outline the actions they will take to ensure that they will become academically successful in the future.

GC-SAS membership includes the CGCE Dean who convenes and serves as the non-voting Chair, an Assistant/Associate CGCE Dean or other appropriate CGCE staff, as appointed by the CGCE Dean; and four members of Graduate Education Council, of which no less than three shall be faculty representatives. Faculty members who have been directly involved in the student's dismissal may not serve on the student's GC-SAS.

GC-SAS shall be convened by the CGCE Dean to review the appeal. The student may attend the meeting but is not required to do so. The student may be accompanied by one person of his or her choice. This person may be present to advise and counsel his or her respective party, but may not represent said party to GC-SAS or serve as legal counsel. GC-SAS maintains the right to place conditions upon the student and reserves the right to review the final grades of any pending coursework in either winter or summer sessions before reaching a decision. GC-SAS decisions are based on a simple majority vote of members in attendance. The GC-SAS shall notify the student of its decision within twenty (20) business days of the date of the receipt of the dismissal appeal.

If a dismissal appeal is granted, reinstated students are automatically placed on academic probation for the semester in which they return and are subject to the conditions noted above under the academic probation policy.

Students may appeal the decision of the GC-SAS only on the basis of procedural error to the Dean of CGCE. The decision of the Dean of CGCE is final.

GC-SAS does not consider appeals or convene between June 1 and August 31.

## **Graduate Academic Standing Policy**

### **Effective July 1, 2020**

The Academic Standing policy is intended to support students' academic progress and maintain academic excellence. All graduate students are expected to meet and maintain high academic standards set by the university and to demonstrate academic progress towards earning a degree. The College of Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE) is authorized to award a



Master's degree for a program of study that includes an overall cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) or higher. No grade less than a B- may count towards degree completion. Students may not earn a B- in more than three courses.

Some academic departments also establish additional criteria by which a student is evaluated on academic standing, progress, and/or dismissal, and students are advised to seek guidance from their individual academic departments.

\*Students enrolled in the MS in Physician Assistant Studies program are held to the Physician Assistant Deceleration Policy in lieu of this academic standing policy. Students in the PA Program should consult the PA Student Manual for policies regarding Academic Standing.

### **1. Good Academic Standing**

To be considered in good academic standing and to remain in a graduate program, students must maintain an overall cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher throughout the course of study. In addition, students may not earn a B- in more than three courses. Students are immediately dismissed from a program if they receive two (2) F's or more than three (3) grades of B- or lower.

All matriculated students are reviewed by CGCE within thirty (30) days after the grade submission deadline of the fall, spring, and summer II terms to ensure they are in good academic standing.

### **2. Academic Probation and Dismissal**

A student is placed on academic probation if the overall cumulative GPA is below a 3.0, at the time of the CGCE review, or the student has received two grades of a "B-" or lower. The student will receive official written notification of academic probation status from the College of Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE). The student's academic advisor and/or CGCE Program Chair is copied with this notification. Students on academic probation are required to meet with a faculty advisor or CGCE Program Chair to develop a written academic success plan for improvement and must submit a copy of this plan to CGCE within thirty (30) days of notification. Students without a written success plan on file will not be permitted to enroll in future terms.

Students placed on academic probation have two full terms (fall and spring) of enrollment to achieve good academic standing unless provided an extension

by permission of the Graduate Program Chair and the CGCE Dean. Students on probation must complete all outstanding incomplete grades before enrolling in future terms. Students are required to repeat course(s) in which they have received a deficient grade (per the Deficient Grades and Course Repeat Policy) as soon as possible within their course of study. Academic probation may not be appealed.

Students are immediately dismissed from a program if they receive two (2) F's or more than three (3) grades of B- or lower, and they have exhausted their course repeat option (below). Students on academic probation who do not achieve good academic standing within their two-term (fall and spring) time frame will automatically be dismissed from their program. Students may appeal academic program dismissal, please see academic dismissal appeals process for more information.

### **3. Deficient Grades and Course Repeat**

No grade lower than a "B-" will count towards degree completion. Students may not earn a final grade of "B-" in more than three courses.

Students may repeat one course one time during their graduate program in order to maintain good academic standing (cumulative GPA of 3.0) with exception of students enrolled in the traditional Master of Social Work and foundation Master of Science in Accounting track, who are allowed to repeat two courses one time each with permission of the respective Graduate Program Chair. Students are required to repeat courses in which they have received a deficient grade as soon as possible within their course of study.

Students must submit a Graduate Course Repeat form for a repeated course prior to the time of course registration. The final grade for a repeated course must be a "B-" or higher, unless the "B-" is the fourth "B-" earned. All grades will remain on the student's transcript; however, when a course is repeated the original grade will not be used in computing the overall cumulative GPA average.

Students enrolled in the MS in Physician Assistant Studies program are held to the Physician Assistant Deceleration Policy in lieu of this deficient grades and course repeat procedure. Students in the PA program should consult the PA Student Manual for information about deficient grades and course repeat procedures.

Grades of “F” earned as a result of violating the **Graduate Academic Integrity Policy** may not be repeated.

Students who feel they have received an unfair grade may appeal it per the **Graduate Grade Appeal Policy**.

## **Academic Appeals**

### *Statement*

The purpose of the Graduate Grade Appeal Policy is to provide graduate and post-baccalaureate students with a safeguard against receiving an unfair final grade while also respecting the academic judgment of the instructor.

This grade appeal procedure applies only when a student initiates a grade appeal and not when the instructor decides to change a grade on his or her own initiative. This procedure does not cover instances in which students have been assigned grades based on academic dishonesty, which is addressed in Westfield State’s Graduate Academic Integrity Policy. Grade appeals alleging discrimination, harassment or retaliation in violation of Westfield State’s Sexual Harassment Policy should concurrently be referred to the appropriate office at Westfield State as required by law and by Westfield State policy.

### **1. Underlying Principles**

- A. Students and faculty should make every effort to resolve questions about grades without seeking a grade appeal. A grade appeal is a last resort.
- B. A grade appeal will be pursued only if there is a valid basis and substantial evidence. The responsibility for developing and presenting the case for changing a grade rests with the student making the appeal.
- C. Instructors have the responsibility to provide careful evaluation and timely assignment of appropriate grades. Course and project grading methods should be explained to students at the beginning of the term and instructors should retain grading calculations for a minimum of one year after the conclusion of a course. Westfield State presumes that the judgment of the instructor of record is authoritative and that final grades assigned are correct, but also recognizes that grading errors may occur.
- D. Grades will be changed only on clear evidence of error or manifest injustice in grading.
- E. If the instructor no longer works at the University or is unavailable, the Department’s Graduate Program Chair may represent the instructor in this process.
- F. Interpretation of this policy is the purview of the Dean of the College of Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE) or designee.

## 2. The Basis for a Grade Appeal

- A. Only final course grades may be appealed.
- B. Grades may be appealed that are alleged to be caused by:
  - i. Unfair and unequal application of grading standards or applying grading criteria to one student or some students in a manner that treats them differently.
  - ii. Unfair or unannounced alteration of assignments, grading criteria, or computational processes from the instructor's previously articulated standards.
  - iii. Computation dispute about calculation of a final grade or its transmission to the Registrar.
  - iv. Sanctions for academic dishonesty without an admission or finding of academic dishonesty.

## 3. Establishment of the Grade Appeal Sub-committee

At the hearing, at least five (5) Graduate Education Council members, including no less than three faculty members and the student member, must be present to establish a quorum of the Graduate Grade Appeal Sub-committee.

In such circumstances in which the GEC student representative is in the same program or otherwise familiar with the student bringing forth the grade appeal, the CGCE Dean shall appoint another student representative. Likewise, any GEC member directly involved in the grade appeal case shall not serve on the Grade Appeal Sub-committee.

## 4. Process for Grade Appeal

- A. Step One: Appeal to the instructor
  - i. To appeal a course grade, a student must discuss the grade with the course instructor within the first two (2) weeks of the following semester (the following Fall semester for Spring and Summer grades or the following Spring semester for Fall or Winter grades).
  - ii. If the student's discussion with the course instructor does not lead to a satisfactory resolution for the student, the student has ten (10) business days to appeal to the Department's Graduate Program Chair for mediation. If the course instructor is also the Department's Graduate Program Chair,

the Dean of CGCE or designee will serve as the mediator instead. The designated mediator has ten (10) business days to try to resolve the disagreement about the final course grade.

- iii. If this process of mediation is unsuccessful, the designated mediator will, at the end of the ten (10) day mediation period, make a recommendation to the instructor about retaining or changing the student's final grade. The instructor will have ten (10) business days to decide whether or not to accept the mediator's recommendation and shall notify the mediator of the decision.

- iv. The mediator shall notify the student and Graduate Program Chair in writing of the instructor's decision.

## B. Step Two: Appeal to the Graduate Grade Appeal Committee

- i. If the student is unsatisfied with the instructor's final decision they will have ten (10) days to submit a written appeal to the Dean of CGCE stating that the disagreement was not resolved at the departmental/program level, explaining the basis for the appeal and providing the evidence for a formal appeal. The Dean will then transmit copies to the faculty member and to the graduate program chair. Student should submit appeals through the following website: <https://secure.blueoctane.net/forms/BPNDM84CF1BL>

- ii. If the Dean determines that there is sufficient basis for a formal grade appeal, the Dean will convene the sub-committee. The student, instructor, and grade program chair will be given at least ten (10) business days notice of the time and place of the hearing. A copy of the student's written appeal and accompanying evidence must be available at least five (5) business days prior to the hearing for review by the instructor and the graduate program chair in the CGCE office. The instructor may also submit a statement or additional information but is not required to do so. No hearings will be held between June 1 and August 31, or between the Fall and Spring semesters.

- iii. The student, course instructor, and graduate program chair will be encouraged to attend the meeting, but are not required to do so. The meeting will be closed to all other outside participation. The student and instructor may each be accompanied by one person, but that person may not be legal counsel and may not participate in the process in any way.

iv. At least five (5) members of the Graduate Education Council, including at least one student member and three faculty must be present in order for a hearing to be held.

v. The Sub-committee is strongly encouraged to conclude its work no later than the end of the semester in which the appeal is filed. In the event that the student filing a formal grade appeal is graduating within the term in question, the sub-committee will make every effort to expedite the process.

vi. Through its inquiries and deliberations, the sub-committee is charged to determine whether clear and convincing evidence of unfair treatment, such as arbitrariness, prejudice, and/or error, might justify changing the grade. The Sub-committee will meet in closed session and make its decision based on a majority vote.

vii. If the Sub-committee determines that no compelling reason exists for changing the grade, the committee will report its conclusion in writing to the student, course instructor, graduate program chair and Dean within five (5) business days of the hearing, and the matter will be considered closed.

viii. If the Sub-committee determines that compelling reasons exist for changing the grade, within five (5) business days of the hearing the Sub-committee will request that the instructor make the change, providing the instructor with a written explanation of its reasons. Should the instructor decline, he or she must provide a written explanation to the Sub-committee for refusing within five (5) business days.

ix. The Sub-committee, after considering the instructor's explanation and upon again concluding that it would be unjust to allow the original grade to stand, will then determine what grade is to be assigned (or recommend an administrative withdrawal from the course). In determining what grade is to be assigned, the Sub-Committee may obtain records from the course instructor, department chair, and student. A formal, written report of the Sub-Committee's decision must be forwarded to the student, instructor, graduate program chair, Dean, and the CGCE Office within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the instructor's written explanation. Under no circumstances may persons other than the original faculty member or the Sub-Committee change a grade.

x. Should the Sub-Committee determine that the instructor's written explanation justifies the original grade, the committee will report this in writing to the student, instructor, department chair, and Dean within ten

(10) business days of the receipt of the instructor's written explanation, and the matter will be closed.

xi. The CGCE office will maintain official records of grade appeal hearings. Records will not be released to individuals outside the University except under the conditions specified in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Access to official records must be authorized by the CGCE Dean or designee.

### **Graduate Grading System**

A	(4.0) High Distinction
A-	(3.7) Superior
B+	(3.3) Excellent
B	(3.0) Good
B-	(2.7) Marginal Pass.
C	(2.0) Not Acceptable towards credits in a graduate program.
P	Pass - No grade point equivalent. May be used toward program of study.
R*	Research - No grade point equivalent.
F	Failure
I	Incomplete
W	Withdrawal
AU*	Audit

\* These designations have no grade point equivalent and will not earn graduate credit. They are acceptable for Professional Development verification, however.

Grades below a B will not be accepted by WSU in transfer.

Graduate students must maintain a minimum overall average of 3.0 and meet all other degree requirements in order to be eligible for graduation. Graduate students in good academic standing are by definition honors students. The designation of Latin honors (Summa cum Laude, Magna cum Laude, Cum Laude) does not apply to graduate students..

## **Auditing of Courses**

It is possible to audit any course offered by the Division. If you elect to audit courses, you have the privilege of attending classes, but are not required to take any test or examination or turn in any written assignments. Faculty does not evaluate your work. When you take a course as audit, you do not receive a grade or academic credit. Therefore, audited courses do not contribute to the completion of a graduate program of study. Should you want to change a course from audit to credit, you must notify the office of Graduate and Continuing Education prior to the third class meeting by completing the appropriate form. Audited courses may not be re-taken for credit toward a graduate program.

## **Course Cancellations**

Graduate courses are funded solely by student fees and tuition. Unfortunately, each semester there are courses in which enrollments are not sufficient to compensate faculty. These courses are canceled at the discretion of the Dean. To allow students time to enroll in other courses, decisions to cancel are made on the basis of the number of enrollments prior to the start of classes. Therefore, students are urged to register early in order to give an accurate assessment of the number of students who want to enroll in each course. Students affected by course cancellations will be notified by phone, email, or mail. Students not wishing to enroll in an alternative course will receive a full refund as soon as it can be processed.

## **Changing Concentrations/Programs**

Students in Graduate Programs may change their concentration within a specific department with approval from the Department Chair and the Dean. You must complete a Graduate Degree Program Change of Major form, available in the office of Graduate and Continuing Education, to begin the process and complete a new Program of Study on acceptance into your new concentration. Students who wish to enter programs sponsored by another department (e.g., Education to English) must reapply. In either case, a new Program of Study must be completed with your advisor's approval and the signatures of your Department Chair and Graduate Dean.

## **Course Load**

Full-time graduate students carry programs consisting of at least 9 semester hours per term. During the summer sessions, nine semester hours of credit across both summer sessions is equivalent to full-time study. Students who wish to exceed this limit may do so, but only with permission. Students who will be receiving benefits from the Veterans Administration or other sources should check with the funding source to be sure a sufficient number of credit hours are taken. Students needing assistance in determining appropriate course loads should consult their academic advisor.

## **Degree Conferment**

Master's and Certificate of Advance Graduate Study degrees are conferred during the months of August, December, January, and May. The Commencement ceremony is held in May.

## **Final Examination**

Students shall have the right to inspect their own complete final examination papers in a course within one semester following the end of the course. However, the course instructor shall have the right to retain permanent possession of the original examination papers and each student's submitted answer sheet.

## **Graduate Level Courses**

All graduate courses are numbered above 400, generally at the 500 or 600 level. All courses with 600 level numbers carry graduate credit and are only open to graduate students. Courses at the 500 level may have a 300 matching number, which allows for the enrollment of upper-level undergraduate students. Professional development courses are assigned the number 595 and will not be included in Westfield's graduate degree programs unless the program coordinator and the Dean grant an exception.



## Graduation

If you are nearing the completion of your graduate program requirements and plan to receive a Master's degree, you should request the Application for Graduation in the Graduate Office. You should complete this form and submit it to the office no later than the deadline indicated in the college calendar. If you are planning to take the comprehensive exam, file the application to graduate simultaneously with the application to take the comprehensive. A commencement fee is required at the time of filing the application for graduation, whether or not you wish to participate in the formal ceremony. There is no fee to take the Comprehensive Exam. No degree or certificate will be conferred and no graduate transcripts will be issued unless all tuition and fees have been paid in full. Information regarding the graduation and Commencement ceremony is sent directly to all students who have applied for graduation.

## Incomplete Grades

A grade of Incomplete (I) is assigned by the instructor only if you have completed 80% of the course work and have offered a valid reason for your inability to complete the course work within the prescribed semester. You must request a grade of Incomplete before the end of the semester and arrangements for the completion of the work must be made in writing with the instructor. Once you have been granted the incomplete grade, you must complete the work within the first 30 days of the next scheduled semester. If the work is not completed within that time, or if an extension is not granted, the incomplete grade automatically becomes an "F". In certain extraordinary circumstances, faculty may complete an Extension Form (available in the Office) and submit it to the Office of Graduate Studies to permit a student additional time to satisfy the course requirements.

## Independent/Directed Study

Opportunities for independent study are provided in each department on an advanced graduate level for one to six semester hours' credit. Course admission requires the permission of the faculty member and approval of the Program advisor, Department Chair and Dean. Written plans for independent study projects must be **approved in advance** before registering for the

independent study course. A maximum of six (6) credits of Independent/Directed Study is allowed within a degree program.

## Program of Study

Upon initial acceptance into a degree program, you will be assigned an advisor skilled in your area of specialization. Your individual program of study is worked out in consultation with your advisor and in accordance with the requirements for a degree in your major program. The planned degree program will include:

1. prerequisites required by the department in your area of concentration,
2. required courses,
- 3.. a planned program of courses necessary for competency in the field of concentration,
4. in some cases, elective courses.

The program of study must have your signature and the signed approval of your advisor(s). The Coordinator of Graduate Records will circulate the program of study for the signature of the department chair and Graduate Dean. The original will then be placed in your file, a copy sent to your advisor and a third copy sent to you.

**The signed Program of Study form must be on file within your first semester of study after acceptance.** Failure to comply may result in a hold being placed on future registration. Any changes to the Program of Study must have advance written approval. These approved changes must be filed with the Graduate Office. The advisor is not responsible for his/her advisee's meeting Graduate School regulations and deadlines. You are personally responsible for knowing all College rules and regulations, as well as your program requirements.

## Retention in Degree Program

The Division is authorized to award a Master's degree for a program of study that includes coursework with grades of B average or better (3.0). You may earn one C that will count as credit toward your degree (providing that your overall average is at least 3.0). A grade of F or a second C in a course requires

that the course be repeated: if in a required course, that course must be repeated with a B or better; if in an elective course, that course or another elective must be repeated with a B or better. A grade of B- is not a B and, therefore, is unacceptable as a replacement grade. If you earn three (3) C's or two (2) F's, you will be dismissed from the program. If you earn two (2) C's, then a B- in a repeated course, you will be placed on academic probation, but may be allowed one opportunity to repeat, earning a B or better. A GPA of 3.0 must be maintained to remain in good academic standing.

All grades will remain on the transcript; however, when you repeat a course with a grade of B or better, the original grade will not be used in computing the cumulative average. Grades of F earned as the result of proven plagiarism will be treated in accordance with the college's policy on Academic Integrity. Earning an F grade for plagiarism at any stage of program completion may provide grounds for administrative removal from your academic program.

### **Student Responsibilities**

It is your responsibility to become familiar with all regulations and procedures required by the relevant graduate program. In no case should you expect a waiver or exception to published program requirements by pleading ignorance of the regulation or by asserting that an advisor or other authority did not directly present the information. All students should become familiar with all academic policies and specific college/departmental program requirements. Only the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education, supported by the Graduate Council, has the authority to waive the basic requirements stated in this catalog. No statements made by any person regarding waiver of admission or program requirement shall in any way bind the Graduate Dean or Graduate Council.

### **Time Limit**

You are expected to complete your degree requirements **within six (6) years** (seven (7) in Psychology M.A. programs) from the date of the first course credited toward your degree, including transfer credits from other accredited institutions. No credit will be given for a course older than six years at the time of graduation. If you fail to meet this time requirement, you must apply in writing for an extension, stating in detail the reasons for the request. The

college does not guarantee that the extension will be granted, and the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education may impose additional requirements before the degree will be granted.

### **Withdrawal Policy**

Enrollment in a course implies a serious intention to complete the work of that course. You may drop a course by withdrawing before the first scheduled class meeting without notation on your permanent record. After the second class meeting, you will receive a grade of "W", ***if you properly withdraw in writing before the deadline.*** The withdrawal form (available in the office) requires both the student's and the faculty member's signatures. The deadline date is published in each semester's schedule of courses and is set close to mid-term. Verbal messages of intent to the instructor or staff do not constitute withdrawal. Unless a withdrawal form has been completed, signed by you and the instructor, and submitted to the Graduate and Continuing Education Office, you have not officially withdrawn.

Students who can document an "extenuating circumstance" may be allowed to drop a course with a "W" notation on their transcript prior to the final exam. They should contact the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education to discuss their situation. Students who enroll for a course and fail to attend the first two classes may be withdrawn at the discretion of the professor. Professors are asked to justify such a decision at the time of the recommended withdrawal. Beginning with the third week of classes (or with the third class meeting in summer sessions), faculty may not submit a "W."

Refunds of tuition and appropriate fees, if any, are made on the basis of the date and time of receipt of a student's withdrawal notification in the DGCE Office, and in accordance with the refund schedule in force during the session within which the refund is requested.

## SERVICES

### Career Services

Graduate students are encouraged to take advantage of the services provided by the College's Career Center. The office is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the school year and by appointment. Services include career counseling, a variety of workshops on preparing for employment (resumes, job search and interview skills) credentials file service, computerized job matching, weekly newsletters on career opportunities, and a career resource library. On-campus employment recruiting and special programs are also featured. Graduate school catalogs, testing information and research guides are available. A computerized interactive guidance program, SIGI+, is also available to assist students in self-assessment and career exploration. For additional information, drop by the Office of Career Services, Lammers Hall Annex, or call 572-5206.

### Counseling Center

The Counseling Center is located in Lammers Hall Annex. Appointments may be made through the Director by calling 572-5790. The Westfield State University Counseling Center exists to provide counseling and preventive psychological services for WSU students. Their mission is to facilitate self-discovery, personal growth and healing for students in their journey toward whole-person development. The Counseling Center staff seeks to understand and value the individual within the context of community living, offering services through a multitude of pathways: individual counseling, couples counseling, family counseling, group counseling, assessment of needs, referrals to community and other WSU resources, workshops and presentations.

The Office of Substance Abuse Prevention (OSAP) offers both substance abuse counseling and a variety of educational and creative social programming designed to enhance development of responsible decision-making skills on the part of students regarding substance (ab)use and healthy living. Further information about OSAP may be obtained by contacting the Counseling Center.

### Library

The Governor Joseph B. Ely Library's collections include 144,195 books, 643 currently received periodicals, 16,666 bound periodicals, 471,489 microfiche,

9,558 microfilm reels, audiovisuals, abstracts, indexes, CD-ROMs, 175 databases containing more than 19,000 full text periodicals available online. Online databases and online catalog are available from the Library's homepage [www.lib.westfield.ma.edu](http://www.lib.westfield.ma.edu). Reference, interlibrary loan, information instruction services, and copiers are available. A student ID is required to borrow materials.

### Library Hours (Fall and Spring)

Monday-Thursday.....	8:00 a.m. - 12:00 a.m.
Friday.....	8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday.....	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday.....	1:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.

Vacation, holiday, Winter and Summer hours will be posted. Refer to semester catalogs for specifics.

## REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

### Absence Due To Religious Beliefs (Chapter 151C, 2B)

Any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his/her religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement which he/she may have missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effect shall result to any student because of his/her availing him/herself to the provisions of this section of the Massachusetts General Laws.

### Confidentiality of Student Records

The Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 is a federal statute which gives you permission to review your records and offers you the possibility of correcting errors which you may discover. Matriculated students who wish to view their files must complete a written request and allow two working days notice.

The college, according to the Act, may make public "Directory Information" about you, (e.g., name, address, date and place of birth, telephone listings, schools attended, degrees and awards received, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and the most previous educational agency or institution) *unless you specifically request in writing that your prior consent be obtained*. A request made by students to suppress from public distribution the above mentioned information is to be made in writing annually to the office not later than October 1 of each academic year.

### Course Descriptions

Should you need copies of course descriptions, you may send a written request or complete the transcript/course description request form, noting the specific course descriptions needed and dates the courses were taken, if applicable. Please allow five working days for processing.

### Health Insurance Requirements

Chapter 15A of the Massachusetts General Laws mandates that every full or three-quarter time student in a public or private institution of higher education shall participate in a qualifying student health insurance program. **You may waive this insurance coverage if you certify on the waiver form that you have comparable coverage.** The cost of the College student health insurance is payable upon registration for 6.75 or more credits through the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education. To waive this charge, you must submit the waiver form, properly completed with your registration. Failure to submit the proper waiver form will render you liable for the insurance premium for state-mandated coverage provided by the College.

### Immunization Requirement

Massachusetts Law (Chapter 76-Section 15C) requires that all full-time college students (12 credits undergraduate and post baccalaureate students; 9 credits graduate per semester) present evidence that they are immunized against measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, and tetanus in order to register for classes. Tetanus/Diphtheria must be within 10 years. Full time students must present proof of at least one (of a series of three) Hepatitis B vaccination. If there is a question of immunization status according to the above information, please update your immunization. Please have the Immunization Form (available in the office or on the back of the Fall and Spring registration forms) completed by your physician and submitted to the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education before coming to register. In lieu of the immunization verification form, copies of medical records with dates may be submitted, documenting vaccination and/or immunity. If the immunization paperwork is not received within thirty (30) days of the start of classes, you will be dropped from all classes.

### Registration for Courses

Current and accurate information about courses and enrollment are available on the college web site through InfoWeb <http://www.westfield.ma.edu/studentsonline/>. The schedule of courses is available in catalog form several weeks prior to the start of a semester. Special registration time is set aside for matriculated students. The catalog is mailed to students who have taken classes within the last three semesters. If you have not taken classes at Westfield within the last three semesters, you are welcome to call and be put

on the mailing list. Once you begin to take classes, the catalog will arrive directly at your home address during the academic year.

The registration form is included in each semester's course catalog book and is also available in the office and on our website. Payment is expected at time of registration. The Office accepts MasterCard, VISA, Discover, personal check, money order, or traveler's checks. Students are offered the opportunity to register through the mail within specified dates. You may also register online with no additional service fee. The dates for registration are available in each semester's catalog.

### **Smoking Law**

State law prohibits smoking in public buildings. Smoking is not permitted in any campus building. Smoking is still allowed in **some** outdoor areas of the campus grounds. Receptacles have been set up around the campus.

### **Transcripts**

Official transcripts may be obtained from the Office of Graduate and Continuing Education by mailing in a written request or filling out a transcript request form, available in the office and on the college web site. The signature of the student is required on the form before a transcript can be released or sent and a fee of \$2.00 per transcript must be submitted with the transcript request form. Please allow five working days for our office to process the request. There will be an additional charge for processing of transcript requests within one business day (\$5.00). Transcripts that include the final grades of the present semester will be available approximately three weeks after the close of the term.

### **Public Safety Security Report**

Westfield State University's annual security report includes statistics for the previous three years concerning reported crimes that occurred on campus, in certain off-campus buildings owned or controlled by Westfield State University and on public property within, or immediately adjacent to and accessible from the campus. The report also includes institutional policies concerning campus security, concerning alcohol and drug use, crime prevention, the reporting of crimes, sexual assault and other matters. Acquire a copy of this report by contacting Public Safety or by accessing <http://www.westfield.ma.edu/safety/SafetyChronicle2.htm>

### **Governance**

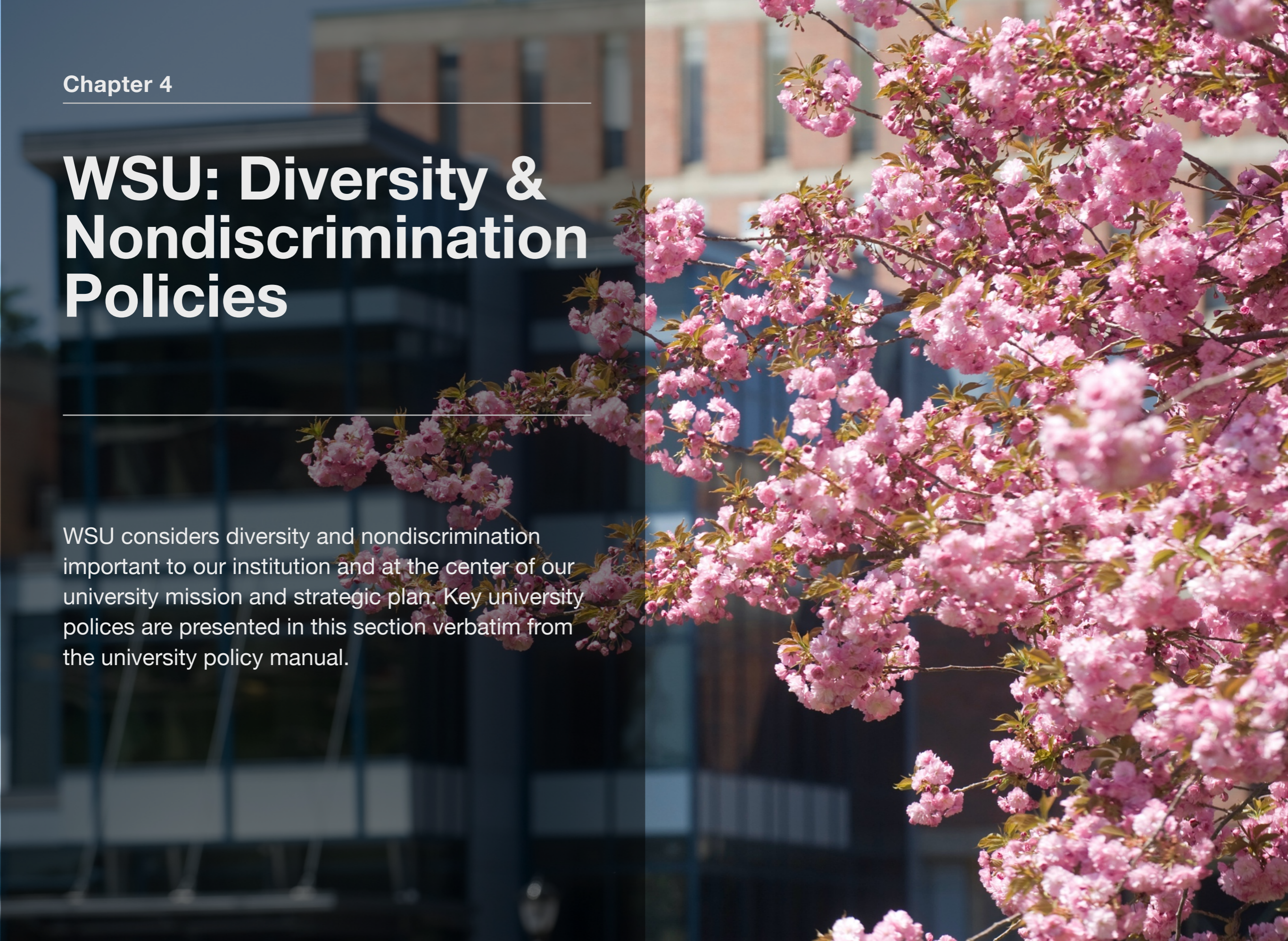
Division of Graduate and Continuing Education students are invited to participate in the governance process of the College through the following organizations: the Campus Center Board of Governors, the Parking Appeals Board, the Affirmative Action Advisory Board, the Judicial Board, and the Graduate Council. Usually appointments are made in the beginning of the fall semester. We need volunteers for these organizations. If you are interested, please contact our office at 572-8020, and leave your name and telephone number. The only general requirement is that you be enrolled in a degree or certification program and that you be available days for the meetings. Participation as a member of the Graduate Council or any other governance committee requires that you be enrolled as a matriculated graduate student in good standing



# WSU: Diversity & Nondiscrimination Policies

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WSU considers diversity and nondiscrimination important to our institution and at the center of our university mission and strategic plan. Key university policies are presented in this section verbatim from the university policy manual.





The following is excerpted from the University Bulletin.

## **Affirmative Action, Nondiscrimination and Diversity**

The College maintains and promotes a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, marital status and national origin. This policy incorporates by reference and where applicable the requirements of Federal Executive Orders 11246 and 11375 as amended; the Civil Rights Act of 1988; the Civil Rights Act of 1991; Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 as amended; Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Section 402, Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974; and pertinent Laws, Regulations and Executive Orders; directives of the Board of Higher Education, the Board of Trustees of Westfield State University and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and other applicable local, state and federal statutes.

Nondiscrimination requires the elimination of all existing discriminatory conditions, whether purposeful or inadvertent. Westfield State University shall systematically examine all policies and procedures to be sure that they do not, if implemented as stated, operate to the detriment of any person on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, marital status or nation(al) origin.

Westfield State University is committed to a policy of affirmative action, equal opportunity, nondiscrimination and diversity. It is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment for its students, employees, and other members of the College Community that values the diverse backgrounds of all people...The College believes that the diversity of socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, religious, gender, sexual orientation, age and disability backgrounds of members of the College Community enriches the institution. The Colleges will not tolerate behavior based in bigotry which has the effect of discriminating unlawfully against any member of the

community. Excerpted from the Personnel Section of the Westfield State University Policy and Procedures Manual, Policy Number 2020.

## **Sexual Harassment**

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

Sexual harassment is a form of behavior which fundamentally undermines the integrity of academic and employment relationships. It is of particular concern within educational institutions where all members of the community, but especially students, faculty, librarians, staff and administrators are connected by strong bonds of intellectual interdependence and trust. Both the Federal Courts and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission have ruled that sexual harassment constitutes sex discrimination as defined under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Sexual harassment has also been judged to be prohibited sex discrimination under Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 as amended, and under Chapters 151B and 151C of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome verbal, non-verbal and/or physical behavior of a sexual nature which has the effect of interfering with the student, employment, academic or other status, or of creating a sexually intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Sexual harassment incidents can involve a male harasser and a female victim, a female harasser and a male victim, or same gender harassment.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when: a. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment

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

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to: verbal harassment or abuse, subtle pressure for sexual activity; sexual remarks about an individual's or group's clothing, body or sexual activities; unnecessary touching, patting, or pinching; demands for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats or offers concerning one's job, grades, letter of recommendation, etc.; physical sexual assault.

Under this policy, consenting romantic and/or sexual relationships between faculty and student, librarian and student, administrator and student, classified staff member and student, or supervisor and employee are deemed unprofessional...

Codes of Ethics for most professional associations forbid professional/client sexual relationships. In this context and for purposes of this policy, the professor/student relationship is properly regarded as one of professional and client. The respect and trust accorded a professor by a student, as well as the power exercised by the professor in giving praise or blame, grades, recommendations for further study and employment, and other benefits or opportunities diminish the student's actual freedom of choice such that relationships thought to be consensual may in fact be the product of implicit coercion. Many elements of the administrator/student, librarian student, classified staff member/student and the supervisor employee relationship are similar to those of the professor/student relationship because of a similar imbalance of power and a similar need for trust. For purposes of this policy, therefore, these relationships are also discouraged and looked upon with disfavor.

Excerpted from the Personnel Section of the Westfield State University Policy and Procedures Manual, Policy Number 2100.

## **Discrimination Complaint Procedure**

A person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital or veteran status may: a. File an informal claim either permitting or not permitting the use of his/her name, in an effort to resolve the matter; b. File a formal complaint either with or without first filing an informal claim; c. Proceed from an informal claim to a formal complaint; d. If provided for by law, file a charge directly with the local, state, or federal agency having appropriate jurisdiction.

Information and assistance on any of these options are available from the Director of Equal Opportunity, Dr. Carlton Pickron, Horace Mann Center, 572-5216. Complete information on Complaint Procedures may be found in the Personnel Section of Westfield State University Policy and Procedures Manual, Policy Number 2070.

## **Hazing Law- Chapter 665**

Students are advised to be familiar with the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18, and 19 relative to the crime of hazing. A copy of the law is printed in the Student Handbook, distributed to all full-time students once a year



Chapter 5

# Computing Information

Computer, Email, Web Page, & Software Information





# Computing, Email, Web Page, & Software Information

## Section Contents:

- **MSW Program Personal Computing Requirements**
- **Basic Services Provided by WSU**
  - **myWestfield**
  - **University Email**
  - **Blackboard at WSU**
  - **Department of Social Work Webpage**
  - **Campus Computer Labs**
  - **Accessing Ely Library Electronically**
  - **Accessing University WiFi**

## MSW Program personal computer requirements (hardware, software, and skills)

### Computer, Software and Skills Recommendations

The following guidelines can act as a good indicator if your computer hardware and software will meet your needs in the program. This also will give you an understanding of the required computer skills

This MSW program at WSU is clearly designed to take advantage of the internet to aid your learning and reduce the amount of time you are in class and on campus. To be successful in this program you will need to have appropriate computer equipment and skills. Students will benefit from having a personal computer that has internet access (preferably DSL or cable, Dial up is very slow for audio and video files). Students need basic software that includes a web-browser (e.g. Explorer, Safari, etc.), a word processing program (MS Word, Apple Pages, etc.), a spreadsheet program (MS Excel, Apple Numbers, etc.), presentation software (MS PowerPoint, Apple Keynote, etc), Quicktime (a free download from Apple for either PC or Mac), and iTunes (a free download from Apple for PCs and Macs). Students need basic web-browser skills, word processing skills, spreadsheet skills, and presentation software skills. For students who require further training in computer skills, hands-on computer skills training is available (See your instructor or the MSW Program Director for help).

### **Basic Services Provided by WSU:**

#### **myWestfield**

##### What is myWestfield?

myWestfield is Westfield State University's web portal. myWestfield is a secure site providing students, faculty and staff with world-class services, featuring a single sign on website for campus announcements, web for students/faculty/staff, e-mail, course tools, library access and much more!



### What is the URL address for myWestfield?

The URL address for myWestfield is <https://myportal-cas.westfield.ma.edu/cas-web/login?service=https%3A%2F%2Fmy.westfield.ma.edu%2Fc%2Fportal%2Flogin>

### What do I need in order to get started on myWestfield?

In order to get started on myWestfield, you will need a computer or iOS device (iPad) with a compatible browser and access to the Internet. You will also need your myWestfield username and password.

### How do I login to myWestfield?

To login to myWestfield, you will need your myWestfield username and password. Then, point your browser to URL address above

### What is my myWestfield username and password?

Your myWestfield username is your first initial and last name followed by a sequence number if necessary. This is the same username that you use for Outlook Web Mail.

Example: If your name is John Smith, then your username would be jsmith. If there is more than one person with the same first initial and last name combination then the last four digits of your College Wide ID (CWID).

### How do I get assistance if I am unable to login to myWestfield?

Online support is found in these Frequently Asked Questions. Students can contact the Student HelpDesk at 413-572-5528 for assistance. Students can also get login assistance in person at the Student HelpDesk in Wilson Hall next to the One Card Office. Faculty and staff can contact the IT HelpDesk at 413-572-5300 ext. 4357 or [helpdesk@WSU.ma.edu](mailto:helpdesk@WSU.ma.edu). Faculty and staff can also get login assistance in person at the IT HelpDesk in Wilson Hall room 103.

### How do I access online instructions for myWestfield?

myWestfield provides many ways to access online help services. You may get general assistance by clicking on the Help icon in the upper right corner of your screen display.

### What browsers are supported for the current version of myWestfield?

To log in and use the system effectively, you should be using one of the following Internet browsers:

- **Windows**  
Internet Explorer 9.0 or higher  
FireFox 20.0 or higher  
Safari 5.1 or higher
- **Macintosh**  
**OS X v10.3 or higher**  
Firefox 20.0 or higher  
Safari 5.1 or higher

If you are trying to log in to the system using another browser, you may experience difficulties.

### How can I tell that myWestfield is secure? I don't see the lock icon.

myWestfield is a secure site.

Currently, browsers do not properly display secure certificate information for a portion of a frame set that is secured. Because of this, the security "padlock" will not appear in your browser window. Despite the absence of the "padlock" your data is secure.

To verify that this page is secure, you can do the following:

#### *Directions for Internet Explorer:*

Right click on any white space within the main frame area and then select "Properties". The connection will show "SSL", the URL will show the https:// and clicking on "Certificates" will provide our secure certificate details.

#### *Directions for Firefox:*

Firefox will only provide URL information for a frame page. If you right click on any white space within the main frame area and then select "This Frame" then select "View Frame Info", the URL will show the https://.

This same process can be applied to any page within myWestfield to verify the secure connection. Make sure to click the area for which you wish to verify the security.

#### What if I can't view or login to myWestfield?

If you are unable to view or login to the myWestfield website, use the following steps to troubleshoot your issue.

STEP 1: Verify your browser compatibility.

STEP 2: Verify non-persistent cookies and JavaScript are enabled.

STEP 3: Verify you are not using a pop-up blocker.

STEP 4: Verify that you are able to access other WSU sites.

STEP 5: Attempt to access the site from another computer.

If you are still unable to view or login to the myWestfield website, please contact the Helpdesk making sure to provide your name, contact phone, email, myWestfield username, the operating system of the computer you are using, how you are connecting to the internet (Dial up, DSL, Cable, other), and what steps you've completed in the troubleshooting process.

#### Can I access myWestfield from home?

Yes, you can access myWestfield from any computer with a web browser and internet connection.

#### What if I need help learning how to use myWestfield?

The system is fairly simple to learn and there are many resources for additional help. Once you login there is a help icon available on the top right of your screen. There is also a channel on the Home Tab called myWestfield Tutorials which contains a End User Training Tutorial which explains the features of the system. There is a Course and Group Leader Administration Guide (pdf).

#### What if I am having a technical problem with myWestfield?

Online support is found in these Frequently Asked Questions. Students can contact the Student HelpDesk at 413-572-5528 for assistance. Students can also get login assistance in person at the Student HelpDesk in Wilson Hall next to the One Card Office.

#### Why do I get a "Failed Login" error?

Details as to why you received the "Failed Login" message appear in italics directly after "ERROR:". The message "username and password pair not found" indicates that the password you entered does not match the password on record for the user name that was entered. Verify that you are using your assigned username and the correct password. Then try entering them a second time.

#### When is myWestfield available?

myWestfield will be available daily except on Saturdays from 12 a.m. - 4 a.m. Special notices of system maintenance will be placed in the Campus Announcements channel on the Home tab.

## University Email

Our e-mail system consists of 4 Microsoft Exchange servers and 1 Unix-based Spam Filter Appliance. We handle roughly 200,000 messages a day. Our Spam filter scans all of these messages before they reach your inbox for possible spam and viruses.

**IMPORTANT! We will never ask you for your username and/or password through e-mail.**

You can check your email from any computer with an Internet connection by clicking email in the myWestfield portal or you can check your e-mail directly by entering the web address <https://mail.westfield.ma.edu> In your browser you will be prompted for your e-mail ID and password. Students' mailboxes can hold 50mb of email. That is roughly 60,000 or 20,000 e-mail messages respectively. You can send attachments up to 10mb in size; more than enough to send a picture or two.

Once logged into your email you will access to the following tools that you may take advantage of:

**Mail**

This will bring you to your current messages.

**Calendar**

Where you can store you appointments and important events.

**Contacts**

Your contacts are where you can store e-mail and postal addresses of your colleagues, family, and friends.

**Tasks**

Think of this as your 'to do' list; we all have one.

**Options**

Located in the upper right corner. You can change many environment features here, such as the color of your Outlook Web Access, or you can do administrative actions, such as changing your password.

## BlackBoard at WSU

WSU uses BlackBoard for on-line learning (both hybrid and fully on-line classes). BlackBoard can accessed through your Web Browser or using the BlackBoard app available for the iPad (there is a fee for the app). The WSU BlackBoard site can be accessed at

<http://www.westfield.ma.edu/plato/>

using your college user name and password. The WSU Center for Instructional Technology provides training and support around the use of BlackBoard. Please take advantage of the on-line training and help available at the website above.

## Department of Social Work Webpage

The Department of Social Work Website

(<http://www.westfield.ma.edu/socialwork>) has many important documents available. Information which can be found on the Web site includes: Descriptions of both BSW and MSW programs, listing of contact information for all department faculty, BSW, and MSW Program Manuals; BSW and MSW Practicum Manuals; Practicum Forms, study plans for completing the BSW or MSW, and links to multiple valuable websites.

You may access the School's website from computers anywhere in the world, as long as they have an Internet connection and browser software.

## Campus Computer Labs

There are various PC and Mac labs through- out campus including:

- Mod Hall Room 110, PC
- Bates Hall, Room 03, PC
- Bates Hall, Room 04, PC
- Bates Hall, Room 22, PC
- Ely Hall, Campus Center, Cyber Cafe, PC
- Ely Hall, Room 313, Mac
- Horace Mann Center, Basement, PC
- Parenzo Hall, Room 113, Mac
- Wilson Hall, Room 104, PC
- Wilson Hall, Room 101, PC
- Woodward Center, Room 240, PC

## Accessing Ely Library Electronically

You can access the Ely library on line for literature searches including full text articles, interlibrary loans, **on-line sources for proper use of APA**, and multiple other services and features. Please point your browser to: <http://www.lib.westfield.ma.edu/> for the Ely Library at WSU.

## Accessing University WiFi

We have 3 wireless networks on campus.

The wireless network names (SSID) are WSU, guest and resnet.

### **WSU**

This wireless network is ONLY available in all of our Academic buildings, Administration buildings and open areas throughout the campus. This wireless network connection requires you to log in using your e-mail username and password.

### **guest**

This wireless network is ONLY available in all of our Academic and Administration buildings. This network has LIMITED bandwidth, is restricted to web browsing and is available for GUESTS of Westfield State University.

### **resnet**

This wireless network is ONLY available in the residence halls on our residential network and is available for our residential students

**For more information about IT at WSU feel free to explore the IT website at**

<http://www.westfield.ma.edu/offices/academic-information-services/technology-support>



# NASW Code of Ethics

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The National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics is included in its entirety in this section.





# Code of Ethics

of the

## National Association of Social Workers

Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2017 NASW Delegate Assembly

### Section Contents:

**Overview**

**Preamble**

**Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics**

**Ethical Principles**

**Ethical Standards**

**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**

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

### Overview

The NASW Code of Ethics is intended to serve as a guide to the everyday professional conduct of social workers. This Code includes four sections:

- The first Section, "Preamble," summarizes the social work profession's mission and core values.
- The second section, "Purpose of the NASW 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.
- The third section, "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 NASW 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:

The Code identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.

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.

The Code is designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.

The Code provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable.

The Code socializes practitioners new to the field to social work's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards.

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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

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.

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.

## 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.

1. Service
2. Social Justice
3. Dignity and Worth of the Person
4. Importance of Human Relationships
5. Integrity
6. Competence

### 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 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 who use technology to provide social work services should assess the clients' suitability and capacity for electronic and remote services. Social workers should consider the clients' intellectual, emotional, and physical ability to use technology to receive services and the clients' ability to understand the potential benefits, risks, and limitations of such services. If clients do not wish to use services provided through technology, social workers should help them identify alternate methods of service.

(h) 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.

(i) 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. the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm.

(d) Social workers who use technology in the provision of social work services should ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide such services in a competent manner. This includes an understanding of the special communication challenges when using technology and the ability to implement strategies to address these challenges.

(e) Social workers who use technology in providing social work services should comply with the laws governing technology and social work practice in the jurisdiction in which they are regulated and located and, as applicable, in the jurisdiction in which the client is located.

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

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

(b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients' cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' culture and to differences among people and cultural groups.

(c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion and mental or physical disability.

(d) Social workers who provide electronic social work services should be aware of cultural and socioeconomic differences among clients and how they may use electronic technology. 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. Occasionally, 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, 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.

(f) Social workers should be aware that posting personal information on professional Web sites or other media might cause boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.

(g) Social workers should be aware that personal affiliations may increase the likelihood that clients may discover the social worker's presence on Web sites, social media, and other forms of technology. Social workers should be aware that involvement in electronic communication with groups based on race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental or physical ability, religion, immigration status, and other personal affiliations may affect their ability to work effectively with particular clients.

(h) Social workers should avoid accepting requests from or engaging in personal relationships with clients on social networking sites or other electronic media to prevent boundary confusion, inappropriate dual relationships, or harm to clients.

### **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 others. 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.



(c) When providing clients with access to their records, social workers should take steps to protect the confidentiality of other individuals identified or discussed in such 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 service performed. Consideration should be given to the client's 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 all available options for the continuation of service and their benefits and risks.

## **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 in 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, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical ability.

(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 with Colleagues**

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 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 advice and counsel of colleagues whenever such consultation is in the best interests of clients.

(b) Social workers should keep informed of colleagues' areas of expertise and competencies. Social workers should seek consultation only from colleagues who have demonstrated knowledge, 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 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.

## **2.08 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, written, electronic, or physical contact of a sexual nature.

## **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 in which there is a risk of exploitation of or potential harm to the supervisee, 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.

### **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, including dual relationships that may arise while using social networking sites or other electronic media. 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 relevant laws, agency policies, and contracts.

### **3.05 Billing**

Social workers should establish and maintain billing practices that accurately reflect the nature and extent of services provided, and specifically by whom the service was provided 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. In order to minimize possible confusion and conflict, social workers should discuss with potential clients the nature of their 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 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 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 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, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, political belief, 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 of 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 organization.

(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 other persons 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, consultations, 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) When evaluation or research participants are incapable of giving informed consent, social workers should provide an appropriate explanation to the participants, obtain the participants' assent to the extent they are able, and obtain written consent from an appropriate proxy.

(h) 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.

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

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

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

(l) 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.

(m) 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.

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

(o) 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.

(p) 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.

(q) 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 persons, with special regard for vulnerable disadvantaged, oppressed, and exploited persons 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