

BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

STUDENT HANDBOOK

(Last updated February 2024)

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longterm care facilities, and hospice. In addition to providing direct service, social workers are involved in community advocacy, program development, research, and policy development.

Professionally, graduates of BSW programs are eligible to pursue state licensure at the baccalaureate level. Academically, the BSW is recognized as the basis of eligibility for advanced standing in master's level social work education (MSW). This means that a person holding the BSW may be able to complete the master's program in a shorter period than someone who holds a baccalaureate degree from another discipline. Please consult the graduate school of your choice for specific requirements concerning advanced standing. State licensure information is available at the following website addresses:

Kentucky <http://finance.ky.gov/ourcabinet/caboff/OAS/op/socwkbd/>

About the NKU Bachelor of Social Work Program

Our social work program has been accredited by the Council on Social Work Education since 1979, marking more than 4 decades of exceptional social work education. The BSW program prepares graduates for social work practice with diverse populations in a variety of settings. The curriculum covers content related to social justice, diversity, human behavior, policy, research, and social work practice with individuals, groups, organizations, and communities.

Aside from classroom learning (online or in-person), the BSW program strongly believes that learning should extend beyond the classroom. This is why the BSW program includes 400 hours of field placement. Students complete these field hours within a community-based agency that aligns with their interests and passions.

- Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
- Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences.
- Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies

3. Advance human rights, social, economic, and environmental justice

- Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels.
- Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

4. Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice

- Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research.
- Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.
- Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

5. Engage in policy practice

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service

- Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies.
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and




Path to the BSW degree

The path to the BSW degree involves 4 main steps/phases. The following graphic provides an overview of these 4 phases and which courses students take during each phase. Below the graphic, more detailed information is provided about each phase.



Additional Information about Each Phase

Phase 0: Declare Social Work as your Major & Meet with your Advisor

- 
- Students may declare social work as a major once fully accepted as a student at NKU. Students may initially declare social work as their major on t

- While completing these field placement hours, students are also enrolled in two 5-credit hour courses (SWK406 and SWK408). These field experience courses are intended to enhance and compliment the learning that is occurring within the community-based agency.
- There is a separate Field Education Manual available for students, field seminar instructors, field supervisors, and faculty as a guide to general procedures, objectives, and activities involved in field education.
- In the semester prior to Field Experience, students receive an advising registration hold. Students are required to schedule a meeting with the Field Director. After meeting with the Social Work Field Director about the field experience course requirements, the student meets with the Social Work Advisor to review graduation Program Certification forms and release the student's registration hold.

In addition to the core social work courses, students must also complete a total of 9 credit hours of social work electives. We offer electives in the areas of forensic social work, police social work, child welfare, substance abuse, mental health, social justice, family-directed structural model, gerontology, veteran services, and others. Based on the needs of the community and the social work profession, we continuously reevaluate, update, and add electives. For a list of electives, please consult the NKU course catalog.

You should also know that some social service agencies may require field students and potential employees to undergo criminal background checks by an external agency. Also, some agencies may deny students and graduates convicted of felonies and certain misdemeanors. In addition, obtaining licensure may be more challenging for individuals convicted of felonies and certain misdemeanors.

Additional University Requirements

Aside from meeting specific BSW requirements, students must also meet all University requirements for earning a bachelor's degree. These university requirements are as follows:

- Minimum of 120 credit hours, the last 30 hours must be taken at NKU
- Minimum of 25% of the semester hours required for a degree must be taken at NKU
- Developmental Coursework (if required) must be satisfied. (See "ADMISSION STATUS" of University Catalog).
- Completion of Foundation of Knowledge Courses (General Education Courses). The requirements are located on the Foundation of Knowledge NKU website and in the NKU catalog.
- Completion of an Associate's Degree or Social Justice Minor or other secondary area of study (either a minor or focus area).
- Grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.75 on all work attempted at NKU.
- Forty-five (45) semester hours of successfully completed coursework at the 300-level or above is required of all bachelor's candidates. Even though freshman and sophomore level courses completed at other institutions may have course titles and/or content similar to certain upper division courses at NKU, the Office of the Registrar will make the determination of equivalencies for acceptance toward fulfillment of this requirement.

Please consult the NKU catalog for a detailed overview of university requirements. In addition, your advisor can help you navigate these requirements.

Social Work Advising

Social work majors work closely with an academic advisor who is knowledgeable about the University and BSW Program requirements. The academic advisor's role is to guide students through their academic career

- Advising can occur through email or virtual appointments.
 -

Transfer Students

The University's Office of Admission has written policies affecting transfer students to which the program adheres. NKU Admissions Transfer Course Equivalent Database provides a service for students who want to know whether the courses they are taking, or plan to take, will transfer successfully to Northern Kentucky University. Public 2-year and 4-year Kentucky colleges, technical schools, private Kentucky colleges, and some Non-Kentucky colleges are currently included in the database. Every effort is made to provide accurate and current information; however, the right is reserved to amend or revise the contents at any time. Final decisions regarding the transfer of credit and application of credit to majors rest with the NKU Office of Admissions and/or the respective academic departmental offices. Only coursework from regionally accredited institutions is accepted at NKU. Coursework listed in the Transfer Equivalency Guide from non-regionally accredited institutions is not accepted at NKU. The NKU BSW Program policy is to accept social work courses only from CSWE accredited BSW programs.

Academic Grievance Process

When a student believes that an instructor has violated his/her rights in the classroom (e.g., failure to follow stated grading policy or other procedures and objectives as outlined in the syllabus, discrimination in evaluation of individual achievement, illegal discrimination or harassment), the student should follow procedures found in the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities (<https://inside.nku.edu/scra/information/students/rights-responsibilities.html>). The Code states:

Grievance Procedure

The student will discuss the matter with the course instructor within ten (10) working days of the incident. If the student is unable to contact the instructor, he or she should contact the Dean of the College.

The student will discuss the matter with the course instructor within ten (10) working days of the incident.

The instructor will respond in writing within five (5) working days of the student's request.

to function as an agent of enlightenment in society. Students are to be aware of University regulations and adhere to them. Students should familiarize themselves with the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (<https://inside.nku.edu/scra/information/students/rights-responsibilities.html>). It is your responsibility to read and abide by this document.

NASW Code of Ethics

Social work students must follow the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics. It is our intention that students will be inspired to not simply be an honest and good student, but pursue honesty and excellence in all areas of their careers. The NASW Code of Ethics will be taught in several of your social work courses. Professional behaviors, and behaviors in general, are learned, so if you have any questions, please ask your instructor. When entering the Social Work Program, you will have to acknowledge that you have received and read this student handbook, and that you agree to abide by the guidelines provided therein. This includes the NASW Code of Ethics. You will have to sign a form indicating that you have read the Code, agree to support its principles, and understand that violation of the Code could result in removal from the BSW program.

The NASW Code of Ethics outlines the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards held by social workers. Social work students at NKU are required to read and follow the Code of Ethics as part of their professional development experience to prepare students for the ethical dilemmas they will face and deal with in social work practice.

The NASW Code of Ethics (1996) serves six purposes:

1. The Code identifies core values on which social work is based.

B. Respect/Civility.

F. Academic Accountability. Commit yourself to learning to communicate in a professional context.

Components:

- a.) Do your own work, and take credit only for your own work. This includes paraphrases and citations, and giving credit where credit is due.
- b.) Acknowledge areas where improvement is needed, and actively work to address those areas.
- c.) Complete work in a timely manner, and incorporate time to review your own work and any needed resources before submission.
- d.) Seek out and benefit from constructive feedback. This includes peer review, instructor reviews, and utilization of the campus writing center.

G. Commitment to Diversity. Strive to become more open to people, populations, id reTj f -0.00b24 T

Required Course Progression Policy.

Students are required to follow the course progression in their academic plan/advising schedule as recommended by the NKU BSW advisor* and NKU BSW field director.* If students delay required field placements and/or required courses, then they may not be permitted to complete current classes and may not register for additional classes in the BSW program until they have completed recommended field placements and/or required courses. In accordance with this policy, students may be removed from existing enrollment as necessary.**

*The NKU BSW advisor and the NKU BSW field director are both employees of NKU. Persons who are not employees of NKU are not permitted to guide or advise regarding student course progression.

**Disclaimer: Successful registration in specific courses is contingent on students still meeting the specific course criteria at the start of the relevant semester. This involves a review of student records prior to the start of each new semester.

Evaluation of Student Work Policy.

Faculty members are unable to provide extra credit points or extra assignments or accept late submissions from any individual student in order to help them pass the course. The university requires faculty members to grade the submitted student work to evaluate student understanding of and engagement with the course content. This is required so that the university has documented evidence that each student has demonstrated mastery of the course materials. This submitted evidence of student mastery is then utilized for the university to award degrees to students to indicate that the students have developed expertise in their chosen fields.

If a student does poorly on submitted class work to such an extent that it has heavily impacted their grade(s), it is critically important that the student re-takes the course so that they can master the required content. All graduating NKU BSW students receive the same NKU BSW degree; therefore, all graduating NKU BSW students must successfully complete the required coursework.

If you feel that you have extenuating circumstances that make it difficult for you to engage with the course and complete assignments in a manner that demonstrates your potential, please take immediate action to advocate for your own learning

professional ethics and practice set forth by the BSW Program and the National Association of Social Workers.

The faculty will regularly monitor not only students' academic progress, but also personal and interpersonal dynamics that may affect their performance as social work professionals. The purpose of this monitoring process is to ensure that all graduates of the Northern Kentucky University BSW Program are not experiencing personal and interpersonal characteristics that interfere with their professionalism or helping capacity.

As future professional social workers, the faculty expects students to exhibit the following personal and interpersonal characteristics (Professional Expectations of Student Behavior) throughout their time in the program:

- Accountability
- Respect and Civility
- Confidentiality
- Competence
- Integrity
- Academic Accountability
- Commitment to Diversity

These professional expectations of student behavior are presented in greater detail on pages 23-34 of this handbook.

Appendix A. Professional Performance Standards Evaluation

Northern Kentucky University
Criteria for Professional Performance Evaluation

School of Social Work

Student Name: _____

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| C. | Did not complete and engage with all course assignments and materials | | Did complete and engage with all course assignments and materials. | | Worked actively and consistently to complete and engage with all course assignments and materials. | |
| D. | Did not demonstrate individual responsibility for course assignments, instructions, and expectations. | | Did demonstrate individual responsibility for course assignments, instructions, and expectations. | | Demonstrated consistent individual responsibility for course assignments, instructions, and expectations | |
| E. | Did not welcome and incorporate constructive feedback | | Did welcome and incorporate constructive feedback | | Solicited, welcomed, and incorporated constructive feedback | |

B. Respect/Civility. Treat all peers, instructors, and community and campus contacts with dignity and respect at all times. Components:

- a.) Pay attention while others are communicating, and pay attention to understand rather than to immediately respond.
- b.) Address faculty members by professional titles, unless otherwise requested.
- c.) Provide feedback and engagement in a constructive and supportive manner.
- d.) Demonstrate professionalism and kindness in all professional communications.
- d.) Approach conflict in a positive and cooperative manner.
- e.) Actively include team members and classmates in class activities and discussions.

Please enter a check mark next to the most appropriate assessment for each component included below.

| Components | “Below Expectations” Description | Place check below if assessment is “below expectations.” | “Meets Expectations” Description | Place check below if assessment is “meets expectations.” | “Exceeds Expectations” Description | Place check below if assessment is “exceeds expectations.” |
|------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|
|------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| A. | Did not pay attention while others were communicating, and paid attention to immediately respond rather than to understand. | | Paid attention while others were communicating, and paid attention to understand rather than to immediately respond. | | Paid obvious attention while others were communicating, and offered feedback and engagement with the communications of others. | |
| B. | Did not address faculty members by professional titles. | | Did address faculty members by professional titles. | | Addressed faculty members by professional titles and requested clarification when uncertain of titles. | |
| C. | Did not provide feedback and engagement in a constructive and supportive manner. | | Did provide feedback and engagement in a | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| F. | Did not actively include team members and classmates in class activities and discussions. | | Did actively include team members and classmates in class activities and discussions. | | Modeled consistent inclusion of and engagement with team members and classmates in class activities and discussions. | |
|----|---|--|---|--|--|--|

C.

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| B. | Did not use professional judgement when sharing personal information, and/or used class or team settings to disclose personal information. | | Used professional judgement when sharing personal information, and did not use class or team settings to disclose personal information. | | Demonstrated consistent professional judgement regarding disclosure of personal information. | |
| C. | Did not adhere to confidentiality standards regarding disclosure of client | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| A. | Did not participate in courses with the appropriate books, materials, and syllabus, including locating and accessing additional materials as warranted. | | Did participate in courses with the appropriate books, materials, and syllabus, including locating and accessing additional materials as warranted. | | Successfully participated in courses with the appropriate books, materials, and syllabus. Locating and accessed additional materials to advance individual learning and professional goals. | |
| B. | Did not seek out appropriate support in a timely manner when having difficulties to ensure success in each class. | | Did seek out appropriate support in a timely manner when having difficulties to ensure success in each class. | | Consistently demonstrated active engagement with appropriate support in a | -6 (el)-16 (y)16 (m)-6 (an)-4 (n)-4 (e4064-2 (d not |

E. Integrity. Practice honesty with yourself, your peers, and your instructors. Consistently strive to improve this ability as a lifelong learning goal.

Components:

a.)

regular basis. Did not address any identified areas for improvement.

regular basis. Did address any identified

D.

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| B. | Did not exhibit a willingness to serve with and learn about and from diverse clientele, colleagues, and communities. | | Did exhibit a willingness to serve with and learn about and from diverse clientele, colleagues, and communities. | | Consistently modeled and demonstrated willingness to serve with and learn about and from diverse clientele, colleagues, and communities. | |
| C. | Did not demonstrate an understanding of how values and culture interact, and an active en | m(es)-5 (,-)3.9 (adt.72 Tm..4 ref ref0949 g117.96 386.76 114.12 14.88 ref67950C 42 446.s)-5 (,17.96 3860n 3860n 38.72 Tm[(act)- | | | | |

A.

B.

C.

| Components | “Below Expectations” Description | Place check below if assessment is “below expectations.” | “Meets Expectations” Description | Place check below if assessment is “meets expectations.” | “Exceeds Expectations” Description | Place check below if assessment is “exceeds expectations.” |
|------------|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| A. | Did not develop and demonstrate | | Did develop and demonstrate | | | |

struggling with challenges, please see the instructor privately for information regarding additional campus resources.

- c.) Never use the names of clients or share identifying client information in a classroom or team setting.

D. Competence. Apply yourself to all of your academic pursuits with seriousness and ~~consciousness~~ ~~conscience~~, and according to the timelines and expectations established by your instructors.

Components:

- a.) Participate in your courses with the appropriate books, materials, and syllabus, including locating and accessing additional materials as warranted.
- b.) Seek out appropriate support in a timely manner when having difficulties to ensure success in each class.
- c.) Utilize available campus resources, including the information technology help desk, the writing center, and Stealy Library.
- d.) Own responsibility for the quality of completed coursework.
- e.) Strive to work toward greater awareness of personal challenges that may impact effectiveness with clients, and actively address those areas.

E. Integrity. Practice honesty with yourself, your peers, and your instructor. ~~Consistently~~ strive to improve this ability as a lifelong learning goal.

Components:

- a.) Maintain professionalism in interactions with peers, instructors, and campus and community partners.
- b.) Demonstrate commitment to positive, respectful, and honest interactions.
- c.) Self-evaluate responsibility and commitment on a regular basis, and address any identified areas for improvement.
- d.) Maintain integrity when completing all coursework.

F. Academic Accountability. Commit yourself to learning to communicate in a professional context.

Components:

- a.) Do your own work, and take credit only for your own work. This includes paraphrases and citations, and giving credit where credit is due.
- b.) Acknowledge areas where improvement is needed, and actively work to address those areas.
- c.) Complete work in a timely manner, and incorporate time to review your own work and any needed resources before submission.
- d.) Seek out and benefit from constructive feedback. This includes peer review, instructor reviews,

- c.) Demonstrate an understanding of how values and culture interact, and an active engagement with evolving standards and expectations.

H. Communication. Strive to improve nonverbal, verbal, and written communication skills. These skills are essential in our professional interactions.

Components:

- a.) Present yourself in a positive and appropriate manner. This includes professional appearance, and means that you should not wear offensive or inappropriate attire in a professional setting.
- b.) Actively maintain communication with classmates, instructors, and members of the NKU community. Self-isolation and a lack of communication are impediments to professional development.
- c.) Practice positive, constructive, respectful, and professional communication skills in non-verbal, verbal, and written communication. This includes but is not limited to: in-person interactions, class discussions, and email correspondence.
- d.) Actively demonstrate appropriate body language, empathy, and listening skills in professional interactions.

I. Social Justice. Strive to deepen your commitment to social justice for all persons. Components:

- a.) Develop and demonstrate understanding of how personal and institutional factors impeded the experience social justice.
- b.) Strive to learn about and participate in social justice initiatives.
- c.) Seek and embrace learning opportunities about methods of empowering populations and enhancing social justice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

To successfully engage in the aforementioned behaviors, the student will:

- 1.) Attend therapy sessions with a licensed mental health professional to improve interpersonal dynamics that relate to the therapy and supervision process as mentioned previously in this document (e.g., the ability to empathize with clients) and the student's ability to comprehend, accept, incorporate, and apply supervisor feedback in clinical practice. A letter from the mental health professional indicating that you have successfully addressed the aforementioned issues in therapy will be required before you can reenroll in practicum. Please present this letter to the BSW Program Director within 2 weeks of attempting to register for the practicum course.
- 2.) Be required to attend 6 hours' worth of supervision-related workshop.

supervision relationship as described in this document. Please present this essay to the BSW Program Director within 2 weeks of attempting to register for the practicum course and after you have completed the first and second requirements in this section.

- 4.) Meet with the BSW Field Director every 4 weeks to discuss progress and concerns related to achieving these goals and to receive feedback about your progress toward these goals.
- 5.) Be allowed to have a different practicum course instructor/supervisor (from his or her original practicum instructor/supervisor).
- 6.) Successfully complete (earn an A or B grade) in prtructor/ull oa(s)-1 ((c)4 (o (og)10 (r)/MCID 1(r)3 (n t)-2

Appendix C. Professional Development Plan, Academic Example

**Northern Kentucky University
Professional Development Plan (ACADEMICS EXAMPLE)**

School of Social Work

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Student email & NKU ID: _____

For you to continue to progress toward receiving your BSW degree at Northern Kentucky University, the School of Social Work faculty is collectively requiring that you engage in the following behaviors that relate to the competencies addressed within our program's retention policy.

A. Accountability. Maintain a strong presence in all courses and demonstrate preparedness and engagement with course materials and feedback.

Components:

- a.) Prompt, positive, engaged, and prepared engagement.
- b.) Prompt, positive, and prepared participation.
- c.) Completion of, and engagement with, all course assignments and materials.
- d.) Individual responsibility for course assignments, instructions, and expectations.
- e.) Welcome and incorporate constructive feedback

B. Respect/Civility. Treat all peers, instructors, and community and campus contacts with dignity and respect at all times.

Components:

- a.) Pay attention while others are communicating, and pay attention to understand rather than to immediately respond.
- b.) Address faculty members by professional titles, unless otherwise requested.
- c.) Provide feedback and engagement in a constructive and supportive manner.
- d.) Demonstrate professionalism and kindness in all professional communications.

- e.) Approach conflict in a positive and cooperative manner.
- f.) Actively include team members and classmates in class activities and discussions.

C. Confidentiality. Treat any personal information that you learn about a peer, instructor, or client as strictly confidential, unless consultation with an appropriate faculty member is necessary.

Components:

- a.) Maintain confidentiality with any information shared with you.
- b.) Use professional judgment when considering a disclosure of information that is very personal in a class or team setting. This time is not to be used for your own therapy or treatment. If you are struggling with challenges, please see the instructor privately for information regarding additional campus resources.
- c.) Never use the names of clients or share identifying client information in a classroom or team setting.

D. Competence. Apply yourself to all of your academic pursuits with seriousness and conscientiousness, and according to the timelines and expectations established by your instructors.

Components:

- a.) Participate in your courses with the appropriate books, materials, and syllabus, including locating and accessing additional materials as warranted.
- b.) Seek out appropriate support in a timely manner when having difficulties to ensure success in each class.
- c.) Utilize available campus resources, including the information technology help desk, the writing center, and Steely Library.
- d.) Own responsibility for the quality of completed coursework.
- e.) Strive to work toward greater awareness of personal challenges that may impact effectiveness with clients, and actively address those areas.

E. Integrity. Practice honesty with yourself, your peers, and your instructors. Consistently strive to improve this ability as a lifelong learning goal.

Components:

- a.) Maintain professionalism in interactions with peers, instructors, and campus and community partners.
- b.) Demonstrate commitment to positive, respectful, and honest interactions.
- c.) Self-evaluate responsibility and commitment on a regular basis, and address any identified areas for improvement.
- d.) Maintain integrity when completing all coursework.

F. Academic Accountability. Commit yourself to learning to communicate in a professional context.

Components:

- a.) Do your own work, and take credit only for your own work. This includes paraphrases and citations, and giving credit where credit is due.
- b.) Acknowledge areas where improvement is needed, and actively work to address those areas.
- c.) Complete work in a timely manner, and incorporate time to review your own work and any needed resources before submission.
- d.) Seek out and benefit from constructive feedback. This includes peer review, instructor reviews, and utilization of the campus writing center.

G. Commitment to Diversity. Strive to become more open to people, populations, ideas, and creeds with which you may not agree. Embrace diversity as a positive component of our society.

Components:

- a.)

from the social work program. I also understand the program's retention policy and am clear that there are certain behaviors that, if violated, will supersede this agreement and may result in immediate removal from the program (e.g., ethics violations).

Date Student Signature

Date Faculty Representative

Appendix D. Student Recommendation Request Form

Student Recommendation Request Form

Thank you for contacting me regarding a recommendation letter. In order for me to consider this request, please share the following with me in one single emailt least three weeks prior to the due date for your recommendation (this excludes university holidays and breaks):

1. Please fill out the attached table for each program for which you would like to request a recommendation letter.
2. Please send me a copy of your updated resume.
3. Please send me any other relevant information or materials.
4. Please include this additional information in your email to me:
 - a. what classes you took with me as the course instructor
 - b. when those classes were (semester/year)
 - c. what your grade was for each of the classes that you took with me
 - d. any notable interactions that you 9[(a)-6 (2(w)-2 (h3B o)-4 (f)-1eP t)-6 (opf)- 403.68 388.2 T t (c)4 (t)-2 (f)-1eP tou0 (ou t)

| | | | | | | |
|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 3.) | | | | | | |
|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|