



Social Work Program Student Manual



Watercolor by Nikki Kinne

**6th Floor, Gruening Building
PO Box 756480, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775
Telephone: (907) 474-7240 Fax (907) 474-6085**



Retchenda George-Bettisworth, Chair

907-474-7025

907-474-6085 fax

rbgeorgebettisworthl@alaska.edu

www.uaf.edu

University of Alaska Fairbanks

P.O. Box 756480, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-6480

Dear Student,

Welcome to the UAF Social Work Program! We are pleased you have chosen social work as a major and a career. This handbook has been prepared to compliment the academic information provided through the main campus website: <http://uaf.edu/>. It is meant to help you understand the program, its mission, goals, requirements and procedures.

In addition to program information, your rights, as well as obligations as a student are outlined. Please read this handbook carefully in order to plan for and maximize your educational experience with us. This manual is posted on our website at <http://www.uaf.edu/socwork/>. Updates to policies and procedures are published online and represent current policy for which students are accountable.

Advising is an important component of the social work program. We urge you to contact an faculty advisor as questions or concerns arise. Your advisor is available to assist you in planning your progress through the program.

I encourage you to make the most of your years with us by becoming active in the student social work organizations and larger community. We look forward to working with you and sharing your journey into the social work profession.

Best wishes for a successful educational experience.

Sincerely,

Retchenda George-Bettisworth, MSW
Department Chair
Clinical Associate Professor

I. Social Work Faculty and Staff

Faculty

Retchenda George-Bettisworth, M.S.W.
Department Chair
Clinical Associate Professor
Statewide BSW Cohort Coordinator
Phone: 907-474-7025
Fax: 907-474-6085
Email: rbgeorgebettisworth@alaska.edu

LaVerne Demientieff, L.M.S.W.
Clinical Associate Professor
Phone: 907-474-6267
Fax: 907-474-6085
Email: lmdemientieff@alaska.edu

Christina Ireton, L.M.S.W.
Field Director
Clinical Assistant Professor
Phone: 907-474-6513
Fax: 907-474-6085
Email: cmireton@alaska.edu

Staff

Carol Renfro, M.Ed.
Program Administrator
Administrative Specialist II
Phone: 907-474-7240
Fax: 907-474-6085
Email: cprenfro@alaska.edu

II. University of Alaska Fairbanks

Mission of UAF

The University of Alaska Fairbanks is a Land, Sea, and Space Grant university and an international center for research, education, and the arts, emphasizing the circumpolar North and its diverse peoples. UAF integrates teaching, research, and public service as it educates students for active citizenship and prepares them for lifelong learning and careers.

II. Baccalaureate Social Work Program

A. Mission and Goals of the Social Work Department

Rooted in core social work values, is to educate generalist social work practitioners to promote the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities, emphasizing the diversity and uniqueness of rural Alaska.

We create a community of critical thinkers dedicated to becoming competent, culturally-sensitive professionals engaged in lifelong learning. We prepare students:

1. For generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
2. To integrate the values and ethics of the social work profession into generalist practice.
3. To apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments
4. To engage diversity in generalist practice to advance human rights and advocate for social and economic justice
5. To understand bio-psycho-social, spiritual, and cultural functioning and apply it to all client systems.
6. To conduct research and scholarship applicable to the Alaskan context which contributes to individual and community well-being.

The mission of the Social Work Department is influenced by the mission of the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), and the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) (See Appendix B). Social Work is a department within the UAF College of Liberal Arts.

B. Historical Context

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) granted candidacy status for accreditation in 1984. Accreditation was granted in 1985 and reaffirmed in 1994, 2001, and in 2009.

In addition to the campus-based model, a statewide distance delivered model was developed in 1999 as an integral part of the overall social work program to assist in fulfilling the mission of service to rural Alaska. The statewide rural cohort distance delivery model was developed in 2001.

C. Delivery Methods

The Social Work Baccalaureate Program is offered through three different delivery models: campus based, statewide distance delivery, and the cohort model.

Campus-Based

Campus-based delivery courses are offered in the more traditional classroom style with the instructor physically present. Students participating in the campus-based courses typically reside on campus or in the surrounding community.

Distance Delivery

The statewide distance-delivered courses are based on the same curriculum, structure and accreditation standards as those presented through campus-based delivery. Courses vary only in the means of delivery, which occurs primarily through audio-conference and other forms of technology. The use of the audio-conference model for teaching replicates the reality of practice in rural Alaska. Client assessments, team meetings, and family sessions are routinely conducted through audio-conference.

Though the Department offers a few courses completely online, the complete degree program is not available in this model.

Cohort Model

The cohort model is a distance delivery model specific to rural Alaska students, who are either working in or have para-professional experience in social services.

The students meet in Fairbanks for a week at the beginning of each semester and three days at the end for intensive face-to-face classroom instruction. In between intensives, the rest of the course is completed through audio conferencing.

The focus of this type of course delivery is to “grow our own” practitioners. Instead of a revolving door of well-intentioned practitioners who rotate in and out of rural Alaska in a year or less, these “home grown” practitioners live in the rural communities themselves, know the community intimately, and are committed to staying.

This model allows rural students to form a bond among fellow classmates, building a network of professional and personal support across Alaska that may not occur in traditional distance delivery modalities. Additionally, students receive course instruction not only from the university instructor during the face-to-face intensives, but also from Alaska Native Elders, thus incorporating both western and traditional approaches to learning.

This mode of delivery has been highly successful, due in part to the fact that the majority of students can start by working to complete their Certificate in Rural Human Services (RHS), which then articulates into their two-year degree in Human Services (HUMS), and then they move on to complete their four-year degree in Social Work. These incremental steps and achievements of success help propel these rural students to the next level of educational attainment. This method is also called the Behavioral Health Pipeline. Though it is not required to enter through the behavioral health pipeline, it is preferred.

The cohort is a separate application process, and if interested please contact the Statewide Cohort Coordinator for more information.

D. Educational Policy Statement

The Commission of Accreditation (COA) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is responsible for establishing standards and conducting accreditation reviews, which stimulate improvement in professional social work education and encourage graduates to meet the changing demands of professional practice. The standards pertain to the organization, administration, and curriculum implementation of social work educational programs. Curriculum standards are derived from the *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of CSWE* (See Appendix B).

EPAS describe four features of an integrated curriculum design: (1) program mission and goals; (2) explicit curriculum; (3) implicit curriculum; and (4) assessment. The Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards are conceptually linked. Educational Policy describes each curriculum feature. Accreditation Standards are derived from the Educational Policy and specify the requirements used to develop and maintain an accredited social work program at the

baccalaureate level.

The infused competencies and specific courses taught build upon a liberal arts foundation and are logically related and linked to each other both horizontally and vertically through course sequencing, and relate directly to our mission, goals and objectives of our program.

Students, along with adjunct faculty and field instructors, are encouraged to read and become familiar with the contents of the Educational Policy and the Accreditation Standards included in this manual.

E. Generalist Practice Definition

The social work curriculum prepares graduates for entry-level generalist social work practice through the mastery of the nine core competencies. The Program has adopted the definition of generalist practice from the Council on Social Work Education as follows:

“Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice.

The baccalaureate program in social work prepares students for generalist practice. The descriptions of the nine Social Work Competencies presented in the EPAS identify the knowledge, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes, and behaviors associated with competence at the generalist level of practice.” (CSWE, 2015, p.11).

F. Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors

The curriculum for the UAF Social Work Program is guided by nine core competencies. The competencies reflect the standards of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the UAF Social Work Program's Mission and Goals. The curriculum prepares students for generalist social work practice through mastery of these core competencies and is demonstrated by observing the components following each competency.

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

- 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;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

- 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; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and 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; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 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; and
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

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

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

- apply 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;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

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

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

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

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

IV. Curriculum

A. Liberal Arts Foundation

The social work curriculum is built on a liberal arts foundation, which enriches the understanding of the person in environment context of professional social work practice, provides an understanding of cultural diversity, and provides the opportunity for thinking critically about society, people, and their problems.

Students acquire the foundation in the freshman and sophomore years. The university numbering system is a good guide to follow: 100-level courses are taken in the freshman year; 200-level, the second year, etc. Nearly all SWK designated courses, except SWK 103, (Introduction to Social Work) and SWK 220 (Ethics, Values and Practice), are at the 300 and 400 levels. The following pre-requisites: SOC/ANTH 100X, PSY 101, and ANTH 242 must be taken in the freshman and sophomore years. These courses lay the foundation of social sciences and Alaska Native culture and history that is necessary in the upper division social work courses. These courses also fulfill general education requirements.

B. University Core Curriculum

The core curriculum, which is part of the liberal arts base, is well suited for preparation as a professional social worker. The writing and oral intensive courses are essential for social workers since communication skills are “tools in trade.” Students would be well advised to sharpen their writing and oral skills since social workers often are required to write and present reports to colleagues and the courts and to prepare grant proposals.

The core and liberal arts components comprise approximately 60 hours of course work, usually completed in the first two years. This includes the areas of communication skills, humanities, social sciences, mathematics and natural or physical science. All pre-requisites must be completed prior to starting practice and practicum in the senior year (See Appendix C).

C. Standardization

Undergraduate curricula offered nationally by accredited social work programs are similar in objectives and content, as is true in other professions, such as nursing, education, and engineering. Standardization allows employers to count on graduates having been exposed to a knowledge base that prepares them to practice anywhere in the country. For those who intend to pursue a Master of Social Work degree, it may be reassuring to know that some schools offer students an opportunity to waive certain graduate requirements by testing out in some core content areas.⁴ Some universities offer an advanced standing program that enables graduates with baccalaureate degrees from accredited social work programs to complete a master's degree in one year.

UAF graduating seniors perform well on nationally standardized exams measuring social work knowledge, and many graduates go on to graduate programs in social work. Spring semester of the senior year students are asked to take an exit exam as part of meeting national accreditation requirements.

D. Regional Emphasis

While there is uniformity in social work curricula nationally, each social work program also has an emphasis that reflects its own regional needs. The mission of this campus includes an emphasis on rural concerns and Alaska Native peoples. As a consequence, UAF requires a course in Alaska Native cultures (ANTH 242) and rural social work practice (SWK 320). In addition, most other courses in the curriculum incorporate content relevant to issues faced in rural Alaska.

E. Professional Foundation (Major)

The major includes courses at the 200, 300 and 400 level. These courses include content on social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at risk, human behavior in the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum. In general the curriculum strengthens the student's understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytical approach to building knowledge for the delivery and evaluation of practice.

A central feature of the social work program that distinguishes it from a purely academic major is the opportunity for direct "hands on" practice in community agencies. In the senior year

students complete a 400-hour field practicum placement in a community agency serving clients and client groups, under supervision of a social worker. The field practicum placement affords students the opportunity to develop intervention and practice skills for beginning generalist social work practice.

CSWE accreditation standards do not allow the program to offer course credit for prior learning, life or work experience, or volunteering.

V. Declaring a Social Work Major

A. Admission to the Major

Matriculating freshman students are allowed to declare a major in social work if they graduated from high school and their records reflect at least an overall grade point average (GPA) of 2.0. (See UAF Catalog: Admission Requirements).

Transfer students are eligible to declare a social work major if they are accepted by the university and have a 2.0 GPA from their previous college or university. Students who seek to transfer in social work courses must have those courses reviewed and approved by the department head, and present a GPA of 2.5 or higher in social work courses.

Currently matriculated students may declare a major in social work at any time as long as a GPA of 2.0 is maintained.

It is important that each student who declares a social work major be aware that doing so in no way ensures that the student will be admitted to the field practicum or become eligible to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Work.

To remain in the program students must maintain a 2.5 GPA overall and receive a grade of “C” or better in all the required courses for the major. Students who fail to earn a grade of “C” or higher are required to retake the course. To declare your major, contact the Office of the Registrar.

Students are required to declare at Minor at UAF when pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree (See UAF Catalog: Minors). To declare your minor you must fill out the “Declaration of Minor” form available on the Office of the Registrar’s webpage, under “Forms”.

B. Academic Advising

All social work faculty serve as academic advisors for majors in the program, and students may work with the faculty of their choice. It is essential that each student talk with a social work advisor when first declaring a major. Utilizing *UA Online Degree Works* degree auditing program, and the Suggested Curriculum Guide (Appendix C), the advisor will assist the student to outline a plan for taking courses directed to a degree in social work and graduation.

Students are required to talk with their faculty advisors each semester during the pre-registration period to review the student's Degree Works profile to assure that the course of study continues to follow the proper sequence.

Most of the courses in the major have prerequisites, including the senior field practicum. Being out of sequence could delay graduation a full year. Field Practicum begins fall semester only. The Curriculum Guide can help students plan what courses to take and when. It is important to refer to the UAF Catalog as course prerequisites are based on the year of admission to the university.

Spring semester of the junior year students should request a graduation audit from the Graduation Office to clarify what requirements remain in order to graduate.

Advisors also help students file petitions to substitute required courses completed at another institution. Students should not have to repeat coursework taken elsewhere. Petitions can be found on the Office of the Registrar webpage under "Forms". Students who meet regularly with their faculty advisors can avoid last minute graduation related problems.

In addition to academic advising, students and faculty develop relationships that further assist students to adjust to the university experience, complete the program and enhance their experience at UAF.

Rural and Alaska Native students may find Rural Student Services (907)-474-7043 to be of additional help.

C. Students with Special Needs

The social work program supports the profession's commitment to recognize and serve special populations and in accordance with state and federal law, does not discriminate or deny admission on the basis of disability. In order to give students with visual, learning, motor, or

other conditions or learning disabilities special assistance, the program must be cognizant of these needs. Although students are not required to reveal disabilities during the application process, such information will be maintained in confidence and will help the faculty and staff in planning and advising the student.

If students require special assistance, it is suggested that they inform the appropriate faculty, their faculty advisor, Department Chair, and/or the Field Director as soon as possible. Faculty work with the Disability Services Coordinator to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities

Disability Services, (907) 474-7043, (203 Whitaker Building) implements the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and insures that UAF students have equal access to the campus and course materials. They work with students and instructors to optimize the student-learning environment.

D. Financial Aid

All financial aid and subsidized loans are allocated and administered through the Financial Aid Office at 107 Eielson Building, uaf-financialaid@alaska.edu, 907-474-7256. You must complete an Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) by February 15th to be considered for grants and scholarships in the following academic year. Specific grants and scholarships require additional application forms.

E. Scholarships

The Social Work Department administers two scholarships per academic year. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Scholarship and the Dr. Gerald S. Berman Founders Scholarship.

To be eligible for scholarships, students need to complete the FAFSA application and be declared majors in good academic standing. Additionally, the NASW scholarship, requires students to be members of NASW- Alaska Chapter.

VI. Student Rights and Responsibilities

A. Student Conduct

The goal of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Social Work Department is to prepare students

for the professional practice of social work. The faculty has the responsibility for determining whether students have demonstrated the required level of academic performance, professional behavior, and ethical behavior sufficient to interact positively with all client systems. Faculty therefore also have the responsibility to identify students who are not meeting acceptable standards of academic, professional, and ethical conduct and seek, when possible, a way to remedy problems that are identified. The following information is provided to clarify and to clearly state the expectations of students in this program.

All students attending UAF are subject to the university's code of conduct. These standards, including the academic honor code, are outlined in the UAF Catalog and the current Course Schedule, and can be accessed via the UAF website. Students are expected to read the codes of conduct and understand that when they accept enrollment in the university they agree to abide by the codes.

Social workers often work with vulnerable people in emotionally sensitive situations, therefore the faculty holds reasonable expectations for student behavior and performance beyond university regulations. The National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (Appendix D) serves as a baseline for appropriate behavior. It is reviewed in the introductory class, distributed in SWK 103, SWK 220, SWK 460, and referred to throughout the curriculum.

The following are the *professional behavior expectations* of the UAF social work program. All students are expected to exhibit the following ethical standards of behavior.

1. **Accountability:** Attend class, arrive on time, and return from break in a timely manner. Participate in group activities and assignments at a comparable level to peers. Complete work in a timely fashion and according to directions provided. Come to class prepared, with readings and other homework complete.
2. **Respect:** Treat all your peers, your instructors, and all those with whom you come in contact, with dignity and respect at all times. Listen while others are speaking. Give feedback to peers in a constructive manner. Approach conflict with peers or instructors in a cooperative manner. Use positive and nonjudgmental language. Turn off any electronic devices that might disrupt the classroom environment or at the direction of an instructor.
3. **Confidentiality:** Treat any personal information that you hear about a peer or an instructor or client in an agency as strictly confidential. Maintain any information that is shared in class, dyads or smaller groups within that unit. Use judgment in self-disclosing information of a very personal nature in the classroom. (Class time should not be used as therapy or treatment. If students feel the need to talk about personal issues or struggles, they may consult with their

instructor to receive a referral for counseling.) Understand never to use names of clients or disclose other identifying information in the classroom.

4. **Competence:** Apply yourself to all your academic pursuits with seriousness and conscientiousness, meeting all deadlines as given by your instructors. Constantly strive to improve your abilities. Come to class with books, handouts, syllabus, and writing implements. Seek out appropriate support when having difficulties to ensure success in completing course requirements. Take responsibility for the quality of completed tests and assignments. Strive to work toward greater awareness of personal issues that may impede your effectiveness in class or with clients.

5. **Integrity:** Practice honesty with yourself, your peers, and your instructors. Constantly strive to improve your abilities.

Academically commit yourself to learning the rules of citing other's work properly. Do your own work and take credit only for your own work. Acknowledge areas where improvement is needed. Accept and benefit from constructive feedback.

6. **Diversity:** Strive to become more open to people, ideas, and beliefs that may be unfamiliar. Embrace diversity. Maintain speech free of racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, stereotyping, etc. Use person first descriptions. Exhibit a willingness to serve diverse groups of persons. Demonstrate an understanding of how values and culture interact.

7. **Communication:** Strive to improve both verbal and written communication skills as these skills are used heavily in interactions with clients and peers and also when creating client records. Demonstrate assertive communication with peers and instructors. Practice positive, constructive, respectful and professional communication skills with peers and instructors paying attention to body language, empathy, and active listening.

8. **Social Justice:** Strive to deepen your commitment to social justice for all populations at risk. Demonstrate an understanding of how institutional and personal oppression impede the experience of social justice for groups and individuals.

Strive to learn about methods of empowering populations and enhancing social justice at micro, mezzo and macro levels.

B. Criteria for Student Performance Evaluation and Review

As student's progress through the social work program they will be evaluated on a regular basis by the faculty and staff. In addition to the UAF Student Code of Conduct, the NASW Code of Ethics, and the aforementioned professional behaviors, a student's performance evaluation will

include the following behaviors:

1. Active substance abuse
2. Lying, cheating, or any form of plagiarizing in coursework or fieldwork
3. Impaired performance in the classroom or field. Behaviors include, but are not limited to, being actively suicidal, inability to focus or communicate, distortion in thought processes, or otherwise unable to develop appropriate work relationships in the social work context even though appropriate ADA accommodations may have been provided.
4. Non-disclosure of a felony conviction, or the department becomes aware that the student has been convicted of a crime considered a Barrier Crime in 7AAC10.905 (the Alaska Administrative Code.)

See link: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/CL/bgcheck/assets/BarrierCrimeMatrix.pdf>.

Some crimes have a barrier that would permanently preclude a student from admission to practicum. Other crimes have a shorter time frame, and the department may determine that a student must wait a specific period of time before admission to the field practicum will be granted. Each situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, however any Barrier Crime conviction may result in termination from the major and permanent denial of practicum admission, regardless of the statute time frames.

5. Inadequate interpersonal relationship skills necessary for social work practice, to include the inability to form positive working relationships with faculty, peers, supervisors, and clients.
6. Inadequate written or verbal communication skills, which impede the ability to work with faculty, peers, supervisors, and clients.
7. Excessive absences from class, or field, which are considered predictive of poor professional performance.
8. Persistent inability to meet deadline dates on assignments and projects, suggesting an inability to be dependable and responsible in serving clients.
9. Failure to pass a required course in social work with a “C” or higher.
10. Termination from a practicum placement related to student performance or violation of the NASW Code of Ethics.

C. Criteria for Termination from the Major

The aforementioned behaviors affect the student’s ability to make appropriate progress toward graduation and developing competence in professional social work practice. Once any concerning behavior is identified the faculty and staff will engage in the following process to support the student through addressing the concerns.

The UAF Social Work Department reserves the right to accelerate and adapt this process for

serious, or egregious, situations (e.g. Students actively intoxicated in class or UAF sponsored event, threats of violence to faculty, peers, clients, violations of client confidentiality, etc.)

Evaluation of Student Performance: Process and Procedure

1. If a student's conduct comes into question, the student's faculty adviser is alerted so that the matter can be remedied quickly. The adviser will work with the student informally to address the concern.
2. If unsuccessful, the social work faculty as a group will meet with the student and attempt to work out a solution (e.g. Student may be referred to a support service offered through UAF, or in the community, the student may be encouraged to consider a different degree program, etc.)
3. If there appears, as is usually the case, a potential for corrective action, the student will be informed, personally and in writing, of the changes requested or actions to be taken within a specific time period. All corrective action will be documented on an Individual Performance Plan (Appendix R)
4. If a student's inappropriate behavior warrants a University level intervention, the situation will be referred to the Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Life, Dean of Students for disciplinary action. That recommendation will be taken into consideration by the social work department, as well.
5. Should it become necessary to dismiss the student from the major, the faculty will indicate reasons in a written statement presented to the student.
6. In termination or corrective action, the student has the right to appeal. The student must make the appeal in writing within three working days and include a statement indicating why the faculty action should be rescinded or modified. The faculty will meet within three working days to reconsider or affirm their actions and then notify the student of the decision on appeal.
7. Should the student wish to continue the process, an appeal may be made at levels beyond the department, (i.e., Dean of the college, Provost of the university). Formal hearings can be requested and convened at any level. Students are not penalized for appeals.
8. If the student does have to leave the major, the faculty advisor will assist in the transfer to another major.

D. Grade Appeal

The Grade Appeals Policy, passed by the UAF Faculty Senate, exists for students to seek review of final grades “alleged to be arbitrary and capricious.” The procedures are designed to provide a means for students to seek review of final course grades alleged to be arbitrary and capricious. Before taking formal action, a student must attempt to resolve the issue informally with the instructor of the course. A student who files a written request for review under the outlined

procedures shall be expected to abide by the final disposition of the review, as provided below, and may not seek further review of the matter under any other procedure within the university.

For a copy of the complete procedures, please visit the following UAF Website:

<http://www.uaf.edu/uafgov/faculty-senate/policies-procedures/grade-appeals/>

To read more about the UAF Student Code of Conduct, please visit the catalog online at:

<http://www.uaf.edu/catalog/current/academics/regs3.html>

VII. Student Organizations

Fairbanks-based social work students have been organized in student associations since the beginning of the social work program at UAF. The Organization of Student Social Workers (OSSW) and the Alaska Native Social Work Association (ANSWA) are registered campus groups, with officers, regularly scheduled meetings, and available meeting places. The two student organizations maintain close ties and participate in joint projects. Both groups are open to all students, including non-majors who have an interest in human service work. Student participation in these groups provide an opportunity to practice leadership skills and engage in community service projects. The organizations are involved in a wide variety of campus and community activities such as Take Back the Night Rally, Domestic Violence Awareness and Action activities, and various community service projects.

A. Organization of Student Social Workers

The Organization of Student Social Workers (OSSW) was established as a student organization in the early 1990's. The goals of the organization are to provide a means for students, faculties and professionals to collaborate on social service and awareness projects. The organization provides students the opportunity to develop character, leadership, and professional attitude. Students engage in practical application of advocacy skills and community organizing. Students in OSSW have organized rallies, educational movie nights, fundraising for social service agencies, gift wrapping for foster children on the holidays, and gift drives for the women's shelter.

B. Alaska Native Social Workers Association

The Alaska Native Social Workers Association (ANSWA) has been a student club in the Social Work Department since 1993. The goal of this organization is to promote diversity, awareness of

social issues both on the UAF campus and in the community of Fairbanks, to give back through volunteering and community support, and to provide leadership and networking opportunities for social work students. The mission includes raising awareness of the strengths and diversity of Alaska Native people and to bring awareness to and support issues faced in the Alaska Native community. The club invites any and everyone to participate whether they are Alaska Native or not and encourages students to lead the club based on their interests and passion for helping. In recent years ANSWA has implemented a statewide distance component to reach out and include students in the distance portion of the Social Work program through the use of teleconferencing capabilities.

ANSWA's students have dedicated their time to activities that vary every year. Some of the activities ANSWA has done in the past are: gift bags for elders, marching in the domestic violence events, sending care packages to rural communities that have experienced tragedies, promoting positive cultural events (Festival of Native Arts, Elizabeth Peratrovich Day, Troth Yeddha Snow Shoe Scramble), volunteering at local social service agency functions (OCS adoption day, Denali Center Valentine's Day Dinner, Effie Kokrine Charter School Honoring Elders event, etc.), and fundraising for the ANSWA end of year community potluck celebration.

C. Phi Alpha Honor Society

The Phi Alpha Honor Society, Kappa Xi Chapter, invites students who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work to apply for membership. The purposes of a national honor society are to provide closer bonds among social work students and to promote humanitarian goals and ideals.

VIII: Field Practicum

A. Introduction

Field practicum is an integral part of the social work curriculum. Most students consider their practicum fieldwork to be the most valuable and significant part of their social work education. Students are given the opportunity to learn to think systemically and to develop skills of a professional social worker. The entire curriculum contributes to preparation for social work practice, but it is in the practicum that students face the real challenges and opportunities of professional responsibility and ethical practice.

Practicum is a form of community service that occurs under the direct supervision of a social worker in a social service agency. Agencies are specifically chosen to provide students the

opportunity to engage in direct social work practice experiences with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

It is important to note that practicum fieldwork is not meant to be on-the-job training or apprenticeship rather it is an educational process of guided experiential learning designed for a student's personal and professional growth as a social worker.

The field practicum is designed to further the mission, goals and objectives of the social work program at UAF in accordance with Council of Social Work Education's guidelines.

B. Practicum Requirements

Practicum requires the senior student to complete a minimum of 400 clock hours in the same community social service agency over the course of two (or three semesters, if needed). The total practicum is 12 credit hours. The practicum sequence SWK 461 occurs in the fall semester and SWK 464 is scheduled for the spring semester. The program has a practicum exception option available for students who may have difficulty completing the sequence as outlined. SWK 466 offers a summer practicum to complete the 400-hour requirement. The credit hours for SWK 466 are adjusted as needed. This option must be approved by the Field Practicum Coordinator prior to practicum registration or as soon as it becomes an identified need.

Students work under the direct supervision of an agency based social worker, or other qualified supervisor approved by the Practicum Coordinator. Students are required to develop Learning Agreements with their field supervisors that specify student's learning objectives within that agency. The learning objectives then serve as criteria for evaluation. The Field Instructor and the Practicum Coordinator, or Faculty Liaison, approve the learning agreements.

Please see Appendix A for an explanation of the roles various individuals play in the practicum experience. Students are expected to meet weekly for a minimum of one hour of supervision with their agency based Field Instructor.

Practicum students concurrently enroll in a practice course sequence, SWK 460 in the fall and SWK 463 in the spring. These three credit courses provide content on interventions with individuals, families, groups and communities that enhance the student's knowledge, skills, and experience in real work practice situations.

Some students feel that the practice and practicum sequence is a heavy load, even for persons who do not work part-time or have family responsibilities. Students may find it necessary to

reduce their hours of employment during the practicum year. In addition, the policy in the program is that students should not take more than 15 credit hours of coursework each semester during the practicum year.

C. Placement Procedure

Spring semester before the senior year students are given applications for Field Practicum. The deadline for submissions is usually January 31. Students complete the application and return it to the Field Director.

The social work faculty meets as an admissions committee to review all applications and to make decisions and recommendations.

In order to apply for practicum, students must have:

1. A minimum of 75 university credits, which then allows them to graduate by the end of the practicum year, while maintaining an overall GPA of at least 2.0.
2. Completed all course work in the major except the senior level (400) courses with a GPA in social work courses of at least 2.5.
3. Demonstrated a capacity to relate to others, and a commitment to social work values.

Upon acceptance in the practicum, students receive a confirmation letter (via email) from the Field Director. Once accepted into practicum, students schedule individual appointments with the Field Director to discuss the results of the admissions committee's review and the student's placement choices. The placement discussion takes into account employment, volunteer work, life experiences, interests, and goals. Placing a student in a particular agency with a particular supervisor is an intricate process. It involves an assessment of individual student strengths, needs, and student preferences for working with certain client populations, and a match with an agency that can provide the necessary learning experiences.

Students are directed not to shop around or contact agencies prior to the placement process. If students have an interest in an agency that is not currently approved they should contact the Field Director who will instigate the appropriate process.

The Field Director contacts the agency, giving the name of the interested student. If the agency expresses interest in accepting a practicum placement, the Field Director requests the student contact the agency. The student then contacts the agency and schedules an interview. The interview allows both the student and the agency the opportunity to clarify expectations and

determine mutual suitability. If both the agency and student agree to the placement, the student, Field Instructor, agency director, department head and Field Director sign the Field Work Affiliation Agreement. This written agreement describes general responsibilities of each party involved in the practicum experience.

Students may not get their first choice of agency, or placement type. The faculty at UAF will do their best to locate a “best fit” placement for each student accepted into the field practicum. This decision will be based on the availability of appropriate support, guidance, and supervision in the placement agency. The UAF Social Work Program cannot guarantee finding a placement for some students in certain circumstances. If a placement cannot be located for a student in their home community, creative placements may be explored. However, if the Field Director cannot locate and secure a placement for a student by the course drop deadline, the student will likely receive an incomplete (I) grade, or be asked to reapply to practicum the following year.

In the unlikely event that a match is not considered suitable, additional interviews are scheduled with other possible agencies. If personnel from three different agencies are unwilling to accept a student for placement, the student may be referred to the head of the Social Work Department to evaluate whether the student is ready for practicum.

If an agency accepts a student but the program is unable to ensure the student will have adequate support, guidance, and mentoring from a MSW or BSW level field instructor, the program reserves the right to not move forward with placing a student at said agency.

If a student is accepted into an agency, then at the beginning of fall semester the Practicum Coordinator calls the designated Field Instructor to verify the placement and confirm the starting date.

Students must attend the first session of SWK 461 before starting the field placement, unless agreed upon by the Field Coordinator, Field Director, and Field Instructor to begin prior. The first class session serves as orientation to practicum and prepares students to enter the agency with appropriate knowledge and expectations.

D. Special Requests

Occasionally students make special requests that are outside of the regular practicum format. The most frequent requests are for block placements, extensions into summer practicum, placements where the student is employed, and placement at ‘for profit’ agencies. Each request is reviewed to evaluate the student’s educational needs and will only be approved if the exception can ensure

educational integrity. The individual student's professional growth and development opportunities must be equal to or greater than other placement options. More specific information on special requests can be found in the Field Practicum Manual.

E. International Placement Requests

On occasion, students express interest in an international placement for practicum. The mission of the UAF Social Work Program is focused on the diversity and uniqueness of rural Alaska. While students are welcome to research possible international placement for field, the program has no resources to support international placements at this time.

In order to be considered for an international placement students must complete the following:

1. Apply and be accepted to UAF Study Abroad
2. Apply and be accepted into a CSWE accredited university exchange program willing to assist with the international placement
3. Provide substantial documentation regarding appropriate field instruction
4. Provide UAF Social Work Program with course descriptions for the practice practicum series from the institution of their choice in order to ensure courses will be transferrable into the UAF system.
5. Indicate intent in writing of seeking international placement one year (1) Prior to Practicum application deadline.

The UAF Social Work Program reserves the right to not approve an international placement request at any time.

F. Stipends

Most agencies do not provide financial assistance. Students are individually responsible to arrange resources sufficient to complete their education.

Students seeking placements in child welfare may be eligible to apply for the Alaska Child Welfare Workforce Initiative (AWCCI). This stipend provides financial support for protection agency upon graduation. If you are curious about this program, please contact the Department Chair.

G. Scholarships

There are scholarships specifically designated for social work students. To be eligible for these

scholarships students must complete the application process through the Financial Aid Office.

Your social work advisor or Practicum Coordinator has current information on these programs.

H. Professional Social Work Licensing

Bachelor of Social Work graduates of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, are eligible to apply for licensure through the State of Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing. Successful applicants must pass an exam to receive a Baccalaureate Social Work License (LBSW) from the Board of Social Work Examiners.