

MSW's STUDENT COMMITMENT CONTRACT

It is expected that once a student is accepted into the MSW program, academic requirements and standards will be maintained. As a professional program, social work expects students to progress toward a professional level of performance. The MSW degree is reserved for students who have demonstrated that level of competence. In addition to mastering a body of knowledge, a social worker must possess professional attitudes, skills, values, and ethics. Academic performance in the program includes classroom performance, class attendance, ethical behavior, communication skills, and psychological well-being sufficient to maintain positive and constructive relationships with client. Continual evaluation of the student includes not only periodic objective evaluations, such as grades and performance in field placements, but also professional faculty appraisal of the student's progress and potential. Continuation in the program is contingent upon positive ongoing faculty evaluation of the student's grades, professional attributes, and performance in real or simulated professional situations. A student may be suspended or terminated from the program for deficiencies in grades or violation of the Professional Standards as indicated below. The list below contains professional standards with areas of concern which may indicate that a student is unable or unwilling to follow the NASW Code of Ethics and/or standards set forth by the social work program. The list has been adapted (with permission) from standards developed by Lock Haven University after careful review and revision by Marshall University faculty, students, and Advisory Board members. It is not intended to be all-inclusive and may be amended by faculty.

Professional Standards

Performance Standards

- Plans and organizes work effectively
- Turns in assignments complete and on time
- Makes arrangements for his/her special needs
- Attends class regularly

Indicators of Concern

- Continually unprepared for class
- Excessive requests for extensions on assignments and exams
- Excessive turning in late or incomplete assignments
- Multiple absences from class (as defined in the course syllabus) or field placement
Conduct/Behavior

Standards

- Demonstrates ability to work cooperatively with others
- Actively participates in class discussion groups/role plays
- Shows respect for others' opinions and is open to feedback from peers/faculty/field
- Is able to form positive, constructive relationships with clients
- Demonstrates a willingness to understand diversity in people regarding race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, political orientation, sexual orientation and identity, religion, and populations at risk
- Conducts him/herself according to NASW Code of Ethics

Indicators of Concern

- Classroom behavior which impedes learning and/or building effective relationships
- Consistently late for class, or leaves class early unless otherwise arranged with professor
- Consistently late for field placement
- Sleeps during class periods
- Disrupts class process by talking to others
- Uses derogatory language or demeaning remarks or gestures
- Appears unwilling/unable to accept feedback
- Unable to form positive, constructive relationships with clients
- Monopolizes class discussions
- Consistently complains about class workload to the point of impeding class process
- Discriminatory behavior or harassment towards others on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, etc.
- Engages in academic misconduct

Standards

- Uses self-disclosure appropriately
- Appears to be able to handle discussion of uncomfortable topics

- Deals appropriately in class with issues which arouse emotions
- Demonstrates an awareness of the impact of one's behavior toward others

Indicators of Concern

- When engaged in self-disclosure, the student appears to overreact to or resent feedback (e.g., takes it personally)
- Appears unable/unwilling to control emotional reactions
- Abuses alcohol/drug, has emotional problems that interfere with relationships/learning process
- Makes verbal threats directed at clients, faculty, staff, or students
- Demonstrates poor judgment, decision-making, or problem solving skills
- Consistent failure to demonstrate ability to form effective client/social worker relationships (i.e., shows judgmental attitude)

Communication Skills

Standards (written communication)

- Shows consistency in written communications – grammar, spelling, punctuation, clear structure, organization, logical sequence
- Demonstrates proper documentation of sources and citations
- Demonstrates ability to write effectively in records
- Abides by university standards regarding plagiarism
- Demonstrates use of critical thinking skills

Indicators of Concern

- Written works are frequently vague, shows difficulty expressing ideas clearly and concisely
- Excessive errors in spelling, punctuation, structure, etc., and does not make an effort to improve

Standards (oral communication)

- * Is able to clearly articulate ideas, thoughts, concepts, etc.
- * Communicates clearly

Indicators of Concern

- * Ideas, thoughts, concepts are not clearly articulated
- * Fails to demonstrate ability to communicate empathy, positive regard, and respect for clients
- * Communication/language skills are inadequate to effectively interact with clients and in class

By signing this contract, you are acknowledging that you agree to comply with the performance standards and are aware that violations could result in a performance review hearing with department faculty, your removal from your field site and/or a possible termination from the program.

STUDENT NAME (PRINT): _____ MUID#: _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE: _____