

EVALUATION OF STUDENT FITNESS & PERFORMANCE POLICY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY-SAN MARCOS

REVISED FEBRUARY 2010

PROGRAM STANDARDS

The Texas State School of Social Work mission is to prepare students for ethical professional social work practice. Students must meet academic and professional development standards to successfully advance through the social work program. Academic standards include not only academic performance, but professional development as well, which is demonstrated through professional and ethical behavior.

Each student signs a contract before program admission 1) agreeing to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and applicable state laws; and 2) acknowledging his/her understanding that a student can be terminated from the social work degree program based on failing to satisfactorily achieve academic and professional standards. Faculty evaluate students' academic achievement and professional development based on Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), the University Honor Code, and the Texas State and School of Social Work Student Handbooks in order to identify actions that the School can take to facilitate students' successful advancement, or to terminate students' enrollment in the program if remediation is not possible.

The Program Standards Committee will be a standing committee comprised of three faculty members. The committee members will be appointed by the Director and will serve for the academic year assigned. The committee members will rotate off of the committee on a staggered basis to ensure consistency and continuity of policies and procedures.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT FITNESS & PERFORMANCE

Texas State School of Social Work will comply with University program standards and policies related to student fitness and performance. If there are changes in the student's academic standing:

- The University Registrar, Graduate College, and/or Academic Advisor will inform each student and the BSW or MSW Degree Coordinators in writing of any changes in the student's academic standing.
- Each student is responsible for contacting the Degree Coordinator, and submitting a corrective action plan indicating how the student will resolve the academic standing issue by the end of the semester in which the problem is identified.
- Students that fail to comply with this process may not be allowed to continue in the program.

If a faculty member has a serious concern about a BSW or MSW student's professional behavior and/or development, the faculty member will:

- Document the concern on the Student Concern form within the semester in which the concerns are identified.
- The faculty member will submit the Student Concern form electronically to the student's Faculty Advisor and the appropriate Degree Coordinator.
- The faculty member, Faculty Advisor, and Degree Coordinator will discuss the concern and determine if a corrective action plan is needed.

- If it is determined that a corrective action plan is needed, the faculty member will meet with the student to discuss the concern and they will develop the corrective action plan together.
- If the student is unable or unwilling to participate in the development of the corrective action plan, the faculty member will develop the plan independently and indicate the student's lack of involvement on the plan.
- A copy of the corrective action plan will be sent to the student, the Faculty Advisor and the appropriate Degree Coordinator electronically.
- In the event that the faculty member, the Faculty Advisor and the Degree Coordinator are the same person, the Chair or a member of the Program Standards Committee will assist in the process.
- If the student's behavior ceases or the concern is resolved, the faculty member will document this change in behavior, inform the student's Faculty Advisor and appropriate Degree Coordinator, and no further action will be pursued on the matter.

THE STUDENT REVIEW PROCESS

If the documented unprofessional behavior or developmental concern persists, the faculty member will initiate remediation based on the following:

- The faculty member who had the initial concern will consult with the student's Advisor and the appropriate Degree Coordinator. The Degree Coordinator will then refer the continued concern to the Program Standards Committee for action and/or recommendations.
- The Degree Coordinator will submit the Student Concern Form, corrective action plan and any other supporting documentation to the Chair of the Program Standards Committee.
- A copy of all documentation will also be provided to the student.
- The Program Standards Committee will convene a hearing within ten (10) working days to make recommendations.
 - Attending this meeting will be: the faculty member who voiced the concern, the student, and the student's faculty advisor. The Committee may also invite other individuals who are deemed relevant to the process.
 - The student may also bring his/her own advocate to provide support or advisement to the student. The advocate is not allowed to address the committee on behalf of student.
 - The Committee members will hear the faculty member's concern as well as the student's response, and any attempts to resolve the concern.
 - At the conclusion of the hearing, all participants will be excused from the room. Committee members will remain in order to deliberate.
- The Committee will report their decision(s) in writing within ten (10) working days to the student, the appropriate Degree Coordinator and the School Director.
- The student has ten (10) working days to accept/reject the Committee's recommendation(s) in writing. If a student fails to respond within ten (10) working days in writing, this will be an indication of acceptance of the decision.
- The student may appeal the Committee's decision in writing to the School Director within ten (10) working days of the notification of the Committee's decision.
- The student may appeal the School Director's decision in writing to the College Dean within ten (10) working days of the notification of the School Director's decision.
- The College Dean's decision is final.

If a faculty member is concerned that a student's professional development and/or behavior is so serious that it requires a prompt or immediate resolution and no corrective action plan is feasible, the faculty member will follow these procedures:

- The faculty member will notify the Faculty Advisor and appropriate Degree Coordinator about the concern and the need for prompt resolution.
- The Program Standards Committee will be notified and will convene within two (2) working days. All procedures outlined above will be followed within an expedited timeframe of two (2) working days instead of ten (10).

DOCUMENTATION & RECORD-KEEPING

The Program Standards Committee report will remain in the School Director's office. Notification that the report is being held by the Director will be placed in the student's file. The appropriate University officials will be notified of the Program Standard Committee's decision if needed.

The School must complete all Student Fitness and Performance Evaluation procedures by the last day of the semester (including exam week) unless the faculty member delivers his/her concern to the appropriate Degree Coordinator within one week of the end of the semester. Should this occur, the Program Standards Committee must complete its deliberations within one week of the new semester's first class day.

The appropriate Degree Coordinator will advise students who have one or more unresolved student concerns on file with the Coordinator at the end of a semester that they are advanced to the next semester only on a probationary basis. Students will not graduate if they have an unresolved student concern on file.