**Texas State University**

**School of Social Work**

**EVALUATION OF STUDENT FITNESS & PERFORMANCE POLICY**

*Revised November 15, 2016*

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**Program Standards**

The Texas State School of Social Work prepares students for ethical professional social work practice. Students must meet both academic and professional standards to advance successfully through the social work program. Academic standards include maintaining a minimum 3.0 GPA and successful completion of all required degree coursework. Professional standards are demonstrated through the student’s professional development and ethical behavior.

 Students sign a contract before admission to the program: 1) agreeing to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and applicable state laws, and 2) acknowledging their understanding that a student can be terminated from the social work program based on failing to satisfactorily achieve academic and professional standards. Faculty evaluate students’ academic achievement and professional development based on the Council of Social Work Education’s (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS15), the University Honor Code, and the Texas State School of Social Work Student Handbooks in order to identify actions that can be taken to facilitate students’ successful advancement or to terminate enrollment in the program if remediation is not possible.

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

**Evaluation of Student Fitness & Performance**

 The 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 BSW or MSW Academic Adviser will inform the student and the BSW or MSW Program Director in writing of any changes in the student’s academic standing;
* The student is responsible for contacting the BSW or MSW Program Director within ten (10) working days to submit 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; and
* Students who 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 academic or professional behavior and/or development, the faculty member will:

* Document that concern on a Student Concern Form within the semester that the concern is identified;
* The faculty member will submit the Student Concern Form electronically to the appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director;
* The faculty member and the appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director will discuss the concern within three (3) working days to determine if a corrective action plan is needed;
* If it is determined that a corrective action plan is needed, the faculty member and appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director will meet with the student to discuss the concern and develop the corrective action plan together, which can be in a safe zone if requested;
* If the student is unable or unwilling to participate in the development of a corrective action plan, the faculty member will develop the corrective action plan and document the student’s lack of involvement on the plan;
* A copy of the corrective action plan will be sent electronically to the student, the appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director, and the School Director within three (3) working days. In the event that the faculty member is also the appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director, the Chair or a member of the Program Standards Committee will assist in this process; and
* If the student’s behavior ceases or the concern is resolved, the faculty member will document this change of behavior or concern, inform the appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director, and no further action will be pursued.

**The Student Review Process**

 If the documented unprofessional behavior or developmental concern persists, the faculty member will initiate involvement of the Program Standards Committee based on the following:

* The faculty member who had the initial concern will consult with the student’s appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director, who will then refer the continued concern to the Program Standards Committee for action and/or recommendations;
* The Program Director will submit the Student Concern Form, corrective action plan and any other supporting documentation to the Chair of the Program Standards Committee within three (3) working days;
* A copy of all documentation will also be provided to the student within three (3) working days;
* The Program Standards Committee will convene a hearing within ten (10) working days to make recommendations;
	+ The meeting may be held in a safe zone if requested by anyone attending this meeting;
	+ Attending this meeting will be: the faculty member who voiced the concern, the student, and a quorum of the Program Standards Committee. The Program Standards Committee may also invite other individuals who are deemed relevant to the process;
	+ The student may also bring a support person to provide support or advisement to the student. However, the support person is not allowed to address the Program Standards Committee on behalf of student;
	+ The Program Standards 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. The Program Standards Committee members will remain in order to deliberate.
* The Program Standards Committee will report their decision(s) in writing within three (3) working days to the student, the appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director and the School Director, and the appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director will then notify the student of the Committee’s decision(s) in writing within three (3) days.
* The student has ten (10) working days to accept/reject the Program Standards Committee’s recommendation(s) in writing. If a student fails to respond in writing to the appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director within ten (10) working days, this will be an indication of acceptance of the decision;
* If the student rejects the Program Standards Committee’s recommendations, 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 of Applied Arts 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 appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director, as well as the appropriate BSW or MSW Field Director if the student will be entering an internship, about the concern and the need for prompt resolution.
* The Program Standards Committee will be notified and convene with at least three (3) committee members 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 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 the concern to the appropriate BSW or MSW Program Director 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 next semester’s first class day.

 The Program Standards Committee report will remain in the School Director’s office, and the School Director will notify any appropriate University officials of the Program Standard Committee’s decision if needed.

 The appropriate BSW or MSW Degree Director will advise any student who has one or more unresolved student concerns on file with the School Director at the end of a semester that they are advanced to the next semester only on a probationary basis until a final recommendation is delivered by the Program Standards Committee and due process is completed. Students will not graduate if they have an unresolved student concern on file.