**PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

The faculty and staff at Ohio University Department of Social Work expect students to demonstrate the values and principles and ethics as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics as part of their preparation to become professionals while in the classroom as students and during their field experience. Students in our program are expected to demonstrate the following behaviors consistent with the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession.

**Professional Expectations of Student Behavior**

1. **Accountability**: Attend class and field, 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 the directions provided by the instructor.  
     
   Come to class prepared, with readings and other assignments completed.*

*Fulfill all commitments to your field agency.*

1. **Respect**: Treat all your peers, your instructors, your clients, 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.*

*Dressing as professionally as other professionals in a given agency will help students to project a professional image and to be treated professionally by others. If unsure how to dress in a particular setting or for a particular event, ask your Field Instructor or the staff of the Field Education Office and err on the side of modesty.*

1. **Confidentiality**: Treat any personal information that you hear about a peer, instructor, or client as strictly confidential.   
     
   *Maintain any information 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 issues they are struggling with, they many consult with their instructor to receive a referral for counseling.)   
     
   Never use names of clients or disclose other identifying information in the classroom.*
2. **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 pens   
     
   Seek out appropriate support when having difficulties to ensure success in completing course requirements. Seek this support in a timely fashion (not waiting until the last minute).   
     
   Take responsibility for the quality of your work, such as tests, assignments, and field activities.   
     
   Strive to work toward greater awareness of personal issues that may impede your effectiveness with clients.*
3. **Integrity**: Practice honesty with yourself, your peers, and your instructors. Constantly strive to improve your abilities.   
     
   *Academic: Commit yourself to learning the rules of citing others’ 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.*
4. **Diversity**: Strive to become more open to people, ideas, and creeds with which you are unfamiliar. Embrace diversity.  
     
   *Maintain speech free of racism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, or stereotyping.   
     
   Exhibit a willingness to serve diverse groups of persons.   
     
   Demonstrate an understanding of how values and culture interact.*
5. **Communication**: Strive to improve both verbal and written communication skills, as these skills are used heavily in interactions with clients and peers and also with creating client records.   
     
   *Demonstrate assertive communication with peers, instructors, and clients.   
     
   Practice positive, constructive, respectful, and professional communication skills with peers, instructors, and clients (body language, empathy, listening)*

*Avoid communicating on your cell phone, iPad, TouchPad and other electronic devices during class, field education settings, or planning and professional meetings, etc.*

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

*Apply an enhanced understanding of social justice issues to create change in the community where you live and work.*

**Consequences**

The Social Work Program may terminate a student's participation in the program on the basis of professional non-suitability if the Program's faculty determines that a student's behavior has constituted a significant violation or pattern of violations of the NASW Code of Ethics or Ohio University Social Work Program’s Student Handbook. These violations may include but are not limited to:

1. Failure to meet or maintain academic grade point requirements as established by the University and the Social Work program.
2. Academic cheating, lying, or plagiarism. Behavior judged to be in violation of the NASW Code of Ethics.
3. Failure to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity or emotional stability requisite for professional practice.
4. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty or staff (in the Social Work Program or in the field placement).
5. Consistent failure to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills necessary for forming professional relationships (for example, unable to demonstrate nonjudgmental attitude or unable to allow client self-determination).
6. Documented evidence of criminal activity occurring during the course of study.

I have read and understand this statement of Professional Expectations of Student Behavior and Consequences.

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Student’s Signature

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Print Name

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Date

*Adapted from FAU School of Social Work, “Professional Expectations of Student Behavior” Available at:* [*http://www.fau.edu/ssw/expectations.html*](http://www.fau.edu/ssw/expectations.html)