

APPENDIX 1: SSW STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

The ultimate goal of Simmons University School of Social Work (SSW) Standards for Professional Practice is to help students have a successful experience at the SSW and be prepared for post-graduate social work practice, leadership, and scholarship. The foundation of this document includes the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) [Code of Ethics](#) and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) [Educational Policies](#). These standards are presented in a social work framework that values diversity of perspectives and experiences. As an SSW student, you will be informed of the Standards for Professional Practice at the time of admission to the SSW and at new student orientation (orientation varies depending on program). The standards are on the SSW [website](#) and also in each program's student handbook.

Simmons University SSW is committed to preparing its graduates to be highly competent, ethical social work practitioners, leaders, and scholars. Faculty make a commitment to providing students with a curriculum that supports their educational and professional development and that assists them in adherence to these standards. NASW governs professional standards and conduct for all social workers. Additionally, CSWE mandates that the SSW promote and evaluate the professional development of students in its social work programs (BSW, MSW, and DSW). Likewise, the SSW is responsible to the community at large for graduating knowledgeable, ethical, and skilled social work professionals whose practice, leadership, and scholarship reflect the competencies and values of the social work profession. Achieving professionalism in social work requires your commitment to and demonstration of the values of the social work profession.

In addition to the standards outlined in this document, SSW students are expected to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics (NASW, 2021), the policies outlined in the SSW Student Handbook and in the Simmons University Handbook, which includes the Simmons University Code of Conduct and policy on Academic Integrity.

*NASW Ethical Principles:

1. Service
2. Social Justice
3. Dignity and worth of the person
4. Importance of human relationships
5. Integrity
6. Competence.

Procedures for addressing a violation of the Standards for Professional Practice or any of the ethics, codes, or policies identified above are outlined in the SSW Student Handbooks and the Simmons University Code of Conduct.

To participate in a Simmons social work degree program, you are expected to satisfy its requirements, including the professional standards, *with or without accommodations*. If you seek reasonable accommodations, you must contact the Simmons [Office of Accessibility Services](#). This office will determine your eligibility for accommodations and/or services.

<i>Simmons Standard of Professional Practice</i>	NASW Professional Ethical Principle(s) to meet the Standard*
1. Self-Awareness Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Accurately assess strengths and limitations and provide evidence of observable, sustained improvement over time through ongoing self-reflection and the demonstrated integration of external feedback in practice across all settings (e.g., practicum, classroom, campus, including interactions with faculty, staff, and peers, and the larger community). 2. Actively examine and address personal privilege and biases on an ongoing basis, demonstrating awareness of their impact and taking steps to mitigate potential harm through self-reflection and the integration of external feedback (e.g., supervision, faculty, and staff input). 3. Seek supervision and demonstrate the consistent and effective application of constructive feedback to inform practice, leadership, and scholarship. 4. Take responsibility for actions and demonstrate accountability by acknowledging impact and making sustained behavioral adjustments 5. Critically examine the relationship between personal values, beliefs, and socialization and professional ethics, and demonstrate the ability to reconcile conflicts by consistently aligning behavior with the standards of the <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i>	• 2. Social Justice • 5. Integrity • 6. Competence

2. Communication Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Demonstrate awareness of your surroundings when discussing client information. Client cases should not be discussed outside of supervision, or used as examples in written work or presentations without client permission 2. In written work, communicate at a level that reflects the academic standards of SSW programs, including honest and ethical use of any artificial intelligence (AI) platforms and APA citation in accordance with assignment guidelines and rubrics, as well as School and University policies 3. Demonstrate a willingness and ability to actively listen to others with objectivity and openness 4. Communicate responsibly and respectfully, with speech that is free of bias, discriminatory language, stereotyping, and plagiarism in all interactions with colleagues, faculty, practicum instructors, staff, and clients, consistent with NASW Code of Ethics (2.01). 5. Advocate for yourself in an ethical, direct, respectful, and responsible manner using SSW and agency-specific channels for conflict management	• 3. Dignity and Worth of a Person • 5. Integrity • 6. Competence
3. Respect for Diversity and Social Justice Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Exhibit a willingness to relate and work nonjudgmentally across differences with others 2. Demonstrate knowledge of, and sensitivity to diversity, oppression, and privilege, including a willingness to examine personal beliefs, values, and assumptions that perpetuate oppression	• 2. Social Justice • 3. Dignity and Worth of a Person
4. Electronic Communication and Use of Social Media Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Demonstrate respect for the privacy of your clients; refrain from gathering information about clients from online sources without the client's consent (e.g., googling client history, accessing client social media); photographing clients; or publishing client information on social media 2. Communicate about and with colleagues and peers with respect and accuracy, refraining from any cyberbullying, harassment, making derogatory or defamatory comments, or disclosing personal information without consent.	• 3. Dignity and Worth of a Person • 5. Integrity • 6. Competence

3. Follow relevant laws, agency policy, <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i> (1.07) pertaining to social media and the use of technology (e.g. artificial intelligence) in all aspects of service delivery 4. Maintain clear boundaries in social media use, demonstrating awareness that posts and interactions can impact professional relationships with peers, faculty, staff, clients, colleagues, and agencies	
5. Openness and Willingness to Learn; Flexibility and Adaptability Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Demonstrate openness to learning new ideas and perspectives, recognizing that professional social work practice requires continual learning, humility, and reflective practice. This openness strengthens professional competence and enhances one's capacity to serve individuals, families, and communities 2. As required by the demands of professional practice, be flexible and adaptable in new situations and as circumstances change, recognizing that responsive and evolving practice is necessary to effectively meet the needs of those we serve and to address complex social problems 3. Assume the stance of a learner with humility; avoid relying solely on current or past professional experiences to inform your judgment or decision-making in the practicum and in the classroom. Students are expected to remain open to new knowledge, perspectives, supervision, and feedback in order to continually develop their professional expertise 4. Demonstrate a willingness to effectively communicate your learning needs and request clarification to understand requirements. Students are expected to engage peers, instructors, and supervisors as partners in the learning process and contribute to the professional learning community	● 1. Service ● 4. Importance of Human Relationships ● 6. Competence
6. Physical and Cognitive Ability, Critical Thinking Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Attend and actively participate in classes and practicum as scheduled, demonstrating punctuality, dependability, accountability, and the ability to prioritize responsibilities. As necessary, utilize formal accommodations to support attainment of these aims 2. Navigate transportation needed to attend practicum and meet classroom requirements 3. Responsibly use the technologies required to engage in scholarship and effective practice, including, but not limited to, use	● 4. Importance of Human Relationships ● 5. Integrity ● 6. Competence

of computers, cellphones, artificial intelligence platforms, agency electronic records and databases, and social media 4. Demonstrate the ability to acquire knowledge and reflect on experiences to inform practice 5. Demonstrate the capacity to think critically and to apply effective problem-solving skills that are well-reasoned, examine multiple perspectives and worldviews, integrate evidence and knowledge, and lead to well-supported decisions and conclusions	
7. Emotional and Mental Stability, and Stress Management Expectations to meet the standard: 1. In accordance with the <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i> (4.05), demonstrate the ability to honor the best interests of people to whom you have professional responsibility by keeping personal life circumstances or problems from interfering with judgment or performance 2. Students are expected to maintain the emotional and mental stability necessary to meet academic and practicum expectations. The academic environment is not intended to function as a therapeutic space; therefore, when stress or mental health concerns interfere with functioning, students are expected to seek appropriate support, which may include a leave of absence. In practicum settings in particular, students must be sufficiently mentally fit to engage safely and effectively, and an inability to do so may constitute a violation of program expectations. 3. Demonstrate professional boundaries, including ethical use of self-disclosure	• 5. Integrity • 6. Competence
8. Professional Values and Ethics Expectations to meet the standard: 1. Exhibit judgment and conduct that is consistent with the values and ethics of the profession as stated in the <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i>, as well as with established laws, policies, and professional standards 2. In accordance with <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i> section on: Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception (4.04), you should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception 3. Demonstrate professional and academic integrity, including exhibiting truthfulness in fulfilling program requirements. Students should remain aware of and abide by the Simmons Honor Code 4. Follow Federal and State laws and agency policies regarding confidentiality and mandatory reporting	• 2. Social Justice • 3. Dignity and Worth of the person • 5. Integrity • 6. Competence

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