

Bachelor of Arts in Social Work

Student Handbook

Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Criminology

Idaho State University

Revised September 2026



**Idaho State
University**

**Sociology, Social Work
and Criminology**

Contents

I. Introduction	3
A. Welcome	3
B. Non-Discriminatory Policy	3
C. Social Work: A Professional Career	3
D. Is Social Work the Right Career Choice for You?	4
II. Program Overview	5
A. Program Mission Statement	5
B. Program Description	5
C. Program Goals	6
D. Program History	8
E. Program Curriculum, Options and Course Offerings	8
F. Program Faculty	11
III. Program Guidelines and Practices	11
A. Admissions	11
C. Leaves of Absence	13
E. Transfer Credit Policy	13
F. Reasonable Accommodations for Students	13
E. Academic and Professional Advising	13
F. Professional Fees	14
G. Practicum Placement	14
Please see the Practicum Education Manual for complete information.	14
IV. Student Rights, Opportunities, and Obligations to Participate in Program Governance	15
D. Research Projects	15
E. Student Safety	16
H. Academic and Professional Expectations of BA in Social Work Students	16
Service	18
Social Justice	18
Dignity and Worth of the Person	18
Importance of Human Relationships	18
Integrity	18
Competence	18
I. Student Review and Grievance Procedures (for Academic and Professional Concerns)	19
J. Termination from the BA in Social Work Program	21
V. Resources	21
Appendix	23
Statement of Understanding	24

I. Introduction

A. Welcome

Welcome to the Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Social Work Program at Idaho State University (ISU)! A career in social work is filled with meaning, action, diversity, and satisfaction. As BA in Social Work Program Faculty, we are honored to be a part of your educational and career journey.

This handbook is designed to familiarize you with the profession of Social Work, the ISU BA in Social Work Program, and student resources. A copy of the Student Handbook is available on our program [homepage](#).

We encourage student involvement and welcome your questions, comments, and concerns. Best Wishes!

ISU Social Work Program Faculty

Telephone: (208) 282-3377

Fax: (208) 282-4733

B. Non-Discriminatory Policy

The BA in Social Work Program at ISU does not discriminate on the basis of age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. This policy is applicable to every aspect of the program.

C. Social Work: A Professional Career

The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment construct, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social, racial, economic, and environmental justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally (CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards, 2022).

Professional social workers assist individuals, groups, and communities in restoring or enhancing their capacity for social functioning, while creating societal conditions favorable to their goals. The practice of social work requires knowledge of human development and behavior, of social, economic and cultural institutions, and of the interaction of all these factors. Social work is a profession devoted to helping people function the best they can in their environments. This not only means providing services or therapy directly to people, but also working for change to improve social conditions.

The phrase “in their environments” points to a distinguishing characteristic of social work—one that sets it apart from other helping professions. Social workers help clients deal with how they feel about a situation and with what they can do about it. As a social worker, you will help people overcome some of the most difficult challenges in life including discrimination, poverty, mental illness, abuse, addiction, physical illness, loss, disability, and educational problems. Social workers help prevent crises as well as counsel individuals, groups, families, and communities to cope more effectively with the stresses of everyday life ([NASW, 2024](#)).

Professional social workers can be found in almost every facet of community life, including public and private agencies serving schools, hospitals, prisons, senior centers, residential living facilities, mental health clinics, military organizations, and corporations. ISU graduates are employed within many different service areas including: the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare in areas such as family and children’s services, mental

health, and developmental disabilities; the Idaho Department of Corrections including juvenile justice, adult probation and parole, and correctional centers; alcohol and drug treatment programs; and small non-profit community agencies offering services for mental health, domestic violence, disabilities, and seniors. Many of our graduates go on to graduate schools in social work or related fields for more specialized education that allows for private or consultative practice such as individual, family and group counseling, community organization, research and administration.

The social work profession has its own body of knowledge, code of ethics, practice standards, credentials, state licensing, and a nationwide system of accredited education programs. These equip the professional social worker to combine the desire to help others with the knowledge, skills, values, and ethics necessary to provide that help.

To be a social worker, one must have a degree in social work from a college or university program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. The undergraduate degree, such as that offered at ISU, is the BA in Social Work (BASW) and prepares graduates for generalist entry-level work. Graduate degrees include the Master of Social Work (MSW), which enables graduates to engage in more advanced clinical practice, and the Doctorate in Social Work (DSW) or PhD, which is needed for conducting research or teaching at the university level. Degree programs involve classroom study as well as practical experience.

Most states, including Idaho, require practicing social workers to be licensed, certified, or registered, although standards vary. Contact the [state regulatory board](#) directly or the [American Association of Social Work Boards](#) for a list of regulatory agencies or for a comparison of state regulations.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization for social workers in the world. To discover additional information about the profession of social work, we encourage you to browse the [NASW](#) website.

D. Is Social Work the Right Career Choice for You?

“If you are looking for a career with meaning, action, diversity, satisfaction, and flexibility, then consider social work. Social workers are people who care about people, who want to make things better, who want to relieve suffering, and who want their work to make a difference” ([NASW](#), 2024).

Characteristics of effective social workers include:

1. A general belief in people’s potential for positive change and a sense of commitment to the well-being of other people and of society.
2. A commitment to helping individuals, groups, and community systems function effectively and to helping meet their needs to the greatest extent possible.
3. Strong analytic and communication skills, both verbal and written.
4. A non-judgmental, respectful, and non-punitive attitude toward people with problems.
5. “An interest in people and the ability to form effective working relationships with different kinds of people from many different backgrounds.”
6. “A willingness to abide by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics.”
7. An understanding of the need to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to work effectively in a helping relationship with others and to fight realistically and effectively against social problems.
8. Sufficient objectivity, emotional stability and a healthy self-concept to be able to focus on the needs of clients with whom you work rather than trying to use your clients to meet your own needs.

For more information about social work as a career, we encourage you to visit [NASW](#)’s website.

II. Program Overview

A. Program Mission Statement

The BA in Social Work Program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education at the baccalaureate level.

Grounded in a person-in-environment framework, the mission of the BA in Social Work Program at ISU is to prepare students to work as professionals in entry-level social work generalist practice. It is the program's vision that graduates will work within the social work profession by:

1. Contributing to the enhancement of quality of life for all people but specifically for those that are marginalized, oppressed and living in poverty.
2. Empowering individuals, families, groups, and communities.
3. Advancing human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.
4. Training students to engage in anti-poverty practices that contribute to the elimination of poverty.
5. Embodying the values of service, social justice, the dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence.

Consistent with ISU's mission, the BA in Social Work Program, underpinned by an anti-oppressive perspective, strives to develop students who respect human diversity, think critically, value scientific inquiry, and are able to provide health related and other professional social work services in a variety of agency settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro level of practice. strives to develop students who respect human diversity, think critically, value scientific inquiry, and are able to provide health related and other professional social work services in a variety of agency settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro level of practice.

B. Program Description

The BA in Social Work Program is housed within the Department of Sociology, Social Work and Criminology in the College of Arts and Letters. The BA in Social Work Program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the national accrediting agency.

The BA in Social Work Program prepares qualified students for entry level generalist social work employment positions that focus on working with persons in micro, mezzo, and macro practice settings. The generalist approach emphasizes the importance of the client's relationship to the environment and requires that students gain skills in assessment, problem-solving, and resource development in order to work with people of all ages and backgrounds. Students are equipped with basic knowledge, professional values, skills, and methods for entry-level professional social work practice. Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment perspective. In order to promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners utilize a range of prevention and intervention methods in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Generalist practice requires application of ethical principles and critical thinking as well as the synthesis of professional knowledge, values, and skills into a problem solving framework. The generalist model further elaborates the importance of working with individuals in the context of their environments and an appreciation for the understanding of the impact of diversity and culture, as well as the potential to employ strengths and resiliency. The generalist model involves the problem solving process of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation.

Central to the BA in Social Work Program is a commitment to human and social well-being. Our program strives to support students in their development as practitioners who identify with the social work profession and are able to apply ethical principles and critical thinking in practice. Students are prepared for the delivery of social work services that improve and enhance individual, family, group, and community functioning, including the

elimination of social injustices that deny human dignity and opportunity. Students are encouraged to incorporate diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice by recognizing, supporting, and building on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. In carrying out these practices, the Program is committed to fostering respect for students' values and life experiences and to helping students integrate those values and experiences into their professional education and practice.

C. Program Goals

The BA in Social Work Program has the following goals:

1. Preparation of students for beginning generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (i.e. micro, mezzo, and macro systems).
2. Preparation of students to develop an identity, which will incorporate the values, principles, and ethics of the social work profession.
3. Preparation of students as beginning social work generalists who link social research and social work practice.
4. Preparation of students for lifelong learning and critical thinking through an educational process combining a liberal arts foundation and professional foundation.
5. Preparation of students to work with diverse, vulnerable, oppressed, and disadvantaged populations as well as advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Upon completion of the program, students are expected to have achieved nine core competencies as outlined in the CSWE 2022 EPAS:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior:

- A. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context.
- B. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.
- C. Use technology ethically and appropriately facilitate practice outcomes, and
- D. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

- A. Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and
- B. Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 3: Engage in Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

- A. Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and
- B. Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice:

- A. Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs, and
- B. Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

- A. Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services
- B. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- A. Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies;
- B. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- A. Apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies; and
- B. Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- A. Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals; and
- B. Incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- A. Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes; and
- B. Critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

For detailed information on each of these competencies, please refer to the Council of Social Work Education, the accrediting body for social work programs in the United States ([CSWE](https://www.csweduc.org/)).

As a graduate of the BA in Social Work Program, the student is eligible to apply for licensure as a social worker in the state of Idaho. Many excellent career opportunities for social workers are available in the areas of family and children's services, adult and juvenile corrections, health care, community mental health, and services for senior citizens.

D. Program History

The BA in Social Work Program at ISU was established in 1966 with the development of one master's level Social Work faculty position through a grant from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare in response to the need for trained social workers. The Program was initially housed within the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. In 1970, the Health and Welfare grant expired, and the Social Work faculty position was established through ISU funds. In 1971, the program became accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) for a five-year period. A core curriculum of five courses was developed and a second full time MSW position was created in 1972 through funds awarded by the Idaho State Board of Education. In 1976, the BA in Social Work Program lost its accreditation due to needs for course additions, sequencing, and practicum instructor training. From 1976 to 1978 the program underwent a two-year curriculum building process to meet changing standards and CSWE guidelines. The initial five course offerings were expanded to nine and listed within the university catalog as Social Work, rather than Sociology. The name of the department was also changed to incorporate Social Work into the title giving the BA in Social Work Program further visibility. As a result of the rebuilding process, the BA in Social Work Program was reaccredited in 1978 and has since sustained accreditation. While these changes were taking place, the State of Idaho passed social work licensing regulations. This further legitimized the status of social work as a profession and emphasized the need for undergraduate social work training.

As the quality and strength of the program has grown, so has the Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Criminology. The undergraduate and graduate Sociology programs offer Social Work students the opportunity for the development of strong research knowledge and skills. A number of Social Work students have combined their BA in Social Work Program with a Criminology degree, thus enhancing career opportunities in corrections work. Some also add a minor or major in Psychology and Sociology to their course of study. Child welfare, rural and medical issues provide a focus for many of our social work students in practicum placements.

E. Program Curriculum, Options and Course Offerings

The BA in Social Work major requires 54-55 credits. Beginning in Fall 2024, the BASW curriculum is organized in a cohort model, which means that most classes required for the major are taken within a specific sequence.

We offer our classes both for the On Campus/In Person Program, as well as through an Online Program, for distance learning students. Students apply to either the in person or the online program. The classes that our on campus students take in person are taken by our online students in a synchronous online format, via Zoom. A few of the classes are also offered in an asynchronous online format, such as SOWK 4471 (Social Justice, Advocacy and Policy Practice) and SOWK 4494 (Macro Practice with Communities and Organizations). Pre-major students also have an option as to whether they take some of the pre-major courses in person or online.

The following degree map highlights the sequence of courses students are taking both a) prior to their admission to the program and b) after admittance, during their junior and senior years.



**Idaho State
University**

Catalog Year 2024-2025
BA, Social Work

(For internal use only)

☐ No change

☒ UCC proposal

A Major Academic Plan (MAP) is one way to complete a degree in a set number of semesters. The *example* below is only one strategy. Actual plans for individual students will vary based on advisor recommendations and academic needs. Official Program Requirements including Major, General Education, Electives, and university requirements (see pg.2) are based on Catalog Year.

Course Subject and Title	Cr.	Min. Grade	*GE, UU or UM	**Sem. Offered	Prerequisite	Co-Requirement
Semester One						
GE Objective 1: ENGL 1101 Writing and Rhetoric I OR HONS 1101	3	C-	GE	F, S, Su	Appropriate placement score	
GE Objective 3: MATH 1153 Recommended by Dept.	3	C-	GE	F, S, Su		
GE Objective 4	3		GE			
GE Objective 6: SOC 1101 Introduction to Sociology	3	C-	GE	F, S, Su		
GE Objective 6: SOWK 1101 Introduction to Social Work	3	C-	GE	F, S		
Total	15					
Semester Two						
GE Objective 1: ENGL 1102 Writing and Rhetoric II	3	C-	GE	F, S, Su	ENGL 1101 or equivalent	
GE Objective 5:	3		GE			
GE Objective 6: PSYC 1101 Introduction to Psychology	3	C-	GE	F, S		
Free Electives	6					
Total	15					
Semester Three						
GE Objective 2: COMM 1101	3		GE	F, S		
GE Objective 5: BIOL 1100 and 1100L or BIO 1101	4	C-	GE	F, S, Su		
Free Electives	8					
Total	15					
Semester Four – Apply to Social Work Program						
GE Objective 4	3		GE			
GE Objective 7: SOC 2248 Critical Analysis of Social Div.	3	C-	GE	F, S		
Free Electives	9					
Total	15					
Semester Five (Fall)						
SOWK 3374 Human Development and Diversity	3		UM	F	Admission to Social Work Major	
SOWK 3372 Practice Interventions with Individuals & Families	3		UM	F		
SOC 2201 Introduction to Gender and Sexuality Studies OR PSYC 3301 Psychopathology	3		UM	F, S, Su		
SOC 3309 Social Statistics	3		UM	F, S		
Free Electives	3					
Total	15					
Semester Six (Spring)						
SOC 3373 Practice Interventions with Groups	3		UM	S	SOWK 3372, 3374, Admission to Social Work Major	
PSYC 3301 Psychopathology OR SOC 2201 Introduction to Gender and Sexuality Studies	3		UM	F, S F, S, Su		
SOC/SOWK 3308 Sociological Methods and Social Work Research	3		UM	F, S	SOWK 3308	
ENGL 3307 Professional and Technical Writing OR ENGL 3308 Business Communications	3		UM	F, S F, S, Su	ENGL 1102, 45 credits ENGL 1102, 60 credits	
Free Electives	3					
Total	15					
Semester Seven (Fall)						
SOWK 3375 Application of Contemporary Social Work Theory	3		UM	F	SOWK 3372, 3373, 3374, Admission to Social Work Major	
SOWK 3379 Social Work in a Diverse World	3		UM	F	SOWK 3372, 3373, 3374	
SOWK 4471 Social Justice, Advocacy, and Policy Practice	3		UM	F	SOWK 3372, 3373, 3374, Admission to Social Work Major	
SOWK 4494 Practice Interventions with Organizations and Communities	3		UM	F, S	SOWK 3372, 3373, 3374, Admission to Social Work Major	
Free Electives	3					
Total	15					
Semester Eight (Spring)						
SOWK 4473 Social Work Field Practicum	9		UM	F, S	SOWK 3372, 3373, 3374, 3375, 3379, 4471, and 4494, C- in all PREREQs	SOWK 4474
SOWK 4474 Social Work Field Seminar	3		UM	F, S	SOWK 3372, 3373, 3374, 3375, 3379, 4471, and 4494, C- in all PREREQs	SOWK 4473
SOWK 4498 Social Work Capstone	3		UM	F, S	SOWK 3372, 3373, 3374, 3375, 3379, 4471, and 4494, C- in all PREREQs	
Total	15					
*GE=General Education Objective, UU=Upper Division University, UM= Upper Division Major						
**See Course Schedule section of Course Policies page in the e-catalog (or input F, S, Su, etc.)						

[illegible]

Form Revised 4.1.2024

Please see also the [ISU Undergraduate Academic Catalog](#) for full details. It lists both the pre-major courses (courses needed to be eligible to apply, as well as the courses taken once admitted to the program..

F. Program Faculty

BA in Social Work Program faculty members all have advanced social work degrees (MSW, DSW, or PhD) as well as direct practice experience. In addition to teaching, faculty members also serve in professional capacities and engage in research activities to further the profession of social work. Please see our [Faculty & Staff](#) page for social work faculty teaching, specialties, and research interests.

III. Program Guidelines and Practices

A. Admissions

The BA in Social Work Program accepts applications from students in the Spring semester per the established application due date (February 15 for Fall semester admission). Current admission requirements and instructions for applying can be found on the ISU Social Work Program [admissions](#) page.

Completed applications for admission should be submitted online per instructions on the BA in Social Work Program page on or before the appropriate deadline.. Each application will be reviewed by the BA in Social Work Program faculty. Students will be notified by email of the decision of the faculty. Faculty assess applications based on the following criteria:

1. GPA and credit attainment
2. Completion of or concurrent enrollment in pre-major course requirements
3. Application essay (1200-1600 words) (based on the following criteria):
 - a. The student's commitment to social work professional ethics and values.
 - b. The student's fit with the ISU social work program, generalist goals and objectives the student's recognition, insight, and resolution of personal issues which may impact professional performance.
 - c. The student's potential to develop skills of professional written communication.

The essay should be written in APA format, with a title page.

Based on these criteria, one of the following three admission decisions will be made:

1. Accepted.
2. Accepted with conditions (i.e., successful completion of current semester course requirements, etc.).
3. Denied (with explanation of the reason for denial).

Review of Applications:

Shortly after the materials have been submitted by the student, each social work faculty member (the BASW admissions committee) reads student applications and evaluates the material in accordance with the following criteria:

1. GPA (minimum 2.5) and credit attainment (minimum 55 credits): Did the student achieve both? (Yes or no)
2. Completion of pre-major course requirements: Has the student completed the pre-major course requirements with at least a C-, or is the student in the process of completing them? (Yes or no)

3. Application essay. Application essays are assessed based on the following criteria:

- The student's commitment to social work professional ethics and values.
 - The student's fit with the ISU Social Work Program, generalist goals and objectives.
 - The student's recognition, insight, and resolution of personal issues which may impact professional performance.
 - The student's potential to develop skills of professional written communication.
- APA format with title page.

Has the student submitted an essay that addresses the above? (Yes or no)

The BASW Admissions committee then meets and discusses the applications, deciding on admissions together. We decide by consensus.

Students who are accepted without conditions are notified of admission decisions via email at least two weeks prior to Fall registration. Following notice of admission, students are required to sign a statement indicating that they have read the handbook and understand the professional expectations of student behavior and conduct. Once this signed statement is received by the BA in Social Work Program and conditions met, formal admission to the program is complete.

If students are accepted with conditions (e.g. have to complete and pass some of the pre-major courses they are in during the semester), they will be allowed to register for the major courses. However, if they do not successfully complete their current required courses at the end of the semester, they will be removed from the program. Conditionally accepted students also sign a statement indicating that they have read the handbook and understand professional expectations of student behavior and conduct.

In their letter of acceptance, students are also informed of an upcoming student orientation to the BASW Program. Orientations are not mandatory, but strongly encouraged, as students get to know some of the faculty, become familiar with the expectations of the program, the way the curriculum is structured, and with the structure and function of our practicum.

Reasons for not accepting a student's application to the program may be based on academic deficiency (e.g., not meeting required course work, not having the minimum GPA of 2.5 or the minimum credit hours of 55 credits). Students are also expected to pass/having passed all required pre-major courses with a minimum grade of "C-".

An Important Note on Background Checks:

A criminal background check is no longer required as part of the admissions process. Students should be advised that a criminal background may create barriers to obtaining a license to practice social work and the rules and regulations regarding licensure for those with a criminal background vary by state. Please refer to the licensing board in the state where you plan to seek a license upon graduation to review state policies. Students may be required to obtain a background check when seeking practicum placement; if a student opts to seek a placement in a facility that requires background checks they will be required to do so. If a student does not wish to submit to a background check they will need to seek a practicum placement in a setting where one is not required. If a student's unwillingness to submit to a background check, or if a student's criminal background prohibits them from securing a practicum placement the student's progress in the program may be delayed and/or they may be dismissed from the BASW program.

For more information students are encouraged to contact the [Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licenses](#) and visit the

website for the Idaho Administrative Code - Department Health & Welfare list of disqualifying crimes – [Rule 16.05.06](#).

B. No Credit for Previous Life or Work Experience Policy:

The Social Work Program does not grant credit for previous life or work experience. Students with prior volunteer or social service work experience are encouraged to seek practicum placements that may offer different learning activities and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

C. Leaves of Absence

Social Work Majors are expected to notify the BA in Social Work Program Director or their faculty advisor if they do not intend to continue enrollment at ISU or within the BA in Social Work Program.

D. Discontinuing in the Social Work Program

Students will be discontinued from the BA in Social Work Program if they have not taken courses for two consecutive semesters ((This means that their status in the system goes back to pre-major social work status). In such instances, students must reapply for admissions to the Program. Readmitted students will be required to meet with their faculty advisor to determine whether coursework must be repeated or audited after an extended absence. Upper division required social work courses are considered to be outdated after a period of five years of absence from the Program and must be repeated.

E. Transfer Credit Policy

For our pre-major courses, we follow the institution's transfer credit equivalency system. In addition, some articulation agreements regarding pre-major courses exist, with some of the two year colleges at Idaho State University, such as the College of Western Idaho and the College of Eastern Idaho. If there is no established equivalency with an institution, the program director will ask for syllabi of the courses in our department that wish to be transferred.

In cases where no existing transfer agreement exists, transfer students must utilize the above process in completing required Social Work pre-major courses during the application process to the BA in Social Work Program. ISU accepts credits in transfer from other nationally accredited institutions if the course is found to be compatible with overall institutional and program curriculum.

Social work specific course (required once in our program) transfer credits must be from a CSWE accredited program. Courses must be similar in content and credit value to those they replace, and students must have earned at least a "C-". Transfer students should submit a syllabus for the course they wish to transfer to the Social Work Program Director for review.

F. Reasonable Accommodations for Students

Students who are experiencing barriers in the educational setting due to a qualified permanent or temporary disability may be eligible for services through the ISU's Disabilities Resource Center. Accommodations for all reasonable requests will be made for documented disabling conditions. Students should discuss their needs with instructors at the beginning of the semester. Students with disabling conditions must qualify for the program by the same criteria as all other students and meet the academic standards for participation in the program.

E. Academic and Professional Advising

Every BASW student has an assigned faculty advisor. This advisor provides both academic and professional advising, focused upon post-graduation preparation for entry into the profession. Students are urged to consult with their advisor at least once a semester and particularly upon admission into the Program in order to develop a graduation plan. The faculty advisor assists students in choosing courses that will further their professional development and career interests. Students are strongly encouraged to refer often to the ISU Undergraduate Catalog wherein general university requirements are detailed along with program requirements. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of this information as they work towards completion of their degree in a timely manner.

Faculty members maintain posted office hours and can also be reached via email or telephone/video to schedule an advising appointment. Students who are interested in Social Work or who have declared their pre-major as Social Work are encouraged to contact the BA in Social Work Program Director for assistance.

F. Professional Fees

The Idaho State Board of Education has approved a professional fee for the BA in Social Work Program.. The cost of maintaining accreditation for the Program significantly exceeds the cost of nonprofessional programs, which do not require accreditation. In order to be licensed and to be accepted in graduate programs, social work students must graduate from an approved university with an accredited program. The professional fee covers the cost of program accreditation and reaffirmation requirements, thereby ensuring that the BA in Social Work Program can continue to offer a quality, accredited curriculum to our students.

Please contact the BA in Social Work Program Director with any questions.

G. Practicum Placement

Practicum education and evaluation is organized utilizing a competency based learning approach. Consistent with EPAS 2022 ([CSWE EPAS 2022](#)). Practicum education is the “signature pedagogy” of social work education at ISU in that it represents the central form of instruction and learning in which students are socialized to perform the role of social work practitioner. The intent of Practicum education is to connect the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with practical experience in a practicum agency setting. The integrated practicum education program in which faculty, practicum instructor and student work together enables the implementation of evidence-informed practice. In practicum education, the bulk of student learning takes place within a community social service agency along with a weekly seminar designed to facilitate the connection of theory and practice.

The practicum experience is a major testing ground for the student's knowledge, skills, and professional values. The student is supported in this experience by the leadership and supervision of his/her agency practicum instructor. The practicum structure consists of two components: (a) the agency placement; and (b) the weekly on-campus seminar taught by the Practicum Director or a faculty in the BASW Program. In placement, under practicum instructor supervision, students experience entry level social work practice through application of the generalist model and phases of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation. The seminar provides discussion, skills training, and exchange of information about community agency settings. Student exchange of information about practicum experiences is integral to the course. Students and faculty strive to integrate practice theory from academic course work with the practicum experience. The Practicum Director is the link between the BA in Social Work Program and practicum instructors. Together they evaluate and assess the student's progress and learning needs. The performance indicators used for evaluation are developed in the course syllabus and the student learning agreement.

Students are required to complete 400 hours of in-agency work specifically addressing required educational and practice competencies of entry-level social work. Students complete the 400 hours in their last spring semester.

Please see the Practicum Education Manual for complete information.

IV. Student Rights, Opportunities, and Obligations to Participate in Program Governance

The BA in Social Work Program, the Department, and the University have regularly scheduled meetings where students can attend, learn and share their ideas. BASW students are strongly encouraged to participate in the shared governance process.

BASW students have both informal and formal rights and opportunities to provide feedback on program policies through the above listed rights and opportunities. The BA in Social Work Program Director encourages students to share their ideas and to make suggestions for program improvements. BASW students are notified of regular meetings and opportunities to be elected to the campus shared governance structures.

A. Student Rights

Our Students have the following rights:

1. Communicate needs, ideas, suggestions, and concerns with faculty, the program director, the department chair, the college dean, and the Office of the Dean of Students.
2. Participate in the Social Work/Sociology student group.
3. Participate in the Associated Students of ISU.
4. Students are encouraged to participate in faculty research projects as well as further their own research interests through independent study or display at University Student Research Days.

B. Student Opportunities

Our students have the following opportunities:

1. Participate as a member of a faculty personnel review committee (3rd year review, tenure, promotion).
2. Participate as a member of the Social Work Advisory Board.
3. Participate in the evaluation of classes each semester by filling out a course evaluation form.
4. Participate in providing feedback on faculty candidates.
5. Participate in the Implicit curriculum by filling out the Social Work Education Assessment (SWEAP) Exit Survey in their last semester.

C. The Student Club

SSWSA, the student organization of the ISU BA in Social Work Program, is committed to the active participation, learning and representation of Social Work students as they develop into entry level professionals. The mission of SSWSA is to advance a spirit of fellowship among social work and sociology majors, to recognize and encourage leadership, to provide the opportunity for meaningful exchange of ideas, and to interface with the social work profession. Any student who is a pre-major or declared Social Work or Sociology major is eligible to become a member of SSWSA. All Social Work majors are urged to join and become active in the organization.

SSWSA is the student voice in BA in Social Work Program affairs. Association representatives may attend Social Work Meetings and may serve on other program committees. SSWSA takes an active role in campus activities and the broader community. Students involved with the SSWSA can expect to form valuable professional and personal relationships, have the opportunity to take part in community service, and acquire experience with planning and organizing events.

D. Research Projects

Students are encouraged to participate in faculty research projects as well as further their own research interests through independent study or as part of institutionalized tracks such as the Trio McNair Scholars Program (<https://www.isu.edu/trio/programs/mcnair/>) or the University Honor's Program (<https://www.isu.edu/honors/>).

E. Student Safety

Every social work student is entitled to completing the practicum experience in a safe environment. Please see the section on Safety in the BASW Practicum Manual for detailed information.

H. Academic and Professional Expectations of BA in Social Work Students

Academic Expectations and Evaluating Academic Performance

Minimum Grade Requirement and Failing a Course More Than Once

Students are expected to pass all their major courses with at least a C-. A class not passed with a C- needs to be repeated. If a student fails the same class in the BASW program twice, however, the student will automatically be dismissed from the program. Students who will be dismissed from the program can reapply to the program after one academic year.

Starting in Fall 2025, our practicum will be graded as a Fail/Pass course instead of via a letter grade.

For all other courses, the social work faculty voted in Spring 2024 to adopt the following grading scale across all required social work courses. This scale is listed in all syllabi:

Grading Breakdown: Final grading will be based on the following percentages:

Grading Scale		
93.0 - 100%	=	A
90.0 - 92.9	=	A-
87.0 - 89.9	=	B+
83.0 - 86.9	=	B
80.0 - 82.9	=	B-
77.0 - 79.9	=	C+
73.0 - 76.9	=	C
70.0 - 72.9	=	C-
67.0 - 69.9	=	D+
63.0 - 66.9	=	D
60.0 - 62.9	=	D-
<59.9	=	F

In addition, all our syllabi list the following statement regarding academic integrity:

Academic Integrity Statement

Dishonest conduct is unacceptable. In cases of academic dishonesty, such as cheating or plagiarism, students will be dismissed from class, given failing grades or otherwise disciplined. Please refer to the Idaho State University Student Handbook for further details.

Academic dishonesty includes:

- Cheating: Utilizing a source other than self either during an exam or in the completion of an assignment.
- Fabrication: Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information.

- Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: For example: allowing another to copy during an exam; allowing your work to be represented as another student's work; supplying information regarding examination to others.
- Plagiarism: Failure to document the direct words of another or the rephrasing of another's words so as to represent them as one's own.

In case of academic misconduct, the university's Student Code of Conduct comes into play.

Students attending the University are expected to adhere to standards as defined in the Idaho State University Student Code of Conduct, found at <https://www.isu.edu/deanofstudents/student-conduct/>.

Extended Absences from the Program:

Discontinuing in the Social Work Program

Social Work Majors are expected to notify the BA in Social Work Program Director or their faculty advisor if they do not intend to continue enrollment at ISU or within the BA in Social Work Program.

Extended Absence from the Program:

Students will be withdrawn from the Social Work Program if they have not taken courses for two consecutive semesters (This means that their status in the system goes back to pre-major social work status). In such instances students must reapply for admittance to the Program. Readmitted students will be required to meet with their faculty advisor to determine whether coursework must be repeated or audited after an extended absence. Upper division required Social Work courses are considered to be senile after a period of five years of absence from the Program and must be repeated

Available Resources for Students who Struggle with Academic Performance

Faculty Assistance

Students experiencing academic difficulties should initiate talking with the course instructor. Most issues are resolved when these conversations occur. The faculty member may encourage the student to utilize university resources or other support.

Student's Advisor

Students are encouraged to contact their advisor about concerns regarding academic and/or professional matters. Faculty advisors are available during posted office hours or by appointment. Advisors may refer students to university resources such as the writing center, tutoring services, counseling services, etc.

Professional Expectations and Evaluating Professional Performance

The BA in Social Work Program at ISU strives to support Social Work students in their development as professional practitioners who incorporate the values and ethics of the social work profession. Thus, it is expected that all Social Work students seek to develop and demonstrate professional values and ethics during their enrollment in the Program. This professional behavior should be demonstrated in interactions with each other, with professors and department staff, in the classroom, and while interning in social service agencies that are off campus. Students are also expected to abide by the [NASW Code of Ethics](#), to conduct themselves in a professional manner, and to maintain honesty and integrity. Failure to meet these requirements may result in expulsion from the program.

In keeping with the NASW Code of Ethics and CSWE Competency Standards, professional expectations for students follow:

Service

The Social worker's primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems. Students demonstrate this professional value by the following behaviors:

1. Active participation in service learning requirements of the curriculum.
2. Demonstrating professional values and ethics in their interactions at service learning and practicum sites, including being on time, appropriate dress, and readiness to serve.
- 3.

Social Justice

Social workers challenge social injustice. Students demonstrate this professional value by the following behaviors:

1. Sensitivity in speech and actions when relating to persons who have experienced discrimination and oppression.
2. Learning ways to seek social change and advocate for a more just society, engaging in anti-oppressive practice.

Dignity and Worth of the Person

Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person. Students demonstrate this professional value by the following behaviors:

1. Speaking and behaving in ways that show respect for others.
2. Refraining from behaviors which interfere with the learning process in the classroom or work environment in the practicum setting.

Importance of Human Relationships

Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships. Students demonstrate this professional value by the following behaviors:

1. Forming and sustaining positive working relationships with others, including using appropriate channels to resolve conflicts.
2. Accept responsibility for their own behavior in interaction with others.
3. Giving feedback in a constructive manner.

Integrity

Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner. Students demonstrate this professional value by the following behaviors:

1. Meeting class or practicum responsibilities, including preparation and active participation.
2. Doing own work and taking credit for own work—no plagiarizing, cheating, dishonesty in assignments and examinations.
3. Treating any personal information that is heard in a strictly confidential manner (i.e., never disclose identifying information; maintain information shared in class, small groups or practicum within that unit; use judgment in self-disclosing personal information).

Competence

Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise. Students demonstrate this professional value by the following behaviors:

1. Attending class and practicum as scheduled, completing work, doing readings.
2. Utilizing resources as needed (e.g., Writing Center, Counseling Center, Advising, and Supervision).
3. Accepting, applying and benefiting from constructive feedback.
4. Seriously considering life commitments and course load in order to devote sufficient attention to studies.

Professional Performance Misconduct:

Since social work is a professional degree granting program, are there specific professional behaviors or issues that could be cause for termination that are unique/specific to social work and not covered in the institution's policies and procedures (e.g., violating the NASW Code of Ethics)?

1. Demonstrated failure to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct, or personal integrity requisite to fulfill academic responsibilities or professional practice responsibilities as a social worker.
2. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty or staff (at the school or in practicum placement).
3. Documented evidence of criminal misconduct during the course of study that could render a student unable to be licensed as a Social Worker or threaten the safety and well-being of clientele.

I. Student Review and Grievance Procedures (for Academic and Professional Concerns)

Because the BA in Social Work is a professional program, students must demonstrate competence in professional capabilities in order to achieve academic success. Students are expected to abide by the professional standards of behavior toward organizations and colleagues as defined by the NASW Code of Ethics as well as the above professional expectations of the ISU Social Work Program. Gatekeeping is a function and responsibility of all professions, including the profession of social work. Gatekeeping contributes to protecting the public by assuring that members entering the profession qualify for the rights and privileges of membership. Social work educators are gatekeepers and are responsible to communicate the expectations related to professional qualifications to all students. Students are viewed as adult learners who assume responsibility for their learning and professional growth. Students are strongly encouraged to meet at least once each semester with their faculty advisor and to communicate with faculty about difficulties and concerns occurring in their social work education. In doing so, students become more attuned to the standards to which they must rise for success in the BA in Social Work Program and the profession.

BA in Social Work faculty members meet at the conclusion of each semester to review the academic and professional progress of individual students. During this meeting, faculty:

1. Identify those students who have received less than a passing grade or who have demonstrated academic or professional behavior concerns.
2. Evaluate and recommend corrective action regarding academic and professional behavior concerns to the student.

The following university and faculty resources are available to students in the BA in Social Work program:

If students disagree with a grade they have been given, the following University policy regarding scholastic appeals and dismissals comes into place

(<https://coursecat.isu.edu/undergraduate/academicinformation/scholasticappealsanddismissals/>)

Informal Consultations

When it seems beneficial or if a concern has been raised, several faculty may meet informally with a student about a particular issue. A request for such a consultation may be made either by a student or by the faculty.

Formal Meetings with the Faculty Review Committee

At any time throughout the semester if a referral involving a concern about a BA in Social Work student's academic, ethical, or professional behavior is raised, as a first step, the Program Director first sets up a meeting with the student and addresses the issue. If the issue cannot be resolved or/and if the issue warrants student termination, a BA in Social Work Faculty Review Committee will be convened. Concerns may be raised by faculty, practicum instructors, and/or students pertaining to compliance of expected professional behavior and ethical conduct.

The review committee meets as needed throughout the year and consists of the Program Director and at least two other social work faculty members, preferably including the student's advisor and current professors. The process is intended to be a collaborative problem-solving forum with intent to stimulate student personal and professional growth as well as to assert the gatekeeping mandate of the profession. After assessing the situation with the student and discussing a plan to address the concern, the meeting is documented and the student indicates by signature his or her affirmation of the plan. In some cases the Faculty Review Committee process may result in a student's termination or withdrawal from the Program.

Student Referral and Review Procedures

Prior to filing a referral, the referent initiates contact with the student in a confidential manner alerting the student of intent to file a referral. If for some reason, direct communication is precluded, a referent must submit a signed concern to the Program Director. Anonymous referrals or grievances will not be addressed. In cases involving safety, need for immediate action, or University misconduct, the BA in Social Work Program Director will consult with the Office of the Dean of Students

1. Following the conversation, the referent submits the referral concern to the Program Director via email within five (5) business days.
2. The referral form is sent by the Program Director to the referent, review committee members, and the student.
3. The student is required to submit a typed and signed response to each of the noted concerns and submit their response within five (5) business days to the Program Director via email
4. The Program Director notifies the review committee immediately upon receipt of responses.
5. The committee reviews all material and advises the student whether an interview with the student is necessary. If not, the committee documents its findings and informs the student of the outcome within six business days. If a meeting with the student is required, the student is notified of available dates by email or in writing.
7. The meeting is held within 15 days of the Program Director receiving the referral. The student may be accompanied by a student advocate, whose role will be to provide support for the student.
8. The committee meeting produces a plan that will be documented and signed by the student. The student retains the original document, a copy is sent to the referent, and a copy is maintained in the student's departmental file.
9. If more than one meeting is required to elicit a plan or outcome, schedules are arranged in a timely manner.

The outcome of the Faculty Review Committee process will be one of three possible decisions:

1. Unfounded – which results in no further action by the Faculty Review Committee regarding the referral.
2. Founded – which results in an amelioration plan or recommendation for termination. The plan to address an area of concern is developed with the student in the Review Committee meeting. The student responds to the written documentation of the plan by submitting a letter in writing to the Program Director within 5 days of receiving the plan affirming his or her intent to follow the plan. Such a plan may include referral for services, participation in continuing education, placement on probation while improvement is documented, etc.
3. Referred to appropriate college officials, i.e. Department Chair, Dean of College of Arts and Letters,

and/or ISU Office of Student Affairs for issues in violation of the principles of [ISU Student Conduct](#).

For review procedures about practicum related matters and concerns, please consult the BASW Practicum Manual.

J. Termination from the BA in Social Work Program

The Faculty Review Committee may recommend that a student's participation in the BA in Social Work Program be terminated on the basis of professional non-suitability if the faculty determine that a student's behavior has constituted a significant violation or pattern of violations of the NASW Code of Ethics, the Idaho Social Work Examiners Laws and Rules, the BA in Social Work Student Handbook, and/or the ISU Code of Student Conduct. These violations may include but are not limited to:

1. Failure to meet or maintain academic standards as established at admission
2. Absence of two semesters from the program (see above, Leave of Absence)
3. Academic dishonesty (as outlined in the Institution's Academic Integrity Statement).
4. Demonstrated failure to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity or emotional stability requisite to fulfill academic responsibilities or professional practice responsibilities as a social worker.
5. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty or staff (at the school or in practicum placement).
6. Documented evidence of criminal misconduct during the course of study that could render a student unable to be licensed as a Social Worker or threaten the safety and well-being of clientele.

The student has the right to appeal a termination decision of the Faculty Review Committee. For appeal action, the student should consult the current ISU grievance and appeals procedure found in the undergraduate catalog:

<https://coursecat.isu.edu/undergraduate/academicinformation/scholasticappealsanddismissals/>.

V. Resources

Useful Links:

[National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\) Code of Ethics](#)

[Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licenses](#)

[Recommended Plan of Study](#) - see Information/Advising

[BASW Statement of Understanding](#) - see Information and Advising

[Social Work Major Course Requirements/Undergraduate Catalog](#)

[Council of Social Work Education \(CSWE\)](#)

[CSWE Policy and Accreditation Standards](#)

[Online Application for Admission to Social Work Program](#)

Student Services:

[ADA & Disability Resource Center](#)

[Registrar](#)

[Library](#)

[Student Success Center](#)

[ISU Counseling Center \(free counseling services for students\)](#)

Appendix

- Statement of Understanding

Statement of Understanding

In order to complete the formal admission process to the ISU Social Work Program, students are required to review and sign the below statement:

I have read the ISU Social Work Program Handbook and the NASW Code of Ethics. I do understand and agree to abide by the Professional Expectations of Student Behavior and the NASW Code of Ethics.

Print Name

Signature
