

Bachelor of Arts in Social Work

Student Handbook

Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Criminology

Idaho State University

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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 field of Social Work, the ISU BA in Social Work Program, and student resources.

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

B. Non-Discrimination

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 and economic 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, 2015)

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](#), 2022).

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 field 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](#), 2009).

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.

(NASW Code of Ethics, 2021; Pamela Trevithick (2000). *Social Work Skills: A Practice Handbook*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press).

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. 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.
2. Empowering individuals, families, groups, and communities.
3. Advancing human rights and social and economic justice.

Consistent with ISU's mission, the BA in Social Work Program strives to develop students who think critically and are able to provide health related and other professional social work services within agencies and programs to the people of Idaho, the Nation, and the world.

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 and economic justice.

Upon completion of the program, students are expected to have achieved nine core competencies as outlined in the CSWE 2015 EPAS:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice.
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice.
4. Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice.
5. Engage in Policy Practice.
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
9. Evaluate Practice 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](#)).

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 field 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

The BA in Social Work major requires 51-52 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. Please see the [ISU Undergraduate Academic Catalog](#) for full details.

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 each Fall and Spring semester per established application due dates (October 1 for Spring semester admission and 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 goal and departmental course requirements
3. Satisfactory background check. Applicants with a criminal record likely to preclude social work licensure and/or practicum placement may not be admitted to the 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](#).
4. 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, satisfactory background check results, etc.).
3. Denied (with explanation of the reason for denial).

Students who are accepted without conditions are notified of admission decisions via email at least two weeks prior to Fall/Spring 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 need to sign a statement indicating that they have read the handbook and understand professional expectations of student behavior and conduct.

Reasons for not accepting a student's application to the program may be based on academic deficiency (e.g., not meeting required course work or having the minimum GPA of 2.5). Other reasons may include documented instances of criminal misconduct, academic dishonesty, violations of the NASW Code of Ethics or Idaho Social Work Examiners Laws and Rules, and/or demonstration of physiological, emotional, or psychological disorders that interfere with a student's ability to fulfill academic responsibilities or infringe on the student's future abilities to fulfill professional responsibilities as a social worker.

Students are expected to pass all required pre-major courses with a minimum grade of "C-".

B. 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. Students will be discontinued from the BA in Social Work Program if they have not taken courses for two consecutive semesters. In such instances, students must reapply for admissions to the Program, including completion of a current background check. 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.

C. Transfer Students

Transfer students must utilize the above process in completing required Social Work and General Education courses prior to application to the BA in Social Work Program. The Program accepts transfer credits from other nationally accredited institutions if the credits are found to be compatible with the institutional and program curriculum. Social Work course transfer credits (courses in the major) must be from CSWE accredited programs. Courses must be similar in content and credit value to those they replace, and students must have earned at least a "C-" grade. Transfer students should submit a syllabus for the course they wish to transfer to the BA in Social Work Program Director for review.

D. 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. Advising

Every BA in Social Work student has an assigned faculty advisor. 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. For additional information, see the field practicum manual.

G. Practicum Placement

Field education is the signature pedagogy of social work education. The intent of field education is to connect the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with practical experience in a field agency setting ([CSWE](#)).

Overview

Field education and evaluation is organized utilizing a competency based learning approach. Consistent with EPAS 2015, field 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 field education is to connect the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with practical experience in a field agency setting. The integrated field education program in which faculty, field instructor and student work together enables the implementation of evidence-informed practice. In field 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.

Practicum

Please see the Field Practicum Manual for complete information.

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 one semester.

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 field instructor. The practicum structure consists of two components: (a) the agency placement; and (b) the weekly on-campus seminar taught by the faculty field director or a faculty in the BASW Program. In placement, under field 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 field experiences is integral to the course. Students and faculty strive to integrate practice theory from academic course work with the practicum experience. The Field Director is the link between the BA in Social Work Program and field 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.

National and international exchange programs for field practicum may be available. If you are interested, please see the Field Director as soon as possible upon admission to the BA in Social Work Program as this planning process takes considerable time.

See here for further information about [practicum](#). With access to Tevera, you may also view the agency listing 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.

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. Complete satisfaction and recommendation surveys.
6. Attend public portions of Social Work Meetings (approximately once per month).
7. Attend public portions of Department Meetings (approximately once per month).

C. Program Policy

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.

D. 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.

E. Research Projects

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.

F. Student Safety

Every social work student is entitled to completing the practicum experience in a safe environment. Safety education is introduced as a curriculum component in the student's first upper division practice course (SOWK 3372, Practice with Individuals and Families). In addition, safety education is provided to students in Tevera (at the beginning of practicum) and is also discussed during seminar and during the field instructor training. The Field Director visits each site at the beginning of the practicum and addresses potential safety concerns either in person or virtually. Students have the right to address safety concerns within their practicum settings with their assigned field instructor and/or the Field Director without negative impact on their academic pursuits. The social work program at ISU follows the [2013 NASW Guidelines for Social Work Safety in the Workplace](#).

H. Professional Expectations of BA in Social Work Students

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 expected to pass all their major courses with at least a C-. 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.

The BA in 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.

Students, faculty instructors, and field agency instructors complete a rating of the student's professional behavior and progress during field, and also in some practice classes, such as SOWK 3372 and SOWK 3373. At the completion of each semester, Social Work faculty utilize the below expectations to review the professional performance and progress of each student. If there are concerns, the faculty advisor or instructor initiates scheduling an appointment with the student to discuss the issue.

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 sites, including being on time, appropriate dress, and readiness to serve.

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.

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 field 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 field 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 field 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 field 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.

I. Student Review and Grievance Procedures

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:

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 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.

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, a BA in Social Work Faculty Review Committee will be convened. Concerns may be raised by faculty, field instructors, and/or students pertaining to compliance of expected professional behavior and ethical conduct.

The ad-hoc 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](#).

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. Academic dishonesty.
3. 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.
4. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty or staff (at the school or in field placement).
5. 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 the decision of the Faculty Review Committee. For further appeal action, the student should consult the current ISU grievance and appeals procedure found on the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) website and in the [Idaho State University Student Conduct Code](#).

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 \(free counseling services for students\)](#)