

STUDENT POLICIES

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- I. Professional Expectations of Student Behavior in the Sandler School of Social Work
- II. Student Success Conference Policy
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I. Professional Expectations of Student Behavior in the Sandler School of Social Work

The Phyllis and Harvey Sandler School of Social Work at Florida Atlantic University is mandated by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) to foster and evaluate professional behavioral development for all students in the social work program. The School of Social Work also bears a responsibility to the community at large to produce fully trained professional social workers who consciously exhibit the knowledge, values, and skills of the profession of social work.

As members of the social work profession, social work students are expected to follow the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (available at <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics>). Acting in an ethical manner includes interactions with other students, professors, field instructors, and clients, whether in person, in writing, or through technology. Given this context, all students in the social work program will be expected to exhibit the following ethical standards of behavior.

1. **Accountability:**

Attend class, arrive on time, and return from break in a timely manner.

- *Participate in group activities and assignments at a comparable level to peers. Complete work in a timely fashion and according to directions provided.*
- *Come to class prepared, with readings and other homework completed.*

2. **Respect:**

Treat all your peers, your instructors and all those you come in contact with, with dignity and respect at all times.

- *Listen while others are speaking.*
- *Give feedback to peers in a constructive manner.*
- *Approach conflict with peers or instructors in a cooperative manner.*
- *Use positive and nonjudgmental language.*

3. **Confidentiality:**

Treat any personal information that you hear about a peer or an instructor as strictly confidential.

- *Maintain any information shared in class, dyads or smaller groups within that unit.*
- *Use judgment in self-disclosing information of a very personal nature in the classroom. (Class time should not be used as therapy or*

treatment. If students feel the need to talk about issues they are struggling with, they may consult with their instructor to receive a referral for counseling.)

- *Never use names of clients or disclose other identifying information in the classroom.*

4. Competence:

Apply yourself to all your academic pursuits with seriousness and conscientiousness, meeting all deadlines as given by your instructors.

Constantly strive to improve your abilities.

- *Come to class with books, handouts, syllabus, and pens.*
- *Seek out appropriate support when having difficulties to ensure success in completing course requirements.*
- *Take responsibility for the quality of completed tests and assignment.*
- *Strive to work toward greater awareness of personal issues that may impede your effectiveness with clients.*

5. Integrity:

Practice honesty with yourself, your peers, and your instructors. Constantly strive to improve your abilities.

6. Academic:

Commit yourself to learning the rules of citing other's work properly.

- *Do your own work and take credit only for your own work.*
- *Acknowledge areas where improvement is needed.*
- *Accept and benefit from constructive feedback.*

7. Diversity:

Strive to become more open to people, ideas, and creeds that you are not familiar with. Embrace diversity.

- *Maintain speech free of racism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, or stereotyping.*
- *Exhibit a willingness to serve diverse groups of persons.*
- *Demonstrate an understanding of how values and culture interact.*

8. Communication:

Strive to improve both verbal and written communication skills as these skills are used heavily in interactions with clients and peers and also with creating client records.

- *Demonstrate assertive communication with peers and instructors.*
- *Practice positive, constructive, respectful and professional communications skills.*
- *With peers and instructor: (body language, empathy, listening).*

9. **Social Justice:**

Strive to deepen your commitment to social justice for all populations at risk.

- *Demonstrate an understanding of how institutional and personal oppression impede the experience of social justice for individuals and groups.*
- *Strive to learn about methods of empowering populations and enhancing social justice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.*

II. Student Success Conference Policy

In addition to the University Regulations and Policies in place to address academic and behavioral concerns, a Student Success Conference Policy has been established within the School of Social Work to ensure that students are meeting the academic and professional standards that are required within the School of Social Work required above. A Student Success Conference may be called when required by a student's circumstances and/or academic performance.

The conference provides a formal procedure to deal constructively with the problem(s). The Success conference is convened and chaired by the program coordinator after a request to have the conference is made by the student or a faculty member. The program coordinator notifies the student and other participants of the date of the meeting in writing. Students must respond to the notification and confirm attendance. Refusal to attend the Student Success Conference may result in the student's automatic dismissal from the School of Social Work.

Participants at the Student Success Conference may include the student, relevant and current faculty members, a representative from the field office, and if the student desires, a Florida Atlantic University student of his/her choice or an FAU faculty or staff representative to serve in an observational capacity only.

Once all participants have heard the circumstances, concerns and potential resolutions, the program coordinator and faculty in attendance shall make formal written recommendations to the Director of the School of Social Work. Such recommendations address the timeline for remediation, as necessary, as well as how (and by whom) successful remediation will be evaluated. A student's failure to follow these recommendations can result in dismissal from the program.

Complete information regarding the Student Success Conference can also be found online at www.fau.edu/ssw.

Student Success Conference Procedure

1. The conference facilitator begins by asking participants to introduce themselves and explain their relationship to the student's academic program.
2. The facilitator reminds participants that the goal of the conference is to create a plan by which the student may progress and eventually graduate from the BSW or MSW program. This is accomplished by making explicit the concerns faculty may have regarding the student's professional behavior as it compares to that described in the *Professional Expectations of Student Behavior* described above. Because success in the internship depends upon the consistent practice of these behaviors, social work educators require their demonstration in the classroom. However, the conference is not a hearing or legal proceeding. Rather it is an opportunity for faculty and student to collaborate on a plan for academic success.
3. The facilitator explains to the student that each faculty member will be heard without interruption.
4. Faculty members provide their observations regarding the student.
5. The student is asked to consider the validity of the feedback and to make recommendations regarding an action plan for the student to support his/her academic success. Faculty contribute to this discussion and plan.
6. The facilitator adjourns the conference.
7. The facilitator writes the report and recommendations and emails copies to student, faculty present and Director of the School of Social Work. Student receives another copy by certified and regular mail.
8. Students who desire to appeal the recommendations must submit their appeal via email to the Director no later than 5 business days after the student's receipt of the recommendations from the program coordinator. The Director will schedule a meeting with the student. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the facts and the director will provide the student with a decision of the appeal within 5 business days after the meeting. The Director's decision on the recommendations will be final.

III. Dismissal Policy

The Phyllis and Harvey Sandler School of Social Work may terminate a student's participation in the program on the basis of professional non-suitability if the School's faculty determines that a student's behavior has constituted a significant violation or pattern of violations of the NASW Code of Ethics or Florida Atlantic University School of Social Work's Student Manual. These violations may include but are not limited to:

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

If dismissal from the School of Social Work is recommended, the student will receive a letter from the program coordinator indicating the reason for dismissal and appropriate follow-up actions (e.g. referral to an advisor to pursue a different major).

If the student chooses to appeal the dismissal, he/she must send an email to the Director of the School no later than 5 business days after the student's receipt of the dismissal letter from the program coordinator.

The Director will schedule a meeting with the student. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the facts and the director will provide the student with a decision of the appeal within 5 business days after the meeting. The Director's decision on the dismissal from the program will be final.