



University of Toronto Governing Council

Social Work Code of Ethics

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Social Work Code of Ethics

Foreword

Students in the Master of Social Work program are involved in field practica. Since field learning occurs through carrying a service role, concerns for client well being is of paramount importance. It is the responsibility of the Faculty of Social Work and the University of Toronto to identify standards of professional behaviour which apply to student practice education. Students will, at all times, adhere to the standards of professional behaviour for the social work profession. (Please refer to the Social Work Code of Ethics, Canadian Association of Social Workers, January 1, 1994).

The MSW Social Work Student

The following guidelines will assist the social work student to develop and maintain professional relationships and ethical conduct with colleagues and clients.

1. The student is a member of the client's service team. Therefore, the social work student should accept responsibility to work co-operatively with peers, the instructor and other professionals to provide competent and safe client care.
2. The Faculty of Social Work adheres to the CASW Social Work Code of Ethics. Please note in particular Chapter Five which deals with Limits on Professional Relationships:
 - A social worker/social work student shall not exploit the relationship with a client for personal benefit, gain or gratification.
 - The social worker/social work student shall respect the client and act so that the dignity, individuality and rights of this person are protected.
 - The social worker/social work student shall assess and consider a client's motivation and physical and mental capacity in arranging for the provision of an appropriate service.
 - The social worker/social work student shall not have a sexual relationship with a client.
 - The social worker/social work student shall not have a business relationship with a client, borrow money from a client, or loan money to a client. (Note: Where a social worker/social work student does keep money or assets belonging to a client, the social worker/social work student should hold this money or asset in a trust account or hold the money or asset in conjunction with an additional professional person).
 - The social worker shall not have a sexual relationship with a social work student assigned to the social worker.
 - The social worker/social work student shall not harass any person.
3. The social work student must not be under the influence of substances (for instance, alcohol and drugs) at the practicum. In the event that a social work student has reason to believe that another student or professional is not giving competent or safe service, *and/or* is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, the student's first *obligations* are to protect the client from harm, to ensure that client dignity is respected, and to inform the field instructor or the Faculty/Field Liaison of the situation immediately.

Review of Behavioural and Ethical Performance

The professional and ethical performance of students is a highly valued component of the MSW program. It will be assessed in accordance with the Graduate Grading and Evaluation Practices Policy of the University of Toronto.

Breaches of the ethical and behavioural standards are serious and represent failure to meet academic standards in a professional faculty.

The policies and procedures for meeting expectations and for withdrawal from the practicum as stated in the Field Practicum Manual will be followed. Note also that "students whose performance is considered to be unsatisfactory may have their registration and candidacy terminated at any time on the recommendation of their graduate unit and with the approval of the school (of Graduate Studies)" (1995-96 SGS Calendar, p. 26).

Action by the Faculty does not preclude action under other University policies, such as the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, the Code of Student Conduct, and the Policy and Procedures on Sexual Harassment, or under the Criminal Code.

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