

Skidmore College  
Department of Social Work

# **Social Work Student Manual**

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# Introduction and Overview

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## The Social Work Profession

### What is Social Work?

Social workers are uniquely qualified to help people in their own environments, by looking at all the different aspects of their life and culture. They work to ensure personal well-being, prevent crises and to counsel individuals, families, and communities. For more than 100 years, professional social workers have helped to make sure people get the assistance they need, from the best resources available.

Social workers care for people in every stage of life, from children to elders. Help is available to overcome life's most difficult challenges, and the troubles of everyday living, including poverty, discrimination, abuse, physical illness, divorce, death, stress, addiction, depression, unemployment, disability, and mental illness. Social workers can be found in every part of the community, from hospice care to adoption agencies and in other places including schools, hospitals, senior centers, mental health clinics, military settings, corporations, public social agencies, the criminal justice system, and many other settings in which people may need assistance.

Social work is a dynamic profession based on knowledge drawn from a variety of disciplines as well as its own body of knowledge, practice skills, research, and professional values. The profession has a code of ethics, practice standards, and a national system of accredited education programs designed to bring together the desire to help others with the skill and knowledge needed to provide that help. Those who are interested in a career in social work should be willing to commit themselves to a professional way of life that includes the following values: client self-determination, a commitment to service, the belief in the inherent worth and dignity of all persons, the importance of human relationships, and social justice (NASW Code of Ethics).

### Generalist Social Work Practice

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person and environment construct. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice. Generalist practitioners incorporate diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice. BSW practice incorporates all of the core competencies (CSWE EPAS, 2015).

## History of the Skidmore College Department of Social Work

Social work has been integral to Skidmore College and its mission since Lucy Skidmore Scribner opened her Young Women's Industrial Club in 1903. Mrs. Skidmore's reaching out into the Saratoga community exemplified social work's ideals of service and commitment to others. Throughout its history, the College has remained strongly committed to integration of traditional liberal arts with more applied programs such as social work. Social work formally entered the Skidmore curriculum in 1924, and has continued to evolve and improve ever since:

- 1924 Introduction of a course on Social Welfare Organization (taught under a Sociology designation)
- 1950 First courses taught under the Social Work designation (Field of Social Work and Field Work, initially offered in 1950 by Patricia Ferguson)
- 1964 Field of Social Work and Public Welfare courses added to the curriculum
- 1972 Major in Sociology-Social Work introduced
- 1973 Seven courses in the Social Work curriculum
- 1975 Department renamed Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work
- 1974-76 Department of Social Work initially seeks accreditation by Council on Social Work Education
- 1976-77 Second full-time Social Work faculty member position added; CSWE consultant advises program
- 1977 Social Work major approved by Skidmore College
- 1978 Margaret Tacardon joins the Social Work faculty
- 1980 Third full-time Social Work faculty position added; Social Work Field Coordinator position created and a new field instruction program introduced; Social Policy course added to curriculum; Social Work major registered with the New York Department of Education; Social Work faculty began a self-study clarifying program goals and objectives and preparing for accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education
- 1981-82 Social Work degree changed from B.A. to B.S.
- 1983 Department of Social Work accredited by the Council on Social Work Education
- 1986 Thomas "Pat" Oles joins the Social Work faculty
- 1989 Jacqueline Azzarto joins the Social Work faculty
- 1992 Department of Social Work reaccredited by the Council on Social Work Education

- 1995-96 New, "streamlined" Social Work curriculum introduced
- 1998 Pat Oles becomes Assistant Dean of the Faculty, then Dean of Students; Jacqueline Azzarto becomes Director of the Department of Social Work; Carla Sofka joins the Social Work faculty
- 1999 Department of Social Work reaccredited by the Council on Social Work Education
- 2000 Carla Sofka leaves Skidmore for position at Siena College and Amy D'Aprix joins Social Work faculty
- 2001 Amy D'Aprix leaves Social Work faculty and new tenure line becomes available
- 2002 Crystal Dea Moore joins the Social Work faculty on the new tenure-track line
- 2003 Crystal Dea Moore becomes Director of the Department of Social Work
- 2004 Jacqueline Azzarto retires from Skidmore College
- 2006 Margaret Tacardon retires from Skidmore College; Peter McCarthy joins the Social Work faculty as Field Coordinator; Kelly Mills-Dick joins the Social Work faculty as a lecturer on a three-year visiting line
- 2007 Elizabeth Misener joins the Social Work faculty as a Visiting Assistant Professor while Crystal Dea Moore is on sabbatical during 2007-2008; The Department of Social Work successfully completes CSWE's Alternative to the Self-Study (one of the first four programs in the nation to complete the Alternative to the Self-Study) and is successfully re-accredited
- 2009 Kelly Mills-Dick departs from the program to finish her doctoral studies; Pat Oles re-joins the Social Work faculty
- 2012 The Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work becomes three separate departments; Crystal Dea Moore is Chair of the new Department of Social Work
- 2015 Crystal Dea Moore becomes Associate Dean of the Faculty, then Interim Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- 2016 Kelly (Mills-Dick) Melekis returns to the Department of Social Work as an Assistant Professor
- 2018 June Paul joins the Social Work faculty as an Assistant Professor
- 2019 Kelly Melekis is promoted to Associate Professor and is Chair of the Department
- 2021 Thomas "Pat" Oles retires from Skidmore College
- 2022 Crystal Moore re-joins the Social Work faculty

*Through all these changes Skidmore College has remained committed to developing and improving a quality Department of Social Work.*

## **Skidmore College Social Work Program Mission and Goals**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is a national association that preserves and enhances the quality of social work education for practice and promotes the goals of individual and community well-being and social justice. CSWE pursues this mission through setting and maintaining policy and program standards in social work education programs, accrediting bachelor's and master's degree programs in social work, promoting research and faculty development, and advocating for social work education. Baccalaureate Departments of Social Work that are accredited by CSWE adhere to the Council's Curriculum Policy Statement for Baccalaureate Degree Programs in Social Work Education. Copies of the statement are available from the Program Director. For more information about the Council, see the organization's website: [www.cswe.org](http://www.cswe.org)

### Mission

Consistent with Skidmore College's mission and the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (2015) requirements of the Council on Social Work Education, the Social Work Program's mission is to 1) prepare students for entry-level professional generalist practice that promotes human rights, social and economic justice, and empowerment of individuals/groups that experience discrimination and oppression; 2) prepare a liberally educated graduate for graduate study and a life of active, informed citizenship; and 3) develop students' professional leadership capacity leveraging the high quality and diverse offerings of Skidmore's liberal arts curriculum.

### Goals

With the liberal arts as its foundation, BSW graduates are prepared for entry-level social work practice and to continue their formal education in social work or another graduate discipline. As such, program goals for students include:

1. Engage in evidence-based entry-level social work practice with individuals, families groups, communities and organizations within a multicultural society.
2. Practice according to the principles, values, and ethics that guide the social work profession.
3. Influence social policies with the goal of alleviating poverty, oppression, and social injustice as well as advocating for human rights.
4. Identify and affect the bio-psycho-social, spiritual, and cultural functioning of people.
5. Engage in practice from a culturally-sensitive perspective which recognizes and appreciates the intersectionality of diverse human identities.
6. Provide leadership in practice settings appropriate to one's practice role, skill set, and educational level.

### Core Competencies

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate and master's level social work programs. EPAS supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for

professional competence. Social work competence is the ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice situations in a purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community well-being (CSWE, 2015).

The Social Work Program has adopted the CSWE competencies and our curriculum is designed to prepare students to demonstrate competency in each of the nine areas. Each competency describes the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the competency at the generalist level of practice, followed by a set of behaviors that integrate these components. These behaviors represent observable components of the competencies, while the preceding statements represent the underlying content and processes that inform the behaviors.

### **Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

### **Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to 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. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

### **Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

### **Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice**

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy,

and service delivery.

### **Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Social workers:

- identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

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

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

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

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge

in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:

- collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

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

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

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

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:

- select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

# The Social Work Major

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## Why Major in Social Work?<sup>1</sup>

Baccalaureate social work graduates have knowledge, skills, and value base that has been augmented by professional social work supervision in social services. Social work's focus on the "person-in-environment" paradigm uniquely prepares BSW graduates to work effectively with individuals, families, small groups, communities, and organizations.

BSW graduates are employed in many different work settings under public and private auspices that may include:

nursing homes	family service agencies
hospices	children & youth services
hospitals	aging services
home care agencies	residential treatment programs
substance abuse programs	child and adult day care centers
mental health services	domestic violence programs
developmental disabilities services	homeless shelters
vocational rehabilitation services	schools (elementary and secondary)
public health agencies	income maintenance programs
community action agencies	legal services agencies

BSW graduates are trained in skills such as:

assessment	problem solving
interviewing	program evaluation
service brokering	community outreach
service planning	advocacy
case management	research
crisis intervention	promotion of social justice

Baccalaureate social work students, unlike many of their counterparts, have chosen a professional career path prior to graduation and demonstrated an early commitment to the specialized work and ideals that are germane to social work. A BSW education combines liberal arts with professional social work foundation content to prepare graduates to provide direct services. To ensure professional standards, BSW programs must meet rigorous academic standards to gain and maintain accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). For admission to a BSW program, students must meet formal admissions standards, including a formal application and a minimum grade point average. As Social Work majors, Skidmore College students are held to scholastic as well as professional standards (see Standards for Social Work Education in the appendix).

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<sup>1</sup> *This information was taken from a brochure prepared by the National Association of Social Workers in cooperation with the Association of Baccalaureate Department of Social Work Directors and the Council on Social Work Education.*

## Department of Social Work Admissions Policy and Procedure

Students must apply for the Social Work major no later than the College-mandated deadline during the spring of the sophomore year (transfer students are evaluated on a case-by-case basis). To be eligible to apply, AT A MINIMUM, students must have successfully completed or be concurrently enrolled in SW 241: Research for the Human Services; AND have successfully completed either SW 222: Introduction to Social Work OR SW 212: Power, Privilege, and Oppression. It is strongly preferred that students also complete SW 253: Human Behavior and the Social Environment prior to applying to the major. This sequencing of courses is necessary for students to complete the Department of Social Work's Writing Requirement and in addition, these courses lay the necessary foundation for completion of upper-division courses during the student's junior and senior years.<sup>2</sup>

Students who fail to formally apply by the deadline will not be granted permission to enroll in SW 333: Social Work Practice for Individuals and Families. Students whose applications are rejected may reapply during the fifth semester before the drop add/period ends. Admission to the program is based on demonstrated academic competence, a willingness to abide by Skidmore College's Department of Social Work Standards for Social Work Education, the National Association of Social Work Code of Ethics, and suitability for beginning professional practice. Applications for admission are available online and from social work faculty.

Before completing the application form for admission to the Department of Social Work, students are encouraged to take some time to think about whether or not social work is the major and potential career choice for them. The following questions can assist students in making a determination about social work as a major and future profession. For further help in making a decision, students are encouraged to seek out other students who are currently majoring in social work, professional social workers in the community, and social work faculty to discuss interests and questions.

1. Are you genuinely interested in working with and helping diverse people from varying racial, economic, and cultural backgrounds? Discrimination and prejudice do not fit with the values of the profession.
2. Do you believe in the intrinsic worth of the individual and in the human potential for growth and change?
3. Are you interested in developing your problem-solving abilities and do you have patience, perseverance, and the ability to follow through? The social worker should be difficult to discourage and understand the process of decision making.
4. Are you interested in your own personal growth and well-being? Social workers must be aware of themselves and their own struggles in order to effectively help others.
5. Are you interested in the larger picture? Social workers need a sense of moral and social responsibility and the ability to see human problems in relationship to

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<sup>2</sup> Students planning on going abroad should talk with the Department Chair or Director of Field Education as soon as possible so timely and appropriate advising can occur.

the community and the state of the nation and the world. Social justice is pre-eminent principle in social work.

6. Are you interested in using research skills and scientific methods to work with people? When possible, a social worker bases their practice on established social work methods and empirical research.

When students apply for admission to the social work major, they are asked to complete a "Declaration of Major" form available from the Registrar, the Department of Social Work application form (available on the Department website), and an admission essay (see following pages). These three documents are then submitted to a Social Work faculty member who distributes the application to the Department for review. When the student is accepted into the major, a social work advisor is assigned and the Declaration of Major form is submitted to the Registrar's Office. Once this process is completed, the student is asked to review the Department's Standards for Social Work Education. Accepted students then meet with their advisor to discuss program expectations, address any questions the student may have, and to sign a form indicating that the student agrees to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics and Skidmore College's Standards for Social Work Education. Students are expected to meet with their advisors regularly to discuss academic and professional issues that promote the students' professional development.

The following criteria are used by faculty in making admissions decisions:

Successful completion of introductory courses:

- \_\_\_\_\_ SW 212 Power, Privilege and Oppression: Advancing Social Justice OR
- \_\_\_\_\_ SW 222 Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare
- \_\_\_\_\_ SW 253 Human Behavior and the Social Environment (preferred)

Awareness of and exposure to Social Work as a profession:

- \_\_\_\_\_ doing volunteer work and/or working in a human service agency
- \_\_\_\_\_ initiating contact with social work professionals
- \_\_\_\_\_ participating in social work and social justice activities

Behavioral indicators of suitability for the profession:

- \_\_\_\_\_ emotional maturity and stability
- \_\_\_\_\_ demonstrated understanding of social work values
- \_\_\_\_\_ demonstrated acceptance of and respect for human diversity
- \_\_\_\_\_ ability to handle classroom assignments (e.g., turning in assignments on time, completing high quality work)
- \_\_\_\_\_ behaving appropriately in the classroom
- \_\_\_\_\_ communicating effectively (oral and written)
- \_\_\_\_\_ relating appropriately with peers, professors, and supervisors

Students denied admission to the Department of Social Work can appeal the decision. Students are entitled to a hearing with program faculty and the Chair of the Department of Social Work to review the decision. Students dissatisfied with the departmental level review can appeal that decision to the Dean of the Office of Academic Advising, the Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights, and/or the college President as outlined in the college catalogue.

## Application to the Social Work Major

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cell Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class year:** \_\_\_\_\_ **GPA:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Credits (including this semester):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Social Work Courses (indicate grade or in progress):**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Prior Experience in Human/Social Services:**

Agency/Organization      Dates.      Volunteer/Paid/Consumer?      Responsibilities/Duties

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Admission Essay

Skidmore College's Social Work major is an accredited professional program. As such, we expect our students to conduct themselves as professionals in their roles as students, interns, community volunteers, and employees. In addition, we expect that our students adhere to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and Skidmore College Standards for Social Work Education. With this in mind, please write a grammatically correct and well edited response to the following:

- Tell us a bit about why you want to major in social work.
- What does it mean to conduct yourself as a professional in your role of student, intern, and community volunteer? How might this be a challenge for you?
- How do the NASW Code of Ethics and the Standards for Social Work Education resonate with your own values and perspectives?

Submit this completed application, your admission essay, and two (2) copies of a completed declaration of major form (aside from social work advisor/chair signatures) to Peter McCarthy, Director of Field Education, at least two weeks prior to the College deadline for declaring your major.

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### Reference

*Please provide the name of someone (e.g., faculty, supervisor, employer, mentor, etc.) who could speak to your preparedness and/or potential for a social work major. This should be someone other than a Skidmore Social Work faculty member.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Demographic Information (Optional)

*The following information is not required for your application however it is requested by the Council on Social Work Education.*

Racial/Ethnic Identity: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender Identity/Expression: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you receiving financial aid? \_\_\_\_Y \_\_\_\_N If yes, what type? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Advising

Please note that you will be assigned a social work advisor upon acceptance to the major. Advising assignments are based on several factors however you are welcome to indicate any preferences here.

## Progression through the Social Work Major

1. Applications must be submitted to a Social Work faculty member by the deadline for declaration of major as set by the Office of Academic Advising. Students who wish to add social work as a double major or change majors after the deadline for declaration of major must apply and admission will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Admission of transfer students will also be decided on a case-by-case basis. Students are oriented to the major through one-on-one meetings with their advisors and attendance at Social Work group advising held each semester.
2. Advising is an important component of the social work major. Students are consistently given feedback by faculty regarding their professional and scholastic performance. Students who are told that there are concerns about their scholastic or professional preparedness (as defined in the Standards for Social Work Education) for social work practice must arrange follow up meetings with their faculty advisor to establish a written plan for improvement and to demonstrate its implementation. Failure to actively participate in this advising process can result in denying the student entrance into the field.
3. To be a candidate for field placement the Department of Social Work requires **at least a C in all required social work courses**. If a student has a legitimate, compelling, and documented reason that is beyond their control (e.g., serious illness) for not satisfying this criterion, they must meet with the Department Chair and present a written plan for how foundation material will be mastered before field placement. In most cases, this will involve re-taking the entire course (no credit will be granted). If the entire course is re-taken, this DOES NOT change the student's grade on their transcript. This only satisfies the Department's criteria for progression through the major.
4. While progressing through the major, students are urged to consult regularly with their faculty advisors and use campus academic and health resources, especially when faculty make appropriate referrals.
5. Students are expected to adhere to the Skidmore College's Department of Social Work Standards for Social Work Education. The social work faculty reserve the right to deny enrollment in the field practicum to any student if, in the judgment of the faculty, that student does not show adequate and appropriate scholastic and professional preparation. The student may appeal such decisions to the Chair of the Department of Social Work and follow the procedures related to administrative complaints as outlined in the Skidmore College Student Handbook.

### Course Transfer Policy

Skidmore College's Department of Social Work may accept 200-level Social Work courses taken at other institutions if they are deemed equivalent to the Department's offerings. Equivalency is determined by submitting a request to the Chair of the Department of Social Work for transfer credit and the syllabus of the course that the student completed. Courses from other institutions at the 300 level are not transferable. Social Work course credit cannot be granted for life or previous work experience.

## Sequencing of Required Courses for Social Work Major

*This is the recommended sequencing of **REQUIRED** SW courses for the major.*  
 Consult with your advisor regarding courses that satisfy all-college requirements.  
**Please note:** SW212 and SW222 are offered both fall and spring semesters; all other courses are offered only once / year, in the semester listed below.

### First Year

Fall	Spring
<b>SW 222 (Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare; 3 credits)</b>	<b>SW 212 (Power, Privilege and Oppression: Advancing Social Justice; 4 credits) or SW222</b>

### Second Year

Fall	Spring
<b>SW 253 (Human Behavior and the Social Environment; 3 credits)</b>	<b>SW 241 (Research Methods for Social Justice; 4 credits)</b> <i>Must complete Social Work application to the major during the fourth semester.</i>

### Third Year

Fall	Spring
<b>SW 338 (Social Policy and Social Justice; 3 credits) OR SW 333 (Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families; 3 credits) AND SW320 (Service-Learning in Social Work; 1 credit co-requisite with SW333)</b> <i>If studying abroad fall of your junior year, you can take SW333/SW320 and SW338 senior year.</i>	<b>SW 334 (Social Work Practice with Groups, Organizations and Communities; 3 credits) AND SW320 (Service-Learning in Social Work; 1 credit co-requisite with SW334)</b> <i>If studying abroad spring of your junior year, you <u>must</u> take SW334 spring of sophomore year.</i>

### Fourth Year

Fall	Spring
<b>SW338 or SW333 SW 340 (Field Preparation Seminar; 1 credit)</b>	<b>SW 382 (Social Work Field Practicum; 12 credits) SW 381 (Social Work Field Practicum Seminar; 3 credits)</b>

Note: SW 241 AND either SW 212 OR SW 222 must be completed or the student must be concurrently enrolled to be eligible to apply for the Social Work major. The application must be submitted no later than March of the sophomore year.

## Required Social Work Courses

### **SW 212: POWER, PRIVILEGE, AND OPPRESSION: ADVANCING SOCIAL JUSTICE**

This course explores social work values, provides opportunities to identify and clarify conflicting values and ethical dilemmas, and examines the impact of discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression on groups distinguished by factors such as race, ethnicity, culture, class, age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, national origin, etc. Students will consider linkages between various aspects of identity and inequality by evaluating existing systems of power, privilege, and oppression, exploring theoretical debates, and examining multicultural and intersectional strategies of response. Specific attention is focused on critically analyzing and applying the social justice-based foundations of social work and the role of social workers in addressing unjust systems and structures that marginalize and disadvantage particular groups in contemporary America. *Fulfills Social Sciences requirement; designated a Cultural Diversity course; fulfills Bridge Experience.* **4 credits**

### **SW 222: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL WELFARE**

Introduction to social welfare and the field of social work from a historical, educational, and theoretical perspective. The course explores the values, knowledge, and skills required in the profession, along with their practical application in the field, and factors affecting social work practice, e.g., class, gender, race. *Fulfills Social Sciences requirement.* **3 credits**

### **SW241: RESEARCH METHODS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**

This course is designed to help students understand and use an analytic approach to building knowledge for practice and for evaluating service delivery in all areas of practice. As both consumers and producers of research, social workers need to understand the core concepts of sound and rigorous research. Students will acquire the skills required to recognize problems for social work research, review literature, design research, and apply research methods in the broader context of one's social work practice. Ethical standards of scientific inquiry will be emphasized, with attention to protecting and promoting the well-being of vulnerable and oppressed populations. **4 credits**

### **SW 253: HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

A multi-disciplinary examination of theories and knowledge of human bio-psycho-social development from birth through later years. The course draws on research from biology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and political science to study the impact of biological, psychological, social and cultural systems on health and well-being. Students explore the range of social systems in which individuals live (families, groups, communities and organizations) and study the importance of ethnicity, culture, gender, disability and other elements of diversity in human development. **3 credits**

### **SW320: SERVICE-LEARNING IN SOCIAL WORK**

Service-learning through partnerships with community agencies. Service learning integrates academic work with community service. Students learn to apply knowledge

gained in the classroom to “real life” by getting hands-on experience in the community. Service learning benefits students by enhancing their understanding of concepts learned in the classroom, promoting personal identity, fostering the development of civic responsibility, and giving them the opportunity to work with diverse populations in a “real world” setting. Community partners benefit from the relationships formed and the services students contribute in response to community needs. Students will engage in fieldwork with underserved and under-represented populations in local community agencies. Students will have the opportunity to practice basic communication and relationship skills, be introduced to social problems and issues, and learn skills relevant to social work theory and practice. Co-requisite: SW 333 or SW 334 *Not for liberal arts credit.* **1 credit**

### **SW 333: SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES**

Part of a two-semester sequence designed to prepare students for entry-level generalist social work practice and to provide students with an overview of social work theory and its relation to practice. The course focuses on the knowledge, skills, and values needed for beginning social work practice with diverse individuals and families and addresses all phases of the helping process, including assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation, termination, and follow-up. Students will be encouraged to examine the relationship between theory and practice, and contextualize particular practice methods within a general theoretical perspective. Assignments emphasize critical thinking skills and theoretically grounded, research-based practice strategies. Prerequisites: SW 222, SW 212, and SW 241 are required prior to enrollment in this course. The course assumes students have also taken SW 253 - Human Behavior and the Social Environment OR are enrolled in SW 253 concurrently. Concurrent enrollment in SW 320 Service Learning in Social Work is also required. *Not for liberal arts credit.* **3 credits**

### **SW 334: SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES**

Part of the practice sequence designed to prepare students for generalist social work practice. Student learn social work theory and practice methods employed by social workers in providing services to communities and organizations in a changing world. Special attention will be given to professional relationships characterized by mutuality, collaboration, and respect, and on practices aimed to advance human rights and social justice. Prerequisites: SW 212 and SW 222 are required prior to enrollment in this course. The course assumes students have also taken SW 241: Research Methods for Social Justice OR are enrolled in SW 241 concurrently. Concurrent enrollment in SW 320 - Service Learning in Social Work is also required. *Not for liberal arts credit.* **3 credits**

### **SW 338: SOCIAL POLICY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**

The study of social policy, welfare program planning, and social service implementation, evaluation, and analysis. The class will interrogate the values, political and societal issues that underpin policies and programs, giving specific attention to the evaluation of policies through research and application of principles of social justice. Students will examine reviews of selected policies on federal, state, and local levels as well as compare the social policies of the United States with those of other countries. Prerequisite: SW222 or permission of instructor. **4 credits**

### **SW 340: FIELD PREPARATION SEMINAR**

Provides historical and current context for understanding the requirement of field instruction in social work programs. Students explore social work partnership with community agencies, the supervision process, and ways to enrich the practicum experience. Through in-class discussion, individual meetings with the instructor, and on-site agency interviews, students assess their areas of interest, professional and academic goals, and potential field practicum placements for SW 382, offered during the spring semester. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. *Open only to senior social work majors. Not for liberal arts credit. 1 credit*

### **SW 381: SOCIAL WORK FIELD PRACTICUM SEMINAR**

Provides discussion and analysis of practicum-related experiences and professional issues. A major purpose of the seminars is the development of professional judgment through examination of cases and practice situations encountered in field instruction. Prerequisite: all required social work courses and permission of instructor. *Open only to social work majors. Non-liberal arts. 3 credits*

### **SW 382: SOCIAL WORK FIELD PRACTICUM**

Thirty-five hours per week spent in social services agencies and related organizations in Saratoga County and the surrounding area. Specific placements made according to academic interests and needs of individual students. Prerequisite: all required social work courses and permission of instructor. *Open only to social work majors. Non-liberal arts. Must be taken S/U. 12 credits*

## Writing Requirement

All Social Work majors will be required to complete two Writing Enhanced courses as part of the fulfillment of their major: SW 241 and SW 333. The writing requirement is intended to prepare students to write effectively for a variety of professional audiences including researchers, clinicians, and supervisors. In these courses, students will:

- Develop a feasible research proposal that includes a well-integrated literature review, a thorough description of the selected research methodology, and a discussion of the practice/policy implications of the proposed work, and an appropriate data collection instrument (SW 241);
- Develop a clinical portfolio that includes a well-defined learning contract for field work, clear and concise progress notes, an objective and comprehensive psychosocial assessment, and a self-assessment that demonstrates the student's ability to reflect on their work with clients and connect field work to course concepts (SW 333).

## Liberal Arts Courses for Social Work Majors

In addition to the required courses for the social work major, students are encouraged to take complementary liberal arts courses. *Please talk with your advisor about options based on your interests and see the Department website for a list of suggestions.*

## Electives in Social Work

Electives are offered depending on program need and staffing capabilities. Social Work majors are encouraged to take advantage of electives outside of their major to complement their liberal arts education.

### **SW 214: DEATH AND DYING**

Analyses of death and dying from historical, cultural, and religious perspectives. Examination of theories of grief and mourning processes and of death-related practices such as wills and funerals. Review of approaches to and strategies for working with the dying and their families. Students may examine their own attitudes toward death and dying. **3 credits**

### **SW 217: OBSESSIONS AND ADDICTIONS**

Approaches to individual situations and cultural variations in compulsive and addictive behaviors related to such matters as drugs, gambling, love, work, and material success. This course uses a comprehensive view of human addictions that involves a person's expectations, values, sense of self-worth, and alternative opportunities for gratification and treatment. **3 credits**

### **SW 219: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

A course designed to provide students with opportunities to engage with the broader community through service and to encourage critical reflection on their experiences. Students volunteer their services in local nonprofit agencies for six to eight hours a week and learn to assume the role of a volunteer: to understand the history of the non-profit sector; to research client needs and service outcomes; and to demonstrate culturally competent skills that promote effective and sensitive community service. **3 credits**

### **SW220: SERVICE-LEARNING IN SOCIAL WORK**

Service-learning through partnerships with community agencies. Service learning integrates academic work with community service. Students learn to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to "real life" by getting hands-on experience in the community. Service learning benefits students by enhancing their understanding of concepts learned in the classroom, promoting personal identity, fostering the development of civic responsibility, and giving them the opportunity to work with diverse populations in a "real world" setting. Community partners benefit from the relationships formed and the services students contribute in response to community needs. Students will engage in fieldwork with underserved and under-represented populations in local community agencies. Students will have the opportunity to practice basic communication and relationship skills, be introduced to social problems and issues, and learn skills relevant to social work theory and practice. *Not for liberal arts credit.* **1 credit**

### **SW 224: SPECIAL STUDIES IN SOCIAL WORK**

One topic of current interest in area of social work. Topics will vary from year to year depending on interests of faculty and needs of students and might include social work practice with alcoholism and narcotic addiction, social work in correctional settings, social work with the developmentally disabled, social work with the aged, advocacy in

social work, or the dynamics of racism in social work practice. *May be taken three times with a different topic for credit.* **3 credits**

### **SW 225: SOCIAL WORK WITH CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS**

Reviews conceptions of and approaches to working with troubled children and adolescents. Topics include divorce, child abuse, learning difficulties, substance abuse, delinquency, foster care, and parent-child conflict. **3 credits**

### **SW244: STATISTICS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**

The purpose of this course is to further develop students' ability to utilize and engage in research to advance human rights and social justice. Skills in research methodology (e.g., hypothesis generation, measurement, and instrument construction) will be reinforced and strengthened, with a focus on quantitative data analysis and interpretation. Students will learn and apply statistical techniques to analyze social issues. In addition to exploring how social differences (e.g., gender, race, class) can shape individuals' life experiences, the course will focus on the use of statistics as a vehicle to better understand the injustices faced by certain individuals, groups, and communities. Students will consider the relationship between epistemology and methodology, with particular attention to the strengths and limitations of quantitative reasoning from a transformative perspective. Prerequisites: SW241 OR another methods course, OR instructor permission. Placement at AQR level or completion of an FQR course. *Fulfills Applied Quantitative Reasoning requirement; fulfills Social Sciences requirement; fulfills Bridge Experience.* **4 credits**

### **SW 298: EXPLORATIONS IN SOCIAL WORK**

A topical workshop, seminar, discussion group, service learning experience, or research project that can link to a regular Social Work course or serve as a freestanding course. Courses integrating an exploration in social work carry four rather than three credit hours. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. *The course may be repeated.* **1 credit**

### **SW299: PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIP IN SOCIAL WORK**

Internship opportunity for students whose academic and cocurricular work has prepared them for professional activity related to social work. With faculty sponsorship and department approval, students may design experiences in such areas as direct work with specific populations, community organizations, and social welfare management, administration, and research. Prerequisites: SW 334 or SW 333 or permission of faculty sponsor. *Not for liberal arts credit.* **3 or 6 credits.**

### **SW324: ADVANCED SPECIAL STUDIES IN SOCIAL WORK**

An examination at the advanced level of current topics in social work not available in regular course offerings. Topics will vary from year to year depending on the interests of faculty and needs of students and will build upon previously completed coursework. *The course in a different subject area may be repeated for credit.* **1-4 credits**

### **SW 398: ADVANCED EXPLORATIONS IN SOCIAL WORK**

A topical workshop, seminar, discussion group, service learning experience, or research project that can link to a regular Social Work course or serve as a freestanding course. Courses integrating an exploration in social work carry four rather than three credit hours. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. *The course may be repeated.* **1 credit**

### **SW371: INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Individual reading and/or research in social work under the guidance of a member of the department. Open with consent of the department to qualified students. Individual conferences to be arranged. **3 credits**

#### Guidelines for Independent Studies in Social Work

Independent Studies in Social Work are designed to encourage advanced reading, research, and community engagement in Social Work. They provide opportunities for students to pursue special interests and their content should not be covered in existing courses. If students desire to use field work as the basis for an independent study in Social Work, it is necessary to make a careful distinction between the independent study and an internship or field practicum. The goal of the independent study must be to gain knowledge regarding a specific topic and the field can be one method for gaining that knowledge. Library work must be a primary part of the independent study.

Generally, independent studies are recommended for juniors or seniors who have completed at least one introductory Social Work course. Introductory courses include: Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare (SW 222) and Power, Privilege, and Oppression (SW 212).

Students who wish to enroll in an Independent Study in Social Work should obtain the permission of a social work faculty member who is willing to supervise their course of study and complete a written proposal. During the semester in which the student is enrolled, he or she must meet regularly with the study supervisor. Students should be prepared to discuss readings, research or field experience. As in any course, evaluation is based on examination, research paper, or other written work to be determined by the supervising faculty.

## Field Education in Social Work

Field instruction in social work is considered to be the profession's "signature pedagogy." Signature pedagogy represents the central form of instruction and learning in which a profession socializes its students to perform the role of practitioner. Professionals have pedagogical norms with which they connect and integrate theory and practice (Shulman, 2005). In social work, the signature pedagogy is field education. The intent of field education is to connect the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum – classroom and field – are of equal importance with the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program competencies (CSWE EPAS, 2015).

The Department of Social Work administers field education consistent with program mission and goals that:

1. Connects the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practice setting, fostering the implementation of evidence-informed practice.
2. Provides generalist practice opportunities for students to demonstrate the core competencies.
3. Provides a minimum of 400 hours of field education for baccalaureate programs.
4. Admits only those students who have met the program's specified criteria for field education.
5. Specifies policies, criteria, and procedures for selecting field settings; placing and monitoring students; maintaining field liaison contacts with field education settings; and evaluating student learning and field setting effectiveness congruent with the program's competencies.
6. Specifies the credentials and practice experience of its field instructors necessary to design field learning opportunities for students to demonstrate program competencies. Field instructors for baccalaureate students hold a baccalaureate or master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. For cases in which a field instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited social work degree, the program assumes responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective and describes how this is accomplished.
7. Provides orientation, field instruction training, and continuing dialog with field education settings and field instructors.
8. Develops policies regarding field placements in an organization in which the student is also employed. To ensure the role of student as learner, student assignments and field education supervisions are not the same as those of the student's employment.

## Field Practicum

The field practicum is an integral component of the curriculum in social work education. It engages the student in supervised social work practice and provides opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field setting. Students complete their capstone field placement in the spring semester of their senior year. Before enrolling in field instruction and seminar, students must complete all other course work required for the major, the volunteer requirement (see guidelines for volunteer requirement), and the field application. Decisions regarding field placement are made by the Director of Field Education based on student input, behavioral assessments, agency need and preference, and discussions with social work faculty. The nature of the field experience requires that the department reserves the right to deny enrollment in the field practicum to any student if, in the judgment of the faculty, that student's academic or professional preparation for beginning professional practice is insufficient.

The Skidmore Department of Social Work requires the student to complete a minimum of 400 contact hours in the field agency and most students complete between 425 and 475 hours, which is approximately 32-35 hours per week. The scheduling of these hours is negotiated by students with their field instructors. Students are integrated into the field experience as regular staff and assume the functions of beginning social work practitioners in such roles as counselors, advocates, and researchers. Students receive supervision from agency field instructors and receive support through ongoing monitoring of the placement by the Department of Social Work. Concurrent with their field placements, students participate in a weekly three-hour seminar. The seminar brings together students from a variety of practice settings and provides students the opportunity to explore the value of a generalist practice orientation with variety of clients and problems.

Students can be removed from a field placement if the Agency Field Instructor or the Director of Field Education initiates such action. A meeting is held with the student and the reasons for removal are outlined. This meeting is followed up with a written explanation for the removal. Depending on the reason for removal the student may be re-placed in another agency. The decision to re-place is made by the Director of Field Education in consultation with the Social Work faculty. In accordance with CSWE standards, academic credit for life experience and previous work experience cannot be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum.

There are a variety of agency settings utilized as field placements where students integrate academic learning with actual practice experience. The Program is fortunate to have a broad variety of field placement sites with very dedicated professionals who are willing to give their time and expertise in helping our students become beginning social work practitioners.

Examples of the Program's past field placements include:

Shelters of Saratoga	Albany Medical Center
St. Peter's Addiction Recover Center	U.S.C.R.I.
Baywood Outpatient Substance Abuse Clinic	Planned Parenthood
Gordon Creek Elementary School	New York State Assembly

## Service-Learning

Students must engage in service-learning 3-4 hours a week for **two** semesters (a total of 80 hours) as part of their coursework in the program's practice sequence (SW 333 and SW 334) which require co-enrollment in SW 320: Service-Learning in Social Work. Service-Learning placements are coordinated and supervised by the SW 320 course instructor. It is preferable that students complete their placements in different settings to maximize exposure to various agency settings and client populations. Service-Learning must be done in the local area and be approved by the course instructor.

Service-Learning should involve substantial client or agency contact e.g., screening clients for the food pantry, assisting program directors with grant writing, helping clients find jobs, assisting in fundraising activities, etc.

Examples of service-learning settings include:

Head Start	BOCES
Shelters of Saratoga	Mary's Haven
Saratoga Senior Center	Saratoga Mentoring

## Honors for Social Work Students

Each year, in recognition of their academic achievements, Social Work majors are on the Dean's List, elected to Skidmore College's Periclean Society, and graduate with all-College and department honors.

To be eligible for departmental honors in social work, students must meet the minimum College GPA requirement of 3.0 overall and 3.5 in the major. Of students who are qualified, departmental honors will be awarded to a total of three students, each being recognized for distinction in one of three areas: research, practice, or overall academic achievement.

- Distinguished research performance is demonstrated by the completion of high quality research products in SW 241 and subsequent superior independent or collaborative research; distinction in practice is demonstrated by superior performance evaluations of practice competencies in SW 320, SW 333, SW 334, and SW 381; and overall academic achievement is demonstrated by the highest overall GPA.

### Betten & Betten Award

The Hilda Bashevkin Betten '39 and Morris H. Betten Award in Social Work is awarded to a graduating senior who has shown outstanding interest and achievement in the study of Social Work at Skidmore College. Recipients of the Betten and Betten Award include:

1982 Elisa Deierlein	1996 Stephanie Agudelo	2010 Katelin Jennings
1983 Renee Lunn Gusman	1997 Suzanne Lipton	2011 Jenna Cameron
1984 Sara L. Sylvester	1998 Cynthia Ferguson Wheeler	2012 Rachel Klein
1985 Paula Stein	1999 Abigail Trow	2013 Kayla Flaherty-Dawson
1986 Frank Bonomo and Susan Donohue	2000 Hillary Budd	2014 Zuliany Rosario
1987 Nanci Strong	2001 Jessica Winnett	2015 Rene Alpert
1988 Sharon Whritner	2002 Joanna Kriel	2016 Kate Bowker
1989 Martha Stevens	2003 Lindsay Friberg	2017 Miranda Thompson
1990 John LaFrenz	2004 Emily Siegel	2018 Elisa Smith
1991 Julie Issokson	2005 Joshua Cristantiello	2019 Elesia Davis
1992 Georgia Boothe	2006 Allison McGlone	2020 Shana Kleiner
1993 Stephanie Thorson	2007 Amelia Rubenstein	2021 Amanda Gomez
1994 Citabria Phillips	2008 Katie Frankel	2022
1995 Emily Wood	2009 Jessica Mia Hull	2023

# Students' Rights and Responsibilities

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## Social Work Program Termination Policy

A student entering and continuing in the Department of Social Work must demonstrate behavior that is in accordance with the program's Standards for Social Work Education and the NASW Code of Ethics. Suitability for beginning professional practice is violated by the activities and behaviors such as the following:

- active abuse of alcohol or drugs
- failure to attend class, demonstrate appropriate engagement with academics, submit work on time, or appropriately and professionally handle work responsibilities
- manifestation of academic difficulties, personal problems, or unmanaged mental health issues that would interfere with professional practice
- demonstration of any behavior that would render the student unable to apply for professional certification

Students who fail to meet the academic and professional standards of the program will be terminated from the Department of Social Work. Students who are terminated from the program may appeal termination through mechanisms described in the Skidmore College Student Handbook.

## Student Involvement in College and Departmental Governance

### Academic Council

Two social work majors represent Social Work on the Student Government Association's Academic Council. These students are invited to attend Social Work monthly department meetings. The Council consists of two student representatives of each academic department or program. These student representatives facilitate the exchange of ideas, recommendations, and information between the students and faculty, particularly in the areas of academics and curriculum.

### Social Work Student Advisory Board

Each semester, between 2-4 students serve on the Social Work Student Advisory Board. The purpose of the Board is to advise the Social Work faculty on student-centered issues includes those related to curriculum. The Board meets with the faculty during select Departmental faculty meetings.

## Skidmore College Policies

### The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

On June 17, 1976, the rules and regulations applying to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act, became final. The Act deals with students' rights of access to their official educational records. Basically, the legislation gives any student or former student of Skidmore College the right to inspect, review and copy his or her permanent records. At Skidmore, the permanent records covered by the Act include: the student's application for admission; high school and/or previous college transcript; SAT scores; correspondence with our Office of Admissions; documents pertaining to grade reports, dates of attendance, approval of leaves of absence; correspondence with the Deans; senior class status; and course distribution summary forms on file in the Registrar's Office; and the materials contained in the student's career planning file.

The Act includes a list of types of records not open to student inspection. These are parents' financial statements; confidential letters and recommendations written before January 1, 1975; letters and recommendations written after January 1, 1975 but specifically designated as confidential; ancillary records of instructional, supervisory and administrative personnel; confidential law enforcement records; and records written by physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, and other recognized professionals or paraprofessionals. Students and former students may request a doctor of their choice to review their medical records.

Colleges are allowed to publish "directory information" including the student's name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational institution attended. If any current Skidmore student does not want such directory information to be disclosed he or she must notify the Registrar's Office in writing of the specific information not to be released. Such notification is necessary within ten days of the first day of classes of the Fall semester annually.

Skidmore College administrators, faculty, and members of established college committees who have legitimate educational interest may have access to students' and former students' files without prior consent. Specific federal, state and local officials and educational agencies conducting studies are also permitted access for definite reasons provided that personally identifiable data are not transferred to anyone else. In addition, proper parties concerning application for or receipt of financial aid have access. Skidmore College will forward a student's education records on written request to another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Prior consent for disclosure of personally identifiable information is not required when the information is needed in connection with a health or safety

emergency; or is to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued a subpoena after a reasonable effort to notify the student is made.

Except as above described **Skidmore College must obtain written consent of the student before disclosing personally identifiable information from the educational records. Such consent must be signed and dated by the student. It must include a specification of the records to be disclosed, the purpose or purposes of the disclosure, and the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made.** The College is required to maintain a record of all non-exempted requests for and disclosures of personally identifiable information from the education records of all students. This record of disclosure may be inspected by the affected student.

A student, former student, or applicant for admission may waive any of his or her rights under the Act by executing a written signed waiver. Such a waiver may be revoked with respect to any action occurring after the revocation. The revocation must be in writing and signed by the student.

*For more information, please visit the Skidmore College website on the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#).*

## Disability and Accessibility Services

Skidmore College cultivates an inclusive and supportive learning community and values the diverse learning styles of our students. We are committed to providing students with disabilities full and meaningful access to all college programs and activities and strive to provide individualized accommodations necessary for students to realize an equal opportunity to succeed.

Our institution abides by The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008 including Sections 504 and 508 which mandate reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities and accessibility of online information. Students with disabilities can register with the Office of Student Academic Services, the designated office on campus to provide services and administer exams with accommodations. This office is located on the first floor of Starbuck Center. The Coordinator of Student Access Services is Meg Hegener and you are encouraged to contact her with questions or concerns related to the application process or the services available at Skidmore.

The coordinator of student access services in Student Academic Services works independently and in cooperation with other administrative offices and academic departments and programs to:

- identify and implement individualized accommodations while fostering the academic and personal development of students;
- ensure the appropriateness of accommodations in specific courses;
- further institutional understanding of students with disabilities; and

- assist Skidmore to establish policies, procedures and facilities that are in compliance with the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Students with disabilities have the right to:

- equal access to Skidmore's courses, programs, activities, and facilities;
- individual assessment of disability and skills;
- reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids as appropriate;
- confidentiality of disability related information;
- control the release of disability related information except as otherwise required by law; and
- appeal the Coordinator's decisions concerning reasonable accommodations by following the grievance procedures outlined in this document.

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:

- meet the qualifications essential for participation in academic courses and programs;
- if seeking accommodation, identify him/herself as a student with a disability and follow the procedures for applying for academic accommodations outlined in this document;
- engage in an interactive process to establish and implement reasonable accommodations;
- provide professional documentation verifying the nature of a disability, the academic or the physical limitations a disability presents and the need for specific accommodations; and
- notify their instructors that they will be using accommodations by submitting an accommodation letter to each faculty member each semester.

*For more information, please visit the Skidmore College website on [Disability and Accessibility Services](#).*

## Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Policy

Skidmore College considers sexual and gender-based misconduct to be one of the most serious violations of the values and standards of the College. Unwelcome sexual contact of any form is a violation of students' personal integrity and their right to a safe environment and therefore violates Skidmore's values. Sexual and gender-based misconduct is also prohibited by federal and state regulations. Skidmore College faculty are committed to supporting our students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. If a student chooses to confide in a member of Skidmore's faculty or staff regarding an issue of sexual or gender-based misconduct, that faculty or staff member is obligated to tell Skidmore's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Deputy Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator will assist the student in connecting with all possible resources for support and options for reporting both on and off campus. Identities and details will be shared only with those who need to know to support the student and to address the situation through the college's processes. If the student wishes to confide in a confidential resource, the Counseling Center Staff, Health Services, and Victim Advocates (anonymous) are all options available.

More information can be found at the Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct website or by contacting the Title IX Coordinator, Joel Aure (jaure@skidmore.edu), 580-5708, or Deputy Coordinator for Student Affairs, Gabriela Melillo (gmelillo@skidmore.edu), 580-5022.

Note: Title IX Regulations were updated in 2020. Resources, updates and FAQs are available [here](#).

## Diversity and Inclusion

Skidmore College is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive community in which members develop their abilities to live in a complex and interconnected world. Consistent with our educational mission, we recognize ourselves as a community that respects individual identities based on varying sociocultural characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, national origin, first language, religious and spiritual tradition, age, ability, socioeconomic status and learning style. We strive to create a socially just world that honors the dignity and worth of each individual, and we seek to build a community centered on mutual respect and openness to ideas—one in which individuals value cultural and intellectual diversity and share the responsibility for creating a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment. We recognize that our community is most inclusive when all members participate to their full capacity in the spirited and sometimes challenging conversations that are at the center of the college's educational mission.

Skidmore defines a *bias incident* as an act of bigotry, harassment, or intimidation involving a member of the Skidmore community that a reasonable person would conclude is directed at a member or group within the Skidmore community based on race, color, ethnicity, nationality, economic background, age, physical and mental health or ability, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, veteran status, or religious practice. A bias incident can occur whether the act is intentional or unintentional. Speech or expression that is consistent with the principles of academic freedom does not constitute a bias incident.

More information on the bias incident protocol is available [here](#).

## Conscientious Religious Observance Policy

If religious observances cause absence from class, campus employment, athletic practice, and/or game days or necessitates accommodations, students should notify their faculty, coaches, or supervisors prior to the date(s) of their absence. New York State policy and Skidmore College policy mandates that students be allowed to make up academic work and/or campus employment requirements without penalty. These accommodations should not reduce the overall expectations of a course nor unduly burden the student requesting accommodation. Faculty must permit students to take a makeup examination without any penalty if they have to miss an examination due to religious observances.

Similarly, faculty must permit students to submit missed assignments by an agreed upon due date, without penalty.

Although not required, the College highly recommends that students submit written notification of the pending religious observances at the start of the semester or at least one week before the date. As an option, students may use this form [\[here\]](#). Distributing the written notification during the first week of classes, campus employment, or the start of the athletic season gives students, faculty, coaches, or supervisors time to prepare for the absence.

If a student, supervisor, coach, or faculty member feels the policy is being violated, they should contact the Dean of Faculty Office at 518-580-5705 (Palamountain 416), the Dean of Students Office at 518-580-5760 (Case Center 313), or Human Resources at 518-580-5800 (Barrett Center first floor).

## Administrative Complaints and Grievance Procedures

Skidmore College views Skidmore students as emerging adults responsible for managing, with our support and guidance, their academic and personal affairs. While we are often inclined toward solving problems for our students, we try instead to help them acquire the information and strategies that they need to explore possible remedies for their concerns. We ask parents to trust this educational effort whenever possible, rather than intervene with an office or program on behalf of students.

When students have questions about College policy or practice, we expect them to review the appropriate policies and handbooks and to pursue their concerns directly with the appropriate office or program. As examples, students should direct questions about housing to the Office of Residential Life and questions related to financial aid to the staff of Financial Aid Office. Student Affairs staff are available to advise students about appropriate offices and best strategies in most circumstances.

If a student remains dissatisfied with the decision of an office or program, the student can ask the dean or vice president responsible for the area of concern to review the decision or policy. However, the dean or vice president will not change a decision that seems consistent with general principles of fairness, equity, and College policy. In the majority of academic situations, moreover, the faculty exercise final authority for decisions regarding the classroom, course requirements, and academic standards and expectations.

There are several appeal and grievance procedures, depending on the subject of the grievance. For example, [Disability Services](#) has its own appeal process and grievance procedure, as does the [Office of Residential Life](#). For procedures and appeals related to academic integrity, please see the [Academic Integrity Handbook](#).

# Standards for Social Work Education

## Skidmore College Department of Social Work

*Criteria for Evaluating Academic Performance, Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic Performance, and Academic Grievances*

### 1.0

#### Criteria for Evaluating Academic Performance in Skidmore College's BSW Program

In order to meet its responsibilities to provide quality professional education and to ensure that its graduates are able to function in a broad variety of professional situations, the Department of Social Work evaluates the academic performance of its students in four general areas: Basic Abilities to Acquire Professional Skills; Mental and Emotional Abilities; Professional Performance Skills; and Scholastic Performance. Meeting the criteria for scholastic achievement is necessary but not sufficient to ensure continued enrollment in a program. Both professional behavior and scholastic performance comprise academic standards.

### 1.1

#### Basic Abilities Necessary to Acquire Professional Skills

##### 1.1.1 Communication Skills

Demonstrates sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings.

- a) Written: Writes clearly, uses correct grammar and spelling, and applies appropriate writing style, including American Psychological Association (APA) referencing, appropriate source citation, and documentation. Demonstrates sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and to complete adequately all written assignments, as specified by faculty.
- b) Oral: Communicates effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals. Expresses ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates a willingness and an ability to listen to others. Demonstrates sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to complete adequately all oral assignments, and to meet the objectives of field placement experiences, as specified by faculty.

##### 1.1.2 Interpersonal Skills

Demonstrates the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to other students, faculty, clients, and professionals and to fulfill the ethical obligations of the profession. These include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, and demonstration of respect for and consideration of others. Takes appropriate responsibility for own actions and considers the impact of these actions on others.

### **1.1.3 Cognitive Skills**

Exhibits sufficient knowledge of social work and clarity of thinking to process information and apply it to appropriate situations in classroom and field. Demonstrates grounding in relevant social, behavioral and biological science knowledge and research, including knowledge and skills in relationship building, data gathering, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of practice. Exhibits ability to conceptualize and integrate knowledge and apply the knowledge to professional practice.

### **1.1.4 Physical Skills**

Exhibits sufficient motor and sensory abilities to attend and practice in class and practicum placement, with or without accommodations. (See section on Accommodations for Disabilities for clarification.)

## **1.2**

### **Emotional and Mental Abilities Necessary for Performance in the Program and Professional Practice**

#### **1.2.1 Stress Management**

Demonstrates ability to deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. Handles stress effectively by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others.

#### **1.2.2 Emotional and Mental Capacities**

Uses sound judgment. Seeks and effectively uses help for medical and emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance. Engages in counseling or seeks out support and help if personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties do any of the following:

- a) Compromise scholastic and other performance,
- b) Interfere with professional judgment and behavior, or jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the social work student has a professional responsibility as outlined in the Current Code of Ethics by the National Association of Social Workers.

## **1.3**

### **Professional Performance Skills Necessary for Work with Clients and Professional Practice**

#### **1.3.1 Professional Commitment**

Exhibits a strong commitment to the goals of social work and to the ethical standards of the profession, as specified in the NASW Code of Ethics. Demonstrates commitment to the essential values of social work that includes the respect for the dignity and worth of every individual and his/her right to a just share of society's resources (social justice).

#### **1.3.2 Professional Behavior**

Exhibits behaviors that are in compliance with program policies, institutional policies, professional ethical standards, and societal laws in classroom, field, and community.

Appearance, dress, and general demeanor reflect a professional manner. Shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, respecting others, being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements, and accepting supervision and criticism in a positive manner.

Works effectively with others, regardless of level of authority. Advocates for him/herself in an appropriate and responsible manner and uses proper channels for conflict resolution. Shows a willingness to receive and accept feedback and supervision in a positive manner, as well as use such feedback to enhance professional development.

### **1.3.3 Self-Awareness**

Exhibits knowledge of how one's values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and past experiences affect thinking, behavior, and relationships. Accurately assesses one's own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice. Shows awareness of self and how one is perceived by others. Reflects on one's own limitations as they relate to professional capacities. Is willing to examine and change behavior when it interferes in working with clients and other professionals.

### **1.3.4 Ethical Obligations**

Current behavior and classroom performance demonstrates adherence to the ethical expectations and obligations of professional practice, noted in the NASW Code of Ethics. Ethical behaviors include:

- a) Adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics.
- b) No history of charges and/or convictions of an offense that is contrary to professional practice.
- c) Systematic evaluation of clients and their situations in an unbiased, factual way. Suspension of personal biases during interactions with others.
- d) Comprehension of another individual's way of life and values. Empathetic communication and support of the client as a basis for a productive professional relationship.
- e) Appreciation of the value of diversity. Effective and nonjudgmental relation to and work with others who are different from oneself. Appropriate service to all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person's age, class, race, religious beliefs, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and/or values system. No imposition of personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on clients.
- f) Demonstration of respect for the rights of others. Commitment to clients' rights to freedom of choice and self-determination.
- g) Maintenance of confidentiality as it relates to human service, classroom activities, volunteer experience, and field placement.
- h) Demonstration of honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; doing one's own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source materials.
- i) Demonstration of clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. Does not sexually harass others; make verbal or physical threats; become involved in sexual relationships with clients, supervisors, or faculty; abuse others in physical,

emotional, verbal, or sexual ways; or participate in dual relationships where conflicts of interest may exist.

#### **1.4 Scholastic Performance**

Students are considered to be in academic difficulty if their GPA drops below 2.25. Students will be advised to withdraw from the Department of Social Work if their grade point average falls below 2.0 overall or 2.5 in major. Failure to maintain a passing grade in Field Practicum (SW 382) will result in dismissal. A student who receives less than a C in a required Social Work course can be barred from enrolling in SW 382.

Students must complete the prerequisites outlined in their appropriate courses of study, as outlined in the course catalog. Students may not have grade of incomplete in any prerequisites if they are to continue course work.

#### **1.5 Sources of Data for Academic Performance Criteria**

Verification regarding meeting academic performance criteria in the Department of Social Work may include but is not limited to any of the following:

- a) Feedback, formal evaluation forms, or reference letters from faculty, work supervisors, or supervisors of volunteer human service activity or other field experiences
- b) Feedback and/or formal evaluations from agency-based field instructors
- c) Observation of classroom, volunteers, or field experiences
- d) Performance in oral and written assignments, examinations, social work skills labs, or other appropriate coursework
- e) Student personal statements or self-assessments
- f) Interviews with faculty or other professionals
- g) Taped interview situations (audio or video)
- h) Feedback from students, staff, college, helping professionals, or community
- i) Signed confidentiality statements, scholastic honesty statements, contract to adhere to NASW Code of Ethics or the Standards, other contracts between the college and the student.

#### **1.6 Accommodations for Disabilities**

No otherwise qualified student shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the Department of Social Work. A student with a disability may be protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and may be eligible for reasonable accommodation(s) that will provide an equal opportunity to meet the academic criteria related to professional behavior and scholastic performance.

Any otherwise qualified student with a protected disability who requests a reasonable accommodation must notify Student Academic Services and provide documentation as needed. The Student Academic Services makes recommendations for accommodations.

The Department of Social Work will review academic performance criteria in light of individual student circumstances to explore issues of appropriateness and accommodation. An initial assessment, subsequent plan, use of outside experts (including the Office of Academic Advising), and periodic checks between the Department of Social Work and the students are appropriate courses of action in making accommodations.

<b>2.0</b> <b>Policies and Procedures for Review of Academic Performance and Academic Grievances</b>
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**2.1**  
**Program Standards Acceptance**

When admitted to the major, students will sign a form indicating they have read, understand, and are willing to comply with the Program Standards, NASW Code of Ethics, and the policies presented in Skidmore College's Department of Social Work Student Manual.

**2.2**  
**Level 1 Interview**

Students who have difficulty in complying with the Standards will be required to engage in a Level 1 Interview. Faculty who identify potential or actual social work majors who are having difficulties in compliance with Program Standards, NASW Code of Ethics, or Skidmore College's Department of Social Work Student Manual policies will be asked to participate in an interview to discuss relevant issues. The interview is collaborative in nature and will focus on the student's coping strengths and issues related to non-compliance. Students are expected to actively collaborate in the development of strategies to remedy the problem and ways to engage in scholastic, professional, and personal growth in the problem solving process. Part of the problem-solving process may include: a written plan, follow-up meetings with faculty, the student, and other involved parties, or the collection of other pertinent data that demonstrates movement towards agreed upon scholastic, personal, or professional growth goals. Participating faculty will document a student's participation in a Level 1 Interview. Students will be asked to sign the documentation indicating their participation in a Level 1 interview. That documentation will become part of the student's Department of Social Work file.

**2.3**  
**Level 2 Interview**

Students who do not show progress toward the resolution of the issues identified in the Level 1 Interview will be asked to participate in a Level 2 Interview. Level 2 Interview participants include the Chair of the Department of Social Work, the other members of the Social Work faculty, and the student. The student may choose to invite another faculty member or administrator of his/her choice. The goal of the Level 2 Interview is to help the student identify issues that are impeding his/her progress toward the solutions identified during the Level 1 Interview and to further problem-solve to ensure compliance with the Standards, NASW Code of Ethics, and Skidmore College's Department of Social Work Student Manual. At Level 2, faculty may determine that the

student is willing to and capable of participating in the change process OR that the student should discontinue the participation in the Social Work major. As with a Level 1 Interview, students are expected to actively collaborate in the problem-solving process. Part of the problem solving process may include: a written plan; follow-up meetings with faculty, the student, and other involved parties; and/or the collection of other pertinent data that demonstrates movement towards agreed upon scholastic, personal, or professional growth goals. Participating faculty will document a student's participation in a Level 2 Interview. Students will be asked to sign the documentation indicating their participation in a Level 2 interview. That documentation will become part of the student's Department of Social Work file.

## **2.4 Grievance Procedure**

At any time during the Level 1 or Level 2 Interview process, students have the option to invoke the College's Grievance procedures.

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*The Standards for Social Work Education were adapted with permission from The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work.*

## National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics

As per the Skidmore College Department of Social Work policies and procedures, a student entering and continuing in the Department of Social Work must demonstrate behavior that is in accordance with the program's Standards for Social Work Education and the NASW Code of Ethics. Upon acceptance to the major, all students are provided with a copy of the NASW Code of Ethics, which is also available on the [Department website](#). *Please note, the Code was revised in 2021; you can view specific changes [here](#).*