

## PROGRAM TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The student must be able to achieve and maintain certain technical standards of knowledge and skill to complete the SW Program. The Program is committed to supporting students as they prepare to become professional social workers with a focus on health settings. These Technical Standards describe the minimum expectations each student must satisfy in order to enroll in, progress through, and graduate from the MSW program, in addition to the professional code of conduct and ethical behavior. The technical standards in this document apply to satisfactory performance in all academic and clinical course work, as well as the fulfillment of non-academic essential functions of the curriculum involving physical, cognitive, and behavior factors that are essential to a professional clinical practitioner.

The University of the Pacific will provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities otherwise qualified to complete the essential functions of the curriculum. However, such essential functions must be completed by the student in a reasonably independent fashion. The safety and welfare of a patient shall never be put in jeopardy as a result of an effort to reasonably accommodate a disability.

### **1. Communication**

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- a. Express ideas and feelings clearly;
- b. Demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills, including the ability to listen objectively and to interpret nonverbal communication;
- c. Elicit information from patients and clients (including individuals, families, groups and communities), including listening objectively, perceiving nonverbal communications and describing changes in mood, activity and posture among individuals and groups.
- d. Communicate effectively, sensitively and in a timely manner with patients, family members and members of the health care team.
- e. Interpret and communicate accurately data, findings and one's own or other's critical analyses of research or technical reports, including tables, figures and graphs.
- f. Communicate effectively in telehealth/teletherapy activities;
- g. Communicate responsibly and respectfully in all interactions with colleagues, faculty, field instructors, task supervisors, staff, clients, other professionals, and all others they might come into contact within their student role;
- h. Communicate clearly through written products at a level appropriate for graduate work, including using correct grammar and spelling and applying the APA format and writing style;
- i. Advocate for themselves in an appropriate and responsible manner that uses proper channels for conflict resolution; and
- j. Mastery of both written and spoken English is required at matriculation into the program, although applications from students with sight, hearing,

and/or speech disabilities will receive full consideration. In such cases, the use of assistive technology, a trained intermediary, or other communications aide may be appropriate if it functions only as an information conduit and does not serve integrative or interpretive functions.

## **2. Physical and Cognitive Ability**

Students must have sufficient sensory, motor, and cognitive skills to meet the following requirements:

- a. Attend and participate in classes and field placements per the expectations outlined in the syllabi and in accordance with the field setting and the Council on Social Work Education Core Competencies of Social Work Practice;
- b. Navigate transportation to attend field and classroom requirements;
- c. Use the technology required to engage in scholarship and effective practice including, but not limited to, the use of computers, telephones, and agency databases;
- d. Demonstrate the ability to acquire knowledge and process experiences to inform practice; and
- e. Demonstrate the capacity to think critically and to apply effective problem-solving skills.
- f. Attend and participate in classes and field placements per the expectations outlined in the syllabi and in accordance with the field setting and the Council on Social Work Education Core Competencies of Social Work Practice;
- g. Navigate transportation to attend field and classroom requirements;
- h. Use the technology required to engage in scholarship and effective practice including, but not limited to, the use of computers, telephones, and agency databases;
- i. Demonstrate the ability to acquire knowledge and process experiences to inform practice; and
- j. Demonstrate the capacity to think critically and to apply effective problem-solving skills.

## **3. Behavioral, Emotional and Social Attributes (Stability, Management, and Regulation)**

In accordance with the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) Code of Ethics (§ 4.05), social work students should not allow their personal problems or issues to interfere with their judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have professional responsibility. The social work student must demonstrate the behavioral, emotional and social stability necessary to execute sound judgment and performance in the program as well as generally to support the practice of social work. Students must be willing and able to meet the following standards:

- a. Demonstrate appropriate self-disclosure (the revealing of personal information) and professional boundaries in classroom and field settings, including all assignments;

- a. Maintain respectful relationships with colleagues, faculty, field instructors/task supervisors, staff, clients, and other professionals;
- b. Seek appropriate help when personal issues interfere with professional and scholastic performance;
- c. Manage stress effectively through self-care and by relying upon supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others;
- d. Demonstrate the ability to integrate into practice constructive criticism received in both didactic and field settings;
- e. Possess the emotional health required for full use of their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment and the prompt ability to care for patients and aggregates;
- f. Demonstrate the ability to develop mature, sensitive, effective and professional relationships with clients, patients and members of the health care team is essential;
- g. Be able to tolerate emotionally taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress;
- h. Demonstrate the ability to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the problems experienced by patients and clients;
- i. Demonstrate compassion, integrity, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation, all of which are qualities that are desired in a healthcare social work professional and assessed during the admissions and education processes; and
- j. Demonstrate tolerance with the discomfort inherent in conflict or ambiguity and utilize the experience with self-reflective and critical analysis to foster professional and academic growth.

#### **4. Interpersonal Skills**

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- a. Demonstrate the ability to build rapport with and work respectfully and effectively with colleagues, faculty, field instructors/task supervisors, staff, clients, and other professionals;
- b. Demonstrate the capacity to understand the experience and perspectives of individuals or groups and use this empathy as a basis for a productive relationship; and
- c. Exhibit conflict resolution skills, including the ability to negotiate differing attitudes and opinions.

#### **5. Respect for Diversity and Social Justice**

Social work practice requires understanding, affirming, and respecting another individual's way of life and values. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experience may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege and power. Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- a. Demonstrate a willingness to examine their personal beliefs, values, and assumptions that perpetuate or counter oppression;

- b. Strive to relate and to work nonjudgmentally with others who differ from themselves, regardless of the person's age, class, color, culture, race or ethnicity, family structure, beliefs, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ability, and/or value system;
- c. Demonstrate knowledge of and sensitivity to diversity, oppression, and privilege;
- d. Approach differences with an attitude of humility and respect, acknowledging the importance of cultural differences in shaping life experiences;
- e. Demonstrate the ability to develop and strengthen cross-cultural proficiency sufficient to work effectively with a wide variety of diverse groups and communities; and
- f. Exhibit an appreciation for difference and a commitment to engage around the complex issues of diversity and social justice.

## **6. Self-Awareness and Reflective Thinking**

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- a. Demonstrate a willingness to continually reflect on their own values, attitudes, beliefs, biases, emotions, past and current experiences, and to consider how these factors affect their thinking, behavior, interactions, and relationships;
- b. Demonstrate the capacity to continuously reassess their own strengths, limitations, and suitability for professional practice;
- c. Take responsibility for their own actions and consider the impact of these actions on others; and
- d. Seek supervision and accept constructive feedback in a positive manner.

## **7. Academic and Professional Standards**

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- a. Show the capacity to successfully complete required field practicum hours and demonstrate positive progress in the required competencies and behavioral indicators in the field and classroom settings;
- b. Ensure that appearance, dress, and general demeanor are appropriate to the context;
- c. Be punctual and dependable, prioritize responsibilities and manage time well, attend class and field in accordance with relevant policy, observe deadlines, complete assignments on time, and conscientiously arrange and keep appointments;
- d. Adhere to agency policies and practices through the learning process and supervision; and
- e. Follow the policies, procedures, and operating standards of the Program, School, University, and the field placement agency.

## **8. Technical Standards**

Students must be willing and able to meet the following requirements:

- a. Competency with file management (for example, creating a folder on your desktop, moving files from one location to another, finding a saved file)
- b. Internet navigation skills
- c. Video meeting platform
- d. Download plug-ins from the Internet
- e. Update your Internet browser
- f. Send and receive email
- g. Create and save documents (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, or HTML)
- h. Copy text from a word processing program and paste it into another program

Students are expected to seek technical support services if needed to navigate the technical aspect of the program. Making use of the respective learning and technical platforms support services in addition to the University's tech support.

The University of the Pacific will provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities otherwise qualified to complete the essential functions of the curriculum. However, such essential functions must be completed by the student in a reasonably independent fashion.

If at any point during a student's enrollment, they have questions about whether or not they can meet these Standards, they should notify the Program Director and the Field Director. If faculty or administrators have questions about whether a student is able to meet these Standards, they will refer the student to the Student Progress Committee (SPC) for assessment, remediation, and possible disqualification from the Program. SPC policies and procedures, including the referral process, are described in Section 15.