



**Social Work 9807 (570 and 571)  
Critical Reflection and Appraisal of Social Work Practice  
Fall/Winter 2025-26**

**Instructors:** Holly Gibson, BA, BSW, MSW, RSW (section 570)

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11:30 to 12:30 pm or by appointment

Ruth Wilson, BA, BSW, MSW, PhD Social Work (section 571)

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:30 to 1:30 pm or by appointment

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**Course and Faculty Contact:**

For Course Information (Day, Time and Location), please go to [student.uwo.ca](http://student.uwo.ca), login, select Academics then Fall 2025. For Faculty Contact information please see the class OWL.

**Course Description:**

Given the wide and varied uses of the terms 'critical reflection' and 'reflective practice' this course will provide students with the opportunity to develop in depth skills in one particular model: Critical Reflection on Practice. This model is described by its originator as both a theory and a practice, so this course will involve students actively participating in small groups as we work through the stages of the Critical Reflection on Practice process. This will involve taking the time initially to develop the type of learning environment which ensures safety for asking one another questions about our practice in non-judgmental manners and being willing to 'unpack' our responses to incidents in practice and learning.

As we work through the stages of the Critical Reflection on Practice process we will also explore the traditions and underlying theories that have contributed to its development. Critical social theory is one of the underlying theories to this process which assists with uncovering hegemonic influences and moves this form of reflection on practice beyond mere problem solving towards an anti-oppressive form of social work inquiry (or research on direct practice) that develops new practice and theory.

As your professors in this course, we will be attempting to model a critically reflective stance in our own practice of teaching and learning with students. We will share some of our own critical reflections on practice and will be open to reflecting on the process we are engaged in together.

Course outlines are required to be completed and posted prior to the beginning of classes thereby unfortunately limiting student input into the process, but we are interested in finding ways to adjust the process of the course as we proceed if this is beneficial.

## **Statement of Commitment from Facilitators of this Course**

At King's University College, we learn and work on land that is part of the Dish with One Spoon Treaty from the original inhabitants of this land, the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenapeewak, and Attawandaron peoples; all of whom have longstanding relationships to the land of Southwestern Ontario and the City of London. As uninvited guests, we are both grateful to inhabit this land, and hope to maintain the spirit of the Dish with One Spoon Treaty to work collaboratively with the original inhabitants to protect it. We are also committed to the spirit of collaborative and dialogical work as we work together to prepare course material and consider ways to Indigenize our teaching practices.

As a mixed-race Filipina, mother, settler, social worker and academic, I (Ruth) am aware of and committed to addressing the historical and continuing harm caused by my community and my profession against Indigenous people. I am striving to do better both professionally and personally, and to finding ways to put into action the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) recommendations. In my teaching, I strive to listen intently, to learn, and to take action towards decolonizing and Indigenizing research and practice; this includes identifying and challenging the specific ways that colonization continues to create harmful practices and policies within social work. I am hopeful that our collaborative learning experience in this course will be a small but important part of the ongoing and larger conversation around how our work - as social workers, educators, learners – can lead us to our mutual liberation.

As a white settler, mother, social worker, and academic, I (Holly) recognize the historical and ongoing harm caused by my ancestors, my community, and my profession against Indigenous Peoples. I am committed to reflecting on my position of privilege and to working towards meaningful change both personally and professionally. I am aware of and understand the significance of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) Calls to Action and try to support tangible ways to put them into practice. In my teaching, I aim to listen with humility and stay rooted in continuous learning and unlearning. This includes identifying and challenging the ongoing colonial structures, policies, and practices that cause harm within social work. I look forward to our collaborative learning experience in this course.

## **National Day For Truth and Reconciliation Policy**

That September 30 be recognized as a day that honours the survivors of the Canadian residential school system, their families, and communities. Acknowledgement of the horrendous abuses committed at the schools is a critical part of establishing collective awareness of our history, but it must be accompanied by broader reflection and response to the legacy of colonization and disenfranchisement that spans centuries. September 30 will be observed as a non-instructional day to allow students and employees to observe this day as an opportunity to advance the work of 'Truth and Reconciliation' as we reflect on the meaning of decolonization, and the actions required by the Western community to achieve it. If September 30 falls on the weekend, the Office of Indigenous Initiatives will be consulted as to when to observe the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

## **Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Identify and describe what is meant by critical reflection on practice, as opposed to critical thinking or reflective practice.
2. Describe and discuss the difference between stage one and two of the process of critical reflection on practice.
3. Describe what might sustain practices of critical reflection as a form of mindfulness and how it can contribute to self-care.
4. Demonstrate the capacity to use critical reflection on practice as a form of inquiry and appraisal in direct social work practice in the field.
5. Describe beginning plans on how to integrate critical reflection in a more informal and sustainable manner in ongoing practice.
6. Demonstrate a familiarity with recent academic writing in the area of critical reflection on practice and have the beginning skills necessary to write for publication in reflective practice journals.

### **Class-specific policy on AI (e.g. Chat GPT)**

King's is committed to fostering a culture of professionalism, honesty, and academic integrity, and all members of our community—faculty, staff, and students—have a role to play in promoting an ethical learning environment. Furthermore, through the work they submit for academic evaluation, students develop important habits of critical thinking, independent inquiry, and creativity. AI tools in this course are permitted exclusively for: information-gathering and preliminary research purposes. You should never include in your assignment anything that was not written or generated directly by you without proper citation. If you are unsure of AI use in this class, please do not hesitate to ask your instructor for clarification.

All students in this course are required to include an AI disclosure statement on the title page of their assignments. If you did not engage with AI tools to create your assignment, your statement will indicate that the assignment was generated entirely by human intelligence. If AI tools are used, you must acknowledge this use and state how the tool was used.

Please be advised that generative AI tools are trained on vast, opaque datasets that reflect dominant narratives, including those shaped by colonial, Eurocentric, and racist worldviews. As a result, these tools can reproduce and reinforce harmful stereotypes, erase Indigenous and racialized ways of knowing, and privilege Euro-Western epistemologies. Further, while AI can support some aspects of research, extensive and habitual engagements with AI can impede your critical thinking and hinder your capacity to ethically assess information and ideas. Use these tools with caution and critically evaluate their assistance and influence over your work.

### **Evaluation:**

1. **Ungraded assignment: Written description of a Critical Incident:** Within 1000 words, describe the context of your critical incident, provide a detailed description of the incident, and conclude with a short statement as to why the incident was critical for you. (What constitutes a critical incident for the critical reflection on practice process will be discussed fully in the readings and in class lectures and discussions.)  
**Due:** September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, by 11:55 p.m. on our course OWL site.  
**Mark:** No grade – this is for feedback purposes since this written description will form the basis of ongoing work within the course.

**2. Assignment: In class written test (description of stage one)**

**Due:** October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

**Mark:** 20%

- 3. Participation:** This course requires a great deal of participation in our class discussions and engagement with the critical reflection process in small groups. Therefore, a participation grade will be provided based upon your involvement in both large and small group discussions when we meet in person or synchronously via zoom, and your overall engagement with the course material.

As audience members to group presentations your participation will be graded based on questions or comments immediately following presentations when we are meeting in person or synchronously via zoom.

Students who are uncomfortable contributing to discussions in our in class or in synchronous online class meetings, who enjoy journaling, may choose to submit journal reflections every two weeks in place of feeling obliged to contribute to discussions. In this way they can show their engagement with the material, ask questions, and receive feedback.

**Due:** Ongoing

**Mark:** 20%

- 4. Assignment: Group presentation:** Classes will be divided into approximately 4 groups of 5 students for the purpose of working through stages 1 and 2 of the critical reflection on practice process. (Each student will have the option of writing up the full process and the resulting findings for their independent final paper: see below.) Although each student in the group will have been expected to focus on their own incident for reflection, and the group will have all developed skills in asking the types of questions to facilitate an in-depth reflection of an incident through stages 1 and 2, the group will also be expected to present as a whole to the rest of the class on new knowledge they have developed over the course of working together as a group in the critical reflection on practice process.

The group may focus on one incident or theme that occurred for the group or on one particular incident that one of the group members shared which has resulted in significant learning.

This assignment will be discussed and further developed in class.

Each group will have 30 minutes to present.

**Due:** December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, during class.

**Mark:** 20%

**5. Assignment: Final project/paper:**

**There are two format options from which you can choose for your final assignment.**

**The first option:**

A 10-12 page paper (12 point font, double-spaced), presenting a brief written description of a critical incident, the process of uncovering the underlying assumptions in that incident, the changes or commitments to certain thoughts that came about through that process and how these insights will be taken into practice in the future. Your new learning needs to be linked to academic and practice literature. (This would be similar in structure to the Helen Hickson article which is an assigned reading for October 14<sup>th</sup>). A rubric will be provided.

**The second option (if you choose this option, please speak with your instructor by November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025 to discuss and have your topic and plans approved):**

This second option provides flexibility for a range of creative formats, in which you can incorporate photovoice, the creation of a blog, the development of a portfolio, or the completion of a paper for preparation for submission for publication. This second option would probably focus on presenting a theme of interest, new practice ideas or implications for theory development based upon the critical reflection on practice process, or related to a topic within the assigned readings, but does not need to focus specifically on the process of CRoP.

These above options will be discussed further in class and during office hours as requested.

APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition format is required along with an appropriate **use of academic references**.

**Due:** December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, by 11:55 p.m. on our course OWL site.

**Mark:** 40%

**Required Books are available online (free of charge) through the King's Library:**

Béres, L., & Fook, J. (Eds). (2020). *Learning critical reflection: Experiences of the transformative learning process*. Routledge.

Fook, J., Collington, V., Ross, F., Ruch, G., & West, L. (Eds). (2016). *Researching critical reflection: Multidisciplinary perspectives*. Routledge.

Fook, J., & Gardner, F. (2007). *Practising critical reflection: A resource handbook*. Open University Press.

**Other required readings:**

Other readings are identified in the week-by-week outline. Electronic versions of these readings are available (free of charge) through the library's course reserve program, Kings Library database, or on OWL Brightspace.

**Helpful:**

Journal available online through King's Library: *Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspective*

**Course Schedule:**

Week 1 - September 9:

Topic: **Setting the stage: Why engage in Critical Reflection on Practice (CRoP), the culture needed for it, and the link to mindfulness and self-care**

**Guest speaker for last 30 minutes: Charles Skeete (and possibly Petra Kovacs)**

Required reading:

Taiwo, A. (2021). Social workers' use of critical reflection. *Journal of Social Work*, 22(2), 384-401. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14680173211010239>

Salomons, T. (2020). Critical acceptance: A pathway to critical reflection on practice. In L. Béres & J. Fook (Eds.), *Learning critical reflection: Experiences of the transformative learning process (Ch. 2)*. Routledge.

Gockel, A., & Deng, X. (2016). Mindfulness training as a social work pedagogy: Exploring benefits, challenges, and issues for consideration in integrating mindfulness into social work education. *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work*, 35(3), 222-244. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15426432.2016.1187106>

Optional:

Fook, J., & Askeland, G. A. (2007). Challenges of critical reflection: 'nothing ventured, nothing gained'. *Social Work Education*, 26(5), 520-533. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615470601118662>

Week 2 - September 16:

Topic: **Clarifying the approach and underlying theories (with demonstration)**

Required reading:

Béres, L., & Fook, J. (2020). Learning critical reflection. In L. Béres & J. Fook (Eds.), *Learning critical reflection: Experiences of the transformative learning process (Ch. 1)*. Routledge.

Brookfield, S. (2016). So what exactly is critical about critical reflection? In J. Fook, V. Collington, F. Ross, G. Ruch, & L. West (Eds.), *Researching critical reflection: Multidisciplinary perspectives (Ch. 2)*. Routledge.

Vinsky, J., & Prevatt-Hyles, D. (2022). Anti-black racism education in human service organizations: The liberation practice international (LPI) critical reflective practice model – “the LPI model”. In J. Fook (Ed.), *Practicing critical reflection in social care organisations (Ch. 4)*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429351501>

Optional:

Mueller, V., & Morley, C. (2020). Blaming individuals for burnout: Developing critical practice responses to workplace stress. *Social Alternatives*, 39(3), 20–28.

**First ungraded assignment due September 19<sup>th</sup>, at 11:55 p.m.: Written description of a Critical Incident**

Week 3 - September 23:

Topic: **The process: Getting started on Stage 1**

Required reading:

Fook, J., & Gardner, F. (2007). The second session (stage 1). *Practising critical reflection: A resource handbook (Ch. 6)*. Open University Press.

Fook, J. (2017). Finding fundamental meaning through critical reflection. In L. Béres (Ed.), *Practising spirituality: Reflections on meaning-making in personal and professional contexts (Ch 2)*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Meidinger, N. (2020). Finding exception: Application of narrative practice in professional critical reflection on practice. In L. Béres & J. Fook (Eds.), *Learning critical reflection: Experiences of the transformative learning process (Ch. 4)*. Routledge.

Optional:

Béres, L., & Fook, J. (Eds.). (2020). Resources for learning and teaching critical reflection. In L. Béres & J. Fook (Eds.), *Learning critical reflection: Experiences of the transformative learning process (Ch. 14, pp. 169-170)*. Routledge. **(Offering examples of questions to ask)**

Dylan, A., & Coates, J. (2012). The spirituality of justice: Bringing together the eco and the social: Spirituality and social justice. *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work*, 31(1-2), 128–149.

Week 4 – September 30: National Day of Truth and Reconciliation (non-instructional day)

September 30 will be observed as a non-instructional day to allow students and employees to observe this day as an opportunity to advance the work of 'Truth and Reconciliation' as we reflect on the meaning of decolonization, and the actions required by the Western community to achieve it. (see statement on National Day of Truth & Reconciliation above)

Week 5 - October 7:

Topic: **Continuing Stage 1**

Required reading:

Ferguson, H. (2003). Outline of a critical best perspective on social work and social care. *British Journal of Social Work*, 33(8), 1005-1024. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/33.8.1005>

Webster-Wright, A. (2013). The eye of the storm: A mindful inquiry into reflective practices in higher education. *Reflective Practice*, 14(4), 556-567. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2013.810618>

Lawley, S. (2020). The energizing experience of being nonjudgmental in the critical reflection process. In L. Béres & J. Fook (Eds.), *Learning critical reflection: Experiences of the transformative learning process (Ch. 3)*. Routledge.

Week 6 - October 14:

Topic: **Further aspects of the CRoP process, considering Indigenous Knowledge and continuing Stage 1**

Required readings:

Brant-Castellano, M. (2000). Updating Aboriginal traditions and knowledge. In G. J. S. Dei, B. L. Hall, & D. G. Rosenberg (Eds.), *Indigenous knowledges in global contexts: multiple readings of our world* (pp. 21- 36). University of Toronto Press.

Ruch, G. (2016). Relational practices in critical reflection: The role of communication and containment. In J. Fook, V. Collington, F. Ross, G. Ruch, L. West (Eds.), *Researching critical reflection: Multidisciplinary perspectives (Ch. 3)*. Routledge

The following reading provides one format you may wish to follow for your final paper:

Hickson, H. (2011). Critical reflection: Reflecting on learning to be reflective. *Reflective Practice, 12*(6), 829–839.

Optional:

Béres, L. (2017). Maintaining the ability to be unsettled and learn afresh: What philosophy contributes to our understanding of 'reflection' and 'experience'. *Reflective Practice, 18*(2), 280–290. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2016.1269003>

Week 7 - October 21:

**In-class written test (description of stage one)**

Week 8 - October 28:

Topic: **The in-between, an interval – moving into the 'ma' (a Japanese word/concept)**

**Guest speaker: Natasha Botelho**

Required reading:

El-Lahib, Y., Wehbi, S., Zakharova, G., Perreault-Laird, J., & Khan, M. (2022). Tearing down the "box": students' perspectives on activating arts-informed methods in social work classrooms. *Social Work Education, 41*(4), 485–496. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2020.1851360>

Le Pértel, N., Fisher, J., & van Dam, N. (2020). Neuroscience of embodied reflection: Somatic/mindbody/contemplative practices, health, and transformative learning. *Reflective Practice, 21*(6), 803-818. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2020.1827492>

Optional:

Botelho, N. F. (2021). Reflection in motion: An embodied approach to reflection in practice. *Reflective Practice*, 22(2), 147-158.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2020.1860926>

River, D. H. M., Thakoordin, J. M., & Billing, L. (2017). Creativity in social work education and practice: reflections on a Survivor Arts Project. *Social Work Education*, 36(7), 758–774. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2016.1266320>

Week 9 – November 4: **Fall Reading Week – no class**

Week 10 – November 11:

Topic: **Further aspects regarding Indigenous Knowledge and looking back on stage 1 to begin stage 2**

**We will watch together in class the video related to the following Indigenous Bundle:**

Brunette-Debassige, C. (2022). Orientation to Indigenous Knowledge (Digital curriculum module). In *Maatookiying gaa-miinigoowiziying (Sharing our gifts)*. Western University.

Required reading:

Fook, J., & Gardner, F. (2007). The third session (stage 2) **and** Critical reflection and direct practice. *Practising critical reflection: A resource handbook (Ch 7 & Ch 11)*. Open University Press.

Ghaye, T. (2010). In what ways can reflective practices enhance human flourishing? *Reflective Practice*, 11(1), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623940903525132>

Cornejo, F. (2020). Social worker well-being and critical reflective practice. In L. Béres & J. Fook (Eds.), *Learning critical reflection: Experiences of the transformative learning process (Ch. 10)*. Routledge.

Week 11 - November 18:

Topic: **Continuing stage 2 and considering identity**

**Guest Speaker: Ericka Tymkin**

Required reading:

Bell, N. (2014). *Teaching by the medicine wheel: An Anishinaabe framework for Indigenous education*. <https://www.edcan.ca/articles/teaching-by-the-medicine-wheel/>

Taiwo, A. (2021). Poetic reflection on the crisis of representation in social work research. *Journal of Health and Science Education*, 5(3), 1-4.

Fook, J. (2014). Learning from and researching (my own) experience: A critical reflection on the experience of social difference. In S. L. Witkin (Ed.), *Narrating social work through autoethnography (Ch 5)*. Columbia University Press.

Optional or in place of Jan's chapter above:

Martinez, N. I. (2014). Being of two minds: Creating my racialized selves. In S. L. Witkin (Ed.), *Narrating social work through autoethnography (Ch 4)*. Columbia University Press.

Hunt, C. (2016). Spiritual creatures? Exploring an interface between critical reflective practice and spirituality. In J. Fook, V. Collington, F. Ross, G. Ruch, & L. West (Eds.), *Researching critical reflection: Multidisciplinary perspectives (Ch 4)*. Routledge.

Week 12 - November 25:

Topic: **Continuing stage 2 and considering perfectionism**

Required reading:

Donati, R. (2020). From 'imperfect perfectionism' to 'compassionate conscientiousness'. In L. Béres & J. Fook (Eds.), *Learning critical reflection: Experiences of the transformative learning process (Ch 6)*. Routledge.

West, L. (2016). Critical reflection? Auto/biographical narrative enquiry and illuminating professional struggles in distressed communities. In J. Fook, V. Collington, F. Ross, G. Ruch, & L. West (Eds.), *Researching critical reflection: Multidisciplinary perspectives (Ch 10)*. Routledge.

Marshall, J. (2016). First-person action research and critical reflection. In J. Fook, V. Collington, F. Ross, G. Ruch, & L. West (Eds.), *Researching critical reflection: Multidisciplinary perspectives (Ch 11)*. Routledge.

Week 13 – December 2:

**In class group presentations**

Week 14 – December 9:

Topic: **Making critical reflection an ongoing professional habit and extending our connections**

Required reading:

Gardner, F. (2014). Practicing critical reflection. In F. Gardner (Ed.), *Being critically reflective: Engaging in holistic practice. (Ch. 3)*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Mayor, C., & Pollack, S. (2022). Creative writing and decolonizing intersectional feminist critical reflexivity: Challenging neoliberal, gendered, white, colonial practice norms in the

COVID-19 pandemic. *Affilia: Feminist Inquiry in Social Work*, 37(3), 382-395.  
DOI:10.1177/08861099211066338.

Béres, L., & Fonseka, T. M. (2023). Unsettling conceptions of power through teaching and learning critical reflection on social work practice. *Canadian Social Work Review/Revue Canadienne de service social*, 40(1), 49-65.  
<https://doi.org/10.7202/1100662ar>



## School of Social Work Policies 2025 - 2026

### School of Social Work Attendance Policy

The Bachelor and Master of Social Work programs are intensive professional preparation programs that emphasize both academic and professional integrity. Regular attendance is not only essential for student success but is also a requirement set by the Canadian Association of Social Work Education (CASWE) for program accreditation and by the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW) as part of professional expectations. A key aspect of this integrity is active engagement in all classes, integration seminars, and practicum activities. We recognize that students may encounter challenges that affect their ability to attend, and we are committed to working collaboratively to support student success while upholding professional expectations.

### Attendance Expectations

1. Regular attendance is expected in all BSW and MSW professional Social Work courses. Each class provides essential learning experiences that cannot always be replicated outside the classroom. Engaging fully in coursework supports both individual learning and the integrity of the social work profession.
2. No more than two unapproved absences per class, per semester (approximately 20% of any one class)
3. If a student is facing barriers to attendance, we encourage early communication with instructors and the School of Social Work support staff to explore potential solutions.
4. If a student is experiencing ongoing difficulties attending class, they will be required to meet with the Coordinator of Academics and Development to discuss available supports and strategies (Please see Student in Difficulty Policy).
5. Instructors require regular attendance as part of course participation. In cases where attendance is inconsistent, students may be asked to engage in additional learning activities to ensure they meet course requirements. Instructors have the discretion to determine if and how alternative learning activities may substitute for missed coursework.

- Absenteeism (more than two unapproved absences) may result in failure of the course and provides grounds for requiring a social work student to withdraw from the program. Please note: regularly arriving late and/or leaving early will be considered absenteeism, unless an accommodation is in place.

**Absences from Practicum:** Students should refer to the relevant Professional Practicum Education Policies and Guidelines Manual for policies about attendance at placement.

### **Absences Due to Illness, Injury, Bereavement, or Other Compassionate Circumstances**

We understand that unexpected situations may arise. If you are absent due to illness, injury, bereavement, religious observance, or other compassionate circumstances, you will not be penalized. However, you remain responsible for any missed coursework and should communicate with your instructor as soon as possible to discuss how to stay on track.

#### **Student Responsibilities:**

- **If you miss a single class (or more than one class in a single week)**, inform your instructor(s) at the earliest opportunity. You will not be penalized, but you are responsible for making up any missed content.
- **If you are going to miss an assignment deadline, test, or exam**, contact the **Coordinator of Academics and Development** and provide documentation to support the absence. The Coordinator will work with you and your instructors to arrange accommodations.
- **Upon your return**, speak with your instructor(s) to clarify expectations for catching up on missed coursework.

#### **Instructor Responsibilities:**

- Students will not be penalized for absences due to illness, bereavement, religious observance, or other compassionate reasons.
- Instructors will provide reasonable alternatives to help students meet academic requirements while maintaining fairness and consistency across the course.

For more details, refer to Western University's **Absence Due to Illness Policy**: [Western University Absence Policy](#).

### **Absences for Religious Observance**

King's University College and Western University are committed to valuing religious diversity. Students observing religious holidays that require absence should provide written notice to their instructor and the Coordinator of Academics and Development at least two weeks in advance.

Instructors will ensure students are provided with fair and reasonable alternatives to meet academic expectations.

For a list of approved religious observance dates, visit: [Accommodation for Religious Observance](#).

## Unapproved Absences

Absences that are not related to illness, injury, bereavement, compassionate grounds, or religious observance are considered unapproved. Students may have up to two unapproved absences per course without penalty.

### Process for Unapproved Absences

- **Single unapproved absence:** If you miss a class, notify your instructor as soon as possible. While you will not be penalized, you are responsible for catching up on missed content.
- **Three or more unapproved absences:** Missing three classes in a single course (30% of a course) will trigger the **Student in Difficulty Policy**. You will be required to meet with the Coordinator of Academics and Development to discuss your absences and explore available supports to help you succeed.
  - If you miss more than 30% of a course, you may be placed on academic probation and could face further actions under University Senate Regulations, which may include failing the course or being required to withdraw from the program.

If you are unsure whether an absence qualifies as approved or unapproved, we encourage you to reach out to your instructors or the Coordinator of Academics and Development for clarification.

### Make-Up Work

If a student misses classes, instructors may assign make-up work to ensure that learning outcomes are met. While this work may not always be identical to what was completed in class, it is designed to provide meaningful learning opportunities.

### Supporting Student Success

We recognize that students may face challenges in balancing their academic and personal responsibilities. Our goal is to work together to find solutions that support your learning and overall well-being while maintaining the integrity of the social work profession. If you are struggling with attendance or other academic concerns, please reach out to your instructors or the Coordinator of Academics and Development for support.

For additional guidance or clarification, please contact the School of Social Work.

*School Council 03/25*

### Grade Adjustment for Late Assignments

Students should negotiate any extension requests (whether an accommodation is applicable or not) in writing with the Instructor prior to the assigned due date.

Failure to meet deadlines without prior permission of the Instructor will result in a reduction of marks. **Marks for papers/assignments received after the due date will be reduced by 2% per day** (including weekends) to a maximum of 5 days, after which time the assignment will not be accepted. Should the Student be granted an extension (based on a negotiated accommodation or extension request), they are expected to submit their paper/assignment by the negotiated due date, and are not subject to the provisions outlined in the Grade Adjustment for Late Assignments policy. The Instructor has the authority to refuse to grade a paper/assignment submitted past the negotiated due date (for which the Student has not negotiated a new due date based on extenuating circumstances).

School Council 04/18

## **CODES OF CONDUCT**

MSW students are expected to comply with the Code of Ethics set out by the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) and the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW) both in the academic environment and practicum settings. Students must also adhere to the university codes of conduct:

[Code of Ethics of the Canadian Association of Social Workers](#)

[OCSWSSW Code of Ethics](#)

[Western Code of Student Conduct](#)

[King's Code of Student Conduct](#)

[King's Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#)

## **Review for Professional Conduct in the School of Social Work**

*Preamble:*

*The Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards for Canadian Social Work Education approved by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) Board of Directors (2021) stipulates that Schools of Social Work have policies relevant to the unique professional and educational requirements of professional social work programs to augment those policies of the broader university (section 1.3). In particular, 1.3.2 references the need for policies and procedures related to student codes of conduct. Also, section 3.3 outlines core learning objectives for students, which include the need to develop an appropriate professional identity and develop appropriate values and ethics in professional practice.*

1. General standards of student conduct are defined by the King's University College Code of Student Conduct. The following policy pertains to professional conduct and applies to any social work course or related learning environment including Practicum. It is an attempt to balance the commitment of the School of Social Work to support and assist students in becoming professional social workers, with the need to protect the safety and well-being of all students, staff, professional officers, and faculty as well as vulnerable individuals, families, groups and

communities. Thus, the School of Social Work holds an expectation that its students will adhere to recognized ethical obligations and professional standards such as the Social Work Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice adopted by the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers, and that the School has an obligation to take action when a student acts in an unethical or unprofessional manner. The purpose of this policy is to provide examples of conduct that may require a review and to provide guidelines for a process of review. The School of Social Work will undertake to resolve any concerns in a fair, timely, reasonable and effective manner.

2. The major values and principles as included in the Social Work Code of Ethics that guide professional social work practice are:

- Empathy and concern for clients
- Respect for individual worth and dignity
- Human capacity for growth and change
- Self-determination
- Honesty and integrity
- Confidentiality
- Social and individual responsibility
- Social justice, human rights and equality

3. It is important that students review and become familiar with the Canadian Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Ethical Practice; the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers' Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice; and relevant School, College, University and in the case of Practicum, agency policies, regulations and procedures, including:

- King's University College Code of Student Conduct
- King's University College Harassment and Discrimination Policy
- The School of Social Work Field Education Policies and Guidelines Manual
- The School of Social Work Policy on Extension of Placement
- Western University Academic Policies/Regulations
- Western University Senate Policy on Off-Campus Placements
- Western University Guide for Students in Professional Program Placements, Clinics, Practica

4. *Limits of Confidentiality:*

The School of Social Work recognizes that the safety and confidentiality of students, clients, or others who have been subject to unprofessional conduct under this Policy must be an important priority. The School of Social Work must balance the need for confidentiality against its duty to protect present and future students or persons who might otherwise be placed in jeopardy by a student who is acting in an unprofessional or unethical manner under this Policy. Information disclosed during meetings with instructors, program coordinators, the Field Education Team, or the Director will not be kept confidential if the information raises concerns about the student's

capability of assuming the professional responsibilities of social work practice. Instructors and/or program coordinators and/or the Director will share pertinent information with each other in a respectful and professional manner, for the purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about the concerns. The School of Social Work reserves the right to share information with the University or third parties as required by law and University regulations.

### *5. Behaviour That May Result in a Review*

Student reviews can occur under any of the following circumstances:

5.1 Serious or persistent behaviour that would constitute a breach of the professional codes of ethical conduct and standards of practice mentioned above, were the student a practicing social worker.

5.2 Behaviour that causes individuals in the School of Social Work to have a serious or persistent concern about the harmful effect of the student's behaviour on the learning environment that would constitute a breach of the Harassment and Discrimination Policy and the Code of Student Conduct at King's University College. Reasons for the serious or persistent concern may include but are not limited to the following: speech or behaviour that contravenes the Ontario Human Rights Code (e.g. discrimination or harassment because of race, creed, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, same sex partnership status, family status or disability); sexual harassment, including unwelcome conduct or gestures; any threat or attempt to physically harm another person; and intimidation or threats to harm another person in non-physical ways.

5.3 Behaviour that results in offenses involving property, including misappropriation, damage, unauthorized possession, defacement and/or destruction of premises or property of the College or the property of others.

5.4 Behaviour that results in illegal use, possession, or distribution of a controlled or restricted substance, or possession, use, or storing of dangerous objects (including unlicensed firearms).

In situations where the jurisdiction is unclear, the Dean of Students and/or the Vice-Principal and Academic Dean may be involved.

### *6. Three Stages of Review:*

Three stages of review can occur in the School of Social Work regarding behaviour that is not consistent with the recognized ethics and standards of the profession of the social work. The stage of review is dependent upon the seriousness of the allegation of the breach of this Policy. The overall commitment of the School of Social Work is to resolve any concern related to professional conduct of a student, at Stage One or Stage Two through a mediation approach with the student.

#### *6.1 Stage One:*

6.1.1 A Stage One review involves a classroom instructor and a student. When a classroom instructor has concerns about a student's behaviour as it relates to professional conduct, the instructor will:

- Discuss the concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve the concern within a defined time frame;
- Document dates and contents of meetings with the student.

6.1.2 If the problem arises in the practicum, the Field Instructor will discuss the concerns directly with the student and Faculty Consultant, and follow the procedure outlined in the School's Field Education Policies and Guidelines Manual.

If the concerns are not resolved at Stage One, the individuals involved will proceed to Stage Two.

6.2 Stage Two:

6.2.1 If the concern is expressed by a classroom instructor and cannot be resolved at Stage One, a Stage Two review involves the instructor, the student and the Social Work Programs Liaison. Students may elect to have someone accompany them to the meeting, but must inform the instructor and Programs Liaison of the identity of the individual accompanying the student in advance of the meeting. If students elect to have someone accompany them, that individual should be referred to the Western University Office of the Ombudsperson document "[Support Person: Students Helping Students](#)".

6.2.3 Stage Two Review will include:

- Determination of the nature and specifics of the concern
- Development of a written plan (including time lines and specific actions) to address the concern. A copy of the written plan will be signed by and provided to all parties personally or by registered mail within ten (10) business days.
- A follow up meeting with all parties to determine if the concern has been resolved. If it is determined that further intervention is required a Stage Three Review will be conducted.

6.3 Stage Three:

6.3.1 Generally a Stage Three review is conducted when issues are considered by the School of Social Work to be of such a serious nature that formal intervention is required. A Stage Three review is most often conducted when concerns have not been resolved in Stages One and Two. A Stage Three review always occurs when a student is being considered for withdrawal or discontinuance in the program or if a recommendation for suspension or expulsion from the University is being considered. Any decision is based on a simple majority vote of the Review Committee at Stage Three.

6.3.2 The Review Committee is comprised of the Director (chair), the Graduate Program Coordinator, and Coordinator of Field Education, or designate.

6.3.3 When a Stage Three review is called for and the Director determines that there are sufficient grounds to continue, he/she may temporarily withdraw the student from courses, as warranted. Within two weeks of being advised, the Director will convene an in-camera meeting of a review committee. The student has the right to express to the Director any perceived conflict of interest with any member of the review committee. Any individual who has participated in the Stage One and Two reviews will not be a voting member of the Stage Three review committee. The student (and an accompanying person if the student wishes) will be invited to attend the review committee meeting. The following individuals may also be invited to attend the meeting: the Social Work Programs Liaison, and any other persons deemed appropriate by the Director to gather further information, determine the nature of the problem and identify alternatives for resolution. Members of the review committee will be informed ahead of time of the identity of a person accompanying the student.

6.3.4 The student will be notified in writing of the specific concerns and meeting date with sufficient time to prepare for and attend the meeting. Should the student choose not to attend the review, the Committee will determine a decision in the student's absence.

6.3.5 The review committee will review any available information (facts) related to the concern(s), review any actions taken to date, hear the student's position related to the concern(s), permit the student to ask questions, and seek clarifications. Hearsay evidence (information) is to be avoided if at all possible. The review committee will control information flow and limit questions to issues of relevance. At the conclusion of the meeting, the review committee will determine a decision based on all information gathered. The Director of the School of Social Work will inform the student of the decision in writing within ten (10) days of the review committee's decision.

6.3.6 When the concern does not arise in the practicum, any faculty member of the School, or the Programs Liaison may advise the Director in writing of an alleged incident or series of incidents. Any incident related to a course or instructional activity will be reported to the Vice Principal and Academic Dean. Any incident that comes under the jurisdiction of the Code of Student Conduct will be reported to the Dean of Students immediately.

6.4 The review committee's decision may include one or more of the following:

6.4.1 *Continue student in the program with no conditions;*

6.4.2 *Establish formal conditions for student's continuance in the program – (e.g., setting goals, actions, timelines, monitoring, mentoring and support, placing the student on probation for a period of time and monitoring the student during the probationary period, referring the student to counselling, requiring the student to temporarily withdraw from the program);*

6.4.3 *Consult with and/or refer to the King's University College Harassment Advisor (if a referral is made, the student must be notified).*

#### 6.4.4 *Recommend withdrawal of student from the program and/or University*

On rare occasions, it may be recommended that the student no longer continue in the social work program, be suspended, or be withdrawn from the University. The student will be counselled to voluntarily withdraw. If that does not occur, the student will be reported by the Director to the Vice Principal and Academic Dean, with a recommendation for suspension or withdrawal. Under the jurisdiction of the Student Code of Conduct, the student will be reported to the Dean of Students. The student will be provided with specific reasons for the recommendation. Any readmission will be subject to the regulations pertaining to “unsatisfactory performance” outlined by the Western Academic Calendar.

6.5 In any Stage Three review, there must be clear, concise documentation of concerns as well as verification that these concerns have been discussed with the student, and that attempts have been made to address the concerns where appropriate. Retention of information on the student’s academic record will comply with the regulations outlined under “Offence Record” and “Release of Information Concerning Scholastic Offences” in the Western Academic Calendar.

#### 7. Retention and Disposition of Documentation

Any documentation pertaining to any of the Stages of Review will be kept in the student’s academic file, which is located in a locked cabinet in the office of the Social Work Programs Liaison. Documentation will be kept until such time as the student graduates from the social work program. If the student is asked to withdraw from or discontinue in the program, or is suspended or expelled from the University, the documentation will be retained in the file in perpetuity.

#### 8. Access to Student File

Only those parties who are involved in the review process, the current Director of the School of Social Work, the Coordinator of Field Education and the Programs Liaison shall have access to the files.

#### 9. Appeals

Any decision made by the Stage Three review committee or the Director can be appealed to the Vice Principal and Academic Dean, King’s University College and the King’s University College Discipline Committee.

*Practicum Committee 10/06  
Faculty Committee 10/06  
School Council 10/06  
Revised School Council 10/19*

### **School of Social Work Course Policy**

Students are expected to complete all required evaluation components, by the dates indicated in the course syllabus, successfully pass this course and progress in the program. Students must achieve a cumulative average of 60%+ on all individual assignments, before late penalties, to pass the course and meet progression requirements. A student who fails to submit all the required assignments (including tests and exams if applicable), by the agreed upon timeline, will not meet progression requirements of the program. In courses where group work and individual assignments are part of the evaluation components, students must earn a passing mark on their individual work (case write-ups, essays, reports, and/or class contribution) to pass the course and meet progression. If you receive a failing mark on your individual work and a passing grade on the group presentation/report, you will not meet progression requirements.

Students with course conflicts and approved inter-university athletic conflicts, or students unable to hand in a summary or participate in the report based on medical or compassionate grounds, may appeal for an extension, or for concessions to the above policy. Requests for accommodations based on medical or compassionate grounds must always be accompanied by appropriate documentation – either with the request, or as soon as possible after the fact and be made through the Social Work Programs Liaison and/or the student's Accessibility Counselor. Students who have any problems that may hinder their academic performance are encouraged to discuss these issues with their professor and/or the Social Work Programs Liaison before the assignments are due.

*School Council January 2024*



## **General Course Policies 2025–2026**

### **1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)**

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

### **Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses\\_enrollment/exams\\_and\\_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf](https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf).

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep24.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf)

### **Absences from Final Examinations**

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

### **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

## 2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

[https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/)

Academic Support Services at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

### GBSV Support:

King's is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing [Care@kings.uwo.ca](mailto:Care@kings.uwo.ca) or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html)

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

## 3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

**Use of Electronic Devices:** Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

**Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom:** King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones

can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

#### **4. Statement on Academic Offences**

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with you instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

#### **5. Copyright of Course Material**

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

## **6. Use of Recordings**

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

## **7. Policy on Attendance**

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.