



SOCWORK 3333B (570/571)
SOCIAL WORK THEORY AND PRACTICE WITH SMALL GROUPS
Winter 2025 - 2026

Instructor: Cheryl Vanderveen, MSW, BSW, RSW, ARCT

Email: cvande53@uwo.ca Please note that emails will be responded to in a timely manner, within 48 hours

Office Hours: Thursdays 11:30-12:30 pm in person (It is often best to arrange a time ahead of time to ensure you are not waiting.)
Or by appointment virtually

Class Times and Location: See "Class Information" on OWL

Calendar Description:

An examination of group structure, process, skills, and development as they relate to theory and practice. Emphasis on understanding relationships between structural elements, interactional sequences, group purpose and functions; relationships between group process and group task activities will be examined in depth, including conflict resolution in group settings.

Antirequisite(s): [Social Work 3317A/B](#).

Pre or Corequisites: **Prerequisite(s):** Registration in the third-year professional BSW (Honours) programl.

Extra Information: 3 lecture hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: CATEGORY A

Subject Code: SOCWORK

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course or special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course, and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Statement of Commitment:

At King's University College, we are privileged to learn, teach, and work on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenapeewak, and Attawandaron peoples. These lands, now part of Southwestern Ontario and the City of London, are governed by the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, a powerful agreement that emphasizes shared responsibility to care for the land and its resources in the spirit of peace and cooperation.

As an uninvited guest, I am grateful to live on 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. As a social worker, I consider the uniqueness of every individual I work with, and value and stress

the importance of culture and cultural practices. I am aware of the historical harm caused by my profession against Indigenous people, and that this continues to impact Indigenous people in many ways. I am committed to learning ways to professionally and personally put the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) recommendations into action. In my teaching, I strive to listen intently and to learn from everyone. I also attempt to identify and challenge harmful practices and policies within social work.

Course Description: Group work is a core social work practice modality. This introduction to group work practice course will examine the structure and formation of small groups providing participants insight into how their past group interactions shape their current group practice perspective. The focus of the course will be group work development and the role of the social worker in shaping and facilitating the group work process. The course will consist of a combination of lectures, discussions, and experiential exercises culminating in five formal student group presentations. Emphasis is placed upon understanding relationships between structural elements, interactional sequences, group purpose and functions. The relationship between group process and group task activities will be examined in depth both in theory and in applied personal practice. This class is also specifically designed to orientate you to the theory, concept and practice of conflict resolution in group settings, something traditionally ignored and avoided in traditional educational practice.

Course Website – OWL

The course website (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) is accessible to all students registered in this course. It contains the course outline (syllabus), announcements, and other course resource material. The OWL may be used for in-class communication including, discussion boards, tests, quizzes, posting of lecture materials at the instructor's discretion.

Class Policies (boundaries and expectations):

- All students are expected to engage in a professional and respectful manner. This includes all interactions with peers, as well as with your professor. Failure to do so will result in Academic discipline;
- Recording of lectures or tutorials without the explicit consent of the professor is grounds for academic discipline;
- Course content created by a faculty member is considered the faculty member's intellectual property; it should not be distributed, shared in any public domain, or sold by a student or other third party without prior written consent of the faculty member;
- All assessments or examinations are expected to be done by the student registered in this course, following the instructions outlined by the assignment;
- Do not post group pictures of your meeting on social media without consent from each participant.

Contents and Methods

A combination of didactic and experiential learning opportunities will be used to engage with course content. Assigned readings, lectures, videos, discussions and workshop sessions will be used to focus on knowledge acquisition. Classes will meet for three hours per week. Some class time will be allocated to allow groups to meet to discuss their respective group presentations.

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. Thus, 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.

Within this course AI tools [such as Chat GPT] are permitted exclusively for: information-gathering and preliminary research purposes. If AI tools are used, students must acknowledge use and state how the tool was used. If you are unsure of AI use in this class, please consult with your instructor.

Textbook

Jacobs, E., Schimmel, C., Masson, B., Harvill, R. (2022). *Group Counselling. Strategies and Skills. Ninth Edition.* Cognella.

Cost: Approx. \$147.50

Additional readings are listed in each week’s description.

Assignments

The course entails three distinct forms of evaluation, all of which examine a different form of learning. The intent of the assignments is to enhance and develop individual, group, academic, and social work knowledge and skills. All assignments are to be submitted via OWL Brightspace.

Please note: The APA (7th ed.) formatted cover page and reference list are NOT part of the recommended length for each of the assignments. Please always refer to assignment rubrics to understand marking criteria.

Assignment	Weight	Due Date
Paper - Traversing the potential minefield of the family of origin	25%	February 5, 2026, by 11:59 pm
Small group presentation	35%	March 12, 19, or 26, 2026
Final group reflection and analysis paper	40%	April 2, 2026, by 11:59 pm.

1. **Traversing the Potential Minefield of the Family of Origin:** Family of origin is both very important and relevant for social work practice with groups. The foremost group experience is obtained in our family of origin, and the reenactment of the primary family dynamics is often a central feature of group counselling. The family is where we learn the fundamentals about relationships, communication and, sometimes, how to live our lives. In turn, we carry the blueprint of its emotional and cognitive road maps. However, unlike most groups in life, membership in our family of origin is virtually impossible to escape.

Exploring family of origin relationships, roles and communication patterns helps group facilitators and group members make sense of current relationships as well as the dynamics re-enacted in the group process.

In four (4) pages:

- A. List the first names, and approximate ages of your “core” family of origin (this may or may not include aunts, uncles, grandparents, foster siblings), Briefly, in one sentence, describe each member (for example, David is my father. He is 52, an elementary school teacher and devout Catholic).
- B. Specify the strengths of your family of origin (health of members, exercise patterns, caring for each other, education levels, financial resources, supports, religious/spiritual values, fun activities, etc. (holidays, family rituals). And specify challenges (health issues, substance use, autocratic leadership, enablers, power dynamics, disability, problematic communication, violence, elder abuse, incarceration, caregiver(s) for elderly parents, infidelity, child abuse, divorce/separation).
- C. From a critical perspective, speculate on how your experiences in your family of origin have shaped your understanding of your level of active participation, your responses to leadership, conflict, authority, disagreement, lack of commitment to and/or participation/ambivalence in collaborative group learning. Also include reflections on your communication and interpersonal style.
- D. On the final page, include a genogram (three generations) to visually depict family of origin relationships, communication patterns, relationships, and dynamics.

Length: This paper is four (4) pages, 750-1000 word-count should be the aim. The title page and reference page do not count in the page length.

Instructions: This paper requires an APA (7th ed.) formatted title page, page numbers, a catchy title, 2.54 cm margins on all sides, double line spacing, and Times New Roman 12-point font. While references are not required in this assignment, if you choose to include them, all in-text citations and the reference list are to be formatted in APA (7th ed.).

Please see the rubric on the course website.

Due: February 5, 2026, by 11:59pm

Value: 25%

Length: 4 pages

2. **In-Class Small Group Presentations:** In small groups of three, you will complete ‘presentations’ during class time on March 12, 19 or 26. Each group will choose a topic related to social work (e.g., working with older adults, children, women, or youth involved in the criminal justice system, newcomers to Canada, etc.). It needs to be a topic that your classmates can reasonably engage with and should not potentially become emotionally difficult for anyone. Once you have narrowed down your population, carefully consider the type and purpose of your group, and the application of theoretical approaches. Your group topic needs to be approved by your professor. Your group will be leading the entire class (who becomes the population you are working with). The goal of the presentation is to actively lead and engage your peers and provide them with adequate knowledge and insights about your group program, teach skills, lead a discussion, and/or accomplish a task, depending on the type of group you choose to lead.

For the approval of your group topic, please speak to your professor or email before the beginning of class on January 29, 2026.

***This assignment provides students with a valuable experiential learning opportunity as the group's functioning is to be closely observed, analyzed, and responded to professionally. To that end, each student should also maintain a personal record of their working group's preparation activities/meetings, including roles, tasks, dynamics, progress and group development to assist with your final group reflection and analysis paper.**

Every effort will be made to give groups some time during class to work with their small group and allow for opportunities to talk, present questions, and address any concerns about the assignment with your professor.

Typically, each group member will receive the group's grade however, individual grades may be given in light of your analysis of the group process and subsequent consideration.

Due: March 12, 19, or 26 (in class)

Value: 35%

Length: 30 minutes, plus 15 minutes for class debrief & class feedback– 45 mins total

- 3. Final Group Reflection and Analysis Paper:** Each student will submit an individual paper, which is to be a detailed analysis of both their working group's development and process, and their reflection on the final presentation experience. The paper should serve as a reflective and analytical record, addressing key questions about group's dynamics: Who? When? Where? Why? What? How? This is where theory is linked to process and observation! You will need to be succinct.

Your paper must include three key components:

- A. Description of group process and task
- B. Personal insight and critical reflection
- C. Theoretical analysis

Refer to the assignment description that is posted on OWL for a detailed explanation for this paper.

You are welcome to use headings for each of the 3 components and address both working group and presentation reflections in each section. Another option is to present 2 parts to your paper (working group and presentation group) and reflect on the 3 components for each one. All elements should be clearly identifiable. Your final paper should be 5 pages (1200-1400 words), Times New Roman, 12 font, APA seventh edition with at least two academic references in addition to the textbook. Please utilize headings for clarity.

Due: April 2, 2026 by 11:59pm

Value: 40%

Length: 5 pages (1200-1400 words)

Course Schedule

Week 1 – January 8, 2026

Topic: Introduction to Group Work – Thinking About Our Learning

Readings:

Jacobs et al., (2022). Chapter 1

Smith, B., & MacGregor, J. (1993). What is collaborative learning? https://www.academia.edu/56697865/What_is_collaborative_learning

Week 2 – January 15, 2026

Topic: Stages of groups, group processes, therapeutic forces & purpose of groups

Readings

Jacobs et al., (2022). Chapters 2 & 3

Sommer, R. (1967). Small group ecology. *Psychological Bulletin*, 67(2), 145-152.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/h0024201>

Week 3 – January 22, 2026

Topic: Getting started & basic skills for group leaders

Readings:

Jacobs et al., (2022). Chapters 5 & 6

Chen, M. & Rybak, C. (2018). The first session and the forming stage. In *Group leadership skills* (pp. 129-150). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
doi:10.4135/9781071800980.n5

Week 4 – January 29, 2026

Topic: Counselling theories and therapy in groups

Readings:

Jacobs et al., (2022). Chapters 13 & 14

Kaklauskas, F. (Ed.), Greene, L. (Ed.), Block, M., Stephens, A. (2020). *Core*

Principles of Group Psychotherapy. New York: Routledge, Chapter 8 (Leadership Tasks) <https://doi-org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/10.4324/9780429260803>

Week 5 – February 5, 2026

Topic: Dealing with difficult situations

A. Paper Due: Traversing the Potential Minefield of the Family of Origin by 11:59 pm

Readings:

Jacobs et al., (2022). Chapter 16

Sethi, B. (2016): Healing Through Group Work, Social Work with Groups. doi:10.1080/01609513.2015.1065387

Week 6 – February 12, 2026

Topic: Introducing, conducting, and processing exercises

Readings:

Jacobs et al, (2022). Chapters 10,11

Week 7 – February 19, 2026

Reading Week – No Class

Week 8 – February 26, 2026

Topic: Working with specific populations

Readings:

Jacobs et al., (2022). Chapter 17

Supplementary/Optional Readings:

DeLucia-Waack, J. L. (2006). Introduction. In *Leading psychoeducational groups for children and adolescents* (pp. 1-15). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781452204291.n1 <https://sk-sagepub-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/books/leading-psychoeducational-groups-for-children-and-adolescents/n1.xml>

Week 9 – March 5, 2026

Topic: Equity, diversity, and social justice in groups

Readings:

Pelech, W., Basso, R., & Wickham, E. (2010). Diversity in Group Work: Interdisciplinary Perspectives. *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*, 5(4), 135–144. <https://doi.org/10.18848/1833-1882/CGP/v05i04/51681>

Week 10 – March 12, 2026

Presentations – Groups 1,2,3

Week 11 – March 19, 2026

Presentations – Groups 4,5,6

Week 12 – March 26, 2026

Presentations – Groups 7,8,9

Week 13 – April 2, 2026

Topic: Group closure

B. **Final paper due** by 11:59 pm

Readings:

Jacobs et al., (2022). Chapter 15

Chen, M. & Rybak, C. (2018). Skills of termination: completing the cycle. In *Group leadership skills* (pp. 459-484). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781071800980.n14

<https://sk-sagepub-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/books/group-leadership-skills-2e/i2956.xml>

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK POLICIES – BSW Program 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.
6. 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.

03/25

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION (See King's Policies below for more information)

Academic accommodation can refer to missed classes, tests/exams or deadlines for written work. Students who request academic accommodation based on medical or compassionate grounds for course work/assignments/tests **worth 10% or less** of the overall grade should consult their Instructor directly. Your instructor will advise you of their policy with respect to work worth 10% or less of the course grade.

Students who request a due date extension based on medical or compassionate grounds for course work or written assignments worth **more than 10%** of the overall grade should proceed as follows:

Short Term Extensions for Non-Medical Reasons: The request for a short term extension (5 days or less) for non-medical reasons is to be made to the Instructor in writing (email is fine) and will be replied to in writing by the Instructor (again email is fine). The form of documentation is determined by the Instructor. If an extension is warranted the Instructor will indicate in the email the revised due date for the assignment.

All Other Requests for Extensions: Medical Grounds, Other Grounds Requiring Documentations, Extensions Past Five Days:

Students requesting an extension for will be asked to alert their Instructor that they will be seeking an extension and make an appointment to meet with an Academic Counsellor. Within the School of Social Work, the dedicated Academic Counsellor is the Coordinator of Academics and Development. The choice is up to the student. A student's request for an extension will be reviewed by the counselor based on appropriate documentation. Those students who are requesting an extension for medical reasons will be asked to provide a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) which may be found [here](#). After discussion between the student and the counsellor, the counsellor will recommend a particular accommodation to the student's instructor via email. The counsellor will direct the student to the instructor to confirm the recommended accommodation. If the instructor agrees to an extension or particular accommodation, the details (including new due date) are either approved within the request system, or are to be provided to the student in writing (email).

Please note: short-term accommodations are considered for deferrals and/or extensions up-to and including two weeks beyond the original date by which an evaluation is due. Anything beyond two weeks is considered to be long-term and additional documentation may be required.

Documentation/Confidentiality: **ALL** supporting documentation (medical or otherwise) should be submitted to the Academic Counsellor who will then advise the instructor(s) involved that appropriate documentation has been received and that accommodation is warranted. It is at the student's discretion to reveal, or not, further details of the situation. In most instances, short-term accommodation requests for illness, injury, bereavement, or compassionate circumstances are requested through the Coordinator of Academics and Development and must be

accompanied by appropriate documentation to support the request.

Policy Advisory Committee February 2025
School Council March 2025

Incompletes and Special Exams

An Incomplete or Special Exam involves a formal accommodation which is recommended by an academic counsellor to the instructor, based upon a student's documented situation. The conditions of the Incomplete/Special Exam are negotiated between the student and the instructor and must be approved by the Director and the Academic Dean. Once approved, a grade of INC or SPC is submitted for the student until such time as the conditions of the Incomplete/Special Exam are fulfilled.

- a) Incompletes/special exams must be requested by the student in writing, with supporting documentation if appropriate, and arrangements for the completion of course work negotiated in writing between the professor and the student.

- b) If on the due date, the Director does not receive a grade revision or a request for a further extension due to medical or compassionate reasons, the Director forwards an automatic "F" to the Dean. The Director will do this by 4:00 p.m. the day following the due date.

In cases where a further extension is requested, additional documentation/rationale must be provided and a revised Incomplete Form submitted. The Director must approve the extension. If this further deadline is not met, the granting of an "F" is automatic.

Missed Tests or Examinations

Students are responsible for seeking accommodation with appropriate documentation, prior to writing tests/examinations, if they are of the view that their performance may be affected by extenuating circumstances.

Students who do not attend a test or examination for non-medical or non-emergency reasons will not be permitted to take a makeup test or examination, nor will the term mark be re-weighted in any fashion in order to accommodate missed examinations. However, students who have a legitimate emergency, medical or otherwise, and who miss a test or examination worth 10% or more of the term grade will be asked to alert their Instructor that they will be seeking accommodation and make an appointment to meet with an Academic Counselor. The dedicated Counsellor within the School of Social Work is Tosha Densky, Coordinator Academics and Development. Alternatively, an undergraduate student could choose to meet with an Academic

Counsellor from the Academic Dean's office. The choice is up to the student.

The student's request to write a makeup test/exam will be reviewed by the counsellor based on appropriate documentation. Those students who are requesting an accommodation for medical reasons will be asked to provide a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) which may be found [here](#).

After discussion between the student and the counsellor, the counsellor will recommend a particular accommodation to the student's instructor via email. The counsellor will direct the student to the instructor to confirm the recommended accommodation. If the instructor agrees to an extension or particular accommodation, the details (including new due date) are approved and provided to the student in writing (email).

In the event that the student has formal accommodations and writes exams using Accommodated Exam Services, it will be the student's responsibility to cancel and reschedule their exam with Accommodated Exams (pending instructor approval).

In the event that the student does not write with Accommodated Exam Services, the student's instructor will schedule a make-up test/exam date. For exams or tests worth less than 10% of the term grade, students should consult their instructor. Only students for whom emergency circumstances prevented their completion of a test/examination will be eligible for accommodation by the instructor.

Policy Advisory Committee February 2025
School Council March 2025

Policy on 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

BSW 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). 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 endeavour to 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 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.

6.3.3 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.

6.3.4 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.

6.3.5 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 Coordinator of Academics and Development 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 Coordinator of Academics and Development 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.

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

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/

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 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

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

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 your 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.