



**School of Social Work  
SW 9719 (570)  
Critical Thought & Ethics in Social Work  
Fall 2026**

**Instructor:** Festus Y Moasun, PhD

Contact Information: **To be Provided**

Office hours: Tuesdays 11:30-1:30 (scheduled in advance) or by appointment via Zoom.

**Calendar Description:**

This course engages students in a process of ethical reasoning relevant to professional social work practice. Theories of ethical reasoning are explored in day-to-day practice and in confronting controversial social issues affecting vulnerable populations. Legislation, court processes and procedures, and current and emerging social work practice issues are examined in the light of their ethical and legal implications for social work practice.

**Course description:**

As helping professionals, social workers are expected to be ethically responsible, to think critically and to make ethically sound decisions. In all roles across the scope of practice, social workers encourage moral and ethical issues that can challenge decision making and acting ethically. Within the context of neoliberal restructuring, and systems, practices and discourses of colonization and oppression, social workers are required to navigate limited resources, organizational expectations and culture, professional, regulatory, and legal requirements, and asymmetrical power relations, while pursuing a social justice agenda. In the process, social workers are confronted with a range of complex ethical dilemmas and moral considerations.

This course provides a comprehensive exploration of values and ethical issues as they apply to social work theory, research, policy, and practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The course draws on professional, legal, critical, feminist, postmodern and Indigenous literature and perspectives to introduce students to theoretical, philosophical, professional, practical issues related to social work ethics.

The course is designed to engage students in critical reflection and self-reflection to examine personal and political conceptions of social work, knowledge, professional roles, and identity. Throughout the course students will be required to critically assess the theoretical basis of social work theories and knowledge, explore their own ethical commitments, and confront the complexities and challenges of working ethically within a range of practice settings.

**Statement of Commitment:**

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, Lenape, and Attawandaron peoples; all of whom have longstanding relationships to the land of Southwestern Ontario and the City of London. As an uninvited guest, I am 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.

As a social worker, I am aware of the historical and continuing harm caused by my profession against Indigenous people. As a white settler, I am also aware of the ways my family has been complicit in and continues to benefit from colonization. I am committed to doing 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 and to learn. I strive to identify and challenge the specific ways that colonization continues to create harmful practices and policies within social work.

**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 learning outcomes:**

- Develop critical thinking and self-reflection skills and practices;
- Understand core ethical responsibilities of a social work professional in Ontario and in Canada;
- Examine epistemological and ontological assumptions associated with ethical thought and reflective practice;
- Understand the components of critical thinking and self-reflective practice as applied to professional ethics and explore the interconnection between embodied knowledge, ethical thought and reflective practice;
- Reflect on how social location and entanglements with power/oppression impact ethics in everyday practice;
- Understand strengths & limitations of ethical decision-making theories;
- Recognize the distinction and intersection between ethical, professional, and legal standards in social work;
- Identify and critically evaluate social work practice assumptions;
- Demonstrate sensitivity to values, beliefs, epistemological outlooks of different social groups;
- Understand how personal values, attitudes, and beliefs can affect professional behaviour;
- Understand the influences of practice locations have on ethical practice;

- Explore creative strategies to address barriers to ethical social work practice.

### **Mode of Instruction:**

This course includes in-person instructor presentations, class discussions, case studies, student led presentations and discussions, small group activities and personal reflections. Emphasis will be on helping students integrate theory and practice, applying ethical decision making in a broad range of settings and considering the complex components of current ethical concerns. Case studies and case discussions may arise from students' practice or the instructor's experience, and everyone is expected to uphold the confidentiality of the information shared by other class participants. Since the course is structured as a collaborative experiential learning process, attendance and participation of all students are very important. Students are expected to engage in discussions and show respect for difference of opinions. To make the class a safe space for all, there will be no audio or video recording of class proceedings. Students can only audio-record classes if they have been pre-authorized to do so for accommodation purposes. Students with accommodations may however be asked to suspend recordings during class discussions where participants express discomfort with their voices being recorded. Students who record classes are to note that the recordings are for their learning only. They have the responsibility to ensure that these recordings are not accessed by a third party.

### **Course textbooks/materials:**

#### **Required textbook:**

Spencer, E., Massing, D., & Gough, J. (Eds.). (2017). *Social work ethics: Progressive, practical, and relational approaches*. Oxford University Press.

- Other readings are noted in the syllabus and a reading list with direct links to the text will be posted to OWL Brightspace
- Some other readings will be posted on the OWL Brightspace course site.

Online through Indigo price: \$82.95

[Social Work Ethics: Progressive, Practical, And Relational Approaches Book By Elaine Spencer,duane Massing,jim Gough, \(Paperback\) | Indigo](#)

### **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.

### **Communication**

Respectful communication is key to successful engagement and interactions in this course. Timeliness is also important. The instructor does not guarantee a response to students' emails under 48 hours during the regular work week, or on weekends and holidays.

### **Diversity in the Classroom**

In this course, we recognize the importance of a diverse student body and are committed to fostering an equitable classroom environment. Please indicate (if you wish) how you want to be referred to both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.). Students are to note that the pronouns someone indicates are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity. Additionally, how you identify in terms of gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among others, is your choice to disclose. You are under no obligation to do so. Students are encouraged not to pressure their colleagues to make such disclosures or make presumptions about one another's identity.

### **Method of Evaluation:**

1. **Class Participation** – Students are expected to attend all classes, prepare for class by having read the course material, share their own analysis and understanding of the readings/course material by participating in class discussions of the course material and bringing their own questions to the discussion. Students are expected to participate in large and small group activities. Students are expected to respectfully express their opinions and points of view and to actively listen to colleagues. At the end of the semester, students will be asked to complete a self-evaluation of their participation in this course.

If students are unable to attend class, they are expected to follow the attendance policy and complete the readings and review the instruction materials for that class. Informing the instructor of absence is welcome.

Due: Ongoing

Mark: 15% (attendance=5%, participation= 10%)

2. **Personal Reflection exercise**—Through this assignment students will demonstrate their self-reflection process that is critical to ethical practice. The assignment has students reflect on their core values and beliefs, explore the development of these values and beliefs, and discuss the underlying assumptions associated with those values & beliefs. Students are expected to reflect on their social location as a part of their reflection and discussion.

The assignment is two (2) pages (3 pages if necessary but note that the ability to be concise is evaluated). The 1st page is to be a creative representation of the student's core values and beliefs. The 2nd page is to be a discussion/reflection on the creative representation of the student's core values and beliefs (i.e. page 1), the development of those values and beliefs, underlying assumptions, and how their social location has influenced them.

**Due:** September 23, 2026, (week 3) by 11:00pm on the OWL Brightspace course site

**Mark:** 15 %

3. **Critical Reflection** – Students will complete a critical reflection on the readings of one topic addressed in one week of the course. Students will select one week and, after reading the materials, complete an analysis of the key messages and reflect on their learning. Students are expected to demonstrate critical thinking and reflection about the topic and how the learning can strengthen their decision-making. The critical reflection will be maximum 4 pages, double spaced.

**Due:** October 21, 2026, (week 7) by 11:00pm submitted on the OWL Brightspace course site.

**Mark:** 20%

4. **Group Presentation** - In small groups, students are to conduct a 60-minute presentation of a chosen week's materials based on the week's readings and other relevant materials the students obtain. In addition to presenting key points of the readings and other information sources, students are expected to engage the class in discussion about the ethical issues related to the topic(s).

**Due:** During class the week chosen as per schedule on topics focused on current issues, from week #7 October 21 - Week#13 December 2, 2026

**Mark:** 30%

5. **Final Assignment** – Critical Reflection on Learning – Students are to explore in greater depth and critically reflect on an ethical issue of personal interest. The chosen topic must be different than the topic presented by the small group the student was a member of. Topics can from the course content or another topic of the student's choice if it addresses ethical issues. Topics must be signed off by instructor. Length: 5-8 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font.

**Due:** December 3, 2026, before 11:00p.m. on the OWL Brightspace course site.

**Mark:** 20%

#### Schedule of Classes and Readings:

| Week                            | Topics                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Weekly Readings                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Week 1</b><br><b>Sept. 9</b> | <b>Introduction:</b><br>Review of Course outline, schedule, and evaluations<br><br>Forming small groups and schedule presentations<br><br>Exploring the context, values, and texts of social work practice<br><br>Exploring the components and process of critical thinking | <b>Required</b><br>Textbook chapter 3<br>Harington, P. (2010)<br><br><b>Suggested</b><br>Durst, D. (2007)<br>Fine, M., & Teram, E. (2009)<br>Pullen-Sansfacon, A., & Cowden, S. (2012). |
| <b>Week 2</b><br><b>Sept.16</b> | <b>SW Values and Ethics:</b><br>CASW Code of Ethics and Guidelines; OCSWSSW Code of                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Required</b><br>CASW (2024) Code of Ethics<br>IFSW (2018) Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles                                                                         |

|                                                                                    |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                    | Ethics and Standards, IFSW Ethical Principles                                                 | OCSWSSW (2023). Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice<br><br><b><u>Suggested</u></b><br>Bisman, C. (2004)<br>Manning, S. (1997).<br>Rice, I. G. (2023).                                                                                                |
| <b>Week 3<br/>Sept. 23</b>                                                         | Self-Reflective Practice and Critical thinking                                                | <b><u>Required</u></b><br>Textbook chapter 16<br>Béres, L., & Fonseka, T. M. (2023)<br>Maclean, S. (2020) – Video<br><b><u>Suggested</u></b><br>Fook, J. & Gardner, Fi. (2007). Chapter 3<br>Hughes, W. & Lavery, J (2015) Chapter 1<br>Parton, N. (2000) |
| <b>Week 4 - September 30: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – No Class</b> |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Week 5<br/>Oct.7</b>                                                            | Ethical Decision-making theories and models                                                   | <b><u>Required</u></b><br>Textbook chapter 14<br>McAuliffe, D., & Greenslade, L. (2025)<br><br><b><u>Suggested</u></b><br>Betan, E.J. (1997)<br>Birnbaum, R., & Sigurdson, C. (2017). Chapter 2<br>Clark, C.D. (2012)<br>Niesche, R. & Haase, M. (2012).  |
| <b>Week 6 – October 14: Reading Week – No Class</b>                                |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Week 7<br/>Oct. 21</b>                                                          | Current employment settings and the impact on ethical practice: neoliberalism, managerialism, | <b><u>Required</u></b><br>Textbook chapters 4 & 5<br><br><b><u>Suggested</u></b><br>Heron, B. A. (2019)<br>Janssen, S.J. (2016)<br>Mänttari-van der Kuip, M. (2015)                                                                                       |
| <b>Week 8<br/>Oct. 28</b>                                                          | Ethics Law and Social Work Practice: Legal considerations                                     | <b><u>Required</u></b><br>Textbook chapter 15<br>Regehr, C., & Kanani K. (2010). Chap. 1<br><br><b><u>Suggested</u></b><br>Birnbaum, R., & Mosher, J.E. (2016)<br>Rice, I. G. (2025)                                                                      |
| <b>Week 9<br/>Nov. 4</b>                                                           | Current Ethical Issues: Self-care- an ethical obligation                                      | <b><u>Required</u></b><br>Baker Collins, S. & Cranmer-Byng, S. (2018)<br>Drolet et al. (2017)<br>Lee, J.J., & Miller, S.E. (2013).<br><br><b><u>Suggested</u></b><br>Butler, L. D., & McClain-Meeder, K. (2015)<br>CASW (2024)                            |

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                  |                                                                          | Kings University (2021).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Week 10</b><br><b>Nov. 11</b> | Current Ethical Issues: Exploring Professional Boundaries                | <p><b><u>Required</u></b><br/>Textbook, chapters 2 &amp; 11<br/>Dietz, C., &amp; Thompson, J. (2004)</p> <p><b><u>Suggested</u></b><br/>Austin et al. (2006)<br/>Bennett et al. (1994)<br/>Lazarus, A. A. (1994)</p>                                                                                                                |
| <b>Week 11</b><br><b>Nov. 18</b> | Current Ethical Issues: Truth & Reconciliation and Decolonizing practice | <p><b><u>Required</u></b><br/>Textbook, chapter 8<br/>Walsh et al. (2018)</p> <p><b><u>Suggested</u></b><br/>Choules, K. (2012)<br/>Department of Justice Canada (2025)<br/>Gerlach, A. (2012)<br/>Joseph, A. J. (2019)<br/>Kirmayer, L. (2012)</p>                                                                                 |
| <b>Week 12</b><br><b>Nov. 25</b> | Current Ethical Issues: Environmental Racism                             | <p><b><u>Required</u></b><br/>Canadian Association of Social Workers (2020)<br/>Dorn, C. (2022)<br/>Muldoon, A. (2006)</p> <p><b><u>Suggested</u></b><br/>CBC (2024, June 21)</p>                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Week 13</b><br><b>Dec. 2</b>  | Current Ethical Issues: Use of Technology, PHIPPA, Consent Capacity      | <p><b><u>Required</u></b><br/>Textbook, chapter 17<br/>Apgar, D. &amp; Cadmus, T. (2023).<br/>OCSWSSW (2017)</p> <p><b><u>Suggested</u></b><br/>Birnbaum, R. &amp; Mosher, J.E. (2018).<br/>Chapter 21<br/>Boddy J., &amp; Dominelli, L. (2017)<br/>CASW (2014)<br/>Reamer, F. G. (2013)<br/>Regehr, C., &amp; Antle, B. (1997)</p> |
| <b>Week 14</b><br><b>Dec. 9</b>  | <p>Social Justice: Anti Black Racism, Anti-racism</p> <p>Course wrap</p> | <p><b><u>Required</u></b><br/>Antwi-Boasiako, et al. (2021).<br/>CASW (2022)</p> <p><b><u>Suggested</u></b><br/>Textbook, chapter 9<br/>Bernard, W. T., &amp; Smith, H (2018).<br/>Mullings et al. (2016)</p>                                                                                                                       |

**\*Access all readings besides the textbook through the reading list links or find unlinked readings on Brightspace in the 'additional course materials' folder.**

## **School of Social Work Policies 2026 - 2027**

### **Attendance For Professional Years**

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 absences for any reason per class, per semester (approximately 20% of any one class). If a student misses three or more classes or 25% of any one class for any reason, they will be referred for support to the Coordinator of Academics and Development.
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. When a student has missed a class, they may be asked to demonstrate that they have caught up on the missed content or 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 absences) may result in Academic Probation and/or 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. You may also want to provide formal documentation to support these absences, in which case the absences are considered part of Academic Consideration.

#### **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 miss 3 or more classes for any reason, you will be required to meet with the Coordinator of Academics and Development, at which time you will have the opportunity to discuss any ongoing concerns and opportunities for support.
- **If you are going to miss an assignment deadline, test, or exam**, contact your instructor. If requested by your instructor 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. However, if you have missed two classes for any reason your instructor will alert the **Coordinator of Academics and Development**. Three or more absences for any reason will result in the student needing to meet with the Coordinator of Academics and Development to discuss these absences and explore available supports to help you succeed.
- 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 absences for any reason:** 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.

### **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.

**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**

### ***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. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to support students in their development as ethical, professional, competent, and reflective social work practitioners, while ensuring the safety, dignity, and well-being of all members of the learning environment and the communities served. The School of Social Work is committed to fostering a learning environment that is respectful, inclusive, and accountable.

1.2 This policy outlines:

- Expectations for professional conduct
- Processes for addressing concerns
- A fair, transparent, and educational approach to reviewing identified concerns.

1.3 The School of Social Work is committed to responding to concerns in ways that prioritize learning, growth, professionalism, accountability, and repair, while upholding professional standards and protecting the public.

## **2. Scope and Authority**

2.1 This policy aligns with the accreditation standards of the Canadian Association for Social Work Education and the professional expectations of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.

2.2 This policy applies to student conduct in:

- All social work courses
- Practicum placements
- Any environments related to the School of Social Work

2.3 This policy operates in conjunction with:

- King's University College Code of Student Conduct
- King's University College Harassment and Discrimination Policy
- Western University Academic Policies and Regulations
- Western University Senate Policy on Off-Campus Placements
- Western University Guide for Students in Professional Program Placements

## **3. Professional Standards and Expectations**

3.1 Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the ethical and professional standards of the social work profession, including those established by the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.

3.2 These standards include:

- a) Maintaining the best interests of clients as the primary professional obligation
- b) Demonstrating respect for the intrinsic worth and dignity of all individuals
- c) Acting with integrity, honesty, and objectivity
- d) Engaging in ongoing learning and maintaining professional competence

- e) Avoiding exploitation of professional relationships
- f) Maintaining confidentiality in all professional interactions
- g) Ensuring outside interests do not interfere with professional responsibilities
- h) Upholding public trust and the integrity of the profession
- i) Advocating for ethical workplace conditions
- j) Practicing in anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and inclusive ways
- k) Promoting social justice and the well-being of society, the environment, and global communities

3.3 Students are also expected to be familiar with and adhere to:

- The Code of Ethics of the Canadian Association of Social Workers
- Relevant School, College, University, and practicum policies (e.g. Professional Practicum Education Guidelines and Policies Manual)

#### **4. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

4.1 The School of Social Work is committed to respecting the privacy and dignity of all individuals involved in a concern.

4.2 Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis for the purposes of:

- Supporting student success
- Assessing risk
- Upholding professional standards

4.3 Students should be aware that information provided to school personnel is not strictly considered confidential and may be shared as appropriate within the School.

4.4 Information may be shared with the University or external bodies where required by law or institutional policy.

4.5 All information will be handled respectfully and with attention to minimizing harm.

4.6 Individuals participating in the review process, including support persons, may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement to reinforce existing ethical, professional and privacy considerations of all parties and the integrity of the process.

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

5.1 A review may be initiated where there are concerns about student conduct that may impact professional practice, learning environments, or safety.

5.2 Examples include, but are not limited to:

##### **a) Professional and Ethical Concerns**

- Behaviour inconsistent with professional codes of ethics and standards
- Breaches of confidentiality or professional boundaries
- Performance that compromises client well-being or trust

##### **b) Learning Environment Concerns**

- Behaviour that creates harm, disruption, or exclusion
- Discrimination or harassment contrary to human rights legislation

### **c) Legal or Policy Violations**

- Misuse or damage of property
- Illegal activity or unsafe behaviour
- Violations of university or practicum policies

5.3 All concerns will be considered within their context, including systemic factors, stressors, and available supports.

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

Three stages of review can occur in the School of Social Work regarding conduct that is not consistent with the recognized ethics and standards of the profession of social work. Each stage of the review is not mandatory within the process, nor are they necessarily sequential, depending upon the uniqueness of any situation and 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 the professional conduct of a student, at Stage One or Stage Two, through a mediation approach with the student as early as possible, with appropriate supports in place at any given stage.

6.1 The School is committed to resolving concerns at the least intrusive level possible, with a preference for early, supportive intervention.

#### **6.2 Stage One: Informal Resolution**

6.2.1 Concerns are addressed directly with the student(s) where appropriate. Examples include, but are not limited to, concerns between an instructor or school personnel and a student, or between two or more students.

6.2.2 The instructor or relevant party will:

- Discuss the concern with the student
- Seek resolution within a defined timeframe
- Keep documentation of relevant discussions

6.2.3 In practicum settings, procedures will follow the Professional Practicum Education Policies and Guidelines Manual.

#### **6.3 Stage Two: Structured Support and Planning**

6.3.1 If concerns are not resolved at Stage One, or it is determined by the relevant parties that more structured support and planning is appropriate at any point in the process (e.g. new concerns arise, concerns are significant, or the need for additional resources and support for student success is identified), a Stage Two review will be initiated.

6.3.2 A meeting will include:

- The student
- The instructor (if applicable)
- The Coordinator of Academics and Development

- Graduate Program Coordinator (graduate students)
- Manager of Professional Practicum Education (if applicable)

6.3.3 The student may be accompanied by a support person, provided that:

- The support person is not a current student
- The identity of the support person is shared in advance of the meeting
- The support person is bound to the confidentiality of the process and may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement

6.3.4 The role of the support person is to provide emotional and/or procedural support only. The support person:

- Does not participate directly in the discussion
- Does not speak on behalf of the student
- Does not have decision-making authority or vote

6.3.4 Outcomes will include:

- A written plan outlining:
  - Specific concerns
  - Required actions
  - Timelines
  - Available supports

6.3.5 A follow-up meeting may be identified where appropriate to assess progress.

## **6.4 Stage Three: Formal Review**

6.4.1 A Stage Three review may occur when:

- similar or new concerns arise;
- Concerns are serious in nature; or
- Previous stages have not resolved the issue

6.4.2 A Review Committee will be convened and chaired by the Director and be comprised of the Graduate Program Coordinator (for MSW students), Manager Professional Practicum Education, or designate, and members of Stage one and/or two as determined by the Director.

6.4.3 The student will:

- Receive written notice of concerns
- Be informed of the meeting date
- Be invited to attend and respond
- Be permitted a support person

6.4.4 The student may be accompanied by a support person under the same conditions outlined in Section 6.3.3–6.3.4.

6.4.5 If a student chooses not to attend the Stage Three review meeting, they may submit a written response or rebuttal to the concerns in advance of the meeting. This submission will be considered by the Review Committee as part of its deliberations. If a student does not attend a scheduled Stage Three review meeting or does not respond in a reasonable timeframe to

attempts to schedule a meeting, the meeting will proceed in the student's absence.

6.4.6 The Committee will:

- Review relevant information
- Consider the student's response (verbal and/or written)
- Ask questions and seek clarification

6.4.7 Decisions will be made by majority vote.

6.4.8 Outcomes may include:

- No further action
- Conditions for continuation (e.g., probation, learning plans, supports)
- Referral to appropriate services (e.g., Student Services, Human Resources where applicable)
- Recommendation for withdrawal or suspension:  
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 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.

6.4.9 The decision will be communicated to the student in writing.

6.4.10 In any Stage Three review, there must be clear, concise documentation of concerns as well as verification that these concerns have been discussed directly or otherwise shared 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**

7.1 Any documentation relating to any stage of review will be maintained in the student's academic file. 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.

*7.2 Records will be retained in accordance with University policies and applicable regulations.*

## **8. Access to Documentation**

8.1 Access to documentation is restricted to school personnel directly involved in:

- The review process
- Program administration and oversight

## **9. Appeals**

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

9.2 In addition, students may submit a written request for reconsideration to the Director of the School of Social Work within ten (10) business days of receiving the written decision, where there is:

- New information not previously available
- A concern regarding procedural fairness

9.3 The Director will determine whether the request meets the criteria for reconsideration.

Policy Advisory Committee April 2026  
School Council May 2026

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

Students are expected to complete all required evaluation components, by the dates indicated in the course syllabus, to successfully pass each 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 the student receives a failing mark on individual work and a passing grade on the group presentation/report, they 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 Academic and Development and/or the student's Accessibility Counsellor. Students who have any problems that may hinder their academic performance are encouraged to discuss these issues with their instructor and/or the Coordinator Academic and Development before the assignments are due.

*School Council January 2024*  
Policy Advisory Committee February 2025  
School Council March 2025  
Policy Advisory Committee November 2025  
School Council December 2025

**King's University College**

## General Course Policies 2026-27

### 1. Academic Accommodations (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 at [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

### 2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

#### (i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>.

#### (ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, 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)

### c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** 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 (i.e., you are scheduled to write 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](#)). <sup>[L]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>

### d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their 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.

## 3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University

College: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's

University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

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

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options on how to obtain

help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University

College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

#### 4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

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

You can reach supports at King's 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 ([health@uwo.ca](mailto:health@uwo.ca)) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

#### 5. 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://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings\\_Code\\_of\\_Student\\_Conduct.pdf](https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf)

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.

## 6. 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 [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_offences.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.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 to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools 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.

## 7. 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.

## 8. 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.

## **9. 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.