

**Process for Addressing Student Performance and/or Conduct Concerns  
Remediation, Termination, and Committee on Students/Student Development Committee  
(Draft Process\_ May 6, 2013; edits February 7, 2014 – Changes Accepted)**

Social Work professionals have the responsibility of serving oppressed and disadvantaged groups of people. In order to provide quality professional education and to ensure that our graduates are able to function in a broad variety of professional situations, the Committee on Students (COS) makes and reviews recommendations for students who are referred because of field or classroom concerns regarding professional skills, self-management, professional behavior, and scholastic performance (not all student concerns will require referral to the COS; see Level 1 guidelines below). Meeting the criteria for scholastic achievement is necessary, but not sufficient to ensure continued enrollment in the BSW and MSW programs and ultimately a career in social work practice.

Below are examples, but not an exhaustive list, of behaviors that threaten a student's ability to engage in productive social work practice. Exhibiting one or more of these behaviors may result in a review by the COS or possible dismissal from the School:

- Failure to meet or maintain program academic requirements;
- Academic dishonesty, including cheating, lying, plagiarism, collusion, or falsifying academic records;
- Behavior in violation of the current National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and/or the Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licenses rules;
- Unable to pass a criminal background check or drug screen which may be required by the program or a field agency;
- Any threat or attempt to harm oneself or someone else;
- Commission of a criminal act that is contrary to professional practice or ethics, occurring during the course of study or occurring prior to admission but withheld from application for admission; and
- Pattern of unprofessional behavior. This may include inappropriate or ineffective interaction with faculty, staff, peers, field instructors, or in other collegial relationships.

The COS will be made up of members of the student development committee which include the MSW and BSW Program Coordinators, Director of Field Education, Student Development Committee Chair, and two additional faculty members. The COS will be co-chaired by the MSW and BSW Program Coordinators and the Director of Field Education.

**Level 1**

A Level 1 review involves a faculty member or field instructor and a student. When a faculty member has concerns about a student enrolled in the social work program, whether related to professional behavior or scholastic performance, that faculty member may:

- When concerns are of a less serious nature, discuss those concerns directly with the student and develop a plan or contract with the student to resolve the difficulties. Details of the plan should be documented in writing and progress on goals should be monitored. In many instances, this level of intervention may be sufficient and the concern may be

resolved. However, should the problem continue, the faculty or field instructor should apprise the appropriate BSW or MSW Coordinator, or Field Director of the concerns in order to identify potential patterns and issues related to the student and/or refer the student to COS/ Level 2.

- Refer the student directly to Level 2 (see below) if the concern is serious. This should include, but is not limited to, instances where a student is in jeopardy of failing a course, or has engaged in behavior that is a violation of the current NASW Code of Ethics.

### **Level 2: COS Referral**

The purpose of a Level 2 review is to have the COS examine the student's situation and, if appropriate, develop a recommendation for a plan to support the student in addressing the concerns and successfully completing the program. In situations where completion of the program is not an option then a process of termination will be determined. A Level 2 review will involve at least 3 members including a co-chair of the COS committee and may include other relevant faculty members and the student of concern. Faculty intending to refer a student to Level 2 will meet with the student to explain concerns as well as make a referral in writing to one of the Co-Chairs of the COS. The student will then be notified by the Co-Chairs in writing about the concerns and meeting date. The Chair will gather additional relevant data about the student's performance, and provide this to the COS. A copy of all information provided to the COS will also be given to the student prior to the meeting.

At the meeting the COS will review all information and then ask the student to come into the meeting to answer any questions the COS may have. The student may also make any additional statement or ask any additional questions he or she may have. After the review meeting has occurred, the COS will consult with the Director of the School of Social Work to make recommendations regarding the student. Based on the review, the Director and the appropriate Program Coordinator will inform the student of the decision, which can include one or more of the following actions:

- Continue the student in the program with no new conditions. In these situations, the concern has been addressed and no further action by the student or program is required.
- Continue the student in the program without condition but with one or more of the following:
  - referral of the student to supports or services that may help address the concern
  - oral or written disciplinary warning or reprimand;
  - noting of misconduct in student's record; and
  - administration of any other sanctions tailored to prevent and/or avoid the recurrence of the prohibited conduct.
- Establish a plan for formal conditions for the student's continuance in the program. In these situations, specific conditions must be met in order for the student to remain in the program. The plan may include establishing goals, strategies, a timeline, and appropriate accountability; providing mentoring and support; referring the student to counseling and/or advising services; referring the student to academic support services; allowing the student to follow a reduced course load or delay entry to the field practicum; requiring the student to complete additional (specified) hours in field; or requiring the student to withdraw from the program with the option of reapplying.

- Discontinue student from the program.
- Students who have been removed from their field education placement pending the results of the COS meeting will not be placed in a new setting until the COS meeting has been completed.

Students may appeal recommendations of the COS. Appeals should be made in writing to the Director of the School of Social Work within 5 working days of the student being informed of the committee's recommendation.