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Dear Social Work Major:

Welcome to Social Work! You have chosen not only a major, but a professional journey that hopefully will bring you profound satisfaction, an enhanced capacity for responsible citizenship, and a heightened sense of commitment and dedication to social justice in the service of others.

Social work is a helping profession. The Castleton University Social Work Program is designed to provide the knowledge, skills and ethics for beginning-level, generalist professional practice and the academic preparation for graduate study in social work. Generalist social work practice consists of a common core of knowledge, values, and skills that can be applied across diverse client systems to enhance the social functioning of those systems.

Baccalaureate degree-level social workers are employed in a wide range and variety of agencies and organizations, which serve the needs of many different people. For example, Castleton University BSW graduates have had responsibilities in a variety of settings including child welfare, juvenile justice, probation and parole, substance abuse, anti-poverty programs, medical, schools, mental health, and nursing homes. Their work includes providing services to people of all ages using the social work methods of intervention at the individual, family, group, and/or community levels.

The BSW degree also prepares the student for entry into graduate programs, which prepare highly skilled and specialized professional social workers upon whom are conferred the Master of Social Work degree. All BSW graduates are eligible for advanced standing status at all MSW programs in the United States. Recently, CU graduates have been accepted with advanced standing to the following graduate programs in social work: SUNY-Albany, University of Vermont, University of New England, Barry University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Columbia University, and Fordham University.

We encourage social work majors to participate in the Social Issues Club whose projects and activities are relevant to social work concerns. Majors are also encouraged to take advantage of the student membership rate and join NASW (see pg. 18). Membership applications are available online. Both students and graduates have served on the Vermont Chapter Board of Directors. In addition, students might consider subscribing to *The New Social Worker*, a publication for students and new graduates. See any faculty member for information.

This manual is an educational and professional guide to assist you as you progress through the program. We hope it will be helpful to you. We wish you every success in this major and as future BSW professionals!

Sincerely,  
The Castleton University Social Work Program Faculty

Dr. Luther Brown  
Professor Margaret Miles  
Dr. Michael Reeves

# **PART I-PROGRAM MANUAL**

## **1. MISSION STATEMENTS**

### **CASTLETON UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT**

To understand the Castleton Way, which guides the university in all its endeavors, is to engage in respectful relationships in an inclusive, student-centered environment; to appreciate our learned and compassionate faculty and dedicated and caring staff; to strive to learn, use, and teach sustainable environmental practices; and to participate in strong community partnerships.

Castleton's transformational education emphasizes undergraduate liberal arts and professional studies while also offering graduate programs. The University prepares its diverse students for relevant and meaningful careers in a global economy, advanced academic pursuits, and responsible citizenship.

### **CASTLETON UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Castleton University Social Work Program is to prepare students, through higher education that is grounded in the liberal arts, to be effective and competent social work professionals in the context of their practice. Consistent with the profession's purpose and guided by the person-in-environment framework and a strengths-based approach, students will be prepared to provide global and local leadership to implement evidence-based services that respect human diversity, promote human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice, work towards the elimination of poverty, and enhance quality of life through a range of prevention and intervention methods with diverse client systems. Students will use critical thinking to reflect the profession's ethical and core values of service, social justice, the dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence and their application in practice.

## **2. SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM HISTORY**

Professor Emerita, Elizabeth Ferguson, began teaching social work courses at Castleton State College in 1970. Early on, she recognized the need for professionally trained entry-level social workers in Vermont. From a single-person discipline, the program now has three full-time faculty. Since 1981 it has been accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

Today, Castleton University is the only BSW program within the Vermont State College System; the other two BSW programs in the state are the University of Vermont and Champlain College, both in city of Burlington. Now in our fifth decade of educating tomorrow's social workers, we are assured of future success given the roots Dr. Elizabeth Ferguson has planted and nourished.

### **3. GOALS OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

With the liberal arts as its foundation, BSW graduates are prepared for generalist practice and/or continuing their formal education in social work or another graduate discipline. It is our mission that by completion of the program, students will be prepared to reach these program goals which are derived from the program's mission statement. These goals are amplified by CSWE's competencies and associated behaviors listed in the standards. The Castleton University Social Work Program will prepare students upon graduation to:

1. Engage in range of evidence-based prevention and intervention methods with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations in the context of their practice.
2. Practice according to the principles, values, and ethics that guide the social work profession.
3. Influence social policies with the goal of alleviation of poverty, oppression, and social injustice as well as advocating for human rights.
4. Identify and affect the bio-psycho-social and cultural functioning of people, informed by the person-in-environment framework, with an emphasis on the strengths-based perspective.
5. Practice from a culturally sensitive perspective.

### **4. CASTLETON UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM COMPETENCIES**

As a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, the Castleton University Social Work Program competencies and practice behaviors are consistent with the *Educational Policy and Accreditation Statement (EPAS)* 2015 of that organization.

**Competency 1:** Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

**Competency 2:** Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

**Competency 3:** Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

**Competency 4:** Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

**Competency 5:** Engage in Policy Practice

**Competency 6:** Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

**Competency 7:** Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

**Competency 8:** Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

**Competency 9:** Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

## **5. TRANSFER OF CREDITS**

General education credits from another institution within the Vermont State College System are automatically transferred. General education credits from an external institution are reviewed by the registrar's office. Credits to be transferred from two-year colleges for required social work courses are reviewed by the program faculty and become part of a formal pathway/articulation between the schools. Links to these articulation agreements/pathways are identified in the program manual and are available on the Castleton webpage. The program does not accept transfer of credit for required social work courses from programs that are not accredited by CSWE. Credits from other CSWE accredited social work programs are accepted, with review. Other credit transfer requests are reviewed by the professor teaching the course where the substitution is requested. Department chair and Dean of the College approval is required. General Education credit transfers also need approval from the General Education Committee.

The CU Social Work program does not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

## **6. REQUIREMENTS FOR BSW DEGREE**

The requirements for a Baccalaureate in Social Work degree are listed on the current Castleton University Social Work Program web page <https://www.castleton.edu/academics/undergraduate-programs/social-work/social-work-program-requirements/> and delineated below. Continuance in the program is non-discriminatory on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, and marital status with the understanding that all students must adhere to standards of knowledge, skills, and ethics.

The Social Work Program offers a Baccalaureate of Social Work degree (BSW). The program compliments and integrates the liberal arts and sciences with a professional course of study. Social work is a helping profession committed to social change and justice for vulnerable populations in society. The Castleton University Social Work Program is designed to provide knowledge, skills and ethics for beginning-level generalist professional practice and the academic preparation for graduate study in social work. Generalist social work practice consists of a common core of knowledge, values, and skills that can be applied across diverse client systems to enhance the social functioning of those systems.

The BSW degree also prepares students for entry into graduate programs, which prepare highly skilled and specialized professional social workers through the Master of Social Work degree. A wide variety of specialization tracks at the Master's degree level are offered. Most Castleton University Social Work Program graduates are granted advanced standing in Master of Social Work programs. Thus, the time to complete the Master of Social work is shortened by one to two semesters.

### **a) Declaration of Major:**

As per university policy, a student may declare any major at any time. Admission to the program does not take place until the second semester of the junior year.

**b) Admission to the Program:**

Application criteria require students to have completed core social work foundation courses with a GPA of 2.0 or higher (These courses are listed on page 10 Curriculum Plan). These criteria serve to ensure preparation of graduates to develop a professional identity which incorporates the knowledge, skills, values, and ethics of the social work profession. Students are not deemed to be an official social work major in the program until they have been admitted by the program faculty in the second semester of their third year.

1. During the second semester of the junior year the student must **apply to the social work program**. This application includes a review of their grades in their core social work courses and a letter that identifies why the student has chosen social work as a major, related experience, their professional objectives upon graduation, and strengths and areas needing improvement. A statement of the student's personal values demonstrating congruency with social work values and ethics is also included in the letter. The application is reviewed by the full-time program faculty.
2. In the same semester **an interview with program full-time faculty** will be scheduled as part of the admission process. This will allow the student to meet program faculty members and the faculty to assess the prospective student's academic accomplishments, personal attitudes, skills, values and cognitive and affective processes that indicate reasonable promise in social work, as can be determined in the university setting. An admission decision will be made at this meeting.
3. Applicants are notified of the **admission decision** immediately following their interview and faculty discussion.
4. Students who have any **conditions** on their acceptance are notified of such at the time they are notified of the admissions decision.
5. Students must sign a **Student/Program Contract** upon acceptance by social work faculty into the Social Work Program.
6. The registrar's office is informed by the Program Director of the student's **acceptance into the program**.

**c) REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION**

Students must complete all requirements of the university and program to be eligible to receive the BSW degree. This includes all general education requirements, program courses, and graduation standards. The final thirty credits must be taken at Castleton to earn the BSW degree from Castleton. Since field practicum is senior level, students cannot take it elsewhere and receive a BSW from Castleton.

**7. ADVISING**

All social work majors are required to have an advisor who is a member of the full-time social work faculty. Academic advisement is crucial to ensuring that program objectives and goals are met within the learning context at Castleton. Students are guided to enroll in the appropriate courses at the appropriate time in their academic career through advisement, following the program's curriculum map. Social Work Program faculty provide formal academic advising biannually prior to the registration period. Students in the advising process are also provided information that is relevant to the overall social work education

program thus ensuring the integrity of the learning objectives and goals outlined for the program.

Faculty also provide informal ongoing academic advising on a routine basis. Social Work faculty post and keep regular office hours and have a welcoming open-door policy. Professional and developmental advisement is also available, for issues such as graduate school, employment opportunities, and state licensing requirements.

## **8. GRIEVANCES**

Specific criteria for evaluating student academic performance are given in each course syllabus. Grades for academic performance assigned by instructors are normally final. However, a student who believes a serious grading error has occurred has several options. A student with a complaint about a grade should first speak with the instructor and explain why the student believes an adjustment is in order. If the student is not satisfied with the instructor's response, the student may speak with the chairperson of the department that offered the course, explain his/her point of view on the matter, and ask that the chairperson intervene on the student's behalf. Any student who continues to believe that a serious grading mistake remains uncorrected after these procedures has the right to appeal to the Academic Dean. Students must make such appeals in writing and explain why they believe they earned a grade higher than the one they were awarded. They should also include any evidence they have that supports their position. Absent clear and fully substantiated evidence of error or prejudice, the Academic Dean will not overturn the decision of a faculty member in regard to the assignment of grades.

## **9. TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM FOR ACADEMIC REASONS**

Student academic performance is evaluated by the course professor and concerns are reviewed by program faculty at bimonthly program meetings. Specific criteria for evaluating student academic performance are given in each course syllabus. Continuation in the program is determined by ongoing progress toward a professional level of performance. In addition to a mastery of knowledge, a minimum grade of "C" in SWK 3010 (Social Work Practice I), SWK 3020 (History & Philosophy), SWK 4020 (Practice II), and SWK 4811 (Field Experience I) must be maintained to continue in the program.

In addition to classroom grades, field evaluations are conducted at the midterm and end of semester by the Agency Supervisor and the student. Midterm evaluations are used to determine if there is a need to an action plan to try to recover the student's placement. End-of-semester evaluations are conducted by the Agency Supervisor and the student and reviewed with the faculty Field Instructor. The faculty Field Instructor determines the grade for the student's professional performance using these tools and their interactions with the student. This grade and other academic grades are used to determine if they will continue in the program. A student must earn a grade of C or better in Field 1 to enroll in Field 2. Student may grieve their fieldwork grade following the above grievance procedures

Not every student will necessarily be appropriate for the practice of social work. The following issue could lead to termination from the program for academic reasons:

- Failure to maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA in required social work courses.
- Failure to maintain a grade of “C” or better in core social work courses and fieldwork.
- Inadequate written or verbal communication skills.
- Unresolved personal issues that impair performance in the classroom or in field instruction.
- Lying, cheating, or plagiarizing in course work or fieldwork.
- Excessive class or fieldwork absences.
- Persistent inability to meet dates on assignments and projects.

## **10. TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM FOR PROFESSIONAL REASONS**

Social work students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with social work values in the classroom, in field work, and in the broader learning environment. Students are taught that their professional behavior should be guided by and in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics. Students are also accountable for their behavior as citizens of the broader Castleton community.

Inappropriate campus behaviors are reported to faculty advisors by the Dean of Students. The impact of these behaviors on continuation in the program are reviewed by program faculty on a case-by-case basis. When a student reports behaviors outside of the classroom that could potentially violate this policy, the situations are reviewed by program faculty on a case-by-case basis. Students are expected to be good neighbors and good citizens. Students are expected to inform their faculty advisor of any behavior off-campus that could potentially violate this policy. Failure to do so can be interpreted as dishonesty and a violation of social work values.

A professional social work practitioner must, in addition to knowledge, demonstrate the acquisition of professional attitudes, values, and skills, and commitment to the *Code of Ethics* of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). Areas that constitute grounds for nonacademic termination from the Social Work Program include:

- failure to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct;
- problems with personal integrity;
- emotional stability requisite for professional practice;
- inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty, clients, staff, or members of the community;
- violation of the NASW *Code of Ethics*;
- failure to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills necessary for forming professional helping relationships (e.g. unable to demonstrate nonjudgmental attitudes toward others; unable to support client self-determination);
- unresolved personal issues that impair performance.

When Program faculty believe there is a reason to terminate a student from the program for academic or professional reasons they will meet to discuss the situation and come to a consensus. If the faculty determine that a student's deficiencies cannot be readily corrected, the student will be asked to withdraw from the Program or terminated. The faculty will meet with the student to discuss reasons for the recommended withdrawal or termination. Identified deficiencies will be substantiated in writing by the faculty. Students who are terminated from the program for personal or professional reasons may contest the decision in writing following the grievance procedure outlined above.

Withdrawal or termination does not preclude readmission to the Social Work Program at a later date. The student needs to apply to the Program Director who will consult with appropriate program faculty.

## **11. BSW EMPLOYMENT AND ROLES**

Baccalaureate degree level social workers are employed in a wide range and variety of agencies and organizations, which serve the needs of many different people such as:

Nursing homes	Hospices
Hospitals	Home care agencies
Substance abuse programs	Mental health services
Vocational rehabilitation services	Public health agencies
Community action agencies	Family service agencies
Children & youth services	Aging services
Residential treatment programs	Child and adult daycare centers
Domestic violence programs	Homeless shelters
Criminal justice agencies	Schools (at all levels)
Income maintenance programs	Legal services agencies
Intellectual disabilities/developmental disabilities services	

## 12. CURRICULUM PLAN

Below is a list of required courses for the BSW and a suggested timeline and sequence for taking them. Please refer to the university catalog for course descriptions. For students coming into the program after their freshman year, the timelines will vary, although prerequisites must still be followed (see university catalog for further information). The list below does not include the college core curriculum, electives, or minor or double major requirements.

### Castleton University Social Work Program Curriculum Plan

#### FIRST YEAR

##### FALL SEMESTER

SWK 1010 Intro to Human Services  
SOC 1010 Intro to Sociology

##### SPRING SEMESTER

PSY 1012 Intro to Psychological Sciences  
SWK 1810 Early Field

#### SECOND YEAR

##### FALL SEMESTER

SWK 2011 HBSE I  
SOC 2030 Community in American  
Society  
or  
SSC 1010 Intro to Study of Community  
MAT 2021 Statistics I

##### SPRING SEMESTER

SWK 2012 HBSE II  
SWK 2040 Discrimination in  
American Society  
BIO 2010 & 2011 A&P I&II  
or  
BIO 1010 Human Biology & Laboratory

#### THIRD YEAR

##### FALL SEMESTER

SOC 3910 Research Methods  
SWK 2140 Substance Abuse &  
Addictions Studies

##### SPRING SEMESTER

SWK 3010 Social Work Practice I  
SWK 3020 History & Philosophy of  
Work  
SOC 4020 Sociological Theory

#### FOURTH YEAR

##### FALL SEMESTER

SWK 4020 Social Work Practice II  
SWK 4811 Field Experience I  
SWK 4010 Social Welfare Policies,  
Programs & Issues

##### SPRING SEMESTER

SWK 4030 Social Work Practice III  
SWK 4812 Field Experience II  
SWK 4720 Social Work Capstone  
Seminar

For double major in Sociology, take an additional 3 SOC electives and SOC 4720 Coordinating Capstone Seminar.

120 Credits to graduate (122 if catalogue year 17-18 or earlier)

## **PART II--FIELD INSTRUCTION MANUAL**

### **1. ELIGIBILITY FOR FIELD COURSES (SWK 4811 & SWK 4812)**

1. Acceptance into the Social Work Program
2. A grade of “C” or better in SWK 3010 Social Work Practice I
4. All prerequisites for Field Instruction
5. Consent of the Program Field Director
5. Only those students with academic accomplishments and personal attitudes, skills, and values indicate reasonable promise in social work, insofar as these can be determined in the college situation, will be recommended for field placements
6. Students must sign a Student/Program contract which they will receive upon admission to the program

Any student who does not qualify is not permitted to enroll in the Field Experience I course. Students who are denied admission to field instruction and/or termination from the program may contest the faculty decision following the grievance procedure listed above

### **2. FIELD PLACEMENT MODEL**

Castleton University uses a concurrent field model. Field placement agencies are chosen by the Social Work Program Field Director after careful determination of their appropriateness for student learning and support. Social work students are placed in local agencies at the same time they are taking coursework on campus. Students are in their agency settings two days a week for a minimum of 200 clock hours per semester, for which they earn six credit hours per semester. Students remain in the same placement for the entire academic year with a practice course taken concurrently each semester.

In addition to agency-based supervision, the faculty Field Instructor provides on-site field instruction bi-weekly to all students and bi-weekly field seminar for students who do not have a BSW/MSW Agency Supervisor.

The theoretical framework of social work and other applicable practice theories are taught in many courses throughout the required major courses, including SWK 1010 Intro to Human Services, SWK 2011& 2012 Human Behavior & the Social Environment I&II, SWK 3020 History & Philosophy of Social Work, and the three practice courses (SWK 3010, 4030). The practice courses are taught by each of the full-time faculty, each who carry a caseload of field supervision. Students bring case examples from their field placement and their journals for discussion in the classroom. These full-time professors also conduct field seminar for student who do not have BSW/MSW Agency Supervisors.

In the Castleton University concurrent/consecutive field placement/classroom model, social work skills, knowledge, and concepts taught in the SWK 3010 Practice 1 course and other required social work courses, including SWK 2040 Discrimination in American Society, SWK 2740 Substance Abuse, SOC 3910 Research Methods, and SWK 4010 Social Welfare Policy, Programs and Issues are implemented as students enter the field in fall of their senior year. These are reviewed in the SWK 3020 Practice 2 course as well as by the faculty field instructor during biweekly supervision and field seminar. Social work skills, knowledge, and concepts taught in

the SWK 3020 Practice 2 & SWK 4030 Practice 3 courses are implemented by students in their concurrent field placements in the fall and spring semesters of their senior year. The implementation is reviewed in class through case examples from their field placement and by their faculty field instructor in biweekly supervision.

Students may be placed in agencies where they are employed. This is not encouraged but can be facilitated in large agencies where students can get a different experience with the same population. In these situations, the faculty Field Instructor identifies that student assignments and agency supervision with the agency as differentiated from the student's employment. For the field placement, the agency would follow the same criteria in the Social Work Program Manual in the sections on objectives of field instruction, agency criteria, and responsibilities of agency supervisor, student responsibilities, and discontinuation of the agency as placement. The agency would also follow the criteria in the CSWE Educational Policy for field education.

### **3. FIELD INSTRUCTION COURSE SYLLABUS** **SWK 4811 & 4812 - FIELD EXPERIENCE I & II**

The major goals of the Castleton University Social Work Program are to prepare students for entry into social work practice and to prepare them for acceptance into programs of graduate level education. The educational focus is directed toward the development of values, knowledge, skills and goals of the profession. The field instruction component is an integral part of the social work education experience as it offers the student the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge to practice.

The development and acceptance of concepts and values such as human dignity, the sharing of social benefits, and the importance of social change can provide the professional skills which are essential tools for alleviating human suffering and realizing a more just society.

Field instruction offers the student the opportunity to understand the role of the social worker and to internalize the professional base of practice. Field instruction provides a mix of values, knowledge and skills crucial to the student's professional development. The overall objective of field instruction is to integrate prior learning into service to people in need.

#### **Specific learning outcomes of field instruction:**

1. Integrate and apply knowledge, values, skills, and theory acquired in academic courses to actual social work practice situations with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
2. Utilize one's own professional self, including technology, to engage in purposeful relationships with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities to effect social change.
3. Utilize professional and personal ethics and values in one's social work practice and in the evaluation of one's practice applying NASW *Code of Ethics*, laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, and ethical conduct of research.
4. Maintain a clear professional identity regardless of agency setting or organizational pressures.
5. Recognize, respect and understand the continuum of human diversity throughout the planned change process, presenting themselves as learners.

6. Involve the client and appropriate others throughout the intervention process including evaluation of change efforts.
7. Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.
8. Evaluate one's own professional practice and growth including using qualitative and quantitative methods and findings to inform and improve practice, policy and service delivery on the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
9. Collect and assess data from a variety of sources to develop mutually agreed-on goals based on critical assessment of strengths, needs and challenges with clients and constituencies.
10. Develop primary competencies in basic interviewing skills, including observation skills, involving the client system in the helping process, and relating to clients with warmth, respect, and professionalism.
11. Engage in policy practice by identifying, analyzing, formulating, and advocating for social policies at all levels that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
12. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities using critical thinking, applying knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, using inter-professional collaboration, negotiating/mediating/advocating on behalf of diverse client systems, and facilitating effective transitions and endings.
13. Apply knowledge of human behavior in the social environment, person in environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate practice.
14. Advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice by applying understanding to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels, and engaging in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.
15. Assess the effectiveness of helping systems, and where there are gaps, promote effective, just and responsive service and resource systems

### **Placement Agencies**

Field placement agencies for the Castleton University Social Work Program must provide generalist practice opportunities for students so they can demonstrate the core competencies. Field settings are approved by the Field Director. Placements can be sought out by the Field Director, recommended by faculty, or the agency can request they be considered. The Field Director meets with the agency representative to discuss the agency's ability to provide students the opportunity to practice generalist social work, with appropriate supervision and safety. When at all possible, work with all sizes of client systems is available at the agency. Placement agencies must provide generalist practice opportunities for students so they can demonstrate the core competencies. Agency Supervisors are trained and provided ongoing consultation by the Field Director, stressing the importance of providing students with the opportunity to demonstrate competencies with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. When any of these areas are a struggle for the particular agency, the Faculty Field Instructor will work with the agency to brainstorm activities in challenging areas.

All students have in-person contact with clients and constituencies. Most of these contacts are face-to-face, while a few are via technology when required by agency policy/procedures or other significant situations. When field placements are selected and Agency Supervisors trained/oriented by the Field Director, they understand they are to provide this contact as far as is possible in their agency settings. This is also stated in the agency contract signed by an authorized agency representative. Field placement agencies understand they are to facilitate

student experiences with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, to the best of their agency's ability. The program requires students to complete an agency assessment and change plan, as well as to participate in macro practice opportunities through monthly Project Vision meetings and volunteering in community projects, such as Habitat for Humanity and the Night to Shine non-prom, as appropriate.

With our model of the Faculty Field Instructor being on on-site or via technology bi-weekly, it is easy to facilitate this process. All students must submit assessment/service plans and process recordings to the Faculty Field Instructor which demonstrate social work competencies in all dimensions. These assignments are reviewed by the faculty Field Instructor and Agency Supervisor. Students also must submit paperwork to their Agency Supervisor that is required by the agency. Students are required to participate in agency staff and/or team meetings if they fall on the days of their placement. All students are required to attend the monthly Project Vision meetings, while classes are in session, either in-person or via technology. Project Vision is a community-wide effort to improve community health, improve neighborhoods, and reduce crime and substance abuse. Students who do not have BSW/MSW supervision at their placement are required to participate in bi-weekly field seminar with program faculty. The Field Evaluation form, which is administered at the end of fall and spring semesters, includes CSWE competencies and associated behaviors 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, & 9. A shorter evaluation is completed at mid-term as a formative assessment.

### **Placement**

Students are placed by the Field Director in field placement agencies based on their expressed interests, agency requirements, and knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses by the program faculty. The Field Director teaches the prerequisite practice course taken by students in the spring semester of their junior year (SWK 3010). Students learn and practice social work concepts and skills in this class. The Field Director presents all of the field placement options to the juniors approximately halfway through the semester in this class. The social work seniors in field placement spend a class with the juniors to talk about their experience and to further describe their agencies. This helps juniors select the agencies in which they would like to be placed. Juniors then inform the Field Director of agencies in which they would like to be placed. The Field Director assigns students to agencies that are the best available match. Students contact their assigned agencies to complete their processes for approving new staff. The agency makes the final decision on whether or not to approve the placement. If the agency decides to not accept a student, the Field Director will meet with the agency to determine the factors that lead to the decision and work with the student to find another placement.

### **Supervision**

Students are monitored in their field placements by their Agency Supervisor and by the Faculty Field Instructor. Agency Supervisors are required to monitor field placement students when they are in the field, as appropriate. This includes scheduling routine weekly supervision. The Faculty Field Instructor monitors students very closely due to the program's model of on-site field instruction. The Faculty Field Instructor monitors student safety and progress in practicing generalist social work skills. Process recordings and social work assessments/service plans are required throughout both semesters by the Faculty Field Instructor, which are reviewed with the student in the field. The Faculty Field Instructor regularly discusses student progress with the Agency Supervisor. Faculty Field Instructors bring field concerns to the attention of the Field Director as needed, minimally at regular program meetings.

**Student safety**

Student safety is of utmost importance to the program. Student safety is part of the practice course curricula and is monitored by the Agency Supervisor and faculty Field Instructor. In our SWK 3010 Practice I course, safety on the job is discussed in the general context. Student safety is also part of the SWK 4020 Practice II syllabus, more specifically discussed in the context of the field placements. Students are taught how to assess their safety in various placement situations. Agencies have safety procedures and guidelines which are explained to students. With our on-site field instruction model, Agency Supervisors and staff know the Faculty Field Instructors, so feel comfortable contacting them if there is a safety concern and meeting with them when they are there.

**Specific policies related to the COVID-19 pandemic**

All Castleton students, faculty, and staff are required to abide by the Spartan Pledge. This pledge obligates the members of the Castleton community to keep the community safe by following all federal, state, local, and university guidelines. The Spartan Pledge can be accessed [here](#). In addition, Castleton social work students must complete the pandemic guidance form before starting at their field placement. This form requires field placement students to work with their Agency Supervisor before their placement starts to understand the agency's policies regarding COVID-19 and their responsibilities. It acknowledges that some students may opt out of field placement during the pandemic and the consequences of such a decision. It requires students who choose to go into the field to acknowledge the risks.

**Reinforcement of the social work perspective**

Students who do not have an Agency Supervisor with a BSW or MSW degree are required to participate in a bi-weekly field seminar with the MSW Faculty Field Instructors.

#### **4. STUDENT/PROGRAM CONTRACT**

The Baccalaureate of Social Work is a professional degree. Continuance in the Social Work Program is determined by continuing progress toward a professional level of performance. The degree is awarded to those graduates who have demonstrated that they have attained a beginning level of professional competence.

The satisfactory completion of the required academic courses presumes the mastery of a body of knowledge deemed essential for social work practice. A professional social work practitioner must, in addition to knowledge, demonstrate the acquisition of professional attitudes, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes, and commitment to the *Code of Ethics* of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

Only those students, whose academic accomplishments and personal attitudes, skills and values indicate reasonable promise in social work, insofar as these can be determined in the University situation, will be recommended for field placements. Knowledge deficiencies are reflected in lowered academic grades. A grade of "C" in SWK 3010 (Social Work Practice I) is the minimum grade required for admission to field placement (SWK 4811). In addition, if any deficiencies in professional attitudes, values, skills or cognitive and affective processes should, in the judgment of Social Work Program faculty, interfere with a student's ability to render satisfactory service to clients, the student will not be permitted to begin Field Instruction (SWK 4811), until such time as the identified deficiencies are corrected to the satisfaction of the Program faculty. Where deficiencies cannot be readily corrected, the student will be asked to withdraw from the Social Work Program. Such a decision by Program faculty may be appealed to the academic dean whose decision will be final.

Once meeting the requirements to be placed in the field, students must achieve a grade of "C" or better in SWK 4811 (Field Experience I), and SWK 4020 (Social Work Practice II), as well as demonstrate professional skills, attitudes, values, and cognitive and affective processes to continue in the program. A faculty member will notify students and their advisor who seem to be in any danger of being asked to withdraw from the program no later than the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> semester. The Program Director will be consulted and a conference involving the Social Work Program faculty and the student will be scheduled. The decision of the faculty may be appealed following the appeals process. It is understood that withdrawal from the Social Work Program does not, of itself, jeopardize graduation, since the student can complete a degree program other than social work in that time. Withdrawal does not preclude readmission to the Program at some later date by application to the faculty of the Social Work Program.

Students who are admitted into the Program are required to sign this statement, indicating their acceptance of these standards.

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Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Program Director \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIELD DIRECTOR**

1. Recruit, train, and retain field placement agencies and supervisors.
2. Determine if the relationship with an agency or field supervisor will be discontinued.
3. Inform faculty of decisions regarding field placements.
4. Resolve issues with students if unresolved with Agency Supervisors or faculty Field Instructors.
5. Match students with field settings spring 3rd year.
6. Communicate with students and agencies regarding schedules, field assignments, fall agency visits by entire class, dates, and provide forms for evaluations.
7. Teach the 3rd year Social Work Practice I course.
8. All other administrative responsibilities related to field including program and CSWE requirements.

## **6. AGENCY CRITERIA**

Seeking the most promising opportunities for students to achieve these objectives, the CU Social Work Program applies the following criteria in selecting field instruction settings:

1. Agency is established within the community
2. Agency commitment to social work, education with social work as the principal function or a recognized ancillary service
3. Agency can provide students with a quality primary social work experience, including:
  - a) In-person work with clients
  - b) Opportunities to interface with community resources
  - c) Exposure to agency practice and personnel
  - d) Involvement in a community and organizational experience
4. Integration of students with staff including staff meetings, in-service training, etc.
5. Agency accepts faculty role and presence in direct supervision and a liaison to the program
6. Relative proximity to the university and accessible to students
7. Ability to provide a minimum of 400 clock hours of social work practice experience over the academic year

## **7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACULTY FIELD INSTRUCTOR**

Field Instructors are full-time faculty members who provide direct field instruction to students and liaison with agency staff on site a minimum of every other week of the placement. In line with this responsibility, the Field Instructor performs the following:

1. Meets minimally bi-weekly at each agency with students and Agency Supervisors, as they are available.

2. Meets as needed with designated agency staff as needed to review appropriateness of assignments for their learning suitability and to determine appropriate responsibilities for individual students according to each student's load and skill level.
3. Provides on-site supervision, including:
  - a. Helping students prepare for and participate in the conference;
  - b. Explaining the purpose and process of field assignments (process recordings, assessment/service plans, journals);
  - c. Emphasizing student success in applying social work values, knowledge, skills, and cognitive and affective processes in the field;
  - d. Examining student awareness of the steps taken in performing assignments. (The attitudes and feelings of students while performing, as well as subsequent to performing, the tasks are discussed).
  - e. Review student involvement in engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation across client systems.
  - f. Review student paperwork.
4. Critiques student paperwork and returns promptly to the student.
5. Reviews student performance at the end of each semester, based upon field instruction agency visits, field assignments, and input from agency supervisor evaluation and student self-evaluation.
6. Determines student grades based upon these assessments and other knowledge of the student in relation to their placement.

## **8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF AGENCY SUPERVISOR**

Each agency will designate one staff member to provide primary on-site supervision. The Agency Supervisor should have been with the agency for a minimum of one year. The Agency Supervisor performs the following tasks:

1. Introduces students to agency staff and setting, including an orientation to:
  - a. Their function within policies, and goals of the program and agency
  - b. The clientele served
  - c. Agency expectations of the student
  - d. Agency relationships to the community and other agencies
2. Supervises student's overall function within the agency
3. Provides opportunity to practice more than one method of social work when possible, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
4. Provides assignments (in cooperation with faculty Field Instructor) which are meaningful to students and contributory to agency goals
5. Meets regularly with students regarding client movement, student performance, agency policies and procedures
6. Prepares a written evaluation on each student two weeks before the end of each semester and at midterm and shares this with student and faculty Field Instructor
7. Informs the Field Director of any extended period of absence;

8. Notifies faculty Field Instructor immediately of any concerns regarding student performance.

## **9. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Participate in fieldwork a minimum of two days per week for 200 clock hours per semester. Changes to this expectation must be approved by the faculty Field Instructor. 400 total hours is a CSWE requirement.
2. Exhibit the following professional behaviors:
  - a. Dress appropriately according to the nature of the field setting;
  - b. Be on time for placement;
  - c. Participate fully in activities including supervisory conferences, seminars, team meetings, etc.;
  - d. Meet agency deadlines for reports written to agency standards;
  - e. Meet program deadlines for reports written to program standards and deadlines;
  - f. Call the agency if unable to report to work (time missed must be made up on off or vacation days);
  - g. Use all time at the agency constructively to further student professional competence and support agency purpose (i.e. don't do homework for other classes while in the field).
3. Write and submit process recordings and assessment/service plans to their field instructor per schedule and submit paperwork to their agency supervisor once critiqued and returned;
4. Complete all agency paperwork requirements in a timely manner;
5. Keep agency staff apprised of client situation for necessary backup.
6. Write a self-evaluation two weeks before the end of each semester.

## **10. DISCONTINUATION OF STUDENT PLACEMENT**

There are four primary reasons why student placements may be discontinued: the placement is inappropriate for student learning needs; the agency is dissatisfied with the level of student work; the student decides to leave the program; or the faculty Field Instructor determines that student work is sufficiently below standard to impair their ability to complete the program.

1. If the placement is inappropriate for student learning needs or the agency is dissatisfied:
  - a. Except under very unique circumstances, any change of placement will be implemented no later than the end of the fall semester;
  - b. If the student desires a change they must submit a request, in writing, to their faculty Field Instructor, which explicates concerns and reasons for the request;

- c. Student and Field Instructor will meet to evaluate the student concerns;
  - d. Student, Field Instructor, and Agency Supervisor then may meet jointly to determine if the present placement can be adjusted to meet the student's needs;
  - e. If no satisfactory adjustment can be made, the Field Instructor will recommend to the Field Director, in writing, that a change in field placement is needed.
  - f. The Field Director will determine if the change is approved, denied, or further information is needed.
2. If a student decides that they no longer want to continue in the placement for reasons other than learning needs not being met:
  3. The student should meet with the Field Instructor to discuss their reasons before the beginning of the second semester in the field;
  4. The Field Instructor will inform the Field Director, in writing, that the student will leave the placement and leave the program;
  5. The student will follow the necessary process for termination with clients and agency;
  6. The student will withdraw from the Field and Practice course of the semester they are leaving;
  7. If a student leaves the field in the fall semester, they will not be considered for readmission until the following fall.
  8. The student will need to reapply to the program in the spring of the year before they wish to be readmitted.
  9. Subsequent field placement and concurrent course work must be taken in a single academic year upon reenrollment.
  10. If a student's performance is determined inadequate by the Field Instructor:
  11. The Field Instructor will inform the student of all inadequacies, as they become apparent;
  12. The Field Instructor and student will devise an action plan and contract to correct these inadequacies;
  13. If student performance remains substandard by the end of the first semester in the field, student will be discontinued from participation in the program;
  14. The student is expected to follow the necessary process for termination with clients and agency;
  15. The student may grieve the decision of the Field Instructor by following the grievance procedures outlined above.

## **11. DISCONTINUATION OF AGENCY AS A PLACEMENT**

If the agency is not meeting Castleton University expectations of providing a professional field experience for students with sufficient quantity and/or quality of assignments, the following steps are taken:

1. The Faculty Field Instructor meets with appropriate agency staff to determine if appropriate changes can be made by the agency. This may be an ongoing process over the year.
2. If agency and Faculty Field Instructor agree that they cannot meet each other's needs and/or expectations and are unwilling or unable to change, the Faculty Field Instructor will recommend to the Field Director that the program will no longer place students in that agency.
3. The Field Director will make the final decision if a placement will be discontinued.
4. If such a determination is made by the end of the first semester, the school will place the student(s) elsewhere for the remainder of the academic year. Under special circumstances, a student's placement can be changed during the spring semester.
5. If the determination occurs later, and the workload is insufficient, the Faculty Field Instructor will attempt to develop additional assignments for the affected student(s), and will reconsider the viability of the placement for the subsequent year.
6. If the Field Director determines the agency does not meet the requirements of a field placement after the completion of a placement, the Field Director will meet with the Agency Supervisor or executive to inform them of the decision. Placements may ask to be placements again in the future.
7. The Field Director will inform the program faculty.

**Agency Contract  
Castleton University  
Social Work Program**

1. The University will recommend for field instruction only students whose educational performance (reflecting the appropriate professional knowledge, skills and ethnics) indicates a relatively high degree of promise in social work, insofar as these can be judged in the University situation.
2. The agency placement will be arranged in conference between the Field Director and each student individually to explore his/her suitability for the particular agency.
3. Responsibilities of student, school, and agency are spelled out in the "Field Manual" (appended) and are the conditions for this agreement.
4. Students are placed for the academic year, Tuesdays and Thursdays, for a total of 400 clock hours. School holidays and vacations are observed although students may opt to come in on their own time.
5. The agency will reimburse the students, at the usual rate for mileage incurred in providing service to clients.
6. As a token of appreciation for the contribution made by the agency to the educational program of the University, a certificate equivalent to one-half tuition for a three-credit course (one certificate for each student per semester placed at the agency) will be presented to the agency to be made available to any employee the agency wishes to designate.

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Signature of Program Director for the University

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Signature of Executive for Agency

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Name of Agency

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Date

## **PART III—THE PROFESSION**

### ***1. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS (NASW)***

NASW is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world with more than 155,000 members. *The NASW supports the professional development and growth of the nation's social workers, and advocates for sound social policies that improve life for all people. Our members are accomplished practitioners, educators, researchers and policy makers, who are employed in a wide range of settings in rural, suburban and urban communities.* Join as a student and get the *Social Work* journal online, *NASW News* paper, substantial savings on books, continuing education credits, and monographs, reduced insurance rates, and, most importantly, membership in your professional organization. Membership packets are available from any social work faculty member. Student membership is about one-third of the cost for regular membership and, if you join while a student, you only pay one-half of the regular member dues for two years following your graduation.

### ***2. NASW CODE OF ETHICS***

The *NASW Code of Ethics* serves six purposes:

1. The *Code* identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.
2. The *Code* summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide social work practice.
3. The *Code* is designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.
4. The *Code* provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable.
5. The *Code* socializes practitioners new to the field to social work's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards.
6. The *Code* articulates standards that the social work profession itself can use to assess whether social workers have engaged in unethical conduct. NASW has formal procedures to adjudicate ethics complaints filed against its members. \* In subscribing to this *Code*, social workers are required to cooperate in its implementation, participate in NASW adjudication proceedings, and abide by any NASW disciplinary rulings or sanctions based on it.

### **Summary of Social Work Values & Principles**

- Service – The social worker's primary goal is to help people in need and address social problems;
- Social Justice - social workers challenge social injustices;
- Dignity and Worth of the Person - social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person;
- Importance of Human Relationships -social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships;
- Integrity - social workers behave in a trustworthy manner;
- Competence - social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.

National Association of Social Workers web page, 2017, Silver Spring, Maryland.

### 3. COMMENTS FROM GRADUATES:

1. Prior to entering the Social Work Program at CSC, I was indecisive about choosing a career path. Once I learned of social work and all the possibilities and opportunities that Social Work has to offer, I was enlightened. The Social Work Program at CSC is an accredited program that utilizes an eclectic approach. It provides students with a sense of self awareness, skills, and tools to be successful in the future. The three professors are incredibly supportive, knowledgeable and they each have very unique teaching styles. Today I am very grateful for having the experience of graduating from the Social Work Program at CSC.

Lisa Brown, BSW

2. The program and professors in the social work program at Castleton State College has been my greatest asset in following my aspirations to become a social worker. I feel that the social work program has thoroughly prepared me to be a devoted, knowledgeable, and skilled social work professional.

Kandi Clark

3. Exceptional learning experience. Hands-on field placement unlike any other I've ever had because it gives you real-world experience, so you get a real good idea of what you are getting yourself into before you do it.

Charlie Mae Johnson

4. The thing that I like the most about the social work program is the support group that it forms within itself.

Jona Holden

5. Overall, I am confident and pleased with the education I've received at Castleton. I have experienced valuable lessons and feel prepared to accept the challenges of social work in my professional career.

Annette Loso

6. Overall, I believe that Castleton has a very strong social work program. I do feel prepared to go into the field as a generalist practitioner.

Jessica Mansfield

7. I believe the CSC Social Work Program faculty is a talented group of individuals that has a great deal to offer students pursuing the field of social work.

Janine Small

8. The best part of my social work program has been the two semesters of field experience that I have currently completed. Through field I was able to put theory into practice. It was exciting to apply theories and models that I have learned to real life client situations. I really cannot think of what I liked least about my social work program.

Danielle Wasirick

9. Attending smaller classes was a plus. It allowed the student to become familiar with his or her classmates and gave the student a chance to know their professors better. In other words, the experience was more personal.

Rhonda Lee

10. What I like about the CSC Social Work Program is that there are three very different professors who each have their own unique style of teaching. Kerrie Fisher
11. The confidence and knowledge I have gained from the Social Work Program are invaluable. Alix Langer
12. I look at my education as a puzzle. Coming into the program, I had a frame with scattered pieces within. This was provided by my values and beliefs. As I took classes more and more pieces to the puzzle came together and a picture was forming. Now as I am in my final semester the puzzle is almost complete. I look at what I have learned through my classes and see it as a whole experience instead of a bunch of different ones. Jennifer Maxham
13. Once I got through the difficulties associated with transferring into to the CSC Social Work Program, I found that I was given the tools and the opportunity to learn and grow in ways I hadn't in other programs. Vicki Farnham
14. It was in the Castleton BSW program that I acquired my social work identity, values, skills, and much of my knowledge base. The faculty was there to challenge and inspire me. The high academic standards prepared me for success in graduate school. Kristina Williams, MSW
15. CSC gave us a good foundation for starting our professional practices. It inspired us to continue our education in the social work field. Frank Reed, MSW and Cheryl Reed
16. The CSC program gave me a lot of insight into what people actually need in the community. The program really gave me a fuller view of the holistic approach. Gary Chapin
17. The CSC social work program gave me an eclectic approach. I learned a little about a lot of things. As a nontraditional student, I felt like I still got the benefit of the program. Pat Szabo, MSW

## IS A CAREER IN SOCIAL WORK IN YOUR FUTURE?

**Becky Turner, DSW, ACSW, LCSW**

Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville Alabama

*If you think you would like a career in social work, you are not alone. As of February 2019, there are 295 Master of Social Work degree programs in the United States, and 541 BSW degree programs. It appears that social work is a popular field of study. With this many students preparing for careers in social work one might think the job market is flooded with too many social workers looking for employment opportunities in a wide variety of settings both public and private, where social workers perform a wide range of tasks using a myriad of skills.*

*But if you are concerned about job opportunities, consider the following employment settings and roles as possibilities for the baccalaureate social worker:*

<i>Nursing home</i>	<i>Foster care</i>
<i>Hospital</i>	<i>Daycare</i>
<i>Home health agency</i>	<i>Protective services</i>
<i>Public school system</i>	<i>Crisis intervention</i>
<i>Public health</i>	<i>Management/administrator</i>
<i>Child care group home</i>	<i>Research</i>
<i>Mental health center</i>	<i>Program evaluation</i>
<i>Juvenile Court</i>	<i>Program development</i>
<i>Corrections</i>	<i>Advocacy</i>
<i>Industry</i>	<i>Residential treatment</i>
<i>Adoptions</i>	<i>Community organizing</i>
<i>Hospice</i>	

*The employment opportunities in the social work profession are numerous. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) defines social work's primary mission as "...to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living." (NASW Code of Ethics 2005). When working with people to enhance or restore social functioning, social workers are concerned with the interactions between people and their social environment. Those interactions might be enhanced or restored by using the following interventions:*

- 1) Counseling at the individual, group, or family level;*
- 2) Linking people with resources, services, and opportunities to improve their functioning;*
- 3) Bringing about change in environmental systems, institutions, and organizations so they become more responsive to people's needs;*
- 4) Bringing about changes in existing policies and creating new policies that provide for people's needs and well-being.*
- 5) Managing/administrating programs.*

## **DO YOU HAVE THE QUALITIES NEEDED TO PURSUE A CAREER IN SOCIAL WORK?**

*Let's take a look at some of the qualities necessary for social work practice. Do you care about people? Social workers need to have the ability to be empathetic with others; to be able to understand the other person's feelings. This is not to say that one must feel as the other person feels. That is sympathy. Empathy is an understanding of another's feelings.*

## **DO YOU VALUE INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES?**

*An important quality that a social worker must possess is a non-judgmental attitude. While social workers are not expected to agree with or approve of the values and behaviors of other people, it is imperative that social workers communicate a non-judgmental attitude toward others. Acceptance of others and a belief in the worth and dignity of every human being are values which the social work profession holds dear. They are values, which are conveyed through non-judgmental behaviors.*

## **CAN YOU KEEP A SECRET?**

*In social work it is expected that the client's confidentiality will be safeguarded. Social workers must be able to respect a client's right to privacy. By respecting a person's privacy, the social worker affirms that person's worth and dignity. Protecting a client's confidentiality shows respect for that person and builds trust.*

## **DO YOU LIKE A CHALLENGE?**

*If your answer to this question is yes, then social work may be for you. Social workers employ problem-solving skills when working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are challenged by the variety of problems presented to them by the client systems they serve. Problems vary by type and degree of severity. Social workers are challenged to creatively seek out and develop resources to assist with the different problems and client systems, which they encounter, in their social work experiences. Social workers are challenged to be advocates for those who are unable to advocate for themselves. Groups needing a social worker's advocacy include children, the aged, the disabled, minorities, and the poor.*

## **CAN YOU MAKE TOUGH DECISIONS?**

*Social workers make decisions every day. Some decisions are easy, such as deciding when to schedule appointments. Other decisions are difficult, such as whether to take an abused child into protective custody and place that child in a foster home. Social workers frequently make decisions, which are considered to be ethical dilemmas. Ethical dilemmas pose difficult and painful challenges to social workers. They involve deciding which ethics, among the ethics subscribed to by the social work profession, and should take precedence in situations with clients. For example, clients may reveal information potentially threatening to someone else. Taking preventative action by revealing the information to law enforcement officials and to the person who is threatened involves revealing information, which a client shared in confidence. The ethical dilemma involves making a choice between two ethics: preserving or protecting human life and confidentiality. What makes decision-making in ethical dilemmas like this one difficult is that there are no clear-cut guidelines available for their solutions. Can you*

*make hard decisions like these and follow through with them? If your answer is yes, then social work may be the profession for you.*

### **DO YOU HAVE GOOD INTERPERSONAL SKILLS?**

*Do you get along well with others? Good communication and listening skills are needed by social workers. If you have good interpersonal skills you are in a position to further develop those skills for social work practice. You will add skills such as confrontation, support, limit setting, self-disclosure, and others to your interviewing skills.*

### **CAN YOU WORK AS A TEAM MEMBER?**

*Good interpersonal skills make it easier for people to work cooperatively with others. In social work there are many opportunities for you to work with other professionals on interdisciplinary teams using a team approach. An interdisciplinary team consists of team members from different professions who are all involved in the client's treatment plan. It is common for medical, legal, educational, and social work professionals to work together on interdisciplinary teams in an effort to develop and implement the best treatment approach for their clients. If you enjoy working cooperatively with others, then social work might indeed be a good career choice for you.*

*Our thanks to our colleague Becky Turner for her permission to reprint this article.*

### **DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE?**

If you do, then consider making an appointment with one of the social work faculty in the Department of Sociology/Social Work/Criminal Justice. Program faculty will be happy to discuss the social work curriculum with you and answer any questions which you might have about careers in social work.

The Council on Social Work Education accredits the BSW program at Castleton University every eight years. The program was fully accredited again in 2013 and is preparing to again be fully accredited in 2021.

## **PART IV--APPENDICES**

### **Appendix A:**

#### **ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS BETWEEN CCV & SACC AND THE CASTLETON SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

**FALL 2018**

Students transferring from CCV or SUNY Adirondack who have acquired the AA degree in Human Services or Behavioral Sciences can typically complete their BSW at Castleton in two years. These students must take all required prerequisite courses prior to or concurrently with applying for program admission in the spring of the junior year. Early field, if required, must be completed before the program application. Please refer to the articulation agreement documents on the CU website for specific coursework expectations at those schools and at CU upon transfer.

### **Appendix B:**

#### ***PHI ALPHA HONOR SOCIETY* A NATIONAL HONORARY SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS**

##### **PURPOSES**

**“Through knowledge – the challenge to serve”**

The purposes of Phi Alpha Honor Society are to provide a closer bond among students of social work and to promote humanitarian goals of education for social workers, and invites into membership those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work. Presently over 475 chapters including Castleton University (2019) are in existence. The chapter name assigned to Castleton University Social Work Program is Iota Rho.

An undergraduate student is eligible for membership after achieving the following national requirements and meeting local chapter requirements:

- A. Declared social work as a major
- B. Achieved sophomore status
- C. Completed 8 semester hours of required social work courses.
- D. Achieved an overall grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale)
- E. Achieved a 3.5 grade point average in required social work courses.

### **Appendix C: SOCIAL ISSUES CLUB**

The purpose of the Social Issues Club is to engage in activities which seek to improve a social condition(s). These activities may take various forms including self-education, public education, advocacy, direct help to people and sponsorship of events. Most of the members are social work majors, but any student who is interested in human service/social welfare issues is welcome. In addition, the Social Issues Club provides a forum for interaction among social work students and faculty.

#### **Appendix D: ADVISORY COUNCIL**

A group of social workers, interested parties, students, and consumers who act as advisors to the CU Social Work Program. This group meets 2-3 time a year, more frequently as needed. The council brings community issues to the attention of the faculty. The faculty share ideas about the program for feedback. The council may vote to provide official advice to the program.

MR: 4/7/20