

**Professional Behavior Agreement Form**  
**West Chester University of PA - Undergraduate Social Work Department**

*I \_\_\_\_\_ have read the overview of the professional behaviors listed below and I understand that I am expected to follow these behaviors as I enter the professional Social Work courses.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

**Official Evaluation of Professional Behaviors**

The evaluation of Professional Behaviors of candidates/students is conducted through the CESW's online assessment software system Tk20. The evaluation is administered to candidates in every social work course every semester. The evaluation must be completed by the end of the semester by a faculty member and, if appropriate, the Field Instructor. University Staff also have the capability of submitting a concern.

**Professional Behaviors in the Classroom and Field**

All students in the Undergraduate and Graduate Social Work program within the College of Education and Social Work (CESW) must adhere to the code of ethics as outlined by the [National Association of Social Workers](#). CESW views its students as mature individuals who are either preparing to be members of the profession or continuing to develop their knowledge and skills within the profession. Students are expected to exhibit a high level of integrity, humility and empathy when working with others (client, peers, instructors, etc) all while upholding the professional standards of conduct. Students are also expected to adhere to additional expectations set forth by Faculty and Field Instructors.

**Problematic behaviors** refer to a student's behaviors, attitudes, or characteristics that may require remediation, but are perceived as not excessive or unexpected for professionals in training. Performance anxiety, discomfort with clients' diverse lifestyles and ethnic backgrounds, and lack of appreciation of agency norms are examples of problematic behaviors that are usually remedied and not likely to progress into ethical misconduct, impairment, or incompetence.

**Ethical misconduct** occurs when the NASW Code of Ethics is not followed. This code is intended to provide both the general principles and the specific decision rules to cover most situations encountered by professional social workers in their professional activities. It has as its primary goal the welfare and protection of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. It is the individual responsibility of each social worker to aspire to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct. Social workers promote social justice and social change, respect, protect human and civil rights, and do not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

**Impairment** is defined as an interference in professional functioning that is reflected in one or more of the following ways:

- Inability or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into one's repertoire of professional behavior;
- Inability or unwillingness to acquire professional skills and reach an accepted level of competency; or
- Inability or unwillingness to control personal stress, psychological disorder, or emotional reactions that may affect professional functioning.

**Incompetence** is defined as a lack of ability. This lack of ability may include inadequate professional or interpersonal skills, or academic deficiency. When students continue to provide social work services beyond their current level of competence they are violating the ethical standard of competence.

The following is a list of some, but not all, practice behaviors that can be used to infer students' ability to demonstrate the competencies outlined by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Candidates are provided opportunities to demonstrate these behaviors in a variety of settings. Behaviors can be displayed through the quality of assignments candidate completes, their interactions with instructors, staff, and colleagues, and through experiences in field practicum settings. This document will be used in every course or when a student exhibits problematic behaviors, ethical misconduct, impairment or incompetence. These behaviors may also be in violation of West Chester University policy (academic integrity, honesty).

**Students are expected to:**

- Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context
- Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations
- Demonstrate professional demeanor and behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
- Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
- Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior
- Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels
- Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experience
- Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies