

*Semester III - Spring (April to June)*

SCWK 5059 Field Instruction (450 hours) (9.0 ch)

*Semester IV - Fall (September to December)*

SCWK 5083 Field Instruction II (250 hours) (3.0 ch)

SCWK 5323 Social Policy - Current and Global Contexts (3.0 ch)

Two elective courses (6.0 ch)

**Total credit hours****60 ch****Mi'kmaq/Maliseet Bachelor of Social Work Program (MMBSW)**

The Mi'kmaq/Maliseet Bachelor of Social Work (MMBSW) program is offered by St. Thomas University in partnership with First Nation Communities. The program is directed toward First Nation peoples in New Brunswick and the Maritime Provinces who wish to become social workers in their communities. The classes are held in Sackville, NB.

The MMBSW program respects and celebrates the traditions and cultures of Indigenous peoples as demonstrated by its flexible and culturally relevant approach to incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and learning throughout the social work courses that are offered in the program.

The program consists of 60 credit hours of social work courses to be completed over a three-year period. Applicants must have completed a minimum of 60 credit hours of liberal arts courses as a prerequisite to admission. The fourth cohort will be admitted in September 2014 until June 2017.

Students wishing to be considered under the Educational Equity Admission Policy must indicate their request in the designated section of the application form.

**Required Withdrawal from the BSW program on the Grounds of Unsuitability**

The profession of social work requires that students acquire a body of knowledge and skills and demonstrate an ability to act in accordance with the demands of the profession. The university may require a student to withdraw or be suspended or meet other requirements which may be imposed as a condition of continued enrolment in the BSW program. Suitability or fitness for the profession of social work is a requirement for continuation in the program.

## C. School of Social Work Policies

### A. Policy Governing Professional Suitability in the School of Social Work

The Canadian Association of Social Work Education (CASWE) requires the School of Social Work to have in place procedures for assessing the suitability of their students for professional practice. St. Thomas University has developed the following policy to be invoked when there are concerns related to a student's professional suitability.

#### 1. Scope and Purpose

- 1.1 All students in the Bachelor of Social Work program are expected to demonstrate attitudes, values, and conduct that are consistent with the Canadian Association of Social Workers' (CASW) and the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers' (NBASW) Codes of Ethics during classroom participation, through written assignments, in presentations, and in field contexts.

1.2 The purpose of this policy is to:

- Increase student and faculty awareness of the attitudes, values, and conduct that are suitable for a professional social worker;
- Comply with the requirements of professional regulatory bodies;
- Assist faculty in evaluating student suitability for social work practice; and
- Seek to ensure students are made aware of any concerns through a fair and transparent process.

1.3 All students at St. Thomas University are required to comply with Course Regulations, the Code of Student Conduct, the Policy on Harassment and Discrimination, academic appeal and dismissal procedures, and any other University policies. Students enrolled in our professional programs have additional responsibilities regarding personal and professional suitability through compliance with specific School of Social Work policies included in the University Calendar and in the PDBSW and MMBSW Student Handbooks.

## **2. Behaviour that May Result in a Suitability Review**

2.1 Students must be aware that their behavior outside the University and social work practice environments, including certain aspects of their personal lives, may have an impact on their suitability for practice.

2.2 This policy is to be applied when it appears that a student is failing to maintain suitability for professional social work practice. The following is a non-exhaustive list of circumstances that may raise concerns about professional suitability and trigger a review process:

- Evidence of a violation of the Professional Code of Ethics of the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers (NBASW) and/or the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW); or of the New Brunswick Human Rights Act;
- Attempts to gain advantage or deceive, through falsification, forgery, or misuse of any record or document, or through false statements or representations;
- Harassment, or any threat, intimidation, or attempt to harm another person;
- Persistent substance use that interferes with the student's ability to function within a professional context;
- A physical or mental condition which impairs essential social work performance, recognizing that reasonable accommodation for the special needs of individuals is required by the New Brunswick Human Rights Act;
- Prevention or intent to prevent any person from exercising or intending to exercise his or her right to freedom of speech or freedom of belief;
- An acquired conviction due to a violation of the criminal code of Canada, which demonstrates lack of judgment and integrity, including, but not limited to, physical assault, sexual assault, or drug trafficking; and
- Failure to disclose pending criminal charges or convictions (except where convictions have been pardoned).

## **3. The Review Process**

3.1 This process is designed to assist students in dealing with identified concerns that have an impact on their performance in the BSW program.

3.1 The following procedures will be followed should a breach of any of the School's, Practicum Agency's or University's policies, or Codes of Ethics occur. Depending on the nature of the infraction, the School of Social Work reserves the right to proceed with a review at any point that is deemed to be appropriate. Anonymous allegations

will not be investigated; however, they will be kept in a confidential file in the office of the Director.

- 3.2 Records of any incidents that are subject to the review process will be placed in the student's confidential file in the Registrar's Office.
- 3.3 All parties, at all stages, will respect the confidentiality of information that may be disclosed during the review process.

#### *Stage One Review*

**Classroom Instructor and Student:** When a classroom instructor has concerns about a student's professional behavior, he or she should:

- a) Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve them;
- b) Involve the student's faculty advisor to assist in supporting the student to resolve the concerns;
- c) Document dates and content of all meetings with the student; and, if warranted,
- d) Notify the Director that Stage One of the review process is being undertaken.

**Field Instructor and Student:** When a Field Instructor has concerns about a student's professional behavior, he or she should:

- a) Discuss those concerns directly with the student and seek to work with the student to resolve them;
- b) Document dates and content of all meetings with the student;
- c) Notify the Faculty Field Liaison that Stage One of the review process is being undertaken; and, if warranted,
- d) Discuss the concerns with the Field Education Coordinator, who will, if warranted,
- e) Notify the Director that Stage One of the review process is being undertaken.

In many instances, meetings between the parties will resolve the concerns and will not lead to further reviews. The Field Education Coordinator shall record in writing the discussions at the meetings and the resolution of the matter at this time. If, after two weeks, the concerns are not resolved at this stage, the parties will proceed to the next stage.

#### *Stage Two Review*

**Classroom Instructor and Student.** When a Stage Two review is deemed necessary:

- a) The Instructor will notify the Director that the next stage of review is being requested;
- b) The Instructor and the Director will meet with the student to discuss the concerns. The student may elect to bring someone to the meeting. If the student plans to attend the meeting with someone, he or she must notify the Director in advance.

**Field Instructor and Student.** When a Stage Two review is deemed necessary:

- a) The Field Education Coordinator will inform the Faculty Field Liaison, the Director, and the student that the next stage of review is being requested relating to the field placement concerns; and
- b) The Director will meet with the student, the Field Instructor, the Field Education Coordinator and the Faculty Field Liaison to discuss the concerns. The student may elect to bring someone to the meeting. If the student plans to attend the meeting with someone, he/she must notify the Director in advance.

Either the Director (in the case of concerns arising from the classroom) or the Field Education Coordinator (in the case of concerns arising from the field placement) will determine the na-

ture of the concerns and gather sufficient information to develop a written plan to address the concerns, if one is needed. No further action may be required, or the student may be asked in writing to modify his or her behavior and/or seek appropriate help. If, after two weeks, the concerns are not resolved at this stage, the parties will proceed to the next stage.

#### *Stage Three Review*

Intervention at Stage Three will require the following:

- a) Referral for formal disciplinary action, if appropriate, under the St. Thomas University Student Code of Conduct, the Policy on Harassment and Discrimination, or other relevant University policy;
- b) A meeting of faculty in the School of Social Work to determine if a recommendation should be made to the Vice-President (Academic & Research) that a student be dismissed from a course or field placement, or be required to withdraw from the BSW program.

#### **4. Right of Appeal**

Students who wish to appeal their dismissal from a course or Field Placement, or the requirement to withdraw from the BSW program, may do so by submitting a written appeal, care of the Registrar, to the Senate Admissions and Academic Standing Committee. Appeals should be based on substantial reasons with supporting documentation. For more detailed information about the appeal procedure, students may contact the Registrar's Office.

Parts of this policy have been adapted from the University of Manitoba Faculty of Social Work's Professional Unsuitability By-Law and the Algoma University School of Social Work's Specific Behaviour Policy.

### B. Policy Governing Deferred, Denied, or Unsuccessful Field Placements in the School of Social Work

To ensure that the interests of Social Services users are a first priority, and to provide the best professional training possible, the following procedures will be followed in the case of a deferred, denied, or unsuccessful field placement.

#### **1. Deferred Field Placement**

A field placement may be deferred if the student submits a written request to the Director of the School of Social Work citing mental or physical health or other extenuating circumstances.

Should the field placement be deferred, the School of Social Work will negotiate a placement at the earliest possible time, consistent with the student's academic program and the availability of an appropriate field placement setting. Field placements are normally offered twice a year: from April until the end of June, and from September until early December. Alternative arrangements may be considered by the Field Education Coordinator at the request of the student and in consultation with faculty of the School of Social Work.

#### **2. Denied Field Placement**

The School of Social Work may deny a field placement for any of the following reasons:

- 2.1 The prospective student has not successfully completed required courses and/or course assignments;
- 2.2 There is confirmed evidence that the student has violated the Professional Codes of

Ethics of the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers, the Canadian Association of Social Workers, or the New Brunswick Human Rights Act;

- 2.3 The student's health renders him or her incapable of carrying out the basic tasks and professional requirements of social work practice in a designated field placement;
- 2.4 The student has not provided a current adequate vulnerable sector/criminal record check, or disclosed pending criminal charges.

When a student is deemed not ready to begin a direct practice or social action field placement, the onus is on the student to demonstrate readiness by adequately addressing the concerns that led to the decision to deny a field placement. In the case of a postponement, the student may be required to pay a pro-rated tuition fee.

The University is obliged to arrange a placement for each student accepted into the program, unless the student has been denied a field placement based on the above reasons.

If, for some reason, no suitable placement can be identified, or a student is denied a placement due to circumstances beyond his or her control, arrangements will be made for a suitable placement at a later date at no additional cost to the student.

### **3. Withdrawal from a Field Placement**

A student who chooses to withdraw from a field placement for a reason not deemed valid by the School of Social Work is not guaranteed a subsequent field placement.

However, if a student withdraws from a field placement for valid reasons (on medical or compassionate grounds), arrangements will be made for a suitable placement at a later date at no additional cost to the student.

### **4. Dismissal from a Field Placement**

The Field Education Coordinator and Faculty Field Liaison will support all students in resolving issues that arise in their field placements. When these efforts have not been successful, the School of Social Work and/or host agency (after consultation with the Director of the School of Social Work) may recommend to the Vice-President (Academic & Research) that a student be dismissed from a field placement when there is evidence of the following:

- 4.1 The student has failed to adhere to the attendance policy (see Appendix), and has failed to negotiate an acceptable alternative arrangement;
- 4.2 The student has violated the Professional Codes of Ethics of the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers, the Canadian Association of Social Workers, or the New Brunswick Human Rights Act;
- 4.3 The student has chosen to discontinue the field placement for any reason not deemed valid by the School of Social Work;
- 4.4 The School of Social Work has determined that the student is not suitable for social work practice as per the Professional Suitability Policy;
- 4.5 The student's behaviour or attitude has interfered with his or her ability to work with agency staff and/or service users;
- 4.6 The student has not followed through in meeting learning objectives;
- 4.7 The student has been charged with harassment or violations of ethical codes.

### **5. Procedure**

When there is evidence that a student is not meeting the requirements for successful completion of a field placement, the Review Process outlined in Section 3 of the Policy

Governing Professional Suitability will be followed.

## **Appendix**

### *Attendance in Field Placements*

The field education program is guided by the requirements of the Canadian Association of Social Work Education (CASWE). The CASWE policy requires that students enrolled in the BSW program receive a minimum of 700 field instruction hours.

Students are expected to make up any missed time due to illness, storm days, strike action, and/or holidays. Flexibility in making up missed time is possible and may include, besides additional field placement days, time spent doing relevant field-related activities. These activities can include journal writing, library research and readings on field-related work, group work preparation and design, and/or the attending of relevant outside meetings and workshops. Students must document these work hours and consult the Field Instructor on their plans for making up missed field days.

Accumulating overtime hours is allowed, provided that it does not mean that a placement ends earlier than two weeks before the official placement ending time.

## C. Policy on Social and Electronic Media and the Use of Electronic Devices in the School of Social Work

### **1.0 Preamble**

The Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) requires that the School of Social Work have a policy that covers the “ethical use of all forms of social media to ensure the privacy, confidentiality, and interests of the academic unit and its field placement community” and that demonstrates “how the policy and procedures are consistent with the relevant human rights legislation, with the mission of CASWE, and with the mission of the academic unit concerned.”

The School of Social Work recognizes that the use of social media and electronic devices can enhance learning and knowledge sharing, and support social justice goals. However, the widespread integration of social media into personal and professional life poses unique challenges and risks to professionals and service users.

Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with policies related to ethical standards of communication including, but not limited to, the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers (NBASW) Code of Ethics, the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) Code of Ethics, the New Brunswick Human Rights Act, and the St. Thomas University Code of Student Conduct and the Policy on Harassment and Discrimination.

### **2.0 Definitions**

- 2.1 **Social Media:** “Social media” refers to socially interactive networked information and communication technologies by which information, opinions, and discussions are presented for public consumption on the internet. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Texting, Email, Blogs, YouTube, Wikipedia, etc.
- 2.2 **Post:** “Post” refers to any user-generated information shared on a social media site. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook status updates, tweets, blog updates, etc.
- 2.3 **Electronic Device:** “Electronic device” refers to any computer or wireless device that provides communication by e-mail, telephone, text messaging, internet browsing, or is used for recording purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, cellphones, smart-

phones, tablets, smart pens, laptops, etc.

### 3.0 Purpose and Scope

3.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- Offer practical guidelines for responsible electronic communication;
- Provide an awareness of and guidelines for appropriate and professional use of electronic devices;
- Comply with the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) requirements regarding ethical use of social media;
- Protect the reputation of St. Thomas University, the School of Social Work, its staff, students, partner organizations, and service users.

3.2 This policy applies to all social work students in academic and field placement settings.

3.3 These guidelines apply to school and field placement related sites and issues and are not meant to infringe upon students' personal interaction or commentary online. As social work students, however, it is their responsibility to understand and live by the NBASW and CASW Codes of Ethics consistently.

3.4 All social media posts, publications, and sites should be treated as public and permanent. Social media communication or posts are never truly private; even private messages can be duplicated, and read not only by recipients but also by service providers. Students must recognize that they are legally liable for anything they write or present online. It must be noted that anything published on the web is not confidential. Students may be subject to a review (governed by the Policy on Professional Suitability) by the School of Social Work for commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, harassing, libellous, or hostile.

### 4.0 General Guidelines for Appropriate Use of Social Media

- When communicating electronically, students should conduct themselves with the same level of professionalism as in a face-to-face environment;
- Students shall maintain respectful electronic communication with all members of the School of Social Work to ensure a professional working and learning environment;
- Students shall respect the privacy of colleagues and classmates. Defamatory, harassing, or insulting comments, or comments that produce a hostile work and/or learning environment, constitute unprofessional behaviour and violate St. Thomas University's Code of Student Conduct;
- Students should become familiar with the privacy controls on their social networks and ensure that the general public cannot see personal details of their lives that they prefer to share only with friends and family;
- Students should be aware that even the highest level privacy setting does not ensure complete privacy;
- Students should ensure that the content of publically accessible social media comply with the NBASW and CASW Codes of Ethics and the New Brunswick Human Rights Act;
- Students should ensure that social media comments or posts do not reflect negatively on the social work profession, the School of Social Work, or the reputation of any employee or student within the School;
- Students must strictly observe confidentiality by not including identifying information about service users; the School of Social Work; placement organizations; and/or staff and students (even if unnamed);
- Unless given written permission by the School of Social Work, students are not authorized to use electronic social media sites to represent the School of Social Work;

- Students shall respect copyright and intellectual property rights;
- Students shall not approach field instructors, faculty, staff, service users, or their family members to connect on social media sites. They shall use only their professional (work/field placement) email address to communicate with clients. They shall not connect with their clients (current or past), nor allow their clients to connect with them using social media: e.g., they shall not “friend” them on Facebook or “follow” them on Twitter.

### **5.0 Guidelines for the Use of Electronic Devices in Classroom and Field Placement**

Students are required to approach the classroom environment with the same level of professionalism that applies to field placement and other professional work settings. It is important that the class is a place of focused attention to the material under review. In an effort to maintain educational integrity, respect for the rights of others, and a positive learning environment, the School of Social Work has developed the following guidelines:

- The use of handheld electronic devices during class time can be distracting, disrespectful, and viewed as unprofessional. Therefore, the use of such devices is limited to scheduled breaks;
- While laptop use in the classroom is generally discouraged, laptops may be used exclusively for note-taking purposes in consultation with the course instructor;
- All handheld electronic devices, including cellphones, must be stored out of sight. For instance, no electronic devices should be on the table or a student’s lap;
- Receipt and responses to electronic messages or phone calls during class or field placement are to be restricted to emergencies. When such a call or message is expected, the student should consult the professor or field supervisor in advance;
- Students must make themselves aware of and follow individual field placement policies regarding the use of electronic technologies; and
- It is prohibited to record classroom lectures and/or interactions through photography, audio-recording or video-recording unless authorized by the professor and all participating parties.

### **6.0 Consequences**

Inappropriate use(s) of social media channels and/or electronic devices that violate the guidelines outlined in this policy may result in a Professional Suitability Review.

Parts of this policy are adapted from the University of Cumbria’s Social Media Policy for Students; the University of British Columbia’s Okanagan School of Nursing Policy on the Appropriate Use of Electronic Devices; and the Renison University College (University of Waterloo) School of Social Work’s Social Media Policy.

## **D. Bachelor of Social Work Courses**

Post-Degree courses offered at the Fredericton campus (F) of St. Thomas University are open to Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) students only, with the exception of electives which may be available to other students, subject to the approval of the instructor.

Courses offered in Sackville, New Brunswick (S) are open to Mi’kmaq/Maliseet Bachelor of Social Work (MMBSW) students only, with the exception of electives which may be available to other MMBSW students, subject to the approval of the instructor.