

## PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College is committed to educating ethical and knowledgeable social work professionals. As you embark on this journey to become a social worker, we ask that you commit to the ethical and professional comportment codes that you are expected to follow while a student at Silberman, and which foster an atmosphere of respect and civility and a positive learning environment both at School and in practicum. These include the Hunter College Campus Code of Conduct ([Henderson Rules](#)) and the [CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity](#).

As the Henderson Rules emphasize, “The tradition of the university as a sanctuary of academic freedom and center of informed discussion is an honored one, to be guarded vigilantly. The basic significance of that sanctuary lies in the protection of intellectual freedoms; the rights of professors to teach, of scholars to engage in the advancement of knowledge, of students to learn and to express their views, free from external pressures or interference. These freedoms can flourish only in an atmosphere of mutual respect, civility and trust among teachers and students, only when members of the university community are willing to accept self-restraint and reciprocity as the condition upon which they share in its intellectual autonomy.”

In addition to the Henderson Rules and the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity, Silberman students are expected to comply with the [NASW Code of Ethics](#) and to meet Council on Social Work (CSWE) [Competency Standards](#) as they progress through the school. This includes demonstrating ethical and professional behavior at school, practicum, and in their relationships with faculty, administrative staff, fellow students, clients, colleagues, and community members. These standards are part of the evaluations made by classroom faculty, practicum instructors, advisors, and administrators who interact with students. An inability to meet these standards may result in dismissal from the program or a refusal of the School to attest that the student has met the standards for certification as required by the New York State Education Department.

These standards are as follows:

- Students are expected to treat all persons in a caring and respectful manner, including recognizing the inherent worth and dignity of every individual and the diversity of world views and cultural values. They are expected to work diligently to understand and appreciate the ways of life and the value systems of others.
- Students are expected to demonstrate the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively to faculty, staff, fellow students, clients/community members, and other professionals and colleagues. These skills include compassion, altruism, integrity, and respect for and consideration of others. Students are also expected to demonstrate maturity and emotional stability.
- Students are expected to be willing to examine how their values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and past experiences may affect their thinking, behavior, and relationships.

Students are expected to be willing to recognize, examine, and change their behavior when it interferes with the learning environment and their relationships with faculty, administrative staff, fellow students, clients/community members, and other professionals and colleagues.

- Students are expected to demonstrate a shift from lay to professional values, skills, and knowledge to be sufficiently objective when evaluating the life situations of clients/community members and others.
- Students are expected to refrain from using language or taking actions which discriminates based on race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical ability. In practicum, they must serve and be willing to serve in an appropriate manner all persons in need of assistance.
- Students are expected to foster and cultivate a learning environment where all students can express their thoughts, feelings, opinions, and ideas and where differences are responded to with humility and respect.
- Students are expected to fulfill all attendance requirements as stated in course syllabi and practicum learning contracts. Students are expected to be attentive in class, without engaging in private conversations, texting, or other distracting activities. (e.g., driving while attending a remote class). Students are expected to be on time for class, practicum, and other appointments and to be dressed appropriately in all professional settings. Students should always be willing to accept constructive feedback from classroom and practicum Instructors and Advisors, and peers.
- Students should adhere to the professional comportment standards described herein when communicating through social media or other means about school activities, practicum, or other professionally related events. Students should also comply with the college's FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) policy, which protects student privacy, and prohibits the posting of information about, or photos and videos that depict other students or peers.
- Students shall not misrepresent their qualifications, experience, or academic credentials to others in any setting, nor misrepresent their status when communicating with practicum agencies about the practicum placement process (e.g., that the School has approved a placement when such is not the case)
- Students are expected to recognize current life stressors and to use appropriate self-care tools in mitigating the effect of these stressors on academic and practicum performance. Self-care includes the development of cooperative and facilitative relationships with faculty, practicum instructors, administrators, colleagues, and fellow

students. Students are expected to seek and utilize help for medical or emotional problems if they interfere with scholastic and professional performance.

The following describes in more detail specific skills and behaviors:

Standards	Skill Areas	Required Student Behavior
<b>Professional Ethics</b>		
<p>Conduct conforms to values and ethics of the social work profession as codified in the NASW Code of Ethics</p>	<p>Adheres to legal and ethical standards in all practice and academic roles and settings.</p> <p>Demonstrates integrity in all dealings with clients, agency and collateral staff, faculty, students, and colleagues</p> <p>Understands and follows all laws pertaining to client confidentiality.</p> <p>Demonstrates willingness to work with and advocate on behalf of vulnerable populations.</p> <p>Demonstrates awareness of and respect for diversity.</p>	<p>Does not engage in social relationships with clients; maintains appropriate boundaries with clients.</p> <p>Makes appropriate use of supervision and refers client when needed services are beyond their competence.</p> <p>Keeps commitments to clients, colleagues, and faculty.</p> <p>Disguises clients' identity in class discussions and academic papers.</p> <p>Accepts responsibility for working with vulnerable populations and participates in advocacy activities on behalf of clients.</p> <p>Willingly accepts and works with a diverse client caseload.</p>
<b>Professional Compartment and Conduct</b>		
<p>Demonstrates responsible, accountable professional behavior, protecting peers, colleagues, clients and others from the adverse</p>	<p>Explores and identifies strengths and weaknesses related to professional practice.</p>	<p>Makes productive use of supervision sessions and/or other forms of professional and academic advising and mentorship.</p>

<p>consequences of personal performance problems and misconduct.</p>	<p>Solicits and makes use of feedback regarding performance.</p> <p>Works to correct performance problems through the development of goals and strategies for professional growth.</p>	<p>Actively participates in practicum supervision.</p> <p>Seeks professional mental help and self-improvement services and consultation when necessary.</p>
<p><b>Professional Relationships</b></p>		
<p>Develops and maintains solid professional working alliances with clients, colleagues, instructors, agency personnel, faculty, advisors, and school staff. Informs practicum instructor, practicum liaison and academic adviser of problems that arise in practicum</p>	<p>Provides feedback and constructive criticism that is respectful and in accordance with agency protocol.</p> <p>Actively and constructively participates in academic and agency affairs</p>	<p>Professional interactions reflect respect, integrity, collaboration and accountability, as well as an awareness of status as a learner.</p> <p>Ends services responsibly with clients and agency, including proper notification of all relevant parties (clients, practicum instructor, practicum liaison, and/or practice faculty), and satisfactory completion of termination protocols.</p>

**Emergency Suspensions**

A violation of professional and ethical standards may result in immediate suspension, as determined by the Senior Associate Dean, from the program, pending a hearing, which will be held within 10 working days of the date of the alleged infraction if the student’s behavior represents an imminent danger to clients, other students, faculty/staff, and others (e.g., threats and/or use of violence, and/or abusive language toward clients, colleagues, students, and/or faculty and staff), or if the student has been convicted of a felony during the time of enrollment at the school.

For additional behaviors that may result in immediate suspension see Henderson Rules