

INFORMATION BROCHURE

STUDYING SOCIAL WORK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

- 1 What is social work?**
- 2 Relevance of social work for South Africa**
- 3 Career opportunities in social work**
- 4 Personal characteristics of someone wanting to study and practice social work**
- 5 Brief outline of the education and training of social work students at the University of Venda**
- 6 Ethical issues in social work education and training**
- 7 Some internet sources for obtaining interesting information on social work in South Africa and globally**
- 8 Obtaining more information on social work education and training at the University of Venda**

BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK (BSW) PROGRAMME

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Brochure is to provide prospective students with a concise overview of what the social work profession is all about and how students are educated and trained to become qualified social workers. The Brochure should assist you in deciding whether you want to study social work. The Brochure must be studied in conjunction with the official calendars of the University of Venda

1 WHAT IS SOCIAL WORK?

There are many definitions and descriptions of what social work is. In fact most social workers and social work academics will most probably have their personal definitions for social work.

But it is important that the profession of social work has a definition with which the majority of social workers can identify. Such a definition was formulated and adopted at an international conference in Montreal (Canada) during 2000 by the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) as well as the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW).

The definition reads as follows:

“The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilizing theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work”.

A number of concepts stated in the above definition needs to be clarified very briefly so as to better understand what social work is all about.

- **Profession.** The word profession basically means that the social work activities are based on sound theory (knowledge), practice principles and techniques. The activities of social workers are properly described and social workers must apply their actions in accordance to the Social Service Professions Act (Act 110 of 1978). The term ‘social worker’ is a so called protected title which may only be used by qualified social workers
- **Social change, problem solving, empowerment and liberation.** These concepts basically tell us that social workers believe that people and circumstances can change for the better and that people can improve their live styles and circumstances. Social workers therefore do not accept that people are or should remain victims to their own on someone else’s thoughts and actions.

Theories of human behaviour and social systems. Assisting people to deal with a wide variety of problems and social circumstances that impact negatively on their lives, is not simply a matter of telling people what to do and not to do. People and their circumstances are complex. If change was that easy to accomplish, there would be no need for social workers and many other helping professions. Therefore social workers must study different theories that explain behaviour and guide the process of change in individuals, groups and communities.

Human rights and social justice. Social work, like many other professions, accepts that people's functioning and the development of all kinds of problems are not only the results of their own personal upbringing and choices they make in life. Unless people are treated with dignity and respect and in a just manner, people often cannot make the choices they want to make to better themselves or their circumstances. Discrimination on grounds of race, religion, gender, etc as well as denying people access to growth promoting and problem solving opportunities, causes many people and communities all over the world to experience severe deprivation and stress with the result that their social functioning becomes severely impaired.

The above definition of social work implies that people who want to become social workers must identify with a professional approach to dealing with problems of people of all walks of life, race, gender, social class, values and beliefs.

2 RELEVANCE OF SOCIAL WORK FOR SOUTH AFRICA

At present there are approximately 11200 social workers registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professions. Social work is declared a 'scarce skill' by the Minister of Social Development, Dr. Zola Skweyiya which means that Government acknowledges the importance of the social work profession as a vital role player in the development of South Africa and all its people.

South Africa is a so called developing country and an emerging economy. The country as a whole can only increase and maintain a good quality of life for most of its citizens if the citizens are skill full and sufficiently competent to deal effectively with life challenges and opportunities that come their way. It is neither feasible nor desirable for a government to take care of every need of all its citizens. People must develop the skill and afforded the opportunities to take care of themselves as far as is practically and ethically possible.

Social work plays a major role in ensuring a stable social environment in which people can function. An unstable social environment in which the majority of people cannot be cared for and guided through life in an orderly and empowering way, faces social disorganisation and an increase in many social problems such as alcohol en drugs abuse, prostitution, family and child neglect, domestic violence, crime , school drop out , and so forth.

Social work, together with many other professions and civil organisations are in the forefront to assist in the developing of the country by focusing on its people as a vital resource.

When you become a social worker you are joining a fraternity of creative people who do not run away from the confrontations and challenges society poses to those who want to make the world a better place for all.

3 CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN SOCIAL WORK

Social workers apply their knowledge and practice their skills in a variety of settings.

The majority of social workers work in Government Departments such Social Development, South African Police Services, South African Defense Force, Correctional Services, Hospitals including Psychiatric Hospitals). Many social workers work for welfare organisations in the fields of Child and Family Welfare, Care for the Disabled, Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centers, Community Development organizations, Children's Homes, Mental Health, etc. In fact most organisations dealing with some or other human problem offers social work career opportunities.

There are a number of social workers that work in the field of Employee Assistance Programmes rendering a variety of services to employees of big companies or Government Department. Social workers are also in private practice and specialize in services such as marital counseling, divorce mediation, adoption, working with children, consultates to industry and government, etc. These social workers are paid by there clients or the organisations they consult for. Social workers are also able to obtain employment in overseas countries such as the United Kingdom.

Through a variety of master's degree programmes and other post qualifying training courses, social workers can develop expertise and specialisation in various fields of practice.

As far as remuneration is concerned it should be acknowledged that social workers are historically underpaid to say the least. And this is a world wide phenomenon in many countries. Social workers entering the more traditional sectors after having qualified as social workers will therefore have to accept the fact that on average salaries will enable them to maintain a very average life style. There are of course social work career opportunities in the Universities and senior managerial positions in government departments as well as private welfare organisations or other NGO's, that offer better to excellent remuneration packages.

Fortunately the South African government is in the process of reviewing the remuneration of social workers and we see a slow yet steady improvement in remuneration. Social work offers persons with initiative and creativity many opportunities for personal growth, innovation and creative service development and of course financial benefits.

4 PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SOMEONE WANTING TO STUDY AND STUDY SOCIAL WORK

The following personal characteristics contribute towards successfully completing the academic course and practice as a social worker:

- Respect and concern for all people irrespective of race, gender, beliefs and values or problems
- Tolerate and accept people that are very different from yourself
- Accept that helping people requires more than just good intentions
- Believe in the right, power and ability of people to help themselves and strive towards their own goals in life
- Ability to work under time pressure and meet deadlines
- Good reading, writing and verbal abilities to understand and express thoughts, feelings and actions
- Be able to see other people's problem separate from your own life
- Not to be emotionally overwhelmed by the problems of other people
- Have a good support system in family and /or friends
- Be able to trust someone with whom you can share your own feelings of joy and sadness /concern
- Participate in some recreational activity
- Motivated towards obtaining a professional qualification and identification with long term personal goals
- Strongly identify with the goals and objectives of social work as a profession.
- Strong interest in knowing what goes on in the world around you (socially, politically and economically).

Social workers interact with people and must therefore feel at ease with people in order to be able to engage with them meaningfully. Naturally many of these characteristics are developed over time as one matures and learns more about oneself and other people and your interaction with other people. However, it is important to be willing to undergo training that entails more than memorizing facts from books. A competent social worker is someone that is always willing and able to look at him- or herself critically with the purpose to increase own functioning for the benefit of 'self' and others.

Studying social work is by implication always also a confrontation with yourself and this discovering of yourself is a very important aspect of developing into a competent social work student and practitioner.

5 BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING CURRICULUM OF SOCIAL WORKERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

All social work training in South Africa entails a 4 year programme leading towards a BSW

(Bachelor of Social Work) degree. Because the practice of social work as well as the training of social workers in South Africa is partly governed by the Social Service Professions Act (Act 110 of 1978), as is the case in many other professions such as engineers, medical doctors, dentists, physiotherapist etc, social work education and training must also follow the curriculum (the contents of the courses that make up the training), as registered with the National Qualification Framework instituted and monitored by the South African government. All social workers in South Africa are trained at Universities only.

All Universities that educate and train social workers are obliged to teach the so called ‘exit level outcomes’. At the moment there are 27 such exit level outcomes. These outcomes give a student a good overview as to what his or her training will focus on. Each of these 27 exit level outcomes also focuses on particular skills or abilities a student must achieve in order to be declared competent.

- Note also that the exit level outcomes entail theoretical as well as practical training.
- Students will attend formal lectures and group discussions.
- Students will visit a number of welfare organisations that deliver social work services.
- Students will also be placed at a welfare organisation where practical work is done with individuals, groups and communities under the supervision of a qualified social worker. The placement. A practical work placement in the 4th year runs over a six months period and requires the student the work full time at the organisation. Students generally do not receive any remuneration during practical work although there may be some organisations that do remunerate the student.

The 27 exit level outcomes as well as the skills and abilities a student must demonstrate are presented next.

5.1 Exit level outcomes

Below each outcome an abbreviated form of the criteria that a student will be assessed on, are indicated with

1 **Develop and maintain professional social work relationships with client systems (individuals, groups, and communities)**

- knowledge and insight into nature and dynamics of client systems
- implementation of social work principles
- understanding of ethical parameters
- create enabling environments for client system to develop capacities

2 **Assess the client systems’ social functioning**

- undertake a comprehensive analysis of client needs and strengths
- application of an appropriate theoretical framework
- use of appropriate social work tools and data

- consider the influence and impact of social circumstances and social systems
 - approach to assessment is holistic
 - client system and social worker can agree on mutual goals
- 3 Plan and implement appropriate social work intervention strategies and techniques at micro, mezzo and macro level**
- consider impact of social system on client system
 - intervention is guided by assessment
 - appropriate techniques are used to achieve goals of client system
 - intervention is supported by appropriate skills, theoretical background, and use of social work contracts, tools and data
- 4 Access and utilize resources appropriate to client systems' needs and strengths**
- identify resources appropriate for client needs
 - referral to appropriate resources linked to client needs
 - networking with resources and organizations linked to client needs
- 5 Produce and maintain records of social work interventions, processes and outcomes**
- client system's files contain relevant reports complying with time frames, standards and procedures
 - reports accurately reflect intervention activities, processes and outcomes
- 6 Evaluate the outcomes of social work intervention strategies, techniques and processes**
- outcomes of interventions are clearly described in terms of client's goals, strengths and needs
 - plans to terminate or continue with services are done purposefully
 - social worker demonstrates self-awareness and reflection when evaluating outcomes
- 7 Terminate social work intervention**
- social work principles guide the process of termination
 - clients are prepared for termination
 - achievement of goals and client systems' ability to function independently guide termination
 - termination complies with the required administrative systems
- 8 Negotiate and utilize contracts during social work intervention**
- contracts contain client system/social worker agreed upon principles, expectations, goals and procedures to guide practice
 - consequences of breaching contracts by social worker and client system is spelled out
- 9 Demonstrate social work values while interacting with human diversity**
- social work actions reflect sensitivity for and ability to work with diversity

- demonstrate awareness and appreciation of different viewpoints and values analyze possible impact of diversity on professional relationship
 - referrals of clients consider clients' unique needs
- 10 Appraise and implement the ethical principles and values of social work**
- awareness of and ability to implement social work values and ethical principles
 - appraise the practical implications of values and ethical principles
 - social work values and the South African social work code of ethics is critiqued as to its potential and limitations
 - recognize impact of personal life experience and personal values on social work practice
- 11 Use, plan and execute social work research**
- research report reflects social work research knowledge and skills
 - research links knowledge construction, research and social work practice
 - formulate a logical research proposal
 - research report demonstrates application of research ethics
 - research designs and processes are clearly described
 - research interpretations are congruent with research data
- 12 Work effectively with social workers and members of inter-sectoral and multi- and/or inter-disciplinary teams in social service delivery**
- team approach in social services and different roles of team members is clearly understood
 - relationship between social work and social auxiliary work is clearly understood
 - role and value of volunteers in the welfare field is well understood
 - ethics of teamwork is well understood and demonstrated
- 13 Identify, select and implement various techniques, methods and means of raising awareness, developing critical consciousness about the structural forces of oppression, exclusion and dis-empowerment, and to engage people as change agents**
- techniques, methods and means of awareness raising are appropriate to the social issue and context focused on
 - targets of awareness raising are clearly described
 - social and cultural context in relation to awareness raising and its impact is understood and considered
 - various ways and means are explored to enhance client system self-esteem
 - people are engaged as change agents, advocates/lobbyists by building on their own strengths and resources
- 14 Analyze human behavior with regard to the intersections of race, class, culture, ethnicity, gender, differential abilities and sexual orientation**

- relationship between identity formation of individuals, groups and communities in relation to socio-structural forces and oppression is understood
 - can analyze and indicate how social stratification and - differentiation impacts on accessibility of privilege, income, status and resources
- 15 Critically appraise social welfare and social work from a global, regional (Africa) and national perspective.**
- understands the key elements, functions and principles of social welfare and social work in relation to history, socio-economic factors and political influences
 - understands similarities and differences between social welfare and social work
 - various social welfare models are critically examined with reference to impact on social work
 - understands the current and historic realities regarding social welfare and social work as in impacts on the client system
- 16 Critically appraise the current status and position of the social work profession within the South African context.**
- core characteristics and qualities of a profession (social work) are outlined
 - relationship between social work and other social service professions is critically evaluated
 - influences on the image of social work is appraised
- 17 Apply and uphold the basic values and principles in the Bill of Rights in the South African constitution in relation to social work service delivery**
- provisions of the Bill of Rights , its basic values and principles can be described
 - relationship between Bill of Rights and social work is critically evaluated
 - social work role in protecting/promoting human rights is understood
 - available resources for protection of human rights are known
- 18 Elucidate national, provincial and global governance structures, and the general laws and charters governing social welfare policy and social work services in South Africa**
- can outline structures, roles, functions and inter- relationships of each of the three spheres of government
 - social welfare related roles and functions of each sphere of government can be identified
 - the South African judicial system's structure, roles and powers ,and how they relate to social work, can be described
- 19 Demonstrate understanding of how social policies and legislation on social issues impact on these issues and how to use legislation ethically and accountably in order to protect and improve the quality of life of client systems from a social work perspective**
- nature and extent of various social issues (e.g.; alcoholism, drug abuse, child abuse)

- are described
 - analyze how social issues impact on client system
 - social issues in relation to key strengths and weaknesses/limitations of social policies is described and the impact thereof on client system
 - proposals for social policy changes are motivated
- 20 Demonstrate understanding of how social welfare policy and legislation are developed and influenced**
- describe the steps, phases and role players in developing social policy and legislation
 - understands the means by which client system can influence social policy and legislation
 - can formulate a plan/strategy to influence policy and/or legislation concerning one social issue
- 21 Demonstrate understanding of the roles, functions, knowledge and skills for effective social work supervision and consultation**
- roles and responsibilities of supervisor and supervisee are spelled out
 - understands different supervision models as well as difference between supervision and consultation
 - role of consultant is understood
 - ethical implications of supervision and consultation is understood
 - knows how to use supervision effectively
- 22 Demonstrate understanding of the roles, functions, principles and characteristics of management and administration within social service delivery**
- qualities, principles and characteristics of management is clearly understood
 - skills, duties and roles of social workers as managers is understood
 - procedures during meetings and the role of office bearers is understood
- 23 Formulate a business plan for the funding of social services**
- plans reflect feasible aims and objectives focusing on a particular problem
 - outcomes of business plans are identified
 - plans contain measures to sustain a project
 - plans reflect a realistic budget
- 24 Identify the influence of the relationship between socio-political and economic factors on social services**
- impact of current socio-political ideology and funding policies on organizational functioning are identified
 - challenges, such as diminishing financial resources, facing social service organizations is understood

25 Demonstrate understanding of the roles and functions of the social worker within relevant statutory frameworks

- policies and legislation in areas such as criminal justice, mental health and child and family welfare/care is understood
- roles and functions of social workers in different courts and court procedures is understood
- practical ability to work according to statutory and legal requirements and carry out orders of the court orders is understood

26 Identify how social security is used optimally for the benefit of client systems

- different types of social security benefits , entitlement to these benefits, and procedures to access the benefits, are understood
- relationship between social benefits and poverty alleviation measures is understood

27 Identify the purpose, functions and principles of social work within the social development paradigm

- relationship between social work, social development, and economic development is understood
- importance of small scale (micro) income generating and job creation strategies is understood as part of the bigger (macro) economic picture is appreciated

The above presented exit-level outcomes and the assessment criteria give a good overview of the span and diversity of social work education and training as well as what the practice of social worker is all about.

REMARK

After having read the above exit level outcomes it should become obvious that the social work education and training programme is comprehensive and demanding. However, it should also become clear that it strives towards equipping a student with the basic knowledge, skills and values that will enable a student to enter the field of social work practice with confidence.

5.2 Modules to be taken

The entire Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree course consists of a number of modules spread over a minimum 4 years. The entire degree must make up 510 so called credits. Modules on levels 1-3 are valued at 14 credits each and the modules on level are valued at 18 credits each. There are three clusters of modules students should be aware of.

5.2.1 FUNDAMENTAL MODULES (amounting to at least 10 credits):

- These modules are offered at level 1 (first year) and at present consist of two modules in English communication skills. It is compulsory to take these modules or other modules.

5.2.2 CORE MODULES (amounting to at least 320 credits):

- There are 22 such core modules spread over 4 years.
- There are 14 theory modules and 8 practical work modules.
- These modules constitute the core of social work education and training and are offered by the Department of Social Work.
- The core modules focus on the 27 exit level outcomes discussed under 5.1
- All modules up to level3 are valued at 14 credits each. On level 4 (4th year) the practical work modules are valued at 18 credits each.

5.2.3 ELECTIVE MODULES (amounting to 180 credits):

- To complete the BSW degree, students are also required to do a number of non-social work modules spread over years 1- 3 (levels 1-3) amounting to at least 180 credits. Remember that each module counts 14 credits.
- The modules usually constitute the second major subject besides the subject of social work.
- These modules which form a good additional base for social work education and training, may be taken from the following subjects.

One hundred (100) credits must be in a human or social science as listed below:

- Anthropology
- Criminology
- Industrial psychology
- Industrial sociology
- Political studies
- Public administration
- Psychology
- Sociology

The remaining 80 credits may focus on modules in for example; economics, law, health studies, agriculture and environmental studies, languages etc.

Students usually choose one of the following subjects up to level 3 as second major subject besides social work; anthropology, **criminology** (???), psychology or sociology.

Students are referred to **Calendar 2007** (??) for the School of Human and Social Sciences (Section HS14). This section will give a clear outline what a social work course over 4 years looks like.

5.2.3.1 How to choose the elective modules

Choosing electives and deciding what your second major subject is going to be can be quite a daunting task especially when you do not have any information available on the nature of these subjects.

- The first step is to understand that most human and social science subject have relevance for social work. Some perhaps more so than others depending on the nature of the course content offered in a specific subject.
- The second step is to approach the teaching departments that offer the various subjects and enquire whether they have any information available on the subject that is being offered. Such information should be able to point out to you what the subject is all about.
- The third step would be to study the University Calendars in which the subjects are broadly outlined.
- The fourth step would be to talk to students that have already studied the subject or are still in the process of studying the subject. These students may give you feedback as to what is offered in the subject.
- The fifth step would be to discuss the subject and its potential relevance for social work with staff members from the teaching department itself. In fact a number of students may make an appointment with a staff member to discuss the subject the students are interested in. Students may of course also approach staff from the Dept of Social Work to discuss possible electives.

As a rough guide the following guidelines may be considered when choosing an elective especially as a second major.

- Students that are interested in dealing with people in a one to one situation (e.g., doing counseling with adults or working with drug addicts) will find psychology very interesting and helpful.
- Students more interested in dealing with juvenile and adult offenders will find criminology very appropriate
- Students that have strong interest in working with larger communities and development work will find anthropology, sociology and / or public administration very enlightening.
- Students can of course never go wrong is also doing e.g.; introductory philosophy, political science, or basic economic theory.

The BSW degree strives towards offering a student an education that is empowering to the student as well. A student must therefore strive towards being exposed to as much as possible academic diversity without however losing sight of the fact that whatever is studied must have relevance to the main objective namely of becoming a competent social worker.

5.3 Nature of core modules in social work

The modules that constitute the core of social work education and training are presented below together with a brief description of the focus areas of each module.

LEVEL 1 Total of 3 modules

SCW 1541: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK

(Theory - Semester 1)

- Social work in historical perspective. International and South Africa.
- Definition, goals, objectives, values and ethics of social work Basic terminology of social work.
- Legislation in relation to social work in South Africa.
- Structure of social work service delivery in South Africa, (governmental and non-governmental services).
- Core role players in social work: social workers, social auxiliary workers, child care workers, lawyers and attorneys, Commissioner of Child Welfare, courts of law.
- Social work in an international context (e.g., affiliation with IASSW, IFSW).
- Relevance of social work with particular reference to South Africa.

SCW 1641: CORE ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL WORK

(Theory - Semester 2)

- Developmental welfare policy for South Africa emphasizing personal growth, development, human potential and empowerment of people.
- Approaches to social work and its theoretical foundations such as systems theory, ecological model, networking etc.
- Process in social work with specific reference to its core values and goals.
- Professional relationship in social work practice.
- Human rights and social work practice.
- Welfare policy and social work services.
- Social work relevant legislation.

SCW 1741: PRACTICAL WORK (SELF AND SOCIAL AWARENESS)

(Practical - Year module)

- Visits to social work agencies/welfare services and relevant government departments and

- projects
- Studying the geographical distribution of social work/welfare services and the implications thereof.
- Observing social interaction and - problems in everyday life.
- Writing reports on observations and learning to use appropriate professional language and terminology
- Reading newspaper reports and periodicals/magazines to sensitize students to developments on the national and international scenario with specific reference to social work/welfare related issues
- Case studies of social work interventions and related issues so as to familiarize students with the action component of social work and to relate action to values, goals and values inherent to social work
- Role of policies in protecting and improving quality of life

LEVEL 2 Total of 6 modules

SCW 2541: HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT (Theory - Semester 1)

- Developmental (life) tasks as a core issue in the human life cycle.
- Resources and obstacles impacting on developmental tasks (psychological, biological, socio-structural, and cultural).
- Assessing human social functioning in relation to life tasks.
- Policies that impact on life tasks (compulsory schooling, legal accountability for actions, retirement age, social grants, housing, etc).

SCW 2542: LEGISLATION AND SOCIAL FUNCTIONING (Theory - Semester 2)

- Laws that govern/impact on peoples lives (e.g., children, adults, married couples, families).
- South African Constitution.
- Human Rights Bill.
- Social Security measures.
- Policies that determine the impact on the nature of social work services (financing and subsidization of social work/ welfare services).

SCW 2641: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK METHODS OF INTERVENTION (Theory - Semester 1)

- The integrated approach in social work. Meaning, process and implications
- Case work: rationale, objectives, principles and process.
- Group work: rationale, objectives, principles and process.
- Community development: rationale, objectives, principles and process.

SCW 2642: ASSESSMENT IN SOCIAL WORK
(Theory - Semester 2)

- What entails assessment in the social work context?
- Value and limitations of assessment.
- Ethics of assessment.
- Assessment in relation to statutory work.
- Relationship between assessment and research.
- Relevance and role of the case history (individuals, couples, families, communities).
- Assessment tools/techniques (e.g., genogram, ecomap, schedules, questionnaires, interview schedules, surveys, using other data basis (e.g., census data).
- Family role functioning as important of assessment in social work.
- Assessment of special needs and other issues by other professions (e.g., psychologists, psychiatrists, occupational therapists).

SCW 2741: PRACTICAL WORK (INTEGRATED METHODS)
(Practical Work - Year Module)

- Social work and the holistic approach to action and intervention.
- Relationship between holistic approach to social work and the integrated methods in social work.
- Demonstration of integrated methods in theory and practice.

SCW 2742: PRACTICAL WORK - CASEWORK
(Practical Work - Year Module)

- Introductory work with individual entailing:
 - Letting people tell their story.
 - Observing life tasks and how people address them as individuals.
 - Identifying resources and obstacles in the life of an individual.
 - Manage a conversation with an individual with a specific aim in mind.
 - Practicing basic skills of listening, empathy, questioning, etc.
 - Practicing the development of the professional relationship.
 - Develop the skill and vocabulary to write reports on conversations with people.
- Seminars will be held to enable students to discuss their learning in terms of own feelings, experiences, thoughts, stress, relevance of theory in relation to working with individuals etc. Seminars assist in developing a professional identity and self awareness.

LEVEL 3 Total of 6 modules***SCW 3541: INTERMEDIATE SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION
(Theory - Semester 1)***

- Case work - relationship, interviewing, assessment, interpretation, planning, reporting on case work process, integration of theory.
- Group work- group formation, group interaction, interactional analysis, group dynamics, growth/therapeutic properties of groups, obstacles and resources in groups, planning group work intervention, reporting on group process, integration of theory.
- Community work - engaging with people, sharing concerns, brainstorming alternatives, group dynamics in community work, reporting on community work process, integration of theory.
- Resources and networking- identifying and engaging with resources, establishing networks and basic networking

***SCW 3542: FOCUS AREAS IN SOCIAL WORK
(Theory - Semester 1)***

- Role and tasks of social work in schools, hospitals, children's homes, workplace, correctional services.
- Policy issues pertaining to working in the above focus areas.
- Resources and networking.
- Interdisciplinary cooperation.

***SCW 3641: SOCIAL WORK (WELFARE) RELATED LEGISLATION AND POLICY
(Theory - Semester 2)***

- Interpreting and using legislation and policy in social work planning and intervention.
- Court reports and giving evidence in a court of law in relation to children, youth and adults
- Court procedure and conduct.
- Cross examination in court.
- Policy that impacts on community work, fund raising, funding of welfare projects, funding proposals.

***SCW 3642: INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH IN SOCIAL WORK
(Theory - Semester 2)***

- process and steps of research
- types of research reports

***SCW 3741: PRACTICAL WORK - GROUP WORK
(Year Module)***

- Engaging with a group of young people focusing on social skills training, observing group process, group dynamics, own role as group leader (facilitator), report writing on group work, integration of theory on group work process.
- Present group work process in class room situation to promote interpersonal learning.

SCW 3742: PRACTICAL WORK - COMMUNITY WORK
(Year Module)

- Engaging with a community, problem identification, exploration, planning, implementation of plans, report writing, integration of theory
- Presenting community work process in class room situation to promote interpersonal learning.

LEVEL 4 Total of 7 modules

Due to the intensive nature of level studies and the practical work placement, students will not be allowed to do any modules other than social work modules in the 4th year.

SCW 4741: ADVANCED SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION METHODS
(Theory - Year Module)

- Marriage and family counseling. Various models and approaches.
- Counseling people with intimacy problems (sexual functioning). Models and approaches.
- Ethics in marriage and family counseling and dealing with sexual/intimacy problems.

SCW 4742: SPECIAL PROBLEM AREAS IN SOCIAL WORK
(Theory - Year Module)

Focus will be on definitions, prevalence, intervention/ treatment strategies, special challenges.

- HIV/AIDS
- Addiction /Alcohol and drugs
- Crime and juvenile delinquency
- Domestic violence
- Divorce
- Poverty
- Foster care and adoption
- Institutional care

SCW 4743: SOCIAL WORK MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION
(Theory - Year Module)

- Meaning and relevance of management in social work.
- Tasks in social work management (record keeping, report writing, keeping statistics, etc)
- Managing a case load.
- Referral procedures to other social workers, welfare organizations, other professionals such as psychologists, and psychiatrists).
- Role and task of supervision in social work.
- Strategies social work should implement to protect themselves when dealing with dangerous persons and situations.

SCW 4744: RESEARCH PROJECT
(Theory - Year Module)

- Planning and executing a research project of limited scope with the emphasis on learning to understand and practice processes and steps in research.

SCW 4745: PRACTICAL WORK - CASE WORK
(Practical Work - Year Module)

- Assisting a client/family in relation to all requirements compatible with social work goals and within the parameters of the organization where student is doing practical work.
- Keeping detailed records of the process.
- Engage in regular supervision with a designated supervisor.
- Function within the ethical guidelines for student social workers as inter alia specified by the SACSSP.
- Write a comprehensive report according to guidelines given by the Department of Social Work. This report is part of the portfolio.

SCW 4746: PRACTICAL WORK - GROUP WORK
(Practical Work - Year Module)

- Conduct a therapeutically focused group over a number of sessions in line with social work and group work theory, and within the parameters of the organization where the practical work is done.
- Keeping detailed records of the group process.
- Engage in regular supervision with a designated supervisor.
- Function within the ethical guidelines for student social workers as inter alia specified by the SACSSP.(South African Council for Social Service Professions)
- Write a comprehensive report according to guidelines given by the Department of Social Work. This report is part of the portfolio.

SCW 4747: PRACTICAL WORK - COMMUNITY WORK
(Practical Work - Year Module)

- Doing a project, or part of a project, demonstrating that the process is understood and conducted in line with applicable and relevant theory and within the parameters of the organization where the student is doing practical work.
- Engage in regular supervision with designated supervisor.
- Function within the ethical guidelines for student social workers as specified by SACSSP.
- Write a comprehensive report according to guidelines provided by the Department of Social Work. This report is part of the portfolio.

5.4 Assessment of students

- In the new outcome based paradigm of teaching, assessment plays a crucial role and merits our utmost attention as the outcomes must measure up to specified criteria.
- Unless the student can demonstrate that satisfactory progress has been made in meeting the assessment criteria specified for each exit-level outcome for a particular level, **the student will not be able to progress to the next level of study.**
- **Assessment of student performance and competence is therefore a core activity of education and training.**
- It needs to be stressed that the Department of Social Work will only be accredited by the ETQA to offer social work education and training if it can be clearly demonstrated that exit-level outcomes are **taught as well as that assessment instruments are in place to assess the outcomes in a valid, reliable and fair manner.**

Some assessment issues will be addressed next.

5.4.1 Who will assess students?

Students will be assessed by:

- social work lecturers
- social work supervisors
- External examiners from another university appointed by the university for level 4 examinations and assessments. External examiners/ assessors may also be appointed for other levels should the need arise.

5.4.2 How will students be assessed?

The following instruments will be (re)designed and implemented to address exit level outcome criteria:

- Formal class tests.
- Written assignments on a variety of themes relevant to exit level outcomes and assessment criteria.

- Case studies and analysis.
- Case presentations.
- Conduct/participation during practical work.
- Process and summary reports on practical work.
- Supervision.
- Formal written exams.
- Formal oral exams.
- Research project.
- Portfolio.

In addition to the formal exams in a particular module, many of the assessments indicated above will also earn a student marks towards the final exam mark.

Each of these instruments will be briefly described.

5.4.2.1 Formal class tests.

Class tests are scheduled throughout the semester/ year and entails writing a test on work prescribed by the lecturer.

5.4.2.2 Written assignments on a variety of themes.

For each social work module at least one assignment will be formulated which is compulsory for students to complete and submit on a due date in order to gain admission to the exams.

The assignment may comprise of one question with related subsections or comprise a number of independent short questions.

The assignments will increase in complexity as the student progresses through the 4 levels.

The assignments aim at achieving particular exit-level outcomes or part thereof and will be assessed against associated criteria.

5.4.2.3 Case studies and case analysis.

In order to develop an understanding of the issues that social workers deal with and the nature of social work intervention, students will have to study cases that are presented to them in written form. Students will have to analyze these case illustrations in accordance with, for example, theory, intervention strategy or policy.

Case studies and case analysis may focus on individuals (case work), groups (group work), communities (community work), and other focus areas of social work.

Students will have to answer particular questions regarding the case studies and use appropriate theory to support their answers to the questions.

5.4.2.4 Case presentations

Case presentations means that student are required to present cases they are dealing with. This may entail an individual case, a group, or a community. The case presentation may have to be done in writing or orally and will be evaluated against a set of criteria.

Case presentations will be spread over the four levels of study.

Case presentations also develop self-confidence and a professional identity.

5.4.2.5 Process and summary reports on practical work

Writing reports on the process of social work intervention (individuals, groups, and communities) constitutes a very important part in the education and training of social workers.

- It is through, inter alia retrospective report writing, that students gain insight into theory and process, develop their writing and professional language skills, and learn to write in a logical and well understood manner.
- Social workers that cannot write well and/or cannot express themselves clearly will face many obstacles when they enter professional practice.
- Process reports must be written according to specific requirements and in accordance with specific guidelines.
- Process reports form the basis of supervision and must therefore succeed in conveying the essential ingredients of the intervention process.

Process reports will be assessed by the supervisor in terms of inter alia:

- punctuality of submission of reports
- neatness
- language and grammar
- integration of theory
- analysis of process
- planning for intervention

Summary reports constitute an overall reflective description of the intervention process after having terminated the intervention or at some stage in the helping process. Assessment of the summary report will concentrate particularly on how the student can explain the progress of the intervention in terms of, inter alia, theory that guided intervention, and intervention strategies applied. The difficulties encountered in the intervention process must also be explained. Guidelines for future intervention put forward by the student will also be assessed.

Preparation of process reports requires student to work focused and consistently. Students may not proceed with the practical work without receiving supervision based on their process reports.

Marks will be allocated for the process and summary reports and can constitute a significant mark

towards the final exam mark for a particular work module in which the practical work is undertaken.

Writing process and summary reports requires students to translate their observations, interpretations and interventions into words and sentences that clearly convey what takes place between the student social worker and the individual client, group or community. Unless the student has an adequate language and writing ability, it will be difficult to properly assess their work. It is therefore every student's responsibility to develop good language and writing skills.

5.4.2.6 Supervision

Supervision of practical work forms an **integral and crucial** part of social work education and training.

Students are placed for practical work at a social service/- welfare organization to do practical work with individuals, groups and communities.

Only students registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professions as student social workers will be considered for practical work placement. This is a legal requirement in terms of the Social Service Professions Act.

- Each student will be supervised by a qualified and registered social worker at the organization where practical work is undertaken or by lecturers of the University of Venda.
- No practical work may be undertaken without regular supervision.
- The purpose of supervision is to assist and guide the student in developing the skills to do social work in the real life context.
- Supervisors will, in collaboration with the lecturers, assess the students' practical work on a number of points. The outcome of the assessment will determine whether the student will pass the practical work in accordance to the outcomes and assessment criteria.

Academic excellence in theory does not imply that a student will pass the practical work. Development and mastery of skills is as important.

The issues that students will be assessed on in practical work are inter alia the following:

- Diligence with which practical work is performed.
- Punctuality of supervision appointments.
- Punctuality of submitting reports to supervisor.
- Preparedness for supervision.
- Neatness and accuracy of reports.
- Appropriate use of language to describe the intervention process.

- Attention to spelling and grammar of reports.
- Level of integration of theory in the practical work.
- Skill in engaging with individuals to address specific issues that the person brings to the social worker as causing stress.
- Skill in dealing with groups to develop life skills of group members.
- Skill in engaging with a community to facilitate the development of a plan to address a particular issue that is of importance to the community to enhance quality of life.
- Networking.

Supervision will strive to develop professional social work skills and the attainment of these skills linked to specific outcome levels. Students do not pass practical work just because they visit and chat to people regularly, but because of the effort they put into their work and the quality and accountability of the input.

5.4.2.7 Formal exams

At the end of each semester / year a formal exam will be written on the theory modules that are indicated as being examined in this way. Practical work may be assessed purely on the practical work documentation as prescribed by the department of social work.

During formal exams students are asked to answer questions in writing or by means of a multiple choice exam. The answers will be assessed by the academic social work staff of the University of Venda.

- Formal exams will of course also address certain outcome levels.
- Depending on the level of study, formal exams may focus on very factual issues but will also assess understanding, application and integration (synthesis) of theory and practice.
- Assessment by means of formal exams require students to be able to use written language as well as social work related vocabulary in such a way so as to be able to convey their understanding of the subject matter clearly and concisely in the exam script.
- A formal exam of a specified duration requires students to work under time pressure.
- It must be clearly understood that assessment in a formal exam only assesses the material that the student has produced in writing.
- Writing skills and the ability to express oneself clearly and in a coherent manner, are therefore of vital importance.
- The work that needs to be prepared for the exams will be demarcated by the lecturers by means of examination preparation letters or through personal communications.
- Indications as to the type of questions that can be expected in exams will also be provided by the lecturers.

5.4.2.8 Oral exams

An oral exam means that a student meets with one or more lecturers and instead of answering exam questions in writing, answers them verbally.

Oral exams are usually not as long as written exams and are scheduled for very specific purposes e.g., to assess how well a student can enter into a critical discussion concerning some or other significant issue in social work theory and / or social work practice issue.

- Oral exams require that a second examiner must be present. In fact a number of examiners may be present to assess the student during an oral exam
- Case presentations, as already discussed in paragraph 10.2.4 may also take the form of an oral exam on the case work, group work, or community work undertaken during the practical work placement.
- Oral exams are sometimes organized for students who for one reason or another could not do the written exam.

5.4.2.9 Research report

All students are required to complete a short research project under the guidance of lecturers from the Department of Social work.

The nature of the research project as well as the research process will be discussed in detail by the lecturer concerned with research.

5.4.2.10 Portfolio

All students are required to compile a portfolio reflecting the essence of their practical work done in the social work programme.

A portfolio comes in very handy when applying for a social work position as it gives the prospective employer an overview of what the student has done on a practical level.

The portfolio will include items such as:

- A short personal biography.
- Summary of workshops done in the social work programme.
- Nature of practical work and where and when it was undertaken.
- Summary reports on practical work.
- References from supervisors, the social service organization and other significant others the student deems important to include in the portfolio.
- A copy of the research project should also be part of the portfolio.

Students are advised to systematically compile the portfolio as they proceed throughout the social work programme so as to prevent all the work having to be done all at once toward the end of level 4. The portfolio should be presented as window looking inside the students' definition of quality and understanding of social work.

6 ETHICAL ISSUES IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The practice of social work is regulated by the Social Service Professions Act (Act 110 of 1978). The act is administered by the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP).

The Social Service Professions Act also requires that social work students must register as student social workers with the SACSSP as from the second level onwards.

Social work lecturers must also be qualified and registered social workers with the South African Council for Social Service Professions. Social work lecturers are also expected to conduct themselves in line with the rules and regulations that apply to all social workers in South Africa.

Students must pay a once-off student registration fee to the SACSSP that is valid for the entire duration of the study period till the student qualifies as a social worker. The fee is determined by the SACSSP. The Department of Social Work will manage this registration process.

This registration implies that students must adhere to the ethical guidelines, rules and regulations that are set out for social workers and student social workers. Students will be briefed on these guidelines in practical work workshops.

Should lecturers or students trespass the ethical guidelines, rules and regulations and display improper conduct that negatively impacts on the profession of social work, such persons should be reported to the SACSSP by either the Department of Social Work, the University, the student, the client, the social service organization, the supervisor, or any other person or organization that is of the opinion that the academic or student trespasses the rules and regulations, and in so doing may demonstrate improper professional conduct. The SACSSP will decide if and how they will pursue the complaint.

Should the SACSSP decide to institute a disciplinary hearing and should the academic or student be found guilty then a number of actions / sentences can be / taken / passed by the SACSSP:

- A warning.
- A fine.
- Suspension of registration as a social worker or student social worker for a stipulated period of time, during which the academic is not allowed to teach social work, and a student is not allowed to study social work although the student need not necessarily be expelled from the university.
- A suspended sentence with the provision that the person is allowed to continue to teach / practice as a social worker.

Academics teaching social work and student social workers are therefore regarded as persons that can

take responsibility for their behavior and must therefore demonstrate appropriate professional conduct that befits the profession of social work.

Should students experience personal or logistical problems in their studies and especially practical work, which may negatively impact on their ethical behavior and jeopardize their studies, students must reach out to lecturers, supervisors and social service organizations in time, to discuss their difficulties and try to find a solution.

The Department of Social Work does not want to control student behavior but must ensure that students do adhere to the stipulations of the Social Service Professions Act as far as it is within the capabilities of the Department to do so.

The SACSSP will also protect the academic and student social worker against unfair and unfounded accusations by any party and will intervene when such action is called for.

Registration with the SACSSP is therefore also a protective strategy and academics as well as students may also call on the SACSSP whenever they feel that they are being wronged in a manner that impacts negatively on their role as social work academics or social work students.

7 SOME INTERNET SOURCES FOR OBTAINING INTERESTING INFORMATION ON SOCIAL WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA AND GLOBALLY

For those students who have access to the internet it may be interesting to read about social work issues in South Africa and other countries of the world.

In South Africa most big welfare organizations have a web page outlining its aims and functions and a host of other information. You simply select a search engine (e.g., yahoo.com) that your internet connection provides, and type in keywords, such as ‘social work in South Africa / United Kingdom /Australia’. Here are some interesting key words you can use to obtain some interesting social work related information:

- University of Venda
- South African Council for Social Service Professions (www.sacssp.org.za).
- Social Care Council (United Kingdom)
- National Association of Social Workers (USA)
- International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW)
- International Federation of Social Workers
- Child Welfare South Africa
- Disability South Africa
- Deaf South Africa

Should you want to communicate with the South African Council for Social Service Professions

(SACSSP), you may contact them as follows:

The Registrar
SA Council for Social Service Professions
Private Bag X12
Gezina
0031 PRETORIA

Telephone: (012) 329 9164 /012 356 9940 / 012 356 8300 /012 329 9161
Fax: (012) 329 9160
E mail: mail@sacssp.or.za

8 OBTAINING MORE INFORMATION ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

Should you need more information on social work education and training you are invited to make contact as follows:

The Head
Department of Social Work
University of Venda
Private Bag X 5050
0950 THOHOYANDOU

E-mail. Thabeded@univen.ac.za
Telephone: 015 962 8337
Fax: 015 962 4749

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