



COURSE OUTLINE: SSW221 - ETHICS/PROFESSIONLSM

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Approved: Karen Hudson - Dean

Course Code: Title	SSW221: ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM
Program Number: Name	1203: SOCIAL SERV WORKER
Department:	SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER
Academic Year:	2025-2026
Course Description:	This course will introduce students to ethical decision-making approaches, practice standards and professional values and ethics within the social service work profession. Students will gain knowledge of the legislative framework governing social service work and the social service worker role and scope of practice. The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Worker (OCSWSSW) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice and the implications for professional responsibility and accountability will be taught. Common ethical standards and dilemmas will be studied to assist students to develop professional judgment and critical thinking skills necessary in SSW practice. Ethical decision making models will be used to apply student learning. Knowledge of reflective practice tools to assist students to build self-awareness and professional self-care as core ethical components of care are emphasized.
Total Credits:	3
Hours/Week:	2
Total Hours:	28
Prerequisites:	There are no pre-requisites for this course.
Corequisites:	There are no co-requisites for this course.
Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLO's) addressed in this course:	1203 - SOCIAL SERV WORKER
Please refer to program web page for a complete listing of program outcomes where applicable.	VLO 1 Develop respectful and collaborative professional and interpersonal relationships that adhere to professional, legal, and ethical standards aligned to social service work.
	VLO 2 Record information accurately and communicate effectively in written, digital, verbal and non-verbal ways, in adherence to privacy and freedom of information legislation, in accordance with professional and workplace standards.
	VLO 3 Integrate a practice framework within a service delivery continuum, addressing the needs of individuals, families and communities at micro, mezzo, macro and global levels, and work with them in achieving their goals.
	VLO 5 Examine current social policy, relevant legislation, and political, social, historical, and/or economic systems and their impacts for individuals and communities when delivering services to the user/client.
	VLO 6 Develop strategies and approaches that support individual clients, groups, families and communities in building the capacity for self-advocacy, while affirming their dignity and self-worth.
	VLO 7 Work from an anti-oppressive, strengths-based practice, recognizing the capacity for resilience and growth of individuals and communities when responding to the diverse needs of marginalized or vulnerable populations to act as allies and advocates.



	<p>VLO 8 Develop strategies and approaches to implement and maintain holistic self-care as a member of a human service profession.</p> <p>VLO 9 Work with individuals, groups, families and their communities to ensure that service provider strategies promote social and economic justice, and challenge patterns of oppression, discrimination and harassment, and sexual violence with clients, coworkers and communities.</p> <p>VLO 10 Develop the capacity to work with the Indigenous individual, families, groups and communities while respecting their inherent rights to self-determine, and to identify and address systemic barriers that produce ill-effects, developing appropriate responses using approaches such as trauma informed care practice.</p>
Essential Employability Skills (EES) addressed in this course:	<p>EES 1 Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.</p> <p>EES 2 Respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.</p> <p>EES 4 Apply a systematic approach to solve problems.</p> <p>EES 5 Use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.</p> <p>EES 6 Locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.</p> <p>EES 7 Analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.</p> <p>EES 8 Show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others.</p> <p>EES 9 Interact with others in groups or teams that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.</p> <p>EES 10 Manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.</p> <p>EES 11 Take responsibility for ones own actions, decisions, and consequences.</p>
General Education Themes:	<p>Civic Life</p> <p>Social and Cultural Understanding</p> <p>Personal Understanding</p>
Course Evaluation:	<p>Passing Grade: 50%, D</p> <p>A minimum program GPA of 2.0 or higher where program specific standards exist is required for graduation.</p>
Other Course Evaluation & Assessment Requirements:	<p>Students are to familiarize with the SSW Skill Acquisition, Contribution/Participation and Professional Development Guidelines and the Sault College Addendum. Students must complete all assignments and exams to be successful in this course.</p> <p>*Note: This course meets the following SSW Vocational Outcomes and elements of performance: 1.a,b,c,d,e,f,j,k,l,o,2.a,b,c,e,f,3.c,5.b,6.e,f,g,7.d,h,8.b,c,d,e,f,9.d,10.c,d,e,f,g</p>
Books and Required Resources:	<p>Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW) by OCSWSSW Publisher: OCSWSSW: Availble On-Line: http://www.ocswssw.org/</p> <p>The New Social Worker Online. by N.A.</p>



Course Outcomes and Learning Objectives:

Course Outcome 1	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 1
1. Demonstrate an understanding of the values, ethics and standards in social service practice.	1.1 Define and describe values, ethics, principles and obligations of the social service work profession. 1.2 Recognize the role that values play in everyday practice and impact of personal values in a helping relationship. 1.3 Understand the role of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. 1.4 Define and describe legal and ethical standards related to yet not limited to confidentiality, privacy, competence, professional boundaries, multiple relationships, documentation and informed consent. 1.5 Describe the primary goals and purpose of the governing legislative framework (Social Work and Social Service Work Act) of the social service profession. 1.6 Identify and understand relevant legislation related to ethical practice such as privacy laws, consent laws, Controlled Act of Psychotherapy and Social Work and Social Service Work Act, Child, Youth and Family Services Act, and reporting requirements. 1.7 Articulate the requirements and benefits to registering with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers. 1.8 Describe and recognize the 7 Grandfather Teachings from Indigenous Culture and connect to the SSW Code of Ethics.
Course Outcome 2	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 2
2. Describe and apply a social service model of ethical decision-making.	2.1 Recognize and identify common ethical dilemmas in SSW practice. 2.2 Define and apply the basic principles in ethical decision making, critical thinking and professional judgment. 2.3 Use the OCSWSSW Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice to guide ethical decision-making. 2.4 Identify the relevant legal and professional standards related to ethical situations. 2.5 Analyze, evaluate and apply relevant information and research in ethical decisions. 2.6 Apply the ETHIC model used in class discussions and case studies.
Course Outcome 3	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 3
3. Develop a personal stance/style reflective of	3.1 Use the OCSWSSW Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice to build professional practice,



	SSW profession.	responsibility and accountability. 3.2 Describe a working definition of professionalism. 3.3 Identify tools for reflective practice and critical inquiry to develop self-awareness and connection to ethical/professional challenges. 3.4 Solicit constructive feedback relating to one's own ethics, values, strengths and areas of growth. 3.5 Identify and explore self-values, beliefs and experiences and how these impact professional practice and competency development. 3.6 Define and apply critical thinking and professional judgement skills with ethical practice situations. 3.7 Describe the importance of professional and self-care from an ethical perspective.
	Course Outcome 4	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 4
	4. Develop and maintain professional relationships which adhere to professional, legal, and ethical standards aligned to social service work.	4.1 Define and describe effective professional and team skills. 4.2 Work collaboratively and contribute to team discussions about ethical dilemmas. 4.3 Act in accordance with professional values to promote respectful relationships with others 4.4 Show respect for diverse values, beliefs and opinions, particularly with respect to gender, culture, ethnicity, spirituality, age, and sexual orientation. 4.5 Explain the ethical responsibilities of a SSW professional within an inter-disciplinary team.
	Course Outcome 5	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 5
	5. Demonstrate effective written and verbal communication strategies.	5.1 Produce work in written and electronic format that is clear and concise with minimal errors. 5.2 Adhere to professional, ethical, and academic standards in written work submitted. 5.3 Interact with others in ways that contribute to effective working relationships by taking responsibility for one's own actions/decisions. 5.4 Maintain respectful online etiquette congruent with professional communication expectations with respect to use of LMS, social media, emails and other technological devices. 5.5 Describe the SSW standards related to documentation and understand reasons why record keeping is a critical skill. 5.6 Explain digital literacy and ethical standards associated with virtual modes of service delivery.

Evaluation Process and Grading System:

Evaluation Type	Evaluation Weight
Case Studies Applying SSW Ethics & SSW Professional Skill Development	40%
Ethics & Social Media/Technology Assignment	20%

	Final Exam	20%
	Mid Term Exam	20%
Date:	June 17, 2025	
Addendum:	Please refer to the course outline addendum on the Learning Management System for further information.	