

Social Work

2022 STUDENT HANDBOOK

Wartburg College

100 Wartburg Blvd. Waverly, IA 50677-0903



STUDENT HANDBOOK TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION.....	1
Professional Organizations.....	2
Social Work Licensure	2
SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION	3
Professional Accreditation	3
THE WARTBURG COLLEGE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM	4
Mission	4
Goals.....	4
Non-Discrimination Policy.....	4
Accommodating Disabilities.....	5
Faculty and Administrative Structure	5
The National Advisory Board.....	6
Student Participation in Program Administration and Policy-Making	6
Facilities.....	6
THE SOCIAL WORK CURRICULUM.....	7
Core Professional Competencies (learning outcomes).....	7
Curriculum Structure.....	10
Required Courses for Social Work Majors	10
Sequencing and Exceptions.....	11
Field Education.....	11
Elective Courses	12
Arranged and Independent Studies	12
Double Majors and Minors	12
International Study.....	13
The Social Welfare Minor.....	14
PROGRAM ASSESSMENT.....	14
Student Involvement in Program Assessment.....	15
ADMISSION TO THE SOCIAL WORK MAJOR	15
Program Admission Requirements.....	15
Process for Applying to the Social Work Major	16
Appealing Admission Decisions.....	17
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR A BA IN SOCIAL WORK.....	17
Transfer Credit from Other Institutions	17
Credit by Examination or Life Experiences.....	18
EXPECTATIONS OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS.....	18

Professional Skills	18
Professional Values & Ethics	18
Professional Comportment	19
Academic Performance	19
Course Grading	19
Class Attendance	19
Academic Honesty	19
DISMISSAL (SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION) FROM THE SOCIAL WORK MAJOR	20
Academic Performance	20
Academic Integrity	20
Ethical Behavior	21
Professional Comportment	21
Process for Removing a Student from the Social Work Major	21
Appeals	21
AJUDICATION OF STUDENT GRIEVANCES	22
ACADEMIC ADVISING	22
Meeting with Advisors	22
Registration for Classes	22
Secondary Advisors	23
DEPARTMENTAL OPPORTUNTIES AND ACTIVITIES	
Student Organizations	23
Holiday Shoppe	23
Slife Social Work Institute	23
Volunteer and Community Service	24
RICE Day	24
POLICIES GOVERNING RESEARCH BY SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS AND FACULTY	25

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1945 and first accredited by the Council on Social Work Education in 1976, the social work program at Wartburg College is the oldest undergraduate program in the state of Iowa, with a long and proud tradition of producing graduates who exemplify the institution's strong orientation towards service and leadership, as well as the social work profession's fundamental values of socio-economic justice and concern for the well-being of others. As a reflection of the College's German heritage and mission, the social work program has adopted St. Elizabeth of Thuringia, who lived at the Wartburg Castle in the fifteenth century and became well-known for her work with the poor.

This handbook is intended to acquaint students and other stakeholders with the social work program at Wartburg College. Specifically, it serves the following purposes:

1. To introduce prospective and new majors to the program.
2. To articulate the policies and procedures of the Social Work Department.
3. To describe the learning activities and opportunities available through the program.
4. To provide a useful resource for students and faculty in curriculum planning.

This handbook is designed to be used in conjunction with the Wartburg College Catalog, which articulates general institutional policies. The Catalog is the final authority in determining policies and procedures that pertain to all Wartburg College students, including those who major in social work.

THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

Social work can be an exciting, challenging, and rewarding profession that helps people to find ways of living more satisfying and productive lives. It reflects a powerful tradition of social justice and action, and recognizes that individual well-being often requires important societal changes.

Many challenges and circumstances may interfere with the efforts of people to live satisfying lives. Child abuse, marital and family disruption, poor health, mental illness, discrimination in its many forms, substance abuse, and economic insecurity are just a few of the many social problems addressed by social workers in the field. While some of our work involves direct service and counseling to individuals, we also recognize that people's well-being is strongly influenced by their social environment – their families, friends, schools, employers, communities, and the supports that our society provides in times of need. It is important that social workers understand and know how to work with and influence these systems so that they function optimally.

Social workers are employed in an ever-expanding spectrum of human service agencies, organizations and programs. These include hospitals, government agencies, family service programs, rehabilitation facilities, mental health centers, and schools (to name a few). Some social workers focus on very specific issues and/or clients (i.e. domestic violence, elder abuse, adoptions, working with recent immigrants) while others prefer careers that are broader in scope.

To be effective practitioners, social workers must master a wide range of skills that includes individual/family counseling techniques, assessment and diagnosis, group facilitation and leadership, conflict management, program and agency administration, community organization, and legislative

advocacy. While social workers vary considerably in their professional interests and employment settings, all are bound together by a common set of core values that includes:

- A commitment to serving others
- Social justice
- A belief in the inherent dignity and worth of all people
- Recognizing the critical importance of human relationships to human well-being
- Maintaining personal and professional integrity
- A commitment to achieving and maintaining professional competence in our work

These values and the principles that guide social workers in their professional practice are articulated in the Code of Ethics adopted and maintained by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). This Code in its entirety may be found on the NASW website, <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Wartburg College Social Work Program recognizes the authority of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) in providing overall leadership to our profession and frequently utilizes this organization as a resource in promoting the professional development of its students. In addition to maintaining the Code of Ethics, NASW performs other important functions. It offers a wide range of professional publications designed to keep social workers current with respect to new knowledge in the field and provides many on-going opportunities for continuing education. It provides certification for certain social work specialties and offers affordable liability insurance for practitioners. Through its political action committee, NASW is active in the public policy arena, seeking to improve services to client groups and further the goal of social justice for all.

Opportunities for professional involvement abound through the Iowa chapter of NASW and students are encouraged to consider joining if they intend to pursue social work careers. Information about the organization and membership can be found at www.socialworkers.org (national organization) and <https://naswia.socialworkers.org/> (state chapter).

NASW is not the only professional organization to which social workers belong. Others are dedicated to advancing the interests of various diverse sub-groups and specialties within social work and students may be interested in joining them, as well. Information about the National Association of Black Social Workers, the North American Association of Christians in Social Work, and others may be obtained from any member of the social work department faculty.

SOCIAL WORK LICENSURE

Social work licensure exists in some form in every state, although specific standards and procedures differ to some degree. Most states provide **multi-level licensing** for social workers, meaning that there are different standards and licenses for practitioners having BSW degrees, MSW degrees, and credentials for clinical and/or independent practice. In Iowa, social work licensure is administered by the Iowa Board of Social Work, Department of Public Health. In this state, a license for social workers practicing with a BSW degree is optional (not required), requiring a degree from a CSWE-accredited

undergraduate program and successful passage of a comprehensive, state-administered examination. Specific information about social work licensing in Iowa (and links to licensing authorities in other states) may be found at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Licensure/Iowa-Board-of-Social-Work>.

The BA in social work degree offered through Wartburg's program meets the requirements in other states where a BSW degree is required. Most states have *reciprocity agreements*, allowing social workers to transfer their credentials between jurisdictions without taking additional examinations.

Information for students about licensure is provided in social work classes and via individualized advising with program faculty.

SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Professional training programs for social workers date to the 1890s, when schools were established in cities such as New York, Boston, and Chicago. In 1952 the Council on Social Work Education was organized, and one of its important functions was to promote and establish uniform standards for social work training programs in higher education across the country. However, these programs offered only master's degrees (MSW), and it was not until 1974 that the Council established and began accrediting undergraduate programs offering BSW degrees. While MSW programs prepare practitioners for specialized work and even independent practice, undergraduate education aims to prepare students for entry level practice. Like all other accredited undergraduate programs, the social work curriculum at Wartburg College takes a broad, *generalist approach* to professional education. Its students do not specialize in any particular type of practice, but are prepared to begin careers in practically any field of social work. Examples of positions held by BSW level graduates include case managers with older adults or those having disabilities, in-home family counselors with families and children, caseworkers in residential treatment facilities for children and adolescents, and positions in state government agencies charged with investigating and addressing child and dependent adult abuse.

Preparation for Graduate School

Another important aim of BSW programs is to prepare students for graduate study, typically the MSW degree. The MSW is considered to be the terminal degree in social work, meaning that it qualifies practitioners to hold virtually any position in the field. Students who expect to make a long-term career of social work should give strong consideration to obtaining the MSW degree at some point. The decision to enter graduate school immediately upon receiving the BSW or to first obtain some professional work experience can depend on several different factors. Faculty advisors in Wartburg's social work department can assist students in making this decision and developing their career plans.

Students who graduate from Wartburg's social work program are often accepted into MSW programs with *advanced standing*, meaning that most initial graduate coursework may be waived. Students with advanced standing typically complete the MSW degree in 11-15 months.

PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION

The Wartburg College social work program has been accredited by the national Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1976, an organization that establishes common curriculum guidelines used

throughout the United States. To maintain the standard of quality that earns accreditation, it undergoes a thorough and comprehensive assessment every seven years. The standards under which Wartburg's program is accredited may be found on the CSWE's website: www.cswe.org. A copy of the program's most recent accreditation review is available in the Department office to anyone, upon request. Any such requests may be initiated through the Department Chair.

THE WARTBURG COLLEGE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Mission

Grounded in the institutional mission of *preparing students for lives of service and leadership as a spirited expression of their faith and learning*, the Wartburg College Social Work Program develops graduates who are prepared for beginning generalist social work practice or graduate school entry at the advanced level. The program and its curriculum are based on the conviction that every person is worthy of respect and dignity and that these ideals cannot be achieved without a deep and active commitment to social justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the qualities of life for all persons, locally and globally. Ultimately, we strive to develop competent, proficient practitioners who reflect the ideals of a liberal arts education and the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession.

Goals

1. Instill in students an appreciation for the **community** as an essential context for professional practice.
2. Develop graduates with the vision, skills, and appreciation for advocacy to assume positions of professional and community **leadership**.
3. Equip our students with an appreciation for professional **ethics** and the skills needed to apply ethical principles consistently in everyday practice.
4. Enable our students to seek and skillfully use resources and **research** methods that enhance the quality of professional practice and service delivery.
5. Develop students who do not merely tolerate human differences, but view **diversity** as a strength and vital element of social life.

Non-Discrimination Policy

All facets of the social work program (admission, grading, curricular opportunities, educational and field assignments, etc.) are administered without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, or political or sexual orientation. Questions or concerns about this policy and its implementation should be directed to the Program Director or the College's Affirmative Action Officer (as described in the Academic Catalog).

Accommodating Disabilities

Qualified students with disabilities are protected from unlawful discrimination in any facet of the social work program by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended. Students desiring information or accommodations due to disabilities should contact the director of the Wartburg College Pathways Center for assistance in making arrangements. Social work faculty, also, are committed to assisting and advocating for students with disabilities and may be consulted at students' discretion.

Faculty and Administrative Structure

The Social Work Program is administered by a department consisting of two full-time faculty who are housed in a suite of offices on the second floor of Old Main. Each faculty member has earned the MSW degree and has considerable professional experience in one or more fields of practice. The primary interest of all social work faculty lies in teaching, advising, and mentoring students, but each also carries important responsibilities for administering the program, providing service (institutional, community, and to the social work profession), and contributing in some ways to the expansion of professional knowledge and expertise (scholarship).

Adjunct faculty are regularly employed through the Department on a part-time basis to teach elective courses with a focus on some area of practice in which they have a particular expertise or considerable experience (American Sign Language, for example), assist in the teaching of field education courses, or to teach one or more of the core social work courses when full-time faculty take a leave of absence.

Each full-time member of the Department faculty holds multiple roles, each of which is critical to the ongoing administration of the social work program:

Chair of the Social Work Department. This position coordinates the work of the Department and serves as its primary liaison to Wartburg's Office of Academic Affairs. It ensures that the program operates within the policies of the College.

Social Work Program Director. This position oversees the social work program's curriculum (learning activities and opportunities), manages its assessment, and serves as the primary liaison to the Council on Social Work Education's Commission on Accreditation. It ensures that the program operates within the accreditation standards of CSWE.

Field Education Coordinator. The faculty member holding this position provides direction and coordination to all facets of the program's field education program, where students are placed in professional settings as an important part of their social work education. See page 14 and the *Field Education Manual* for details.

Director, Slife Institute for Social Work Consultation, Research & Training. Holding the College's *Tomson Family Distinguished Professorship*, this position coordinates the work of faculty, students, and other associates in their professional work with social service agencies and organizations. See page 28 for more information about the *Slife Institute*.

Through an agreement with the President of the College, these administrative responsibilities are rotated periodically among the faculty.

While having distinct responsibilities, individual members of the faculty work together as a team to carry out the mission of the social work program. The Department holds regular meetings to conduct its business and develop policies. Decisions are made through consensus and recorded in meeting minutes, which are available for review upon request.

The National Advisory Board

The Social Work Department is one of four at Wartburg College that has created, through the President's Office, a national advisory board. It consists of 10-15 social service administrators, staff, program alumni, and community leaders who meet, typically, twice each year to review the operations of the program and make recommendations that enhance its quality. The NAB plays an important role in the program's annual assessment and advocates on behalf of the department with the President, the Board of Regents, and in the community-at-large. Students typically are invited to NAB meetings to brief the members on their activities and to provide their perspectives on the social work program.

Student Participation in Program Administration and Policy-Making

The program places a high value on students' ideas and contributions to its success. This input is solicited in many different ways:

- Students are invited to participate in meetings of the National Advisory Board.
- Social work majors are invited to attend meetings with faculty each year to review the Department's assessment data and to provide suggestions for program changes.
- Fourth-year social work majors taking the *Senior Integrative Seminar* course (SW 400, Winter Term) are asked to participate in surveys and meetings to give their views on the extent to which the program has prepared them for professional practice.
- Students play an important role in filling faculty vacancies when they occur. A student representative, selected by the department chair, serves on the search committee that reviews applications for employment, interviews candidates, and makes recommendations to the Dean of the Faculty. Additionally, all candidates are asked to provide a demonstration of their teaching in a classroom setting, and student evaluations are collected and read by the committee. All students are invited to meet informally with candidates to learn about their qualifications, teaching/professional experience, and educational philosophies, and to provide their assessment to the search committee.

Facilities

The Social Work Department is located on the second floor of Old Main. This suite houses offices for full-time faculty, a storage area for official records and student advising files, and a small workroom.

Information about graduate programs, volunteer opportunities, jobs, and campus/community resources are posted in the waiting area.

Social work classes are usually held in the Old Main classrooms, but may be assigned to other buildings on the Wartburg campus when necessary.

Vogel Library is an essential learning/teaching resource, and it provides an information literacy specialist to consult directly with social work students and faculty in locating and using a wide range of books, journals, audio/visual records, and on-line resources. Social work faculty can assist students in making connections with library staff and utilizing their services.

The Social Work Curriculum

Core Professional Competencies (learning outcomes)

The required courses in the social work curriculum have been carefully designed to help students acquire nine **core professional competencies** that the Council on Social Work Education believes to be essential for graduates of all accredited BSW programs. These competencies are introduced, taught, practiced, and applied at designated points throughout the curriculum. The extent to which students master them is assessed in the 300 and 400-level courses and this assessment forms the basis for the program's on-going evaluation of its own performance.

Wartburg College Social Work Program

Competencies and Practice Behaviors

(Effective September, 2016)

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.
 - a. Students demonstrate an ability to practice in accordance with the NASW Code of Social Work Ethics and other recognized frameworks.
 - b. Students articulate a thoughtful integration of their personal values/ethics and those of the social work profession.
 - c. Students competently use accepted professional models and tools to analyze and resolve ethical dilemmas in social work practice, demonstrating an appreciation for the fact that there may be more than one ethical approach to the resolution of any given problem.
 - d. *Students show an understanding of how to use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.*
 - e. Students set meaningful and realistic career goals that give adequate consideration to professional strengths/limitations, participation in professional organizations, and continuing education.
 - f. Students are able to identify the unique roles and contributions of social workers in an interdisciplinary setting.

- g. Students demonstrate consistent adherence to the standards of appearance, comportment, and communication expected of social work professionals.
 - h. Students show an ability to use professional consultation and supervision to enhance the quality of their practice.
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice.
- a. Students give due consideration to human diversity and the effects of historical treatment in their assessment of human behavior and practice interventions.
 - b. Students articulate an understanding of the ways in which cultural structures and values exacerbate social inequalities among diverse groups.
 - c. Students demonstrate an ability to practice social work with a positive regard for the nuances of human diversity and the contributions of diverse groups.
 - d. Students can identify and mitigate the negative influences of their own biases and values in working with diverse groups and individuals.
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice.
- a. Students show that they understand the dynamics and historical roots of oppression, recognizing ways in which economic security, social well-being, and environmental justice are related.
 - b. Students are able to identify effective policy strategies for alleviating social, economic, and environmental oppression and ways they might be implemented.
 - c. Students are able to articulate and advocate for community and policy changes that reflect a high regard for social, economic, and environmental justice.
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice.
- a. Students are able to design, implement and present a program policy, or practice evaluation that gives due credence to data gathered through professional work.
 - b. Students can design interventions that are well-grounded in current, relevant research.
 - c. Students are proficient in accessing, evaluating, and using professional literature and research findings in their practice.
 - d. Students utilize valid program evaluation strategies to suggest changes designed to enhance the quality of human services and respond to changing social needs.
5. Engage in Policy Practice.

- a. Students demonstrate a familiarity with current trends and issues in social welfare policy that impact well-being, service delivery, and access to social services.
 - b. Students are able to analyze and assess the effectiveness of social policies and programs.
 - c. Students know how to initiate policy changes via legislative and administrative channels.
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
- a. Students are able to develop a general strategy for engaging clients in planned change that demonstrates a working knowledge of the Ecological and Social Systems Perspectives as integrative frameworks.
 - b. Students are able to develop a general strategy for engaging clients in planned change that demonstrates sensitivity to socio-cultural variables.
 - c. Students demonstrate an ability to develop effective rapport with clients.
 - d. Students demonstrate an ability to develop effective rapport within groups and with various community constituencies.
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
- a. Using professional assessment tools and protocols, students can collect and accurately interpret relevant client data.
 - b. Using professional assessment tools and protocols, students can collect and accurately interpret data relative to community needs.
 - c. Students demonstrate an ability to apply basic concepts and theories of human growth and development in their analysis of collected assessment data.
 - d. Students are able to develop clear, measurable intervention goals and objectives that accurately reflect assessed strengths, needs, and client preferences.
 - e. Students are able to develop clear, measurable intervention goals and objectives with community projects.
 - f. Students are able to develop appropriate intervention strategies in micro-practice that reflect a skillful interpretation of assessment data, research knowledge and client values and preferences.
 - g. Students are able to develop appropriate intervention strategies with community and professional organizations that reflect a skillful interpretation of assessment data, research knowledge, and community/organizational culture.

8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
 - a. Students are able to identify appropriate strategies for intervention that apply their knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
 - b. Students are able to identify appropriate strategies for intervention with community groups that reflect community strengths, culture, and capacity for change.
 - c. Students show that they can effectively negotiate, mediate, and advocate on behalf of clients.
 - d. Students know how and when to effectively terminate client relationships with sensitivity to future needs and growth.
 - e. Students demonstrate an ability to plan and work effectively with professionals of diverse backgrounds to effectively meet the needs of clients.
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
 - a. Students will demonstrate that they are able to accurately assess the impact of their interventions in ways that constructively inform their practice.
 - b. Students will demonstrate that they are able to accurately assess the impact of their community interventions in ways that constructively inform their practice.

Curriculum Structure

Students earn a BA degree in social work by completing 36 course credits at Wartburg College, which include 16 credits earned through 14 required social work and related courses. In addition to the required courses, the social work department offers electives, arranged studies, and independent studies. Students must earn a C- or higher in EN115 (or equivalent), a college Human Biology course (typically Bio 130 or NSC 135) and all Social Work (SW prefix) courses. All courses, with the C- or higher, must be completed before a student begins the senior practicum experience.

Required Courses for Social Work Majors

Students majoring in social work take 14 required courses (16 credits) that are arranged sequentially over a four-year course of study.

First & Second Years

SW 101: Introduction to Social Work & Social Welfare
SW 181: Beginning Field Experience
SW 201: Human Behavior and the Social Environment
SW 202: Group & Organizational Behavior

PSY 101: Introduction to Psychology
SO 101: Introduction to Sociology

Third Year

SW 300: Social Policy

SW 301: Social Work Practice I

SW 321: Social Work Research

BI 130: Drugs & Personal Health, BI 131: Biology of Ordinary Things, or NSC 135: Biology of the Mind

Fourth Year

SW 302: Social Work Practice II

SW 303: Social Work Practice III

SW 400: Senior Integrative Seminar

SW 401-03: Supervised Field Experience

Two of these courses (SW 181: Beginning Field Experience and SW 401-03: Supervised Field Experience) are field practica, where students are placed in social service agencies for the duration of the term. All of the other courses are taught on the Wartburg College campus.

All courses required for the major must be completed with a C- or higher before a student begins the senior practicum experience and capstone course.

Students take SW 400 and SW 401-403 at the same time and must pass all four courses with a C- or higher in order to successfully complete all four courses.

A complete list of courses offered through the social work department, including brief descriptions and prerequisites, may be found in the Wartburg College Academic Catalog.

Sequencing and Exceptions

The required social work courses are arranged to be taken sequentially, but some flexibility exists, particularly with those at the 100 and 200 levels. Some of the courses, including all of those at the 300 and 400 levels, have prerequisites that normally must first be met. However, exceptions to this policy may be granted if, in the judgement of the social work faculty, they would serve the best academic interests of the student. Students transferring into the social work program from other colleges, universities, or departments at Wartburg College, for example, might be given permission to take social work courses out of sequence to facilitate their graduation within a reasonable period of time. Student requests for these exceptions should be channeled through their social work academic advisors.

Field Education

Extensive exposure to the “real world” of social work and having the opportunity to practice the professional skills learned in the classroom are features that make social work education rather unique. In fact, the Council on Social Work Education regards field education as the profession’s *signature pedagogy*. Most social work students regard their field placement (or practicum) experiences as being among the most valuable and memorable aspects of their social work education.

Social work field experiences differ significantly from “internships” and other forms of experiential education offered by the College. Students have a faculty course instructor who works closely with them and placement agency supervisors throughout the practicum to help meet very specific learning objectives. Field experiences involve regular, structured interaction with the course instructor and other

students in placement, and require additional learning in the form of reading, writing, and research assignments.

Students majoring in social work complete a 140-hour *Beginning Field Experience* (SW 181) at some point before the beginning of their third year in the program and a 450-hour *Supervised Field Placement* (SW 401-03) during their last Winter Term at Wartburg. Additional field experiences for academic credit, in the form of elective courses, are available for students wanting exposure to diverse client populations (*SW 281: Diversity Field Experience*) or preparing for professional employment (*SW 405: Extended Field Instruction*).

Field education is administered by a member of the social work faculty who is the department's Field Education Coordinator. Among other things, the Coordinator develops suitable placement sites, trains agency staff who provide on-site supervision, coordinates student applications for field placements, and works to insure that field education experiences and assignments remain relevant to student needs.

Details about field education courses and policies may be obtained directly from the Coordinator or found in the program's ***Field Education Manual*** (available on the social work department website). All forms related to field education may also be found on and downloaded from the website. Additionally, students will benefit from regular discussions and planning with their faculty advisors about potential field placement possibilities.

Elective Courses

Each term, the department may offer one or more elective courses that acquaint students with specific areas of social work interest or practice. Often taught by adjunct faculty with relevant professional expertise, these courses are usually open to all Wartburg College students. A complete listing of elective courses that may be offered by the department may be found in the Wartburg College Academic Catalog.

Arranged & Independent Studies

Students desiring to take a course that will not be offered before their projected graduation date (or is offered only at times that conflict with other courses) may request to enroll and complete it via ***arranged study*** with a qualified member of the social work faculty. Student requests for an arranged study course should be initiated with the academic advisor and the course instructor. They require completion of a request form available through the Registrar's Office and approval by the student's academic advisor, the course instructor, the department chair, and the college registrar. Additional fees are charged for arranged studies. College policies regarding arranged studies may be found in the Wartburg College Academic Catalog.

Independent study courses (SW 450) afford students a unique opportunity to earn academic credit through individualized research or other learning activities under the direction of a social work faculty member. They allow students to learn about particular areas of social work practice, policy, or research that lie beyond the content of the courses in the social work program's curriculum. Independent study courses require careful planning and approval by the student's academic advisor, faculty sponsor, department chair, and the college registrar. Additional fees are charged. Students wishing to explore

independent study possibilities are encouraged to discuss their ideas with their academic advisor or any other member of the social work faculty.

Double Majors and Minors

With careful planning, most students can meet the academic requirements for a second major or a minor at Wartburg College, if that is their choice. Useful options include Spanish, religion, business, social justice, and social entrepreneurship (to name a few). Faculty in the social work department are committed to helping students obtain a second major or minor whenever possible, via collaboration with faculty in other departments, intensive advising, and flexible course scheduling. Students wishing to explore these options should arrange a discussion with their social work faculty advisor as early as possible, preferably in their first or second year at Wartburg.

International Study

Wartburg College offers students a wide array of international study opportunities and with its high regard for cultural diversity, the social work program strongly supports students in their efforts to study abroad. The duration of international study is typically one term and it usually is managed through a university or an independent agency specializing in creating and facilitating these programs. As an alternative, Wartburg also offers *cultural immersions* – unique opportunities for students to live and work in another country while receiving academic credit through arranged and independent studies. May Term travel courses afford yet another means through which Wartburg students can gain international exposure. Information about specific programs, courses and sites is available through the Study Abroad Office.

The social work program has structured its curriculum so that students can study abroad during the fall term of their third (junior) year and remain on on schedule to graduate in four years. Required social work courses that would normally be taken at this time may be postponed until the following year so that students have a great deal of flexibility in their international study. Courses required for the major are not taken abroad; in some cases, however, certain elective social work courses or field experiences may be available as options. In cultural immersions, for example, students typically take *SW 281: Diversity Field Experience* for academic credit.

Arranging an international study experience requires careful planning, and if this is their interest, students should consult with their academic advisors as early as possible. Students should begin the formal application process in the fall term of their second (sophomore) year by initiating meetings with both their advisor and the coordinator in the Study Abroad Office. The application process involves the completion of several forms and references which must be submitted by February 1 and formal interviews with the faculty directors of the Study Abroad Office. Students are notified within a few weeks of their acceptance for international placement.

All policies regarding international study at Wartburg College are developed and maintained by the Study Abroad Office. Questions should be directed to the Study Abroad Coordinator.

The Social Welfare Minor

The social work department offers any student not majoring in social work the option of earning a minor in social welfare. This minor introduces students to issues of public good, public welfare, and various theories of human behavior in the context of the social environment. It could be useful to those students who wish to pursue careers in health care, counseling, education, and social services.

The following courses are required to earn a social welfare minor:

SW 101: Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare
SW 201: Human Behavior and the Social Environment
SW 202: Group and Organizational Behavior
SW 300: Social Policy

Two of the following:

BA 377: Nonprofit management
PH 101: Introduction to Public Health
SO 101: Introduction to Sociology
SW 181: Beginning Field Experience
SW 210: Meeting the Needs of Children
SW 213: Working with Different Abilities
SW 250: Current Topics in Social Work Practice (1.0 credit)
SW 321: Social Work Research

Students seeking the social welfare minor should route their requests to the chair of the social work department.

Program Assessment

On-going assessment is essential to understanding the extent to which Wartburg's social work program meets its goals and accomplishes its mission, and also ensures that our teaching is dynamic. Since 2010, the program has used a comprehensive curriculum assessment process in accordance with the *Educational Policy Standards* issued by the *Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)*. This process assesses student mastery of core professional competencies (identified in the Program Curriculum section of this handbook). It is assumed that student performance on course assignments and in the senior field placement are good indicators of our program's success and/or need for change.

Data is obtained each year through student performance on certain designated course assignments and from evaluations of their work in the senior field placement by their practicum instructors. It is transmitted to the program director, who compiles the data into a comprehensive report which is sent to other faculty for review at the end of the academic year. In the summer, department faculty meet together to review and discuss the assessment data and its meaning, and to establish curriculum development goals/priorities that are implemented during the following academic year. A summary of the assessment data is posted on the department's website; annual goals may be obtained from the program director.

Student Involvement in Program Assessment

The College utilizes a system of faculty and course assessment, the Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI), that places a high priority on the evaluations completed by students. These evaluations are administered at the end of nearly every course taken at Wartburg. While only non-tenured faculty are required to have students complete the SRI, most tenured faculty continue to use it as a tool for modifying and improving their teaching. In addition, social work faculty encourage students to provide informal, on-going feedback in a variety of ways that are appropriate to their specific teaching and advising.

Student representatives attend each semi-annual meeting of the National Advisory Board to report on their work and discuss issues pertaining to the social work program and meet at least annually with faculty in an open forum to provide ideas and suggestions for improvement.

Admission to the Social Work Major

Although students express interest in and take social work courses during their first and second years at Wartburg, they must make a written application and be formally accepted into the social work major before they can take the social work practice courses (SW 301, 302, 303), the senior supervised field experience (SW 401, 402, 403) and the senior integrative seminar (SW 400). Typically, a student applies to be a major in the fall term of her/his third year and reapplies for admission to the seniorField program while taking SW 301.

Program Admission Requirements

To be formally accepted into the social work major, a student must:

1. Have at least second-year standing.
2. Submit a complete, acceptable application packet to the department office on a timely basis.
3. Have earned a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.00 or higher at the date of admission to the major.
4. Have earned a grade of C- or higher in each course required for the social work major that has been completed at the date of admission.
5. Have completed *EN 112: Intermediate Composition* (or a similar course taken at another institution and accepted for credit by the Wartburg College Registrar) with a grade of C- or higher.
6. Have successfully completed the *SW 181: Beginning Field Experience* (grade of "P").
7. Have a record of behavior and performance that is consistent with the values and principles articulated in the *National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics*.

8. Have a consistent record of acceptable professional comportment, demonstrated by:
 - Regular class attendance, engagement, and participation.
 - Professional respect for the ideas and perspectives of others.
 - Honesty and integrity in communication and interactions with faculty and peers.
 - Professional work habits in meeting deadlines and submitting assignments of an acceptable quality.
 - Constructive use of feedback/evaluation; meaningful engagement in self-reflection.
 - Consistent respect for and attention to professional roles and boundaries when interacting with instructors, agency staff, clients, and other students.

Process for Applying to the Social Work Major

Application forms and instructions are given to eligible students early in the fall term. The application packet consists of a cover sheet (form) and instructions for an autobiographical essay.

Completed application packets are typically due in October. Failure to submit a complete and timely application may cause delays in the review process and prevent a student from taking the required practice courses on schedule.

When completed applications are returned to the Department office, they are routed to the applicants' academic advisors for review. At the discretion of the advisor, this review process may involve an interview with the student. The advisor's recommendation is a strong factor in determining whether a student's application is approved.

Decisions regarding admission are reached through consensus by full-time faculty at a closed meeting in December and communicated to applicants before the beginning of Winter Term classes. Faculty consider factors such as meeting all admission requirements (see above), academic performance, motivation for pursuing a social work major, commitment to the ideals of the profession, behavior, and professional goals. The admission decision is communicated through a formal letter from the department chair. Students may be:

- Granted full, unconditional admission to the major
- Admitted with certain specified conditions
- Denied admission to the major

A copy of the decision letter is placed in the student's advising file.

A student who is denied admission to the major or admitted with conditions is directed to schedule a meeting with her/his academic advisor. The advisor may assist the student in developing plans for

meeting specified conditions or re-applying at a later date, or help in exploring and moving into other fields of study. If a different major is selected, the student should complete a Change of Major form and return it to the Registrar. The Social Work Department will forward her/his advising file and academic records as directed by the Registrar.

Appealing Admission Decisions

A student may appeal an admission decision communicated to her/him by the Department, using the grievance procedures specified in this Handbook.

Graduation Requirements for a BA in Social Work

To receive a BA degree in social work, students must:

- Earn a total of 36.0 credits from Wartburg College and other institutions that have approved by the College Registrar.
- Complete and earn a grade of C- or higher in each of the courses required in the social work major that are specified in the Wartburg College Academic Catalog.
- Complete and earn a grade of C- or higher in EN 115: Intermediate Composition and the Human Biology course.
- Achieve an overall grade point average of 2.00 or higher.
- Achieve a grade point average of 2.50 or higher in courses required in the social work major.

Transfer Credit from Other Institutions

Wartburg College accepts credits in transfer from other nationally recognized institutions if the course is found compatible with its overall curriculum standards. The College Registrar evaluates requests for transfer credit and determines the amount of credit to be awarded.

The Social Work Department may accept credit earned at other institutions for required social work courses:

Transfer from CSWE-Accredited Programs

Credits must be earned in courses that, in the judgement of the Department, are similar in content and credit value to corresponding courses in Wartburg's social work curriculum, with a grade of C- or higher. Transfer credit is not permitted for SW 301: Social Work Practice I, SW 302: Social Work Practice II, SW 303: Social Work Practice III, SW 400: Senior Integrative Seminar, or SW 401, 402, 403: Supervised Field Instruction.

Transfer from Non-Accredited Social Work Programs

Credit may be granted on a case-by-case basis after careful examination of the courses by Department faculty. Courses must contain content comparable to corresponding courses in Wartburg's social work curriculum and the student must have earned a grade of C- or higher. Students are responsible for providing the department with course descriptions, syllabi, faculty qualifications, and other information needed to evaluate the requested transfer. Transfer credit is not permitted for SW 301: Social Work Practice I, SW 302: Social Work Practice II, SW 303: Social Work Practice III, SW 400: Senior Integrative Seminar, or SW 401, 402, 403: Supervised Field Instruction.

Credit by Examination or for Life Experience

The program does not permit students to transfer social work course credit granted through examination in lieu of actual coursework. It does not grant academic credit, course waivers, or field practicum credit for life experiences or previous work experience.

Expectations of Social Work Students

Social work at Wartburg College differs somewhat from other, more traditional majors in that it is a "pre-professional" program that aims not only to assist students in acquiring knowledge, but also in developing professional skills, values, and behaviors.

Professional Skills

Our curriculum is designed around teaching strategies that stress the application of knowledge and theories gained in the classroom. Most courses, especially those at the 200, 300, and 400 levels, have assignments and expectations that take the student out of the classroom and into the community in some significant way. To succeed in this major, students must have the willingness and flexibility to engage in outside field experiences, service learning, and community-based projects. These often require them to commit significant amounts of time to their learning outside of specified class meeting times. Since nearly all professional social work occurs through collaboration with others, many class assignments require significant amounts of group work with other students. Teamwork can be quite challenging, but provides opportunities to acquire skills that will be invaluable in the professional arena.

Professional Values and Ethics

The profession of social work is built upon certain key values, principles, and beliefs about people and society that give it a unique character. These are clearly articulated in the National Association of Social Worker's Code of Ethics, which needs to be thoroughly read and understood. Students in the social work program are expected to abide by this Code of Ethics and also in accordance with civil laws, the Wartburg College Honor Code, and the Student Code of Conduct, which may be found in the *Academic Catalog* and the *Wartburg College Student Handbook*. Failure to comply with these standards may subject the student to disciplinary action, including dismissal from the social work major.

Professional Comportment

“Comportment” is defined as acting and conducting oneself in a professional manner. The specific behaviors expected of social work students are detailed in the Program Admission Requirements (see above). Disregard for these expectations may result in dismissal from the social work major.

Academic Performance

Students in the social work major are expected to proactively take responsibility for their own learning and adhere to class policies and requirements that are described in course syllabi. Questions or concerns about expectations, assignments, or grading should be communicated directly to course instructors.

Course Grading

Each instructor has the authority to determine how grades are assigned in her/his classes, the standards for which are described in the course syllabi. Students are entitled to receive grades and performance feedback from the instructor on a timely basis and an explanation for grades received for courses or assignments. Letter grades (A-F) are issued for all required social work courses, with the exception of the *SW 181: Beginning Field Experience*. Generally, these grades indicate the following:

- A: Exceptional. Performance or product exceeds expectations in terms of quality. It is clearly superior to that of most students who take the course.
- B: Good. Performance or product meets the expectations set for students in the course.
- C: Acceptable. Performance or product is somewhat less than expected, but still acceptable.
- D: Problematic. Performance or product is seriously deficient in some way and requires improvement.
- F: Failing. The course or assignments were not completed in a satisfactory manner.

Class Attendance

Regular class attendance is expected in all social work classes, and chronic absences may result in lowered or failing grades. Students should consult with each course instructor to understand her/his specific policies for attendance and advance notification if classes must be missed.

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious matter, and students are expected to abide by the Wartburg College Honor Code in all social work courses. Examples of dishonesty include:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Tendering of information
- Collusion
- Misrepresentation bribery
- Abetting dishonesty by another student

Course instructors have full authority in decisions regarding academic dishonesty and in determining any subsequent actions to be taken. At the discretion of the instructor, academic dishonesty may result in a lowered or failing grade for the assignment or the course. In accordance with the Wartburg Student Honor Code, the instructor may refer cases of academic dishonesty to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who may suspend or dismiss the student from the College.

Dismissal (Suspension or Termination) from the Social Work Major

Admission to the social work major comes with the expectation that the student will continue her/his academic career with acceptable academic performance, ethical behavior and professional comportment. Continuation in the social work major is contingent upon positive ongoing faculty evaluation of student performance in these areas. A student may be suspended or terminated from the social work major if s/he exhibits serious deficiencies in any of these criteria.

Academic Performance

Standards

A student is considered to be academically deficient if her/his overall GPA drops below 2.00. Note that students must have a 2.00 GPA and a 2.50 GPA in courses required for the social work major in order to enter the supervised field experience in their senior year. A student whose GPA falls below 2.00 will meet with her/his academic advisor to determine if continuation in the major is appropriate and to develop a plan to improve academic performance if s/he continues to pursue a BA degree in social work. Expectations and time lines for improvement of academic performance will be described in this plan. If, in the judgment of the academic advisor, the student does not show promise or a strong commitment to improving her/his performance, the advisor may recommend to the Department that the student be terminated from the major.

All students are expected to achieve a grade of C- or higher in each course required for the social work major, EN 115: Intermediate Composition and the Human Biology course. A student must re-take any course in which her/his academic performance does not meet this standard.

Academic Integrity

A student may also be suspended or terminated from the major if s/he is guilty of committing any of the forms of academic dishonesty described in the Wartburg College Student Honor Code. Each course instructor has full authority in determining if academic dishonesty has occurred and assigning consequences, which can include a lowered or failing grade in the course or on the assignment in

question or other remedial actions. The instructor may also refer the student to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for disciplinary action or recommend to the department that the student be suspended or terminated from the social work major.

Forms of academic dishonesty are:

- Cheating on examinations or assignments
- Plagiarism
- Tendering of information
- Collusion
- Misrepresentation bribery
- Abetting academic dishonesty by another student

Ethical Behavior

Failure to adhere to laws, the Wartburg College Student Honor Code, the Student Code of Conduct, the NASW Code of Social Work Ethics, or any contractual arrangements with the College may result in a review of a student's status as a social work major. In such instances, the Department may require specific, required corrective actions or dismiss the student from the major.

Professional Comportment

Students are expected to conduct themselves according to the standards of professional comportment (behavior) specified in the program admission requirements (see above). Failure to abide by these standards or to take corrective actions stipulated by course instructors or the student's academic advisor may result in a recommendation for dismissal.

Process for Removing a Student from the Social Work Major

Any full or part-time member of the social work faculty may formally ask the Department to consider suspending or dismissing a student from the major for reasons described above. This request must be presented to the Department in writing through the Department Chair with an explanation and/or evidence that supports the requested action. This letter will be shared with the student, who will be given the opportunity to meet with the Department's full-time faculty to present a response. At its discretion, the Department may conduct additional investigative activities to assist in its deliberations. When the investigation is completed the faculty, meeting as a group, will review the referral for removal, and arrive at a consensus decision regarding actions to be taken. The decision of the Department and any recommendations will be communicated to the student in writing by the Department Chair.

Appeals

If a student desires, s/he may appeal the decision of the Department regarding termination through the grievance procedures described below.

Adjudication of Student Grievances

A student may formally grieve actions by the Department, its faculty, field instructors, or other social work students in instances where they believe their rights have been violated/denied or program policies have been misapplied. Grades given to students in courses or on examinations or assignments may not be appealed unless they resulted from an alleged misapplication of policies articulated by the instructor in the syllabi.

Students are encouraged to resolve conflicts by working directly with their academic advisors and the parties involved. However, if a satisfactory resolution is not reached, the student may ask the Department chair to initiate a meeting to reach an agreement that is acceptable to all parties involved. If the matter is still not resolved to the student's satisfaction, s/he may contact the Vice President for Academic Affairs for assistance, using the institutional grievance procedures outlined in the Wartburg College Student Handbook.

Academic Advising

A student's academic advisor is an important resource for Wartburg College students. Because Wartburg is small, advisors and other professors can develop a relationship with students that may extend well beyond the classroom and into the future, post-graduation. A close relationship with an academic advisor means advisors are aware of student interests and can readily direct students toward scholarships, jobs, and many other opportunities that might be of interest. Advisors can also be useful to students in planning for graduate school or careers, and in providing formal references when needed.

Students may also consult with academic advisors regarding problems or difficulties that interfere with or otherwise impact their studies, or to seek assistance in locating the many sources of personal support that exist on campus or in the surrounding community. Social work advisors and faculty are not counselors, per se, but are available to listen to concerns and help students in finding the resources they need to be successful in college.

Meeting with Advisors

Social work students meet with their academic advisors early and often. Many students first meet their advisors when they come to campus to register for classes in the summer months. Frequently, students plan individual conferences with advisors at the beginning of the school year to discuss plans and make adjustments to class schedules. First-year students meet again with the academic advisor after about four weeks of class to discuss their adjustment to college classes and student life at Wartburg, and again near the middle of the Fall Term to review class schedules for the remainder of the year.

Registration for Classes

Students are required to meet with their academic advisors in March to review schedules for the following academic year before they are authorized to proceed with the registration process. Students should initiate a meeting with their advisors at least one week prior to their designated registration date, for approximately one half hour. This meeting not only allows the student to construct class

schedules for the following year, but can also be a good time to review long-range plans to assure that s/he will graduate on time.

Although the advisor may offer useful suggestions, Wartburg students are ultimately responsible for selecting and registering for their courses, and assuring that all requirements for graduation are met.

Secondary Advisors

If a student is pursuing a second major or a minor in another field of study, s/he should seek an additional faculty advisor in that academic department. However, the social work faculty advisor remains the primary academic advisor for all social work majors.

Wartburg College offers international and American Ethnic students individualized guidance and support through the Director of International Student Services and the Director of Multicultural Student Services. These staff can be helpful in many ways and frequently work with faculty to support the adjustment and academic progress of students. They do not, however, provide the formal academic advising services of an assigned faculty advisor.

Departmental Opportunities and Activities

Student Organizations

The Social Work Club provides opportunities to meet and socialize with social work students and faculty, learn about social work careers, and participate in campus and community service projects. It provides the student leadership for the Social Work Program's annual *Holiday Shoppe* event and the celebration of *Social Work Month* in March. Membership is open to any Wartburg student with a major or an interest in the profession of social work.

The Iowa Alpha Chapter of the Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society provides recognition to those students who have achieved academic excellence in their coursework. To be eligible for membership, students must have completed at least three required courses for the social work major and a beginning field experience, and compiled an overall GPA of 3.00 with a 3.25 GPA in required social work courses. Invitations for membership are usually extended during the Winter Term and the induction ceremony is held each spring.

Social work students have traditionally taken key leadership roles in other student organizations at Wartburg, including the Black Student Union, Alliance (LGBTQ support), Dance Marathon, Habitat for Humanity, and various faith-based interest groups.

Holiday Shoppe

For over thirty years, Wartburg's Social Work Program has organized and coordinated a community-wide event that collects, purchases, and facilitates the families of Bremer County children to receive holiday gifts. Leadership for the Holiday Shoppe is provided through

a collaborative effort with the Waverly-Shell Rock United Way, St. Paul's Lutheran and Redeemer Lutheran Churches, local volunteers, and the Social Work Club, but nearly all social work students and fall term classes contribute to the project in important ways.

Slife Social Work Institute

The Slife Institute provides professional consulting, research, and training to human service agencies and organizations throughout the region. Led by social work department faculty, the Institute frequently engages students as project assistants, giving them opportunities for hands-on learning and professional involvement that extends beyond their coursework. Financial compensation is provided to students who work with faculty on Institute projects.

The Institute also provides students and faculty with the financial support to attend and/or present their work at regional and national training workshops and professional conferences.

Volunteer and Community Service

Many social service agencies in Waverly and the surrounding area contact the social work department directly when seeking volunteers or candidates for paid employment during the academic year and in the summer months. These include the Bremwood Residential Treatment Center (children), Bremer County Community-Based Services, Cedar Valley Friends of the Family, and the Larrabee Center. Any member of the social work faculty can provide more information about these opportunities.

RICE Day

The Social Work Program participates each spring in Wartburg's celebration of student and faculty achievements in and out of the classroom, known as Research, Internship & Creative Endeavor (RICE) Day. Students are invited to present their research and senior practicum work, and a ceremony is held to present annual department awards which include:

- *Outstanding Social Work Senior*, recognizing superior academic achievement.
- *St. Elizabeth Student Social Work Award*, noting outstanding leadership and campus/community service.
- *Mannie Holmes Award*, recognizing outstanding service or leadership in campus or community work celebrating or supporting human diversity and/or inclusion.
- Outstanding Community Partner award, recognizing an individual or organization who has provided significant support to students and the department.

This ceremony also includes the induction of new members to the Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society.

Policies Governing Research Conducted and Presented by Social Work Students and Faculty

The Social Work Department seeks to follow all federal and HIPAA guidelines for faculty and students conducting research involving human subjects. While most of the research conducted by social work faculty and students is of minimal risk to the subjects, review and proper process of the research is still important. Most agencies where students conduct research are HIPAA compliant, and students should follow the agency's protocol. To assure HIPAA compliance and Human Subject protection, the Social Work Department has established a research protocol.

Regulations Protecting Human Subjects in Research

Research by Wartburg College students and faculty must follow federal regulations protecting research subjects. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviews all human subject research at Wartburg College.

The federal regulations protecting human subjects in research are contained in Title 45: Part 46 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* and are administered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. These regulations have developed over time since the passing of the National Research Act in 1974. In 1979 the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects deliberated over the ethical principles which ought to dictate human subject's research. The Belmont Report is the document that the commission produced. Its contents form the philosophical underpinnings of Title 45: Part 46 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*.

In addition to the federal regulations, individual academic and professional disciplines have agreed upon ethical standards which govern research conduct as it pertains to the protection of human subjects. As most of these standards are quite similar between disciplines, IRB has concentrated its efforts on the guidelines of the American Psychological Association. All IRB decisions regarding research protocols will be made, therefore, in an attempt to uphold both federally mandated and discipline-specific ethical standards.

Title 45: Part 46 of the Code of Federal Regulations can be viewed at:
<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html>.

The Belmont Report can be viewed at:
<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html>.

The American Psychological Association statement of research ethics as they pertain to human subject protection can be viewed at: <http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html#8>.

Vulnerable Populations (e.g. children) Defined

Populations are considered vulnerable if there are concerns about their ability to understand information presented to them and make reasoned decisions about participation in research (for example, prisoners and children). Special protections exist for vulnerable populations in terms of review and informed consent. For example, research with children must secure the consent of parents.

Investigators should review the specific federal regulations designed to provide special protections for vulnerable populations at the following website: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/populations/>.

Exempt Research

The IRP has adopted the federal standards for exempt research. You may review the appropriate categories for exemption on its website. If you feel that your research is exempt from review, please contact the IRB chair.

Wartburg IRB Approval Process

1. When determining approval, the committee carefully assesses the benefits associated with the research and any potential for risks. Benefits can be theoretical or applied in nature. Risks may include potential for physical or mental harm. Risk can also include situations in which participants' anonymity or confidentiality is compromised.
2. Review the following resources before completing the human subjects protocol form:
 - **Information About Informed Consent Forms**
 - **Information About Debriefing Forms**
3. Download and complete the Human Subject Protocol Form.
4. If you are a student researcher, send the electronic version of your completed form to your research advisor. Your research advisor should review and sign off on your protocol before sending it for approval.
5. The research advisor should email the completed protocol form to IRB@wartburg.edu. The committee will not review protocol forms that are submitted directly from students.
6. To ensure a timely review and approval of your protocol, you must send your protocol in at least one week in advance of IRB meetings. See the IRB website for specific dates for the current semester: <http://info.wartburg.edu/Academics/Undergraduate-Research/Human-Subjects>.
7. If substantial changes are required after being reviewed by the committee, it may only return partial feedback to the researcher; the committee will then consider an improved submission.

