

Professional Standards and Expectations

Upon admission to the Specialty Program in Alcohol and Drug Abuse (SPADA) Certificate Program, you will be expected to sign, agree to, and abide by the Professional Standards as set by the program (see page 15 below). Failure to comply with the Professional Standards or discharge from a field practicum site may result in remediation or termination from SPADA.

All students enrolled in courses/activities in SPADA are expected to abide by the University Code of Conduct (<https://wmich.edu/conduct/code>). In addition, this document provides students, faculty, staff and clinical supervisory staff in SPADA with professional standards by which all students must comply and upon which all students enrolled in courses/activities will be assessed.

For students accepted into SPADA, the accumulation of knowledge must be accompanied by the acquisition of skills and professional attitudes and behavior. In all phases of professional education, the students' abilities to utilize their intellectual ability and maintain emotional stability, particularly when under stress and within the time limitations inherent in the professional setting, is vital for the successful completion of the program. Students must also abide by the professional standards and code of ethics of their core discipline (e.g., NASW, ACA, APA).

1. Definition of Professional Standards

Students must possess more than knowledge and professional skills in the addiction field. They must also possess and exhibit beliefs, values, and attitudes that are necessary to work effectively and interact with other students, faculty, staff, supervisory staff, other professionals, clients, and members of the community. The standards will be assessed throughout the program.

These standards are:

- Academic integrity
- Consistent punctuality
- Consistent dependability
- Honesty with and respect for other students in the program, faculty, staff, clients, and supervisory staff
- Demonstrated responsibility for previously learned material
- Fairness
- Demonstrated effective interpersonal relationships with others
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity and tolerance of diverse views
- Professional appearance
- Professional judgment
- Personal initiative
- High expectations for performance
- Confidentiality of client information
- Commitment to professional growth
- Willingness to work in partnership
- Demonstrated social and moral responsibility
- Commitment to engaging with current trends and research in the addiction field

2. Assessment of Professional Standards (occurs throughout the professional program)

A. Assessment Standards

- a. An ability and willingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into one's repertoire of professional behavior;
- b. An ability to acquire professional skills in order to reach an acceptable level of professional competency; and/or
- c. An ability to control personal stress and strong emotions which could interfere with professional functioning.

B. An assessment of professional standards that reveals one or more of the following characteristics may require remediation:

- a. A student does not acknowledge, understand, or address a problem when it is identified;
- b. A problem is not merely a reflection of a skill deficit which can be rectified through training;
- c. The quality of services delivered by the student is sufficiently negative;
- d. A problem is not restricted to one area of functioning;
- e. A student's behavior does not change as a function of feedback, remediation efforts and/or time.

Any concerns expressed over adherence to professional standards or any assessment identifying a failure to adhere to professional standards may be addressed through remediation. In case of severe or egregious violations of professional standards, sanctions consistent with the applicable policies, procedures, and rules may be implemented without the opportunity of remediation.

3. Remediation Alternatives

It is important to have meaningful ways to address concerns regarding a student's inability to exhibit professional standards. In implementing remediation interventions, the program administration must be mindful and balance the needs of the other students in the program, faculty, the clients involved and the supervisory staff. In appropriate circumstances, the program administration may implement corrective measures other than remediation. These may include the following:

- a. A verbal warning to the student emphasizes the need to discontinue the inappropriate behavior under discussion. Record of this warning is appropriately documented in the student's file.
- b. After an agreed upon reasonable time has elapsed since the verbal warning, if the student's performance has not sufficiently improved, a written warning to the student will be issued and shall include:
 1. A description of the student's unsatisfactory performance or behavior, and recognition that the student had been previously afforded a verbal warning;
 2. Actions required of the student to correct the unsatisfactory performance/ behavior;
 3. The timeline for correcting the problem (depending on the student, schedule modification may be time limited);
 4. The action(s) to be taken if the problem is not corrected;
 5. A professional review within the program may be conducted to discuss behavior/activities. The outcome of this review may include a suspension of direct service activities, a program approved leave from the program, or dismissal from the program.

4. Equal Protection and Due Process

Equal protection and due process ensure that decisions about students are not arbitrary or personally biased. It ensures that evaluative procedures are applied equitably to all students. Due process allows for appropriate appeal procedures to be available to the student. All steps need to be appropriately documented and implemented.

General due process guidelines include:

- a. As part of the program orientation process, present in writing the program expectations regarding professional standards.
- b. Provide a written procedure to the student, which describes how the student may appeal.
- c. Document, in writing and to all relevant parties, the actions taken by the program and its rationale.

5. Due Process: SPADA Professional Review Committee (PRC)

A PRC shall consist of the following deliberating members and non-deliberating participants:

Members who Deliberate:

1. The PRC Chair. The chair will be the SPADA program coordinator, unless there is a conflict of interest (e.g., the program coordinator is also a member of the student's committee), or if the program coordinator is unavailable. Then, the School of Interdisciplinary Health Programs (SIHP) director will appoint a secondary PRC chair who is knowledgeable about PRC policies and procedures.
2. One faculty member with direct knowledge of the student and the student's competence in the area(s) under review (optional).
3. One SIHP faculty member without direct knowledge of the student.
4. The field practicum supervisor for the appropriate regional location when the performance issue is related to the field placement.

Non-deliberating Participants:

1. The student is required to attend. If the student has been adequately informed and refuses to attend, a PRC will still convene.
2. The site supervisor, when applicable to a field placement concern.
3. A silent observer, if one is selected by the student.

6. PRC Procedures:

1. Every faculty member has the right and obligation to refer a student for a PRC if they deem it necessary and that referral will be honored by SPADA.
2. The chair will convene the PRC on a designated day and time in collaboration with the student and all other relevant parties.
3. The student will receive a letter or other confirmed communication outlining:
 - a. The reason(s) the PRC is being held,
 - b. The date, time and place of the hearing, and
 - c. The composition of the committee.

4. The student will have the option of bringing a silent observer who shall not participate in any other capacity except to observe and provide silent support to the student. A student who desires consultation with an observer will request a time-limited recess and leave the meeting room for such consultation.
5. The student will have the option of bringing relevant supporting documentation.
6. The meeting will have two parts:
 - a. Presentation from and/or discussion with the parties involved, and
 - b. Deliberation among PRC voting members. If deliberation of the PRC team does not reach consensus, the PRC chair will make a decision regarding recommendations.
7. The PRC chair will submit a letter with the final determination sent to the student by mail or other confirmed communication within seven business days. A copy of this letter will be forwarded to the voting members of the PRC as needed, and placed in the student's file.

7. If students wish to further appeal this decision, they may do so to a University Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee (GAPDAC).

This appeal must be initiated within twenty business days of the final notification of program dismissal. The student will initiate an appeal through the Office of the University Ombudsman. When the Ombudsman receives an appeal, the provost or designate will schedule a meeting of a Grade and Program Dismissal Appeals Committee using procedures determined by the Professional Standards Committee of the Faculty Senate.

KEEP THIS DOCUMENT FOR YOUR RECORDS AND COMPLETE/SEND IN THE SIGNATURE PAGE ONLY

Professional Standards Signature Page

I agree to adhere to the Professional Standards set by WMU's Specialty Program in Alcohol and Drug Abuse (SPADA) Certificate Program. I understand that if I violate any of the Professional Standards or if I am discharged from my field practicum placement, that there will be remediation and the potential for immediate termination from the Program.

I also understand that I must inform my SPADA field practicum supervisor within 24 hours if I am asked to leave my practicum experience placement for any reason. *Failure to do so could result in an immediate discharge from the SPADA Certificate Program.*

Print Name

WIN

Signature

Date

Complete and send signature page only to Dr. Tiffany Lee:

Mail:
Specialty Program in Alcohol and Drug Abuse
Attn: Dr. Tiffany Lee, Program Coordinator
1903 W. Michigan Avenue Kalamazoo, MI
49008-5212

Email:
tiffany.lee@wmich.edu

In-Person:
College of Health and Human Services Building, Suite 2400