Social Work, MSW

Related Certificates

- Applied Gerontology (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/applied-gerontology-certificate)
- Non-Profit Management (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/nonprofit-management-certificate)
- Trauma-Informed Care (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/trauma-informed-care-certificate)
- Women’s Studies (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/womens-studies-certificate)

State of Wisconsin Credentials

- School Social Work Certification (http://uwm.edu/socialwelfare/academics/school-social-work)
- Substance Abuse Certification (http://uwm.edu/socialwelfare/academics/substance-abuse-certification-sac)

Overview

The Helen Bader School of Social Welfare (HBSSW) offers a program of graduate studies in social work. As a department in an urban research university, the mission of the Department of Social Work is to promote positive change through social work research, scholarship, education, and community partnerships. The Department promotes the values of the social work profession through a commitment to social justice and diversity, a dedication to public service, and an emphasis on individual and community well-being. The goal of the MSW program is to prepare graduates with specialized knowledge and skills for advanced practice and leadership with diverse populations and communities.

In furtherance of its mission, the goals of the Social Work Department are:

1. To educate students to become highly skilled, culturally competent, and ethical social workers and to provide leadership for the practice of social justice.
2. To create and disseminate knowledge leading to social work and inter-disciplinary innovations.
3. To engage in research and apply results that inform social work policy, practice, advocacy, education, and future research.
4. To collaborate with community partners in promoting evidence-informed practice, educational and research partnerships, and social and economic justice.

HBSSW offers students access to the University computer system, special interview training rooms, and specialized audiovisual materials.

The MSW curriculum is designed to prepare students for advanced-level professional Social Work practice, and builds upon a solid base of coursework in human behavior, practice methods, research, and policy. The MSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and can prepare students for state certification requirements.

Admission Requirements

Application Deadlines
Application deadlines vary by program, please review the application deadline chart (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines) for specific programs. Other important dates and deadlines can be found by using the One Stop calendars (https://uwm.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines).

Admission
Application must be made to both the Graduate School and the MSW program. Program application materials are available for the Fall semester only. All applications must be completed and submitted on or before January 2. Applicants must meet Graduate School and program requirements for admission, including:

1. Undergraduate grade point average of 2.75 or better.
2. Completion of at least 21 semester credits in the social and behavioral sciences (i.e., psychology, sociology, political science, economics, anthropology, and/or their equivalents).
3. Submission of a program application which includes three letters of recommendation, a narrative statement, and a comprehensive professional resume.

Please see complete requirements and instructions for applying on the MSW program web page (http://uwm.edu/socialwelfare/academics/msw-in-social-work) before starting an application.

Credits and Courses

The MSW program requires a minimum of 34 graduate credits for students admitted to the Advanced Curriculum. Students may be required to complete up to 22 credits to fulfill the Professional Foundation prior to beginning the Advanced Curriculum. The minimum 34 Advanced Curriculum credit requirements are distributed as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 722</td>
<td>Field Instruction II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 821</td>
<td>Field Instruction III</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 822</td>
<td>Field Instruction IV</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Select one of the following options: 8

Option 1:

- SOC WRK 711  Direct Social Work Practice I
- SOC WRK 811  Direct Social Work Practice II

Select one additional practice course

Option 2:

- SOC WRK 713  Community Organization, Planning and Human Service Administration I
- SOC WRK 813  Financial Management and Planning in Human Services

Select one additional practice course

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 793</td>
<td>Evaluation of Practice</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 794</td>
<td>Evaluation of Programs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
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Concentration

- SOC WRK 851  Social Issue and Policy Analysis
- SOC WRK 685  Social Gerontology
- SOC WRK 753  Adult Psychopathology
and choose one of five specialized concentrations:

Upon completion of the Professional Foundation requirements—through coursework or exemption—students enter into the Advanced Curriculum and choose one of five specialized concentrations:

**Professional Foundation**

Students admitted into the graduate social work program without having earned a bachelor’s degree from an accredited social work program within the past 5 years are required to fulfill the Professional Foundation prior to Advanced Curriculum coursework (see below for exemptions).

The purpose of the Professional Foundation is to orient students to the profession and to provide a knowledge, values and skills base in preparation for the Advanced Curriculum. Coursework in the Professional Foundation is not included in the 34 Advanced Curriculum credits required for completion of the MSW degree. The Professional Foundation courses are:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 604</td>
<td>Social Systems and Social Work Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 662</td>
<td>Methods of Social Welfare Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 665</td>
<td>Cultural Diversity and Social Work</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 705</td>
<td>Individual Behavior and Social Welfare</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 708</td>
<td>Social Work Methods I: Individuals and Families</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 709</td>
<td>Social Work Methods II: Groups, Organizations and Communities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 721</td>
<td>Field Instruction I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC WRK 750</td>
<td>Social Welfare Policy Development and Implementation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
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Total Credits 22

**Exemptions**

Students who have, within the 5 years preceding admission, completed coursework which substantially duplicates Professional Foundation courses may apply to the Chair of the Social Work Department for an exemption from the relevant courses. Exemption examinations are also offered on a scheduled basis for these courses. Exemption of the field experience (SOC WRK 721) may be permitted under special employment experience circumstances and only by permission of the Director of Field Programs. Students interested in securing an exemption should request course exemption forms upon notification of admission to the program.

All requests for exemptions must be made at the time of initial enrollment. Exemption requests will not be accepted following the end of the first semester of coursework.

**Program Requirements**

**Specializations**

Upon completion of the Professional Foundation requirements—through coursework or exemption—students enter into the Advanced Curriculum and choose one of five specialized concentrations:

- Physical Health
- Behavioral Health and Mental Health
- Gerontology
- Children and Families
- Community and Organizational Leadership

With careful faculty advising, students are able to develop a course of study that builds upon their individualized interests, experiences, and strengths.

**Specialization Descriptions**

**Physical Health**

This concentration is designed to prepare students for advanced and clinical practice in a variety of health care settings. Students in the health concentration are prepared to address the multifaceted world of health care through coursework designed to expose them to issues of chronic health, health care delivery, health policy, and the social determinates of health across the life course. Health concentration students are trained in case management and assessment skills, and the role of social work in multidisciplinary health care teams. Students develop a solid understanding of how access to health systems, policies, and programs impact health. Students who graduate with a concentration in health are prepared for practice in a variety of settings from hospitals and primary care clinics, to community health settings and long term care.

**Behavioral Health and Mental Health**

This concentration is designed to prepare students for advanced social work practice involving the delivery of mental health and addictions services to individuals, families, small groups, and the community. Students are exposed to issues, approaches, and technologies for application in prevention, treatment, administration, and policy. These are related to risks and problems with: alcohol and other drugs, mental health and mental illness, intimate partner violence, community violence, and other behavioral health concerns across the lifespan. Coursework provides students with knowledge, values, and skills to prepare them for professional practice in a variety of private and public settings related to mental health, addictions, and substance abuse.

**Gerontology**

This concentration is designed to aid students in understanding the complexity of the aging process from the perspective of the individual, family, society and social policy. The concentration will cover the physical, psychological and social processes of aging including family roles and responsibilities, cultural diversity, social support networks and the use of health and social services. Major developmental issues during the second half of life will be presented and interventions to facilitate adaptation to developmental change will be described. Coursework will enable students to: understand late-life mental disorders; develop assessment skills; formulate, implement and evaluate treatment plans; and become aware of issues related to age and ageism as they influence social work practice.

**Children and Families**

The social work profession has a long history of commitment to ensuring the well-being of children. Furthermore, professionals recognize the family system as being significant in the lives of children. The family system, in its various forms, represents a significant social institution, essential to communities and to society as a whole. This concentration focuses on the study of family systems, child and family welfare, and interventions to enhance the lives of children and families. Students in this concentration develop the advanced practice knowledge and skills
necessary to provide services to children and families in a wide variety of settings.

Community and Organizational Leadership
Often described as “macro” practice, this concentration is for students who are interested in social change with organizations and communities. Social work within this concentration is about creating social and policy change, strengthening community and organizational systems, developing leadership skills, and addressing social injustices. Students will prepare for roles in leadership and administration, program development, planning, policy, and community practice.

Double Concentration
Students who are interested in gaining knowledge and skills relevant to both macro practice techniques and a second “direct practice” concentration may choose a “Double Concentration” sequence. This sequence is a combination of Community and Organizational Leadership and a second concentration (Physical Health, Behavioral Health and Mental Health, Gerontology, or Children and Families), and may require up to an additional semester of coursework. Four semesters of Field Placement are required with two semesters of that Field experience being within a direct practice field setting and two semesters of a Community and Organizational Leadership-based field placement. Students who have interests that range from direct social work practice to more leadership social work roles will benefit from this option.

Practice Method Areas
Direct Practice
By providing advanced-level knowledge and skills to address the changing impact of interpersonal and social problems, this specialty prepares students who are interested in using direct practice to help individuals, families, and groups.

Macro Practice
This method is for students who are interested in planned change with organizations and communities. Students will prepare for roles in planning, policy, administration, program development and community practice.

Double Methods
Students who are interested in gaining knowledge and skills relevant to both Direct Practice and Macro Practice techniques and settings may choose a “Double Methods” sequence. This combination of methods tracks may require up to an additional semester of coursework. Four semesters of Field Placement are required with two semesters of Direct Practice experience and two semesters of Macro Practice experience. Students who have interests that range from direct social work practice to more administrative social work roles will benefit from this option.

Faculty Advisor
All students will be assigned a faculty member to advise and supervise their studies as specified in Graduate School regulations. Students should develop, in consultation with the advisor, a written plan of study, including selection of the specialized concentration. Students may elect to change advisor contingent upon the new advisor’s appropriateness to the area of specialized concentration, the advisor’s acceptance of additional advisees, and formal notification to the MSW specialist in the MSW program.

Time Limit
Students admitted directly into the Advanced Curriculum must complete all degree requirements within seven years of initial enrollment; students required to complete any portion of the Professional Foundation must complete all degree requirements within seven years of initial enrollment.