

The Undergraduate Professional Program

Bachelor of Social Work

Minimum Hours Required for Graduation: 122 hours

The undergraduate professional program is designed to prepare students for beginning generalist social work practice and to provide preparation for graduate training in social work and related professions. Emphasis is placed on a conceptual framework of systems theory, the ecological model, and a strengths-based approach to problem solving. Generalist social workers are taught to address a range of social issues, to work in a variety of practice settings, and to facilitate positive change that will enhance the social function of individuals, groups, families, organizations, and communities.

The B.S.W. program utilizes the development of knowledge and skills in the areas of human behavior in the social environment, social work practice, research, social policy, diversity, ethics, and values. A personalized instructional approach is used to engage students in a learning process that promotes critical thinking and self-reflection. Commitment to educating students to work towards the creation of a more just and humane society by advocating for services and resources for oppressed, vulnerable, and other at-risk populations is a main emphasis of the program.

Students enrolled in the undergraduate social work curriculum are required to complete a major consisting of 35 hours, a guided interdisciplinary minor of 22-24 hours, and 6 hours of research, totaling 63-65 hours. As part of the program, students complete a 400-hour internship in a human service agency.

Social Work majors can obtain specialty certificates offered by the College of Health and Human Services in conjunction with their social work degree. Students with other majors can obtain a 15-hour minor in social work. For further information about certificate programs and the social work minor, please consult with the College of Health and Human Services academic advisor.

Admission Requirements

Students interested in social work major will be admitted into the pre-social work curriculum at the time of admission to the University. This does not guarantee admission to the social work major. Students who have completed SWRK 2100 Social Work Services and Professional Roles and have a minimum of 45 credit hours, may apply to the Undergraduate Social Work Major. General information necessary for admission includes:

- Completion of the Social Work Undergraduate Application
- Submission of all academic transcripts
- Supplemental (personal) Statement

All applications are submitted to the Director of Admissions and Student Services of the School of Social Work. Deadlines for submitting applications are January 15, May 15, and October 1 of each year. Selection of students to be admitted to the major occurs after review of all application by the Admissions and Student Services Committee composed of social work faculty. This is a competitive admissions process with a specific number of students admitted each year. Specific criteria for selection candidates are based upon:

- Overall grade point average of 2.5 for consideration
- General and social work related employment
- Participation in community services, leadership activities, and volunteer experience
- Written communication skills, personal qualifications, and basic knowledge of the profession as evidenced in the supplemental statement

Field Education

The field practicum provides students with opportunities to learn and apply generalist knowledge and beginning level skills in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Students in the social work major complete two consecutive semesters of field education (SWRK 4100/4110) in a human service agency. Field education and the courses taken concurrently, SWRK 4010 and 4020, are open only to students formally admitted to the B.S.W. program.

Placement is made through the School of Social Work, following the application and interview process established and conducted by the Coordinator of Field Education. The timing of each student's field education is determined upon admission to the major during the program planning process. At least one semester prior to the scheduled start of field education, students will receive the Field Placement Application, which is due according to the time frame established for each field cohort by the Coordinator of Field Education. Failure to complete the application process according to the established deadline may result in delaying the start of field education.

Field education consists of three required components: A three-day communication laboratory, on-campus seminars, and 400 hours of work at the agency where the student is placed. Each student works with a field instructor at the agency and a faculty liaison at the University. Communication labs are conducted on campus by the faculty liaison and is intended to help orient students to their placement, to identify overall expectations for professional performance, and increase general understanding of the field education program. Extensive safety training is included during this time to ensure adequacy of students' knowledge base regarding safety issues. Student attend an integrated on-campus seminar as a part of the field experience. Seminars are facilitated by the faculty liaison and meet 12 hours in SWRK 4100 and 14 hours in SWRK 4110. The hours devoted to communication labs and to the seminars are not considered part of the total 400 on-site field hours. During the actual field hours at the agency, students work with a professional, their field instructor, to develop social work skills and gain hands-on experiences. The Council on Social Work Education guidelines require a minimum of 200 hours per semester at the agency. Field education is graded on a Credit/No Credit basis.