Social Work, B.A.

The undergraduate program in social work has been accredited continuously by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1974 and is designed to be consistent with the council’s 2015 Educational Policy Statement competencies. The program’s goals are to:

- prepare students for culturally competent generalist social work practice with individuals, families, small groups, organizations, and communities;
- provide students with a base for continuing graduate education in social work and for lifelong learning; and
- prepare students for active engagement with issues of social justice, oppression, and social welfare in local, state, regional, national, and global goals.

The program draws on a liberal arts perspective; social and behavioral science theory; social research; social policy development, analysis, and implementation; culturally competent intervention and prevention approaches in working with individuals, families, small groups, organizations, and communities; social integration; multiple systems assessment and evaluation; and knowledge pertaining to diversity.

Consistent with CSWE standards, the program views dimensions of diversity as intersections of multiple factors, including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender-identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Students learn that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim.

Knowledge and practice in social work values and ethics is also an integral part of students’ education. Knowledge and skill related to the evaluation of practice are integrated throughout the curriculum, beginning in SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States, continuing through practice and research courses, and culminating in the field experience and field seminar.

Admission to the Major

The School of Social Work endeavors to maintain a heterogeneous student body by enrolling students who represent diverse backgrounds and cultural perspectives.

A limited number of students are admitted to the major each year. The application deadline is February 15. Admission to the undergraduate program in social work requires:

- completion of SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States with a grade of C or higher during the sophomore year;
- a cumulative g.p.a. of at least 2.50 (exceptions may be made for persons who do not meet the grade-point average requirement if they are strong candidates on the basis of other criteria); and
- completion of application forms and statement.

Students should complete SSW:1022 in their first year or in fall of their sophomore year and apply to the major during their sophomore year. Students who apply during their junior year and are admitted must expect to complete an additional summer session, or more, in order to fulfill the requirements of the major.

All of the items above are required for transfer students, except that substitution of SSW:1022 is permitted with a grade of C or above in a course approved by the department, such as introduction to social work or introduction to human services. Students who have completed the equivalent of introduction to social work at another institution also must submit a completed recommendation form and transcripts. Recommendations and letters of reference will otherwise not be accepted.

The School of Social Work criteria for selective admission for a B.A. in social work is detailed in the “B.A. Social Work Admissions Policy Statement and Guidelines for Application” on the school’s Admission web page.

Meeting the admission requirements above does not guarantee admission. Admission often is limited by available instructional resources and opportunities for field placement. The school does not grant academic credit for life experience or previous work experience.

For more information about admission policies, contact the program administrator at the School of Social Work.

Social Work Interest

Students who are interested in applying to the social work major may declare a social work interest at any time after they enroll at the University and before they earn more than 72 s.h. of credit, and preferably while they still will have time to enter and complete the major in a total of four years of study. Students may not declare a social work interest after they have earned 72 s.h., even if they already have declared another major.

Declaration of a social work interest qualifies students with at least sophomore standing to be advised by a senior academic advisor assigned to social work interest students. Declaration allows students to participate in the Social Work Student Association and other social work activities, but does not allow them to register for required courses in the major. They may take electives in the social work department prior to formal admission to the major.

Students may continue their social work interest standing until they are admitted to the major or until they have earned more than 72 s.h. of credit.

Social Work Courses in Des Moines

In addition to its on-campus undergraduate program in Iowa City, the School of Social Work offers social work courses for the Bachelor of Arts through its program in Des Moines. Students in the Des Moines program take courses in sequence, completing the social work courses required for the degree in a minimum of two years. Courses are offered in a classroom setting. Students may complete other requirements for the B.A. in online and/or classroom course work. The Des Moines program is approved by the Council on Social Work Education. For more information about the social work program in Des Moines, contact the University of Iowa School of Social Work program administrator.

Requirements

The Bachelor of Arts with a major in social work requires a minimum of 120 s.h., including at least 60-64 s.h. of work for the major (a minimum of 35-38 s.h. in social work courses, 13-14 s.h. in cognate areas, 6 s.h. in one other department or in social work courses, and 6 s.h. in social work electives).
Students must maintain a g.p.a. of at least 2.00 in all courses for the major and in all UI courses for the major. They also must complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences General Education Program. Courses used to fulfill General Education Program requirements may not be used to satisfy the social work electives requirement.

Students must complete SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States (3 s.h.) to be admitted to the major and before enrolling in the remaining social work courses required for the major; this course also fulfills the General Education Program’s Values and Culture requirement. A transfer student may be given approval by the department to substitute this requirement if they have completed an introduction to social work or introduction to human services course at another institution, or if they complete SSW:2222 Introduction to Social Work (section EXW), in place of SSW:1022 to be admitted to the major; SSW:2222 would not fulfill the General Education requirement. If transferring the course from another institution, a student may be able to reduce the social work credit required for the major by 3 s.h.

Many students use the major’s required course BIOL:1140 Human Biology as partial fulfillment of the General Education Program’s Natural Sciences requirement.

The B.A. with a major in social work requires the following course work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Work Courses</th>
<th>Required Electives</th>
<th>Cognate Areas</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35-38</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>60-64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Social Work Courses**

All of these:
- SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States 3
- SSW:3840 Human Behavior in the Social Environment 4
- SSW:3841 Fundamentals of Social Work Practice 3
- SSW:3842 Interpersonal Skills Laboratory 2
- SSW:3844 Introduction to Social Work Research 4
- SSW:3845 Social Work Processes 4
- SSW:3847 Discrimination, Oppression, and Diversity 3
- SSW:4189 Field Experience Seminar 1
- SSW:4193 Field Experience 8-11
- SSW:4843 Social Welfare Policy and Practice 3

**Required Electives**

Students must complete a minimum of 6 s.h. of social work electives and 6 s.h. of courses in one other discipline or they can select additional course work in social work. If they opt to complete 6 s.h. from another discipline, students typically select courses in areas closely related to social work, such as African American studies (prefix AFAM), aging and longevity studies (prefix ASP), American studies (prefix AMST), anthropology (prefix ANTH), communication studies (prefix COMM), economics (prefix ECON), entrepreneurial management (prefix ENTR), health and human physiology (prefix HHP), journalism and mass communication (prefix JMC), management and organizations (prefix MGMT), political science (prefix POLI), psychological and brain sciences (prefix PSY), religious studies (prefix RELS), sociology (prefix SOC), Spanish (prefix SPAN), sport studies (prefix SPST; see American studies), Tippie College of Business nondepartmental courses (prefix BUS), and gender, women's and sexuality studies (prefix GWSS).

Courses used to fulfill General Education Program requirements may not be applied to the elective requirements.

Students who are working on a minor or a certificate may apply up to 6 s.h. toward this requirement.

Students must complete the following.

These:
- Social work electives 6
- Electives in another discipline related to social work 6
Or this:
- Social work electives 12

**Cognate Areas**

Students must complete the following.

**Natural and Social Sciences**

All of these:
- BIOL:1140 Human Biology 4
- POLI:1100 Introduction to American Politics 3
- PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology 3
- SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology 3-4

**Recommended Course Sequence**

The school recommends that students complete required course work in the following sequence. Most social work courses are offered only once each year.

**First and Second Years**

| SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States 3 |
| BIOL:1140 Human Biology 4 |
| POLI:1100 Introduction to American Politics 3 |
| PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology 3 |
| SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology 3-4 |

One social work elective or an elective from another area

**Third Year**

| SSW:3840 Human Behavior in the Social Environment 4 |
| SSW:3844 Introduction to Social Work Research 4 |
| SSW:3845 Social Work Processes 4 |
| SSW:3847 Discrimination, Oppression, and Diversity 3 |

One social work elective or an elective from another area

**Fourth Year**

| SSW:3841 Fundamentals of Social Work Practice 3 |
Social Work, B.A.

Sample Plan of Study
School of Social Work (B.A.)

Course Title Hours
First Year
Fall
SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States (major, also GE: Values and Culture) 3
RHET:1030 Rhetoric (GE: Rhetoric or other General Education course) 4
GE: Diversity and Inclusion 3
GE: World Languages or elective course 2 3-5
CSI:1600 Success at Iowa 2

Hours 15-17

Spring
BIOL:1140 Human Biology (major, also GE: Natural Sciences with a lab) 4
ENGL:1200 The Interpretation of Literature (GE: Interpretation of Literature) 3
SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology (major, also GE: Social Sciences) 3-4
GE: World Languages or elective course 3-5
Elective course 3-2 2-3

Hours 15-19

Second Year
Fall
PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology (major) 3
GE: International and Global Issues 3
GE: World Languages or elective course 3-5
Elective course 3
Elective course 3

Hours 15-17

Spring
POLI:1100 Introduction to American Politics (major) 3
GE: Natural Sciences without a lab 3
GE: Quantitative or Formal Reasoning 3
GE: World Languages or elective course 3-5
Elective course 3

Hours 15-17

Third Year
Fall
SSW:3840 Human Behavior in the Social Environment 4
SSW:3847 Discrimination, Oppression, and Diversity 3
Major: social work elective course (prefix SSW) 4
Major: social work elective course 3
GE: Historical Perspectives 3

Hours 16

Spring
SSW:3844 Introduction to Social Work Research 4
SSW:3845 Social Work Processes 4
Major: social work elective course (prefix SSW) 3
GE: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts 3

Honors in the Major

Honors students majoring in social work have the opportunity to graduate with honors in the major. Honors students complete in-depth study in areas that interest them. They must maintain a cumulative University of Iowa g.p.a. of at least 3.33 to participate in the program. Consult the School of Social Work for more information about graduating with honors in the major.

University of Iowa Honors Program

In addition to honors in the major, students have opportunities for honors study and activities through membership in the University of Iowa Honors Program. Visit Honors at Iowa to learn about the University's honors program.

Membership in the UI Honors Program is not required to earn honors in the social work major.

Academic Plans

Four-Year Graduation Plan

The following checkpoints list the minimum requirements students must complete by certain semesters in order to stay on the University's Four-Year Graduation Plan. Courses in the major are those required to complete the major; they may be offered by departments other than the major department.

Admission to the major in social work is selective. The four-year graduation plan applies only to students who are admitted by the beginning of their fifth semester.

Before the fifth semester begins: four courses in the major and admission to the major

Before the seventh semester begins: five more courses in the major and at least 90 s.h. earned toward the degree

Before the eighth semester begins: five more courses in the major and finalized field placement

During the eighth semester: enrollment in all remaining course work in the major, all remaining General Education courses, and a sufficient number of semester hours to graduate

Two social work electives or electives from another area
Elective course  
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<tr>
<th>Hours</th>
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**Fourth Year**

**Fall**

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<tr>
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<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>SSW:3841</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Social Work Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW:3842</td>
<td>Interpersonal Skills Laboratory</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW:4843</td>
<td>Social Welfare Policy and Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major: social work elective course</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective course</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective course</td>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
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**Spring**

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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<tr>
<td>SSW:4189</td>
<td>Field Experience Seminar</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSW:4193</td>
<td>Field Experience</td>
<td>8-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GE: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective course</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>15-18</td>
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**Total Hours**  

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<td></td>
<td>121-134</td>
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</table>

1. General Education (GE) courses may be completed in any order unless used as a prerequisite for another course. Students should consult with an advisor about the best sequencing of courses. For more information, view the General Education Program.

2. Students who have completed four years of a single language in high school have satisfied the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE: World Languages requirement. Enrollment in world languages courses requires a placement exam, unless enrolling in a first-semester-level course.

3. Students may use their elective courses to complete a double major, minors, or certificates.

4. Students must take a minimum of two elective courses in social work (6 s.h.). They also take two courses (6 s.h.) in a related discipline (i.e., psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, or gender, women's, and sexuality studies) or an additional 6 s.h. of social work elective courses.

**Career Advancement**

The social work major prepares students for employment in social service areas such as public welfare, child welfare, mental health, elderly services, group services, and corrections. Many graduates continue with advanced study in social work or related physical and mental health professions.

The Pomerantz Career Center offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.