Social Work, B.A.

Learning Outcomes

The specific mission of the B.A. program in social work is to prepare culturally aware generalist social workers whose practice is consistent with social work values and ethics, including a commitment to social justice and social change. 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.

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.

Overview

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.

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.

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 higher 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. Required social work 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 UI courses and a g.p.a. of at least 3.00 in social work courses for the major. They also must complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE CLAS Core. Courses used to fulfill GE CLAS Core 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 Values and Culture requirement of the GE CLAS Core. 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 GE CLAS Core 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 to partially fulfill the GE CLAS Core Natural Sciences requirement.

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

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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>SSW:3844</td>
<td>Introduction to Social Work Research</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Social Work Processes</td>
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<td>Discrimination, Oppression, and Diversity</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSW:4189</td>
<td>Field Experience Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>SSW:4193</td>
<td>Field Experience</td>
<td>8-11</td>
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**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 entrepreneurship (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 GE CLAS Core 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.

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**Cognate Areas**

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**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 GE CLAS Core courses, and a sufficient number of semester hours to graduate

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

Social Work, B.A.

Course Title Hours
Academic Career Any Semester

Students apply to the Social Work BA program through a selective process. Acceptance is not guaranteed.

Students must maintain a GPA of at least 2.00 in all UI courses and a GPA of at least 3.00 in social work courses for the major.

First Year Fall
SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States 3

Rhetoric or The Interpretation of Literature 3 - 4

GE CLAS Core: Diversity and Inclusion 3

GE CLAS Core: World Languages First Level Proficiency or elective course 4 - 5

CSI:1600 Success at Iowa 2

Second Year Fall
PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology 3

GE CLAS Core: International and Global Issues 3

GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level Proficiency or elective course 4 - 5

Elective course 3

Elective course 3

Third Year Any Semester

The curriculum shown in the third and fourth years on this plan begins upon acceptance into the School of Social Work.

Fall
SSW:3840 Human Behavior in the Social Environment 4

SSW:3847 Discrimination, Oppression, and Diversity 3

Major: social work elective course (prefix SSW) 3

Major: social work elective course 3

GE CLAS Core: 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 CLAS Core: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts 3

Elective course 1

Hours 15

Fourth Year Fall
SSW:3841 Fundamentals of Social Work Practice 3
The Academic Advising Center and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences advise Social Work Interest students on prerequisite course planning. Students are advised for success, based on academic strength, not necessarily for a four year plan. Prerequisites may take more than two years to complete.

b Students must complete SSW:1022 to be admitted to the major and before enrolling in the remaining social work required major courses. Students may take this course in any semester, but must have completed the course before admission is finalized. It is recommended that it be taken in the first three semesters. Students may alternatively enroll in SSW:2222 Introduction to Social Work, but it does not fulfill a General Education requirement.

c Fulfills a major requirement and may fulfill a GE requirement.

d GE CLAS Core 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.

e Students who have completed four years of a single language in high school have satisfied the GE CLAS Core World Languages requirement. Enrollment in world languages courses requires a placement exam, unless enrolling in a first-semester-level course.

f Students may use elective courses to earn credit towards the total s.h. required for graduation or to complete a double major, minors, or certificates.

g Students are expected to apply to the major in their sophomore year. Juniors are permitted to apply and if they do so, it is with the expectation that at least one additional summer session of coursework will be necessary to complete all of the requirements of the major, due, in part, to the sequencing of social work courses.

h Students must take two elective courses in social work (6 s.h.).

i Students must take an additional two courses (6 s.h.) of electives. They may take the two courses as additional social work electives, or they may take two courses in a related discipline (i.e., psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, or gender, women’s, and sexuality studies).

j Please see Academic Calendar, Office of the Registrar website for current degree application deadlines. Students should apply for a degree for the session in which all requirements will be met. For any questions on appropriate timing, contact your academic advisor. For more information visit http://commencement.uiowa.edu/. If applicable search for “Early and Late Participation” to find this page (e.g. walk in graduation ceremony in May, degree conferred in August).

### Career Advancement

The social work major prepares students for employment in social service areas such as public welfare, child welfare, human service organizations, mental health, health providers (such as hospitals, hospice, skilled care, substance abuse treatment), senior services, group services, residential treatment for youth and persons with disabilities, and corrections. Many graduates continue with advanced study in social work or related physical and mental health professions.

Overall employment of social workers is projected to grow 16 percent from 2016-2026 (Bureau of Labor Statistics).

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