Master of Social Work, MSW

Requirements
The Master of Social Work requires 36 s.h. for advanced standing students—those who hold an undergraduate degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)—or 54 s.h. for students who earned a bachelor's degree in a major other than a CSWE-accredited social work program. Students must maintain a graduate grade-point average of at least 3.00 and they must be in compliance with the school's student advancement policy. The degree is offered with or without thesis.

Credit from previous graduate coursework toward the MSW may be applied if specific criteria are met, but students must earn a minimum of 36 s.h. after admission to the MSW program and agree to meet all requirements of the program.

All students complete one of two specializations (23 s.h.) and 9 s.h. in elective courses.

54 s.h. Program

Generalist Practice

Course #  Title  Hours
All of these:
SSW:6100  Thinking Like a Social Worker  3
SSW:6200  Development of Professional Use of Self  3
SSW:6300  Theory and Skills for Working with Individuals and Families  3
SSW:6400  Theory and Skills for Working with Organizations and Communities  3
SSW:6500  Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice I  3
SSW:6600  Engaging with Evidence  3
SSW:6700  Generalist Practicum in Social Work  3
SSW:6701  Generalist Practice Seminar  1

Leadership Practice

Course #  Title  Hours
All of these:
SSW:7410  Leadership Practice I: Community Relationship Building and Collaboration  3
SSW:7420  Leadership Practice II: Policy Analysis and Advocacy  3
SSW:7430  Leadership Practice III: Leading Programs and Organizations  3
SSW:7500  Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice II  3

Clinical Practice

Course #  Title  Hours
All of these:
SSW:7310  Clinical Practice I: Treatment Planning and Intervention  3
SSW:7320  Clinical Practice II: Intervention, Evaluation, Termination  3
SSW:7330  Clinical Practice III: Selected Topics in Clinical Practice  3
SSW:7500  Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice II  3
SSW:7550  Program and Practice Evaluation  3
SSW:7601  Clinical Practicum Seminar I  1
SSW:7602  Clinical Practicum Seminar II  1
SSW:7600  Practicum with Clinical Specialization (taken twice for 3 s.h. each)  6
SSW:7760  Practicum in School Social Work (taken twice for 3 s.h. each)  6

Specializations
The specific mission of the Master of Social Work (MSW) program is to prepare social workers for leadership in the profession and for advanced social work practice in one of two specializations: clinical practice or leadership practice. While students are not required to declare a more specific focus, opportunities to specialize are available in areas of practice such as aging, end-of-life care, school social work, child welfare, trauma-informed practice, social work in health and mental health settings, and many others. Students in both the generalist and advanced standing programs select one of the following specializations to complete.

Clinical Practice
The clinical practice specialization will prepare students for mental health work with individuals and families in organizations such as nonprofits, hospitals, schools, hospice/end-of-life, and private practice.

Leadership Practice
The leadership practice specialization will prepare students to partner with communities, develop programs, lead organizations, develop and interpret policy, and advocate for social, economic, and racial justice.
SSW:7550  Program and Practice Evaluation  3

SSW:7751  Leadership Practicum Seminar I  1

SSW:7752  Leadership Practicum Seminar II  1

One of these:

SSW:7750  Practicum with Leadership Specialization (taken twice for 3 s.h. each)  6

SSW:7760  Practicum in School Social Work (taken twice for 3 s.h. each)  6

Electives

Students in both the generalist and advanced standing programs complete 9 s.h. in elective coursework. Electives are chosen in consultation with their advisors; options include School of Social Work courses (prefix SSW) and Aging and Longevity Studies Program courses (prefix ASP) numbered 3000 and above (excluding courses already listed). With advisor permission, additional elective options are possible. Students completing a thesis are permitted to apply a maximum of 6 s.h. of SSW:7272 Thesis toward their elective requirements. Students receive a tentative plan to complete the program and meet regularly with their faculty advisor about their plan.

MSW Off-Campus Learning Centers

Full-time and part-time study are available in Iowa City, Des Moines, and online. Students follow a sequenced plan for their program option which may include electives in the summer. The Sioux City site only admits entering classes on a three-year cycle, beginning in the summer. Advanced standing students begin their coursework in the summer and may complete the program over one year (three semesters) or two years, following the sequenced plan.

The School of Social Work delivers the MSW curriculum in person in Iowa City and in two learning centers in Des Moines and Sioux City, Iowa, and as an online program. Each learning center is administered by the School of Social Work in cooperation with Distance and Online Education. Social work faculty members teach required courses at each center and are available for student advising. The off-campus programs have been evaluated by the Council on Social Work Education and the University of Iowa Graduate College as providing a program comparable to that available on the Iowa City campus.

Courses at each off-campus site are taught in classrooms by tenure-track, clinical, lecturers, visiting, and adjunct faculty members. Instructional connections between sites are maintained through varied technologies, including computer-based instruction.

Des Moines

The MSW program in Des Moines, in central Iowa, offers courses sequenced to accommodate both part-time and full-time study. Students complete most of their required courses in person at the Des Moines center and most of their electives online. Classes are held at the John and Mary Pappajohn Education Center.

Sioux City

The Sioux City part-time program is offered in classroom space at Briar Cliff University in Sioux City, Iowa, with additional online asynchronous components.

Online

Students in this program attend evening classes in real time using video conferencing, and asynchronous classes in which coursework is done independently, adhering to deadlines.