

Social Work, PhD

Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy program in social work requires 78 s.h. of graduate credit. Students must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.00. Students complete the required coursework, research, and teaching practicum; pass a comprehensive exam; write a dissertation; and defend it in an oral exam. Their work includes courses in one of four outside disciplines—sociology, psychology, public health, or education—to prepare for the comprehensive examination and dissertation.

The doctoral program prepares students to conduct research that contributes to the knowledge base of social work, to become leaders in the profession, and to teach social work in postsecondary educational institutions.

Those who enter the program with a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree are granted 30 s.h. credit; they must complete an additional 48 s.h. for the PhD. Individuals with master's degrees in related disciplines (for example, psychology or sociology) may choose to earn a PhD in social work without first earning the MSW. Credit from a related master's degree may be applied to the PhD degree program, as determined by the School of Social Work.

Individualized and Interdisciplinary Curriculum

The program allows students to develop a coherent program of study with opportunities to pursue their own scholarly interests. These interests are pursued through a core social work curriculum, a concentration (sociology, psychology, education, or public health), and a social work focal area (e.g., family violence). Students may take methods and electives in any college or department at the University of Iowa.

The School of Social Work provides a supportive environment with substantial opportunities for mentoring and interaction with faculty members. Throughout PhD studies at the University of Iowa, the school assists students in developing a program of study based on their unique educational and career goals. There are many opportunities to work closely with faculty members in a mentoring environment. In the first two years, students complete a mentored research practicum with a faculty member and a mentored in-class teaching experience. During the second year, students choose a faculty member to guide them through the comprehensive examination and dissertation processes.