Social Work

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Undergraduate major: social work (BA)
Undergraduate minor: social work
Graduate degrees: MSW; PhD in social work
Faculty: https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/people
Website: https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/

Courses

Social Work Courses

SSW:1000 First-Year Seminar 1-2 s.h.
Small discussion class taught by a faculty member; topics chosen by instructor; may include outside activities (e.g., films, lectures, performances, readings, visits to research facilities). Requirements: first- or second-semester standing.

SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States 3 s.h.
Historical development of social welfare and social justice in the United States; individual values and ethics; role and responsibilities of enhancing society; contemporary practice to address social injustices including poverty, discrimination, various forms of violence; small group discussions and debates of various issues to allow for an exchange of diverse views and perspectives; volunteer work. GE: Values and Culture. Same as SOC:1022.

SSW:1200 Mental Health Across the Lifespan 3 s.h.
Basic mental health concepts emphasizing mental health variations throughout the lifecycle; use of cultural humility as a framework to better understand differences among these groups; discuss social determinants impacting mental health.

SSW:1800 Aging Matters: Introduction to Gerontology 3 s.h.
Overview of the field of gerontology from a bio-psycho-social framework; how the human body and brain age, effects of these biological changes on physical and cognitive functions, and interaction of these individual factors with societal contexts; broad perspective to give students a foundation in gerontology, paving the way for more advanced courses in biology of aging, psychology of aging, and global aging; for students from a wide range of disciplines and levels, no prior knowledge of aging required. GE: Social Sciences. Same as ASP:1800, CSD:1800, NURS:1800, TR:1800.

SSW:2042 Intercultural Communication 3 s.h.
Culture defined as a system of taken-for-granted assumptions about the world that influence how people think and act; cultural differences that produce challenges and opportunities for understanding and communication; those differences from several theoretical perspectives; opportunities to examine culture and cultural differences in practical, experience-driven ways. Same as COMM:2042, IS:2042.

SSW:3135 Global Aging 3 s.h.
Demographic factors that contribute to the worldwide phenomena of population aging in context of WHO Active Aging and the United Nation's Principles for Older Persons frameworks. Same as ASP:3135, GHS:3050.

SSW:3191 Individual Study arr.
Project related to student interest carried out under direction of faculty member.

SSW:3500 Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness I 3 s.h.

SSW:3600 Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness II 3 s.h.
Qualities for leadership of nonprofit organizations, including relationships with staff and volunteers; relationship of nonprofit and outside world; marketing, public relations, advocacy strategies for nonprofits. Same as MGMT:3600, NURS:3600, RELS:3701.

SSW:3700 Introduction to Understanding Trauma and Resilience 3 s.h.
Introduction to understanding key concepts of trauma-informed systems of care in multiple settings; identification of various types of trauma along with behaviors and responses seen in survivors of trauma; students trace effects of historical trauma of marginalized communities and multiple trauma survivor groups to understand the consequences of trauma and its impact in the culture; resilience and strategies to offset consequences of trauma. Same as PSQF:3700.

SSW:3712 Human Sexuality, Diversity, and Society 1-3 s.h.
Introduction to human sexuality from a biopsychosocial, sex-positive perspective; sexuality as a normal and essential component of human existence and expression throughout the life span; influence of gender, class, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability status, age, and culture on sexuality interwoven and highlighted; diversity of perspectives and experiences shared through active participation and respectful dialogue. Same as PSQF:3712.

SSW:3729 Substance Use and Abuse 2-3 s.h.
Chemical dependency for helping professions; etiological, physiological, psychological, legal, sociological aspects; treatment methods.

SSW:3786 Death/Dying: Issues Across the Life Span 3-4 s.h.
Introduction to the field of end-of-life care; examination of student concerns about death, dying, and grieving process; historical, cultural, societal, and personal perspectives of death and dying in modern society. Same as ASP:3786.
Including first-year students, racial and sexual minorities.

Campus Sexual Assault: Policy, Prevention, and Intervention

Imagery: 2-3 s.h.

Thinking critically about one of the most damaging family problems prevalent in the United States today—family violence; students examine the phenomena of child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, and elder abuse, including definitions, causes, risk factors, consequences, reporting, assessment, intervention, prevention, and policy.

SSW:3797 Child Welfare Policy and Practice 3 s.h.

Public and private child welfare practice and organizations in the United States; historical and legal aspects, co-occurring issues, foster care, adoption, family preservation.


Human behavior, practice, social welfare policy.

SSW:3840 Human Behavior in the Social Environment 3-4 s.h.

Behavior and development in context of social, ecological systems and human diversity; overview of biopsychosocial dimensions, individual behavior, and development throughout lifespan; contexts of diverse family, group, community, organization, and cultural systems.

SSW:3841 Fundamentals of Social Work Practice 3 s.h.

Professional practice: functions, roles, skills, conceptual frameworks, values, ethics; focus on integrated approach to practice, including assessment, intervention, evaluation of interventions, termination with individuals, families, groups; emphasis on empirically based practice. Corequisites: SSW:3840, if not taken as a prerequisite. Requirements: admission to social work BA program.

SSW:3842 Interpersonal Skills Laboratory 2 s.h.

Practice of interpersonal skills required in the helping relationship. Corequisites: SSW:3841, if not taken as a prerequisite. Requirements: admission to social work BA program.

SSW:3844 Introduction to Social Work Research 4 s.h.

Scientific approach to knowledge building, with emphasis on critical use of research; quantitative and qualitative methods, evaluation of practice, computerized data analysis, ethics and diversity in social work research. Requirements: admission to social work BA program.

SSW:3845 Social Work Processes 4 s.h.

Context of practice examined to understand structural factors that affect clients and communities; culturally competent practice using empowerment perspective. Corequisites: SSW:3840, if not taken as a prerequisite. Requirements: admission to social work BA program.

SSW:3847 Discrimination, Oppression, and Diversity 3 s.h.

Theoretical and historical perspectives on racism, sexism, other forms of discrimination; applications to social work, culturally competent practice, change strategies. Requirements: admission to social work BA or MSW program.

SSW:3900 Campus Sexual Assault: Policy, Prevention, and Intervention 3 s.h.

Among undergraduate students, 26.4% of females and 6.8% of males experience rape or sexual assault in college; students examine institutional responses to campus sexual assault with a goal of becoming informed advocates to work with institutions to strengthen programs and support; laws and policies that guide campus responses to sexual assault; effectiveness of a range of models for preventing and intervening with campus sexual assault; and prevention and interventions for groups at higher risk of sexual assault, including first-year students, racial and sexual minorities.

SSW:3904 Human Services Administration 2 s.h.

Effects of organizational structures/processes on individual performance; models of management, communication patterns, leadership styles; skill in technical writing, decision-making, personnel and financial management, applied professional ethics. Requirements: completion of foundation courses.

SSW:4100 Social Work in the Criminal Justice System 3 s.h.

How social work practice intersects with different aspects of the criminal justice system; focus on integrating social work values into criminal justice field; social work’s responsibility to address social justice problems (e.g., mental illness, racial disparity, gender, human rights) within criminal justice system; critical examination of past and present practices in criminal justice and implications for social work practice and policy when working with individuals in criminal justice system.

SSW:4130 Family Development Specialist Model 3 s.h.

Use of family development specialist model of family-centered practice to facilitate improved family functioning, economic independence; relationship building, systems theory, family-centered case management, conflict management, empowerment strategies. Requirements: completion of family development specialist certification course.

SSW:4155 Treatment of Substance Use and Co-Occurring Disorders 3 s.h.

Treatment of individuals presenting substance related issues (abuse, dependency, co-occurring disorders); etiological, physiological, psychological, legal, and sociological aspects; evaluation of current research and direct application of contemporary treatment modalities to client situations encountered as helping professionals. Recommendations: introductory course in substance abuse.

SSW:4189 Bachelor of Arts Generalist Practicum Seminar 1 s.h.

Opportunity for students to recount their experiences from generalist practice in agencies; application of knowledge, skills, and values of culturally competent social work. Corequisites: SSW:4193. Requirements: completion of coursework in the major.

SSW:4190 Aging Studies Internship and Seminar 3 s.h.

Opportunities for students in various disciplines to relate their areas of study to older adults and aging; interdisciplinary relationships, approaches to meeting needs of older adults; an online seminar that meets regularly is included in this experience. Same as ASP:4190.

SSW:4192 Honors in Social Work arr.

Supervised individual research. Requirements: honors standing.

SSW:4193 Bachelor of Arts Generalist Practicum arr.

Supervised experience in selected social welfare organizations; application of knowledge and skill common to generalist practice in an agency setting. Corequisites: SSW:4189. Requirements: completion of coursework in the major and social work senior standing.
### SSW:4700 Motivational Interviewing in Diverse Application
3 s.h.
Application of motivational interviewing (MI) skills, as a collaborative process and communication style, while working with individuals presenting with ambivalence to change; MI skills are used to guide across the change process ("Stages of Change") by evoking the intrinsic motivation for change; includes application to diverse populations (e.g., cultural groups, veterans, adolescents) and psychological issues individuals may exhibit.

### SSW:4843 Social Welfare Policy and Practice
3 s.h.
Basic social welfare policies and programs; economic, social, ideological, and political conditions that have influenced formation and implementation of social policy, current structure of major social welfare policies.

### SSW:5194 Social Work Practice in Health Care Settings
2 s.h.
Introduction to organization, provision of social work services in health care settings; practice issues such as models of intervention, ethical questions, impact of cultural diversity on health care.

### SSW:5200 Grief Work with Individuals and Families
2-3 s.h.
Complexity of grief and its multifaceted impact on family systems; utilizing grief theories, including Worden's Tasks of Mourning, ambiguous loss theory, several family systems models; examination of multi-generational dynamics that affect how we learn to grieve, how we experience grief, and how we live after a loss; acknowledged and unacknowledged grief and loss; generational family dynamics; difficulties and strengths passed from one generation to the next; assessing grief at individual, family, group, and community levels; how loss can affect personal well-being and professional practice, particularly when working with an interdisciplinary team. Requirements: social work graduate standing.

### SSW:5240 Trauma Informed Family Practice
3 s.h.
Theory, knowledge, and skills informing evidence-based assessment and intervention for traumatized children and adolescents in child welfare system, including those exposed to abuse, neglect, witnessing interpersonal crime (e.g., domestic violence, community violence); family events within their ecological context; various family forms, cultural patterns; controversial issues in child welfare; conclusions based on scholarly research, presentation of conclusions in professional oral and written form.

### SSW:5250 Resilience and Trauma-Informed Interventions with Individuals
3 s.h.
Focusing primarily on trauma caused by violence, students explore definitions, symptoms, and physiology of trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and the impact of violence on individuals, family system, and communities; individual-level assessment and interventions.

### SSW:6100 Thinking Like a Social Worker
3 s.h.
Introduction to social work values and ethics in context of systemic perspective and social, economic, and environmental justice; critical analysis of the profession's historical and social context to understand how privilege and power are perpetuated in society and in social work practice; ethical dilemmas and application of ethical decision-making models to make practice decisions; exploration of systemic thinking as distinguishing social work from other helping professions; examination of privilege from the perspective of those who have and do not have privilege or power. Requirements: admission to MSW program.

### SSW:6200 Development of Professional Use of Self
3 s.h.
Development and practice of interpersonal skills for effective use of self in social work practice; students identify and resolve barriers to effective skill development and demonstrate professional demeanor, empathy, self-reflection, and self-regulation; examination of how cultural and family beliefs and values facilitate or constrain ability to develop an other-oriented stance open to new cultural information; development of effective use-of-self through recognizing and interpreting emotional and physiological reactions in interactions with client systems; engagement in active learning through role play and video recording skill practice. Requirements: admission to MSW program.

### SSW:6224 Spirituality and Ethics in Social Work
2-3 s.h.
Knowledge, values, and skills that provide a framework for spiritually sensitive social work practice; preparation for responding competently and ethically to diverse spiritual perspectives, for recognizing and reflecting on one's own spiritual beliefs, and for identifying appropriate ways to apply personal beliefs to practice with varied populations while safeguarding client autonomy and self-determination.

### SSW:6228 Theories of Personality and Psychopathology
2 s.h.
Theories and their relevance to social work practice with diverse populations. Prerequisites: SSW:3840. Requirements: social work graduate standing.

### SSW:6232 Therapy with Couples
2 s.h.
Introduction to working with couples in interaction and as a social system; theories of functional and dysfunctional systems; theoretical bases for couple's therapy and techniques of intervention; special attention to couple assessment. Requirements: completion of foundation courses.

### SSW:6233 School Social Work Practice
2 s.h.
Evidence-based school social work services from a multilevel approach with student, family, school, and community grounded in social work standards, values, ethics and cultural competence; social and political influences on education and practice; prevention, assessment and intervention; specific practices include response to intervention and positive behavior supports; evaluating and serving students with disabilities including use of functional behavior assessment and development of behavior intervention plans; consultation and collaboration with teachers and school staff, engaging in culturally sensitive practices.

### SSW:6234 Social Work Practice and Use of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
3 s.h.
Major categories of psychopathology and the DSM-5 system of classification; the use of the DSM-5 approach to diagnosis allows one to consider all aspects of an individual's behavior and presentation of symptoms; included in the DSM is information about effects of culture, developmental stage, and gender on the presentation of mental disorders.

### SSW:6236 Interventions with Individuals
2 s.h.
Specialized practice; emphasis on thinking about how one works with individuals and importance of emotional (affective) regulation in the professional relationship; focus on emerging findings from the neurosciences combined with attachment theory and object relations; class deliberations involve theory and practice; understanding the overall interpersonal and psychotherapeutic process. Requirements: completion of foundation courses.
SSW:6237 Social Work Practice with Children, Youth, and Families 2 s.h.
Preparation for practice in child welfare, family service agencies; family life cycle, child development, child maltreatment, problems of adolescence, social services for families and children, legal issues. Requirements: completion of foundation courses.

SSW:6238 Introduction to Play Therapy 2-3 s.h.
Major theories and techniques of play therapy, relevance to social work practice.

SSW:6247 Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness I 3 s.h.
Operational and financing aspects of nonprofit management; mission and governance of organization; strategic planning for effective management, including finance, budget, income generation, fund-raising. Same as HMP:6360, MGMT:9150, PBAF:6278, RELS:6070, SPST:6010, URP:6278.

SSW:6248 Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness II 3 s.h.

Topics not covered in another course; diversity, social justice and ethics issues related to a social work practice area.

SSW:6282 Grant Writing 1-2 s.h.
Same as PBAF:6282, URP:6282.

SSW:6300 Theory and Skills for Working with Individuals and Families 3 s.h.
Individual and family engagement, assessment, and intervention through the lens of multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks; students assess quality and credibility of different kinds of knowledge and critically appraise interventions for working with individuals and families; application of assessment and intervention frameworks that emphasize clients’ strengths in diversity; development of self-reflective interpersonal skills necessary for establishing effective, anti-oppressive professional relationships with individuals and families. Requirements: admission to MSW program.

SSW:6400 Theory and Skills for Working with Organizations and Communities 3 s.h.
Social work practice requires interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and interorganization collaboration at all systems levels; focus on organizational and community engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation; assessment of quality and credibility of different kinds of knowledge when working with organizations and communities; students apply a social justice lens to see how structural systems of oppression contribute to social problems and injustices in organizations and communities, and critically examine interpersonal skills for establishing effective professional relationships when working with organizations and communities. Requirements: admission to MSW program.

SSW:6500 Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice I 3 s.h.
Students are challenged to think critically in context of deeply held personal beliefs; development of competencies for engaging diversity and difference in practice; examination of personal beliefs, biases, and affective reactions; how systems of oppression, alienation, marginalization, power, and privilege intersect for clients and communities; how social work practice can advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice; use of critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance justice. Requirements: admission to MSW program.

SSW:6600 Engaging with Evidence 3 s.h.
Students expand critical thinking skills necessary for effective social work practice; development of competencies in research and evaluation at all levels of practice; critical appraisal of evidence-informed approaches to social work practice; quality of research evidence and its implications for improving practice effectiveness; application of research evidence to inform and improve practice. Requirements: admission to MSW program.

SSW:6700 Generalist Practicum in Social Work 3 s.h.
Generalist practice experience with individuals, families, small groups, organizations, and communities; communication skills, change process, professional values, and ethics applied at multiple system levels; students evaluate their own practice using a learning contract in an agency setting. Corequisites: SSW:6701. Requirements: admission to MSW program, and concurrent enrollment in or completion of generalist courses.

SSW:6701 Generalist Practice Seminar 1 s.h.
Integration of classroom learning and development as a social worker with experience in generalist practicum placement; ethical decision-making practice, critical reflection of situations when social work values may not align with client, agency, or interdisciplinary team values; peer feedback to promote professional accountability; documentation and reflection of professional development and acquisition of social work competencies from first half of MSW program; establishment of professional development plans for seeking and using feedback and supervision for self-reflection, self-care, and strategically establishing professional relationships. Corequisites: SSW:6700. Requirements: admission to MSW program, and concurrent enrollment in or completion of generalist courses.

SSW:7100 Critical Thinking for Clinical Practice 2 s.h.
Preparation for specialized coursework; builds on generalist practice at individual and family levels; critical thinking to appraise theory, practice, use, and creation of evidence for clinical practice; demonstration of critical thinking skills in assessment and treatment planning; how personal beliefs, biases, assumptions, and reactions influence and limit understandings of clients and communities; decentering personal experiences and understandings. Requirements: admission to advanced standing MSW program.
Students will understand the importance of political social advocacy roles, networks, and leadership opportunities. They will develop a deep understanding of local, state, and federal policy and economic, environmental, and racial justice; and develop a leadership practice that seeks out expertise and develop evaluation leadership of marginalized communities to improve practice effectiveness; and students apply and critically appraise evidence-informed approaches to practice.

SSW:7500 Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice II 3 s.h.

Development of competencies for engaging in anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice; how to dismantle systems of oppression, alienation, marginalization, power, and privilege that intersect for clients and communities; students hone their skills in advancing human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice; use of critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

SSW:7550 Program and Practice Evaluation 3 s.h.

Students build more advanced competencies in evaluation at all levels of practice; application of anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens to evaluation; focus on evaluation approaches that seek out expertise and develop evaluation leadership of marginalized communities to improve practice effectiveness; students apply and critically appraise evidence-informed approaches to practice.

SSW:7600 Practicum with Clinical Specialization 3-4 s.h.

Practice experience implementing clinical theories and skills in interventions with individuals, families, and groups; two semester practical course.

SSW:7601 Clinical Practicum Seminar I 1 s.h.

Integration of student learning in specialized year courses and practicum; practice giving, seeking, and incorporating feedback on use of self, ethical decision-making, engagement with anti-racist practice, and other aspects of professional development; focus on MSW program, students document and reflect on their professional development and acquisition of social work competencies by creating a portfolio of their work. Corequisites: SSW:7600.

SSW:7602 Clinical Practicum Seminar II 1 s.h.

Integration of student learning in specialized year courses and practicum; practice giving, seeking, and incorporating feedback on use of self, ethical decision-making, engagement with anti-racist practice, and other aspects of professional development; focus on MSW program, students document and reflect on their professional development and acquisition of social work competencies by creating a portfolio of their work. Corequisites: SSW:7600.

SSW:7750 Practicum with Leadership Specialization 3-4 s.h.

Practice experience implementing leadership theories and skills in interventions with organizations and communities; two semester practical course.
SSW:7751 Leadership Practicum Seminar I   1 s.h.
Integration of student learning in specialized year courses and practicum; practice giving, seeking, and incorporating feedback on use of self, ethical decision-making, engagement with anti-racist practice, and other aspects of professional development; focus on MSW program, students document and reflect on professional development and acquisition of social work competencies by creating a portfolio of their work. Corequisites: SSW:7750.

SSW:7752 Leadership Practicum Seminar II   1 s.h.
Integration of student learning in specialized year courses and practicum; practice giving, seeking, and incorporating feedback on use of self, ethical decision-making, engagement with anti-racist practice, and other aspects of professional development; focus on MSW program; students document and reflect on professional development and acquisition of social work competencies by creating a portfolio of their work.

SSW:7760 Practicum in School Social Work   3-4 s.h.
Practice experience implementing theories and skills in interventions in school setting; two semester practical course.

SSW:7800 Social Work Proseminar   1 s.h.
Orientation for new PhD students to program and degree requirements; how to formulate research questions; introduction to faculty research and interests. Requirements: admission to social work doctoral program.

SSW:7803 Social Work Research Practicum   1-4 s.h.
Student work with faculty on various phases of research process including research design, measurement, sampling, data collection, data analysis, human subjects review, and writing for publication. Requirements: admission to social work doctoral program.

SSW:7804 Thesis Writing Seminar   1-3 s.h.
Writing a thesis and an argument; synthesizing literature and justifying methods; development of scientific communication skills; defending ideas at proposal hearing and thesis defense.

SSW:7806 Teaching Practicum   1-2 s.h.
Development of knowledge, skills, and values needed to become effective, culturally competent social work educators through an applied teaching experience; faculty mentors provide ongoing instruction on how to teach and assess student learning.

SSW:7807 Introduction to College Teaching for Social Workers   1 s.h.
Development of knowledge and skills needed to become effective, culturally competent educators; topics may include theories of adult learning, course design, creating a learning culture that is inclusive, instructional strategies, accreditation processes, and writing a teaching philosophy.

SSW:7808 Seminar in Social Work Theory and Knowledge   3 s.h.
Examination of fundamental relationship between theory and research and epistemology of micro-level theories used in social work research; emphasis on critical evaluation of theories and understanding the difference between frameworks, theories, conceptual models, and their functions; students present and defend their own analysis of theories applicable to their program of scholarship and engage other students in discussion. Requirements: admission to University of Iowa doctoral program.

SSW:7810 Conducting a Systematic Literature Review   3 s.h.
How to design, conduct, and write scoping and systemic reviews of existing research literature; methods of reviews, quality standards for reviews, and application of these standards to critique reviews or review proposals.

SSW:7820 Writing for Publication in Social Sciences   3 s.h.
Graduate seminar providing practical experience in publishing for peer-reviewed journals in a variety of disciplines. Using Belcher’s “Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks,” students explore strategies for planning a writing project, identifying appropriate journals, clarifying arguments, making claims for significance, and organizing material. Students revise a draft (such as a classroom paper, conference paper, or comprehensive exam) into a peer-reviewed article and submit it for publication. In a supportive environment, discuss strategies for overcoming resistance to writing.

SSW:7830 PhD Dissertation   arr.
Ongoing and substantial feedback to doctoral candidates on development and defense of dissertation. Prerequisites: SSW:7800 and SSW:7803 and SSW:7806 and SSW:7807. Requirements: submission of comprehensive exam.