

SOCIAL WORK

<https://www.uvm.edu/cess/socialwork>

OVERVIEW

The Master of Social Work program at the University of Vermont prepares students for advanced social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in the post-modern environment. The curriculum emphasizes strengths-oriented, relational practice guided by principles of social justice and human rights and a conceptual framework of critical social construction. The Master of Social Work program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

The professional foundation curriculum is designed to assist students to explore and develop generalist knowledge, values, and skills for professional practice. Students take 30 credits of foundation course work, including 1 elective. The curriculum comprises course work in 5 areas: Human Behavior in the Social Environment (HBSE), Social Welfare Policy, Social Work Practice, Field Practica, and Research.

The concentration year curriculum is designed to extend and integrate student knowledge, values, and skills for advanced practice in a single concentration, Transformative Social Work. This is accomplished through focused study in a student-generated, individualized area of interest. All core curriculum courses in the concentration year are considered advanced practice courses in Transformative Social Work, in that all emphasize the application of complex social ideas and the production of transformative roles and methods.

Students select 4 focus courses to direct their studies toward a particular population or field of social work practice. In addition, the concentration curriculum consists of two advanced practice courses, a field practicum, an advanced research course, and a "capstone course" aimed at integrating the student's application of transformative social work in the area of interest.

DEGREES

Social Work M.S.W.

FACULTY

Comerford, Susan Ann; Associate Professor, Department of Social Work; PHD, Case Western Reserve University

Melekis, Kelly; Associate Professor, Department of Social Work; PHD, Boston University

Putney, Jennifer; Associate Professor, Interim Chair, Department of Social Work; PHD, Simmons College

Solomon, Brenda M.; Associate Professor, Department of Social Work; PHD, Syracuse University

Velez, Christine; Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work; PHD, Portland State University

Courses

SWSS 5000. Critical Reflections. 3 Credits.

Content and structure may accommodate special issues not especially appropriate within the boundaries of an existing course. Prerequisite: Foundation year Master of Social Work student or Instructor permission.

SWSS 5027. Foundations of SW Research. 3 Credits.

An introduction to qualitative and quantitative methods of applied social research including program evaluation and the evaluation of practice with additional focus on interpreting research for social work context. Prerequisite: Master of Social Work student or Instructor permission.

SWSS 5160. Th Found of Hum Beh&Soc Envr I. 3 Credits.

This course introduces students to the biological, psychological, cultural/social, and economic forces that influence human behavior and their implication for social work practice. Prerequisite: Master of Social Work student or Instructor permission.

SWSS 5170. Th Found Hum Beh&Soc Envr II. 3 Credits.

Focus is on theories regarding the nature and functioning of human service organizations and communities in relation to meeting human needs. Prerequisite: SWSS 5160. Pre/Co-requisite: SWSS 5160.

SWSS 5200. Soc Welfare Pol & Services I. 3 Credits.

An introduction to history and philosophy of social work and social welfare and the structure of service programs is provided. Prerequisite: Master of Social Work student or Instructor permission.

SWSS 5210. Soc Welfare Pol & Services II. 3 Credits.

Focus is on the analysis of the economic, political, and social forces that influence the development and implementation of social welfare policy. Prerequisite: SWSS 5200. Pre/Co-requisite: SWSS 5200.

SWSS 5240. Child Abuse & Neglect. 3 Credits.

A Master of Social Work foundation elective that considers child abuse and neglect from historical, cultural, sociopolitical and psychological perspectives and examines professional social work responses to them. Prerequisite: Matriculation in the foundation year of graduate study in Social Work or Instructor permission.

SWSS 5990. Special Topics. 1-18 Credits.

See Schedule of Courses for specific titles.

SWSS 6000. Foundation Yr Practicum. 3 Credits.

Supervised practicum-based learning of 15-20 hours per week. Students are placed in human service agencies and organizations and learn the purposeful application of generalist social work theory, ethics and skills. Prerequisite: Master of Social Work Foundation year student or Coordinator of Practicum Education permission. Co-requisites: SWSS 6120; SWSS 6130.

SWSS 6120. Social Work Practice I. 3 Credits.

A comprehensive introduction to concepts and skills employed by social workers in interactions and interventions with individuals, families, and groups is provided. Prerequisite: Master of Social Work student.

SWSS 6130. Social Work Practice II. 3 Credits.

Emphasizes knowledge and skills of social work practice with organizations and communities. Prerequisite: SWSS 6120. Pre/Co-requisite: SWSS 6120.

SWSS 6140. Transformative Social Work I. 3 Credits.

Focuses on developing relational, profound, and generative meanings for change across populations, fields of practice and social issues.

Prerequisite: Completion of Foundation Year.

SWSS 6150. Transformative Social Work II. 3 Credits.

Focuses on practical applications across populations at risk, field of practice and social issues. Prerequisite: Completion of Foundation Year.

SWSS 6160. Integrative Appr Transform SW. 3 Credits.

In this course students will synthesize their exploration of their area of focus in transformative social work through scholarly reading, research and classroom presentations. Prerequisite: Completion of Foundation Year.

SWSS 6180. Social Work in Global Context. 3 Credits.

Students convene in Finland to learn about how social work is understood and practiced in different parts of the world. Together with students and faculty from other countries, explores social issues, social work responses to those issues, and ways of communicating across cultural and language differences. Considers how the common identification with social work builds connection and might enable collaborative work to improve the lives of people worldwide.

Prerequisite: Master of Social Work student or Instructor permission.

SWSS 6270. Adv Social Work Research. 3 Credits.

An analysis of social work research from methodological and theoretical perspectives is emphasized. The application of research to the student's concentration area is required. Prerequisites: Completion of SWSS 5027; a basic Statistics course; Master of Social Work advanced student; or Instructor permission.

SWSS 6300. Crit Principles into Practice. 3 Credits.

An advanced Master of Social Work concentration elective that analyzes competing and complementary assessment strategies and their implications in social work in health/mental health and with children and families. Prerequisite: Completion of Master of Social Work foundation course work or Instructor permission.

SWSS 6360. Addressing Substance Abuse SW. 3 Credits.

In this course, students will investigate the research on the etiological and contributing factors to substance abuse, and study gender specific and culturally responsive treatment strategies, than include trauma-focused, motivational interviewing and cognitive-behavioral approaches. Prerequisites: Social Work student, Concentration year status (completion of foundation year or having advanced student status in the Master of Social Work program).

SWSS 6390. Practitioners' Own Stories. 3 Credits.

Through weekly writing prompts, students reflect on connections between their graduate training and contexts for practice, considering organizing concepts of wellness and illness and normal and dysfunction, along with social categories of social difference. They focus on how their personal and professional subjectivities contribute to their observations and analyses of institutionally generated client concerns. Prerequisite: Completion of foundation year course work in Master of Social Work program.

SWSS 6400. Trans. Change in SW Orgs. 3 Credits.

This course prepares social workers to lead transformative organizational change; change that reorients the way the organization functions through critical questioning of standing organizational discourse and practices. Topics include: futures research, change models, constructivist approaches, & social inequity and difference. Prerequisite: Completion of first year of the Master of Social Work program or advanced student status in the Master of Social Work program.

SWSS 6410. Social Work with Refugees. 3 Credits.

The historical construction of 'refugees', the discourses and practices that surround it, and the impact of that construction on the lives of people, particularly vulnerable populations are course foci. The geopolitical, economic, ecological discourses that give rise to human flight are examined within the context of social work practice. Service learning experiences are provided. Prerequisites: SWSS 6120, SWSS 6130, SWSS 5160, SWSS 5170, SWSS 5200, SWSS 5210, SWSS 5027, SWSS 6000.

SWSS 6890. Spec Practice Yr Practicum. 3-4 Credits.

Supervised practicum-based learning of 15-20 hours per week. Students are placed in human service agencies and organizations and apply advanced social work practice related to an area of specialized practice. Prerequisites: SWSS 5200, SWSS 5210, SWSS 5160, SWSS 5170, SWSS 5027, SWSS 6120, SWSS 6130, SWSS 6000. Co-requisite: SWSS 6140.

SWSS 6990. Special Topics. 1-18 Credits.

See Schedule of Courses for specific titles.

SWSS 6993. Independent Study. 1-18 Credits.

Individual work on Social Work issue(s) selected by the student in consultation with a faculty member. Prerequisite: Instructor permission required.

SWSS 6995. Graduate Independent Research. 1-18 Credits.

Graduate student work on individual or small team research projects under the supervision of a faculty member, for which credit is awarded. Offered at department discretion.