

SOCIAL WORK

Program Description

Our department's mission is to prepare students for critically reflective practice, and to use social work knowledge, values, and skills to demonstrate the intrinsic value of all humankind in a unified purpose to serve and promote social justice and human rights.

More specifically, our Master of Social Work (MSW) program mission is to prepare clinical social workers for critically reflective social work practice. We collaborate with students and communities to create learning environments grounded in social justice and scholarly inquiry with a critical perspective on social work knowledge, values, and skills, in order to lead and influence change.

Two MSW program options are available: Advanced Standing, a reduced-credit option for students with bachelor's degrees in social work; and Regular Standing, for students with bachelor's degrees in any subject. One-year, two-year and three-year tracks are available for Advanced Standing students. Regular Standing students select from two-year, three-year, or four-year tracks. The advanced standing program requires 33 credits, including 500 hours of field practica. The regular standing graduate program requires 51 semester credits, including 900 hours of field practica. Foundation and advanced courses include study in human behavior and the social environment, social policy and services, research, generalist and clinical social work practice and fieldwork. Courses are offered on our St. Paul, MN campus, in a **blended** format that includes **fully on-campus courses** as well as a *few* hybrid (on campus **and** online) courses, and fully online course options—all in a convenient schedule during early evening (4:30 to 6:55) or later evening (7:10 to 9:30) times designed for working adults.

Our MSW program emphasizes the development of the whole person as a critically-reflective practitioner sensitive to the needs of others and skilled in making service delivery systems more responsive to human needs. Our focus on **critically reflective clinical practice** with individuals, small groups and families, deals with a wide range of social problems and issues including poverty, various kinds of discrimination, mental illness, developmental disabilities and oppression. Students and faculty collaborate to create learning environments grounded in a commitment to social justice, strengths-based and empowering practices, anti-oppressive practices, and development of social work competencies based on this critical perspective. Our MSW curriculum is student-centered, offering optimal choice and variety in learning activities and assignments, while helping students hold themselves accountable to ethical standards and demonstrated mastery of knowledge and practice skills. Students may develop areas of particular focus by their choice of electives and corresponding field placement settings.

Master's

- Master of Social Work (MSW) (<http://catalog.stkate.edu/graduate/health/social-work/msw/>)
- Master of Social Work/Master of Arts in Holistic Health Studies Dual Degree (MSW/MAHS) (<http://catalog.stkate.edu/graduate/health/social-work/msw-mahs/>)

GRSW 5000 History and Philosophy of Social Work — 3 credits

This course provides a foundation for the graduate social work and includes some texts that will be used across the curriculum. Special emphasis is placed on understanding the history, legacies, philosophy and values of social welfare and social work. This course provides students the opportunity to explore the historical development of the ethics, purposes, and sanctions characteristic of professional social work practice.

GRSW 5010 Theory and Practice of Social Work I — 3 credits

This course provides the first year MSW student with the knowledge and skills needed for generalist social work practice. Students develop communication and interviewing skills, which are used in work with client systems of all sizes. It is taken concurrently with a field placement, which serves as a practice lab for applying theory and skills learned in the classroom. This first course in a year long sequence (students are expected to stay in the same section both semesters) focuses on understanding the generalist and integrative models of practice, social work values and ethics, the strengths perspective, empowerment principles and basic principles of ethical reasoning. Student self-awareness and self-assessment are especially important since they facilitate the development of an authentic style of practice.

GRSW 5020 Theory and Practice of Social Work II — 3 credits

This course is a continuation of GRSW 5010 and is also taken concurrently with a field placement which serves as a practice lab for theory and skills learned in the classroom. This course focuses on several practice applications: group theory and process (both task and treatment groups), agency change, and understanding the dynamics of unintended discrimination and oppression. As with the first course, student self-awareness and self-assessment are critical to developing a solid foundation for authentic practice.

GRSW 5050 Field Practicum and Seminar I — 3 credits

The field practicum is an educationally directed on-site experience under the supervision of an agency-based social work field instructor and a campus based faculty liaison. Students complete a total of 400 hours during the first practicum. On-campus seminars (I and II) taken concurrently with the practicum, assist the student in the integration and application of practice theory to their placement learning activities. The first practicum is taken concurrently with GRSW 5010 and GRSW 5020: Theory and Practice of Social Work I and II.

GRSW 5060 Field Practicum and Seminar II — 3 credits

The field practicum is an educationally directed on-site experience under the supervision of an agency-based social work field instructor and a campus based faculty liaison. Students complete a total of 400 hours during the first practicum. On-campus seminars (I and II) taken concurrently with the practicum, assist the student in the integration and application of practice theory to their placement learning activities. The first practicum is taken concurrently with GRSW 5010 and GRSW 5020: Theory and Practice of Social Work I and II.

GRSW 5400 Human Behavior and the Social Environment — 3 credits

This foundation course will explore the dynamics of human behavior and prepare a foundation of knowledge on which to build clinical practice skills. Through a study of systems theory, psychodynamic theory and the identification of the biological, psychological and sociological variables influencing development, students will gain a theoretical base for application to the assessment of client systems. Special emphasis in the course is on the important factors of human diversity (ethnic minorities of color, racism, ethnocentrism, aging, sexism, sexual orientation, and religion/spirituality) as they affect the dynamics of human behavior.

GRSW 5410 Social Work Practice with Immigrants and Refugees – 3 credits

This course presents the family resilience framework as a foundational context for working with diverse populations, focusing on strengths and adaptive capacity. Specifically, this course explores critical issues, theory and skills related to social work practice with immigrants and refugees. Consideration is given to the macro context of immigration including related policy responses. Key factors in resettlement and transition, such as migration trauma, the social work delivery system, and the role of the social worker with clients, communities and organization will be addressed.

GRSW 5800 Social Work Research Methods – 3 credits

This course focuses on learning generalist social work research methods and skills. Students will be introduced to the basic concepts of research, allowing them to be both critical consumers and novice producers of research. Skills emphasized include critiquing and analyzing research literature, searching for relevant scholarly articles, writing literature reviews, developing research design, and understanding quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Discussed in the class are frameworks regarding evidence-based practice, diverse client systems, ethical research practice, and social justice.

GRSW 5903 Topics – 3 credits

Topics courses vary each semester and provide an in-depth study of particular issues, concerns and trends in social work.

GRSW 6030 Methods of Clinical Social Work I – 3 credits

This course is part one of a year-long sequence requiring students to keep the same instructor over the academic year. This course provides an overview of theories and intervention methods for social work practice. The course focuses on the clinical interview, both with regard to the philosophy and theoretical constructs of the approaches and to the application of those approaches in work with clients from various cultural, ethnic and class backgrounds. Emphasis is placed on differential aspects of assessment and diagnosis of clients of all ages, the formulation of a treatment plan, the therapeutic relationship and the process of treatment. This course is taken concurrently with GRSW 6070.

GRSW 6040 Methods of Clinical Social Work II – 3 credits

This course is part two of a year-long sequence requiring students to keep the same instructor over the academic year. This course provides an overview of theories and intervention methods for social work practice. It is a continuation of GRSW 603. The course focuses on the clinical interview, both with regard to the philosophy and theoretical constructs of the approaches and to the application of those approaches in work with clients from various ages, cultural and ethnic and class backgrounds. Emphasis is placed on differential aspects of assessment and diagnosis of different age groups throughout the lifespan, the formulation of a treatment plan, the therapeutic relationship and the process of treatment. Emphasis is placed on theories and methods of practice with individuals and groups. This course is taken concurrently with GRSW 6080.

GRSW 6070 Field Practicum and Seminar III – 4 credits

This course provides advanced learning and practice in settings conducive to clinical social work practice under the instruction of an agency-based social work supervisor and campus-based faculty member. Students complete a minimum of 600 hours during the practicum. Campus seminars (III and IV) taken concurrently with the practicum provide guidance for learning, continued application of theory and prior experience, and further refinement of social work skills. The clinical field practicum is taken concurrently with GRSW 6030 Methods of Clinical Social Work I and GRSW 6040 Methods of Clinical Social Work II.

GRSW 6073 Field Practicum & Seminar III – 3 credits

This course provides advanced learning and practice in settings conducive to clinical social work practice under the instruction of an agency-based social work supervisor and campus-based faculty member. Students complete a minimum of 600 hours during the practicum. Campus seminars (III and IV) taken concurrently with the practicum provide guidance for learning, continued application of theory and prior experience, and further refinement of social work skills. The clinical field practicum is taken concurrently with GRSW 6030 Methods of Clinical Social Work I and GRSW 6040 Methods of Clinical Social Work II.

GRSW 6080 Field Practicum and Seminar IV – 4 credits

This course provides advanced learning and practice in settings conducive to clinical social work practice under the instruction of an agency-based social work supervisor and campus-based faculty member. Students complete a minimum of 600 hours during the practicum. Campus seminars (III and IV) taken concurrently with the practicum provide guidance for learning, continued application of theory and prior experience, and further refinement of social work skills. The clinical field practicum is taken concurrently with GRSW 6030 Methods of Clinical Social Work I and GRSW 6040 Methods of Clinical Social Work II.

GRSW 6083 Field Practicum & Seminar IV – 3 credits

This course provides advanced learning and practice in settings conducive to clinical social work practice under the instruction of an agency-based social work supervisor and campus-based faculty member. Students complete a minimum of 600 hours during the practicum. Campus seminars (III and IV) taken concurrently with the practicum provide guidance for learning, continued application of theory and prior experience, and further refinement of social work skills. The clinical field practicum is taken concurrently with GRSW 6030 Methods of Clinical Social Work I and GRSW 6040 Methods of Clinical Social Work II.

GRSW 6090 The Spiritual Dimension of Social Work Practice – 3 credits

This course conceptualizes social work practice as consisting of seven interrelated elements: use of theory, goals of practice, context for practice, nature of helping relationship, assessment, intervention and ethical guidelines. These interrelated elements will be explored in the context of religion, spirituality, and various practice settings. Social Work assists people in achieving their full potential within their environmental contexts by adopting a holistic, person-in-environment perspective. Since its inception, the profession has recognized that a holistic perspective requires attending to biological, psychological, sociological, and spiritual human needs. Current trends in social work education support the inclusion of content on religion and spiritual diversity. In accordance with professional policy, this course is an elective that provides an introduction to the spiritual dimension of social work practice.

GRSW 6120 Grief Counseling and Therapy – 3 credits

The course provides theoretical and applied frameworks for understanding grief and loss as they relate to social work practice. The perspectives and skills taught in the class can be used in recognizing and addressing grief and loss with persons of diverse backgrounds, who are facing a variety of different losses, in a variety of practice settings. The course is designed to be relevant for social work practice in any setting, not just those focused on death and dying. A broad view of the concept of loss will be taken. Students will be able, by the conclusion of the course, to recognize, identify, and respond to losses with those with whom they work. Students will also address matters of self and team care when addressing grief issues with clients.

GRSW 6190 Integrative Psychotherapy – 3 credits

This course on integrative psychotherapy uses a bio/psycho-social/spiritual perspective applied to clinical social work practice. Based on Mindfulness-based Meditation principles and practices, students will explore the mind-body connection informed by neuroscience research, emotional intelligence and mindfulness-based approaches, body-oriented, and contemplative approaches from other east/west disciplines of study. Integrative psychotherapy draws from a range of expressive/healing arts. Through both theoretical and experiential practices students will learn effective and appropriate applications of integrative processes in clinical work with individuals, couples, families and groups. Integrative therapy with diverse mental health issues and client populations will be taught through case examples, classroom activities, discussion and assignments. A strong ethical foundation for practice and the prevention of compassion fatigue will be established throughout the course.

GRSW 6220 Clinical Practice with Adolescents – 3 credits

This course will focus on teaching clinical social work interventions with adolescents emphasizing a developmental, psychodynamic perspective. The course will focus on developing clinical skills that assist adolescents in dealing with derailed development.

GRSW 6230 Clinical Practice with Older Adults – 3 credits

Emerging from what has been learned through the Hartford Geriatric Enrichment Grant, this course has been designed as a graduate level specialty course on the clinical issues of aging. The course is an examination of aging and the interaction of the biological, psychological, emotional, spiritual, and social/economic factors. By focusing on clinical practice and case management with older adults and their families, the course will provide in-depth knowledge about assessment, diagnosis, treatment and evaluation. In counterpoint to the application of various psychological and cognitive measurement tools, students will discuss the clinical and ethical implications in relation to diversity and populations at risk. Theories of aging and models of intervention will be discussed and critiqued. The role of the clinical social worker will be examined in the various settings and agencies serving aged populations. The course is based on the strengths based perspective and will provide a variety of viewpoints and case examples of best practice with older clients and their families.

GRSW 6250 Social Policy and Advocacy Practice – 3 credits

This course focuses on current social welfare policy, policy analysis and advocacy, connections between policy and practice, and social welfare program development. The content and effects of current social welfare policy are examined in the course, and policy analysis and the skills for policy advocacy are emphasized. The course carefully considers the connections between policy and clinical practice. A major focus of the course includes learning the stages of program development, which culminates in a group program proposal and presentation. Emphasized in the course are the frameworks of social justice, diversity and cultural contexts, and the application of research skills to all parts of policy and program practice.

GRSW 6260 Clinical Practice for the Treatment of Trauma – 3 credits

This course will focus on an understanding of the psychophysiology of trauma and address clinical work with trauma clients. The course will explore trauma's impact on the organization of the self and its implications for treatment.

GRSW 6280 Clinical Practice with Immigrants and Refugees – 3 credits

This course provides an in-depth study of issues related to clinical social work practice with immigrants and refugees. It is set in the macro context of understanding global trends in immigration, immigration to the U.S. and related public policy responses in terms of their influence on the lives of persons coming to this country and on the service delivery systems intended to serve them. Specific clinical skills and strategies for engaging immigrant and refugee clients in various practice settings are emphasized, along with research findings on service utilization of immigrants and refugees. The role of acculturation processes, issues and problems will be addressed in relation to common social service workers' cultural and ethnic heritage may affect their clinical practice and work with social work colleagues who themselves have immigrant or refugee backgrounds will be addressed.

GRSW 6290 Clinical Social Work Practice in Integrated Healthcare – 3 credits

The objective of this course is to educate social work students in the direct practice of integrated behavioral health in primary care. Students will become knowledgeable of the roles of behavioral health providers working in primary care settings, theories and models of care, and cross-cultural issues. They will develop skills in engagement, assessment, intervention planning and implementation, and practice evaluation. Because the populations served in primary care settings span the spectrum of severity in both the physical and behavioral health dimensions, students will develop competencies in engaging and supporting patients across a range of health conditions. This includes the essential practice skills needed to effectively address the challenges of integrating services, care, and support for persons with health, mental health, and substance use problems.

GRSW 6330 Dialectical Behavioral Therapy – 3 credits

This course provides a detailed understanding of the theoretical perspectives, empirical foundations, and treatment strategies of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). DBT is an Empirically Supported Treatment (EST) approach for working with clients who have difficulty managing symptoms associated with Depression, Anxiety, Personality Disorders and Personality Disorder – Trait Specified Disorders (PD-TS), addictions, and dual diagnosis. DBT assists clinicians in expanding their expertise and effectiveness working with and supporting clients with dramatic interpersonal styles, difficulty regulating their reactions to external triggers, suicidal issues, and self harm potential. It is a therapeutic approach that originated from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). Students will explore the theoretical basis of this approach, specific DBT interventions, and how to effectively work with high-risk, complex, multi-need clients. Students will be encouraged and challenged to assess and critique how DBT aligns and conflicts with clinical social work practice and values.

GRSW 6450 Clinical Assessment – 3 credits

This course will explore the dynamics of psychopathology in human behavior. Through the identification of the biological, psychological, sociological and spiritual variables influencing behavior, students will gain a theoretical foundation for understanding and assessing psychopathology. The impact of diversity, social justice and ageism on behavior and the experience of mental illness will be explored. Special emphasis in this course is on the complexity of psychopathology and the use and practical limitations of diagnostic systems, especially the DSM-IV-TR.

GRSW 6500 Clinical Supervision and Program Management – 3 credits

This course identifies and examines central concepts, theories and models of clinical supervision and program management. Strategies and techniques for establishing, improving and maintaining the supervisory relationship as a mechanism for maximizing service to clients are considered. Special attention is given to organization dynamics and structure, to delineating the management function, and to issues of power and authority. Emphasis is on the dynamics of supervision, ethical and value principles, professional boundaries and supervision as a leadership function.

GRSW 6683 Directed Study – 3 credits

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GRSW 6810 Social Work Practice Research – 3 credits

This course focuses on research in all areas of social work practice. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods are studied in research designs from single-subject designs through group designs to systematic evaluation. A major focus is to develop the knowledge and skills of the student to be an objective evaluator of social work practice as well as to be an active participant in adding to the knowledge base of social work.

GRSW 6903 Topics – 3 credits

The topics course will vary each semester offered and provide an in-depth study of particular issues, concerns and trends in social work. GRSW 6903 is a clinical level elective.

GRSW 6953 Independent Study – 3 credits

Independent study offers students in the generalist concentration the opportunity for creative learning on topics of their choice. A student works with a faculty member to develop a learning plan that specifies the content, objectives, credit allocation and process of evaluation.

Prerequisites: Instructor and program approval.