

# SOCIAL WORK: FULL TIME, MSW

The MSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Full-Time MSW Program students attending on a full-time basis generally complete the program in two academic years.

This is a named option within the Social Work MSW (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/social-work/social-work-msw/>). A broader overview of the School, our MSW Program Goals, the MSW Curriculum, and Field Education can be found on the Social Work MSW Overview page (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/social-work/social-work-msw/>).

You can also review:

- the Learning Outcomes (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/social-work/social-work-msw/#learningoutcomestext>) for the MSW Program;
- the MSW Program Accreditation (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/social-work/social-work-msw/#accreditationtext>) standing and MSW competencies; and,
- more information about Certification and Licensure (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/social-work/social-work-msw/#certificationlicensuretext>).

Applicants with a CSWE-accredited Bachelor of Social Work degree from within the last five years should instead look at Social Work Advanced Standing: Full Time, MSW (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/social-work/social-work-advanced-standing-msw/social-work-advanced-standing-full-time-msw/>).

## ADMISSIONS

### ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. **Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/>) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).** Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/>).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	January 10
Spring Deadline	The program does not admit in the spring.
Summer Deadline	The program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Not required.

English Proficiency Test Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Requirements for Admissions policy: <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241> (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241/>) and Social Work's higher requirements:

- TOEFL (iBT): 100
- Duolingo (DET): 130

Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT) n/a

Letters of Recommendation Required 3

Online applications are available through the School of Social Work website (<https://socwork.wisc.edu/admissions/mswapp/>).

**Admission into the master's degree program** includes the Graduate School requirement that applicants hold a minimum undergraduate grade-point average (GPA) of 3.00 on the equivalent of the last 60 semester hours (approximately two years of work) or a master's degree with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 is required. Applicants from an international institution must demonstrate strong academic achievement comparable to a 3.00 for an undergraduate or master's degree, using all credits from the degree to calculate the GPA equivalency. The Graduate School will use your institution's grading scale. Do not convert your grades to a 4.00 scale.

Applicants apply online through the Graduate School's application site (link found in the instructions on the School of Social Work website). A complete application includes both the Graduate School application and the School of Social Work's supplemental application forms.

Applicants must review the instructions on the School of Social Work (<https://socwork.wisc.edu/admissions/mswapp/>) website for specific application details and prerequisites.

### ADVANCED STANDING

**Individuals who have completed a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree** within five years from the academic year of graduation to the academic year of enrollment **should apply to Social Work Advanced Standing: Full Time, MSW** (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/social-work/social-work-advanced-standing-msw/social-work-advanced-standing-full-time-msw/#admissionstext>).

## FUNDING

### FUNDING

#### GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

[The Bursar's Office provides information about tuition and fees associated with being a graduate student.](#) [Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid.](#) [Further funding information is available from the Graduate School.](#) Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

#### MSW PROGRAM RESOURCES

Thanks to the generosity of friends and alumni, the Sandra Rosenbaum School of Social Work also has a number of Awards and Scholarships

(<https://socwork.wisc.edu/students/awards-and-scholarships/>) available to MSW applicants and current MSW students, ranging from several hundred dollars to covering the full cost of tuition and fees, as well as training grants and other opportunities (<https://socwork.wisc.edu/students/awards-and-scholarships/#other-opportunities>) that can provide funding for students with specific career interests.

Students also have access to federal loans and work study.

## REQUIREMENTS

### MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum degree requirements (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#requirements>) and policies (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policies>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

### NAMED OPTION REQUIREMENTS

#### MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

#### Mode of Instruction Definitions

**Accelerated:** Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

**Evening/Weekend:** Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

**Face-to-Face:** Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW–Madison Campus.

**Hybrid:** These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

**Online:** These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

### CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

#### Requirement Detail

Minimum Credit Requirement 49 credits

Minimum Residence Credit Requirement 16 credits

Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement 25 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244> (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/>).

Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 GPA required. Refer to the Graduate School: Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement policy: <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203</a> ( <a href="https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/">https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/</a> ).
Other Grade Requirements	Grades of C are accepted only if they are offset by an equal number of credits of A. Candidates who receive more than two grades of C (in courses that do not extend beyond one term) or a grade of D or F while in the program will be dropped from the MSW Program. Candidates who receive a grade of C in the Field and Integrative Seminar courses may continue only with permission of the faculty and may not offset the grade with a grade of A. (This policy does not apply to grades received for courses taken to meet the statistics prerequisite while in the program but it will affect the GPA).

Assessments and Examinations	None.
Language Requirements	None.

### REQUIRED COURSES

#### Generalist Practice

First-year MSW students complete all generalist courses unless granted an exemption:

Code	Title	Credits
SOC WORK 400	Field Practice and Integrative Seminar I	4
SOC WORK 401	Field Practice and Integrative Seminar II	4
SOC WORK 441	Generalist Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups	3
SOC WORK 442	Generalist Practice with Communities and Organizations	2
SOC WORK 612	Psychopathology in Generalist Social Work Practice	2
SOC WORK 650	Methods of Social Work Research	3
SOC WORK 708	The Field of Social Work	2
SOC WORK 709	Social Policy	2
SOC WORK 710	Diversity, Oppression and Social Justice in Social Work	2
SOC WORK 711	Human Behavior and the Environment	2

**Total Credits 26**

Generalist courses must be completed before beginning Advanced Generalist courses.

#### Advanced Generalist Specialization

In a broad social justice framework, advanced practice MSW students complete an advanced generalist practice specialization. Students may choose one of four optional focus areas:

1. Aging;
2. Child, Youth, and Family Welfare;
3. Health; and
4. Mental Health.

For more information about focus area recommendations, students should refer to the Specialization Handbook found on the Social Work website Student Resources page (<https://socwork.wisc.edu/students/resources/>).

Students complete an **Advanced Practice** class in a focus area, a **Policies & Services** class in a focus area, a sequence of **Field Practice** in a focus area, **Advanced Macro Practice**, and three "free electives" chosen in consultation with an advisor. Students may choose to complete their advanced generalist practice specialization with no focus area, and still complete **Advanced Practice**, **Policies & Services**, and **Field Practice** courses that are based within focus areas, in addition to **Advanced Macro Practice** and three "free electives" chosen in consultation with an advisor.

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Advanced Practice (choose one)</b>		<b>2</b>
SOC WORK 741	Interventions with Children, Youth, and Families	
SOC WORK 821	Social Work Practice in Aging and Mental Health	
SOC WORK 835	Advanced Social Work Practice in Mental Health	
SOC WORK 873	Social Work Practice in Health Care	
<b>Policies &amp; Services (choose one)</b>		<b>2</b>
SOC WORK 836	Mental Health Policies and Services	
SOC WORK 875	Health, Aging, and Disability Policy and Services	
SOC WORK 920	Child, Youth, and Family Policies and Services	
SOC WORK 921	Child Welfare Policies and Services	
<b>Advanced Macro Practice</b>		<b>2</b>
SOC WORK 840	Advanced Macro Practice	
<b>Advanced Practice Field <sup>1</sup></b>		<b>11</b>
SOC WORK 800	Field Practice and Integrative Seminar III	
SOC WORK 801	Field Practice and Integrative Seminar IV	
<b>Three free electives from the list below chosen in consultation with advisor.</b>		<b>6</b>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>23</b>

<sup>1</sup> For information on available Advanced Practice field units and the process of selecting a field unit, students should refer to the Field Handbook found on the Social Work website Student Resources page (<https://socwork.wisc.edu/students/resources/>).

**Free Electives**

Electives may be chosen from this list in consultation with an advisor. The Specialization Handbook (<https://socwork.wisc.edu/students/resources/#full-time-msw-students>) has suggested electives for focus areas and select sub-focuses. Not all electives are offered in a given year or semester. **Courses outside of the department may substitute for a course on this Free Electives list in consultation with an advisor.**

Code	Title	Credits
SOC WORK 623	Interpersonal Violence	3
SOC WORK 624	Social Work with the Small Group	2
SOC WORK 627	Sex Trafficking and Sex Trading	2

SOC WORK/ AMER IND 636	Social Work in American Indian Communities: The Indian Child Welfare Act	3
SOC WORK 639	Social Work Practice with LGBTQIA2S+ Individuals and Communities	3
SOC WORK 644	Issues in Developmental Disabilities	3
SOC WORK 646	Child Abuse and Neglect	2
SOC WORK 648	Social Work Practice in Palliative Care	2
SOC WORK 656	Child Welfare Practice in Foster and Kinship Care, Permanency, and Adoption	2
SOC WORK 675	Topics in Contemporary Social Welfare	2-3
SOC WORK 712	Psychopathology for Social Work Practice in Mental Health	3
SOC WORK/ URB R PL 721	Methods of Planning Analysis	3
SOC WORK 741	Interventions with Children, Youth, and Families <sup>1</sup>	2
SOC WORK 742	Assessing and Treating Children and Adolescents	2
SOC WORK/ NURSING/ PHM PRAC 746	Interdisciplinary Care of Children with Special Health Care Needs	3
SOC WORK 817	Social Work Practice in Schools II (only for School Social Work students)	2
SOC WORK 821	Social Work Practice in Aging and Mental Health <sup>1</sup>	2
SOC WORK/ LAW 822	Family Law: Marriage and Divorce	2-4
SOC WORK/ LAW 823	Family Law: Parent and Child	3-4
SOC WORK 825	Grief, Death, Loss, and Life	2
SOC WORK 835	Advanced Social Work Practice in Mental Health <sup>1</sup>	2
SOC WORK 836	Mental Health Policies and Services <sup>1</sup>	2
SOC WORK 838	Principles of Psychedelic Healing	2
SOC WORK 842	Supervision and Leadership in Social Work and Human Services Organizations	3
SOC WORK 852	Influencing Political Systems for Social Change	2
SOC WORK 854	Crisis Intervention	2
SOC WORK 861	Recent Developments in Social Work	2-3
SOC WORK 863	Recent Developments in Social Work	2-3
SOC WORK 870	Cognitive and Behavioral Mental Health Treatments for Adults	2
SOC WORK 873	Social Work Practice in Health Care <sup>1</sup>	2
SOC WORK 875	Health, Aging, and Disability Policy and Services <sup>1</sup>	2

SOC WORK/ ED PSYCH/HDFS/ NURSING 880	Prevention Science	3
SOC WORK 920	Child, Youth, and Family Policies and Services <sup>1</sup>	2
SOC WORK 921	Child Welfare Policies and Services <sup>1</sup>	2
SOC WORK 924	Family Problems and Social Work	2
SOC WORK 929	Social Work and Substance Misuse	2

<sup>1</sup> These courses can satisfy either an Advanced Practice/Policies & Services course, or a free elective. Taking additional Advanced Practice/Policies & Services courses as electives should only be done in careful consultation with an advisor, and can only be taken in the advanced practice year.

## POLICIES

### GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) serve as the official document of record for Graduate School academic and administrative policies and procedures and are updated continuously. Note some policies redirect to entries in the official UW-Madison Policy Library (<https://policy.wisc.edu/>). Programs may set more stringent policies than the Graduate School. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

### NAMED OPTION-SPECIFIC POLICIES

#### PRIOR COURSEWORK

##### Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

Graduate credits in equivalent generalist courses completed with a grade of B or better taken at CSWE-accredited MSW programs may be used to fulfill the minimum degree credit requirement. In general, coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to the MSW Program may not be used to satisfy degree credit minimums. Graduate credits from other MSW programs/institutions may not be used to fulfill the minimum residence credit requirement.

##### Undergraduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions or UW-Madison

Graduates of UW-Madison may transfer only those courses completed with a B or better and numbered 300 or above toward their minimum graduate degree credit requirement for coursework determined by the social work faculty to be equivalent to the MSW generalist coursework, up to 7 credits. Coursework completed through a degree earned five or more years prior to admission to the MSW program may not be used to satisfy credit requirements. Students seeking credit for previously completed social work practice courses may only do so if completed while declared in the BSW degree program.

MSW students may transfer undergraduate coursework from external institutions as determined by the social work faculty to be equivalent to the MSW generalist coursework, up to 7 credits, if completed with a grade of B or better. Coursework completed through a degree earned five or more years prior to admission to the MSW program may not transfer to satisfy credit requirements. Students seeking credit for previously

completed social work practice courses may only do so if completed while enrolled in a CSWE-accredited BSW degree program.

#### Credits Earned as a Professional Student at UW-Madison (Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary careers)

No credits accepted.

#### Credits Earned as a University Special Student at UW-Madison

On a case-by-case basis generalist Social Work courses completed with a B or better and numbered 300 or above taken as a UW-Madison University Special student may transfer to fulfill degree requirements. No more than 7 credits of generalist course may be used for this purpose. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to the MSW program may not be used to satisfy credit requirements.

### PROBATION

Refer to the Graduate School: Probation (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1217/>) policy.

#### MSW Satisfactory Progress Criteria

Graduate students are required to maintain and graduate with a cumulative GPA of 3.00.

Grades of "C" are accepted only if offset by an equal number of credits of grades of A. Students who receive more than two grades of C or a grade of D or F will be dropped from the MSW Program. (This policy does not apply to grades received for courses taken to meet the Statistic prerequisite while in the program but will affect the GPA).

Students who receive a grade of C in the Field and Integrative Seminar courses may continue only with permission of the faculty and may not offset the grade with a grade of A. Refer to the Field Education Handbook (found on the Social Work Student Resources site (<https://socwork.wisc.edu/students/resources/#full-time-msw-students>)) for more details about grades in Field.

### ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

All master's candidates are assigned to the social work academic advisors.

### CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credit maximum. Refer to the Graduate School: Maximum Credit Loads and Overload Requests (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1228/>) policy.

### TIME LIMITS

Full-Time Program students matriculating through the Full-Time MSW program on a part-time basis must enroll in a minimum of two courses each semester and complete one full-time semester of at least 8 credits. Candidates who withdraw from the Full-Time Program without having completed at least 8 credits must reapply for admission to the program. Students who withdraw from the Part-Time MSW Program without having completed at least 6 credits must reapply for admission to the Part-Time Program.

Refer to the Graduate School: Time Limits (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1221/>) policy.

### GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)

- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
  - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employee disabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office Student Assistance and Support (OSAS) (<https://osas.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

## L&S POLICY FOR GRADUATE STUDENT ACADEMIC APPEALS

Graduate students have the right to appeal an academic decision related to an L&S graduate program if the student believes that the decision is inconsistent with published policy.

Academic decisions that may be appealed include:

- Dismissal from the graduate program
- Failure to pass a qualifying or preliminary examination
- Failure to achieve satisfactory academic progress
- Academic disciplinary action related to failure to meet professional conduct standards

Issues such as the following cannot be appealed using this process:

- A faculty member declining to serve as a graduate student's advisor.
- Decisions regarding the student's disciplinary knowledge, evaluation of the quality of work, or similar judgements. These are the domain of the department faculty.
- Course grades. These can be appealed instead using the L&S Policy for Grade Appeal (<https://kb.wisc.edu/lis/22258/>).
- Incidents of bias or hate, hostile and intimidating behavior (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>), or discrimination (Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>), Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/eo-complaint/formal-investigations/>)). Direct these to the linked campus offices appropriate for the incident(s).

## Appeal Process for Graduate Students

A graduate student wishing to appeal an academic decision must follow the process in the order listed below. Note time limits within each step.

1. The student should first seek informal resolution, if possible, by discussing the concern with their academic advisor, the department's Director of Graduate Studies, and/or the department chair.
2. If the program has an appeal policy listed in their graduate program handbook, the student should follow the policy as written, including adhering to any indicated deadlines. In the absence of a specific departmental process, the chair or designee will be the reviewer and decision maker, and the student should submit a written appeal to the chair within 15 business days of the academic decision. The chair or designee will notify the student in writing of their decision.
3. If the departmental process upholds the original decision, the graduate student may next initiate an appeal to L&S. To do so, the student must submit a written appeal to the L&S Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Academic Affairs within 15 business days of notification of the department's decision.
  - a. To the fullest extent possible, the written appeal should include, in a single document: a clear and concise statement of the academic decision being appealed, any relevant background on what led to the decision, the specific policies involved, the relief sought, any relevant documentation related to the departmental appeal, and the names and titles of any individuals contributing to or involved in the decision.
  - b. The Assistant Dean will work with the Academic Associate Dean of the appropriate division to consider the appeal. They may seek additional information and/or meetings related to the case.
  - c. The Assistant Dean and Academic Associate Dean will provide a written decision within 20 business days.
4. If L&S upholds the original decision, the graduate student may appeal to the Graduate School. More information can be found on their website: Grievances and Appeals (<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/>) (see: Graduate School Appeal Process).

## OTHER

### Practice Sequence

SOC WORK 441 and SOC WORK 442 are taken concurrently with field, and are only offered in the fall for BSW students. Exceptions to this sequencing are rare and will only be made through consultation with an advisor and the Director of Field Education. SOC WORK 400 is offered in the fall and SOC WORK 401 is offered in the spring. None of the practice courses are available in the summer.

### Coursework that doesn't meet the policy requirements

Coursework that does not meet the above policies (ie grade received was below a B, or degree was earned more than five years prior to admission) is not sufficient to meet program requirements. Students may choose to demonstrate competence in required foundation courses through examination for credit (<https://socwork.wisc.edu/students/exemptions/>) for select courses, or will be required to take the applicable course as part of their plan of study.

### Credit by Exam

An exemption exam (<https://socwork.wisc.edu/students/exemptions/>) is a way to demonstrate sound understanding of foundational generalist social work content required for our MSW Program. Exemption exams are intended for students who have had prior exposure to the required content. This option is recommended for students who have taken a similar course, but NOT eligible for exemption by prior coursework review (such as if a grade below a B was received, or the course was taken more

than five years prior to entry into the program). If a student passes an exemption exam, they will typically earn credit for that course.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

### **PROGRAM RESOURCES**

MSW students can also take advantage of the College of Letters & Sciences SuccessWorks (<https://successworks.wisc.edu/>) services, including their Canvas modules (<https://successworks.wisc.edu/canvas/>) on jobs and internships.