

SOCIAL WORK, MSW/SOCIAL WELFARE, PHD

Related Certificates

- Applied Gerontology (<https://catalog.uwm.edu/community-engagement-professions/social-welfare/social-work/applied-gerontology-graduate-certificate/>)
- Non-Profit Management (<https://catalog.uwm.edu/letters-science/public-nonprofit-administration/nonprofit-management-graduate-certificate/>)
- Trauma-Informed Care (<https://catalog.uwm.edu/community-engagement-professions/education/educational-psychology/trauma-informed-care-graduate-certificate/>)
- Women's Studies (<https://catalog.uwm.edu/letters-science/womens-gender-studies/womens-gender-studies-graduate-certificate/>)

State of Wisconsin Credentials

- School Social Work Certification (<http://uwm.edu/socialwelfare/academics/school-social-work/>)
- Substance Abuse Certification (<http://uwm.edu/socialwelfare/academics/substance-abuse-certification-sac/>)

Overview

The Helen Bader School of Social Welfare (HBSSW) offers a program of graduate studies in social work. As a department in an urban research university, the mission of the Department of Social Work is to promote positive change through social work research, scholarship, education, and community partnerships. The Department promotes the values of the social work profession through a commitment to social justice and diversity, a dedication to public service, and an emphasis on individual and community well-being. The goal of the MSW program is to prepare graduates with specialized knowledge and skills for advanced practice and leadership with diverse populations and communities.

In furtherance of its mission, the goals of the Social Work Department are:

1. To educate students to become highly skilled, culturally competent, and ethical social workers and to provide leadership for the practice of social justice.
2. To create and disseminate knowledge leading to social work and inter-disciplinary innovations.
3. To engage in research and apply results that inform social work policy, practice, advocacy, education, and future research.
4. To collaborate with community partners in promoting evidence-informed practice, educational and research partnerships, and social and economic justice.

HBSSW offers students access to the University computer system, special interview training rooms, and specialized audiovisual materials.

The MSW curriculum is designed to prepare students for advanced-level professional Social Work practice, and builds upon a solid base of coursework in human behavior, practice methods, research, and policy. The MSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and can prepare students for state certification requirements.

Admission Requirements

Application Deadlines

Application deadlines vary by program, please review the application deadline chart (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines/>) for specific programs. Other important dates and deadlines can be found by using the One Stop calendars (<https://uwm.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines/>).

Admission

Relevant application materials must be submitted to both the Graduate School and HBSSW and will be accepted for admission in the Fall semester only. All applications must be completed and submitted on or before January 2. Applications received after January 2 will be considered only if space is available after other applications are reviewed.

Students who apply and are accepted to the joint MSW/PhD program will be able to earn both the Master of Social Work and Doctor of Philosophy in Social Welfare and will not be required to apply to the PhD program after earning the MSW degree, assuming their progress is satisfactory. Applicants who are not offered admission to the joint program will still be considered for admission into the MSW-only program.

All applicants must meet Graduate School requirements plus the following HBSSW requirements:

1. Have an undergraduate grade point average of 2.75 or better.
2. Have completed at least 21 semester credits in the social and behavioral sciences (i.e., psychology, sociology, political science, economics, anthropology, and/or their equivalents).
3. Indicate the following in the Personal Statement section of the Graduate School application form:
 - Their reasons for seeking a doctoral degree in social welfare.
 - Their goals as future scholars.
 - Topic or issue in the field that they consider to be particularly challenging and worthy of study.
4. In materials submitted to the HBSSW, applicants must:
 - Provide a current copy of a professional résumé or curriculum vitae. This should contain information on:
 - All post-secondary education, including institutions, degrees and dates of completed programs of study, plus institutions, dates, and types of study that did not lead to a degree.
 - All employment by the applicant in social work or criminal justice and related areas, including dates and employing organizations.
 - Employment unrelated to social work or criminal justice within the past five years.
 - Information on any past or current professional licenses held.
5. Submit three letters of recommendation from persons familiar with the applicant's achievements and academic potential, including at least one current or former academic instructor.
6. Submit a sample of written work that demonstrates: the applicant's knowledge of social science theory, practice, and research; ability to think analytically; and writing skills. The sample should be at least 1,000 words in length and represent work for which the applicant was the sole author, or if it is jointly authored should indicate which sections were primarily done by the applicant.

Advisement

Each MSW/PhD student in the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare will be assigned a major professor as their advisor. This assignment is based on congruence between the applicant's interests and the expertise of the major professor. In consultation with the director of the PhD program, the student may change major professors after beginning the program, but no applicant will be admitted unless a doctoral faculty member in social welfare agrees to serve as major professor.

Financial Assistance

Through a combination of tuition remission, teaching assistantships, research assistantships, fellowships, and other competitive funding options, the program will attempt to provide financial assistance to admitted students during their first four years in the program. Funding is not guaranteed. Applicants needing additional information on other sources of financial assistance, such as student loans, should contact the UWM Office of Student Financial Services.

Credits and Courses

Professional Foundation

The purpose of the Professional Foundation curriculum is to orient students to the profession of social work and to provide a knowledge, values and skills base in preparation for the Advanced Curriculum. Coursework in the Professional Foundation is not included in the 34 Advanced Curriculum credits required for completion of the MSW degree.

Students who complete both the foundation and advanced curricula will fulfill all requirements for the MSW degree in two years (approximately six semesters), including two semesters of summer study.

Code	Title	Credits
Professional Foundation Courses		
SOC WRK 604	Social Systems and Social Work Practice	3
SOC WRK 662	Methods of Social Welfare Research	3
SOC WRK 665	Cultural Diversity and Social Work	3
SOC WRK 705	Individual Behavior and Social Welfare	3
SOC WRK 708	Social Work Methods I: Individuals and Families	3
SOC WRK 709	Social Work Methods II: Groups, Organizations and Communities	3
SOC WRK 721	Field Instruction I	3
SOC WRK 750	Social Welfare Policy Development and Implementation	3
Total Credits		24

MSW-Level Advanced Curriculum

Once students complete the Professional Foundation they move into the Advanced Curriculum portion of the MSW degree program credits as demonstrated below. If your Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree was earned from an accredited BSW program within the past seven years then you automatically begin in the Advanced standing portion of the MSW curriculum and will have 34 credits to complete to earn the MSW degree as demonstrated below. These 34 credits include a number of required courses. This includes three consecutive semesters of field placement. Courses that will satisfy MSW elective credits will be drawn from the PhD curriculum.

Students who qualify to begin in the advanced curriculum will complete all MSW requirements in the first year (three semesters), including one semester of summer study.

The MSW Advanced Curriculum credits will be distributed as follows:

Code	Title	Credits
MSW Advanced Courses		
SOC WRK 711	Direct Social Work Practice I	3
SOC WRK 712	Advanced Practice and Leadership in Organizations and Communities	3
SOC WRK 795	Evaluation of Social Work Practice and Programs	3
SOC WRK 851	Social Issue and Policy Analysis:	3
SOC WRK 722	Field Instruction II	3
SOC WRK 821	Field Instruction III	3
SOC WRK 822	Field Instruction IV	3
MSW Elective Credits ¹		13
Total Credits		34

¹ MSW Elective credits will be satisfied by PhD curriculum courses.

Exemptions

Students who have, within the seven years of preceding admission, completed coursework that substantially duplicates professional foundation courses may apply to the MSW program coordinator for an exemption from the relevant courses.

All requests for exemptions must be made at the time of initial enrollment. Exemption requests will not be accepted following the end of the first semester of coursework.

PhD Requirements

A minimum of 42 credits of PhD-level coursework is required. The PhD program requires all 42 credits to be completed within the program at UWM. In consultation with the major professor and as soon as possible after admission, each MSW-PhD student designs a program of study to gain the knowledge and skills appropriate to their educational goals.

Upon successful completion of the required MSW courses, students will progress into the required PhD curriculum, in which they will complete the following:

- One required foundation course in the philosophy of science.
- Three specialization seminars that address broader themes on child and family welfare, health and behavioral health, and criminal justice practice and policy.
- Six courses on research methods and statistics to advance their understanding in quantitative and qualitative research methods, design, and applied analysis.
- Three pro-seminar courses that cover content relevant to ethics, grant writing, and teaching.
- Two practicum credits to expand students' skills in teaching and research.
- Two elective courses in areas that strengthen students' knowledge in their substantive areas of interest.

Course options that fulfill the above categories will be determined between student and doctoral program advisor, based on relevant course offerings within UWM and the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare.

Additional Requirements

Preliminary Examination

All students must pass a preliminary examination subsequent to successfully completing all required coursework and prior to being admitted to doctoral candidacy. The examination assesses students' ability to articulate their research interests, analyze and synthesize empirical knowledge and relevant theoretical concepts, explain how theory may affect the generation of knowledge, and show familiarity with relevant scientific methodologies. In keeping with Graduate School rules, the preliminary examination should be completed within five years of enrollment.

An Application for the Doctoral Preliminary Examination (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/doctoral-requirements/>) must be completed by the student and signed and submitted to the PhD Program Committee by the major professor six weeks prior to the first examination. Students who fail the preliminary examination may not proceed to the dissertation. The exam may be retaken only once. Complete policies regarding forming a preliminary examination committee, writing the proposal, and taking the examination are available in the Social Welfare PhD program handbook.

Dissertation Proposal Defense

All students must successfully complete an oral defense of their dissertation proposal to determine their preparation for independent research. The defense must be completed successfully within four years of initial enrollment.

Dissertation

Students who have passed the Preliminary Examination and have submitted a one-page preliminary dissertation proposal are formally admitted to doctoral candidacy. In accordance with Graduate School policies, students must then register for three research or thesis/dissertation credits each semester until the dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School. To meet the requirements for the dissertation, the candidate must complete an original independent research project that adds meaningfully to the existing body of knowledge in social work or criminal justice. It should be of a caliber that warrants publication in respected journals in the field.

Dissertation Defense

As the final step toward the degree, the candidate must pass an oral examination before their doctoral committee in defense of the dissertation. The examination may also cover general topics relevant to the student's area of study. This requirement may not be completed until all other degree requirements are satisfied.

Residence

Students must meet minimum Graduate School residency requirements.

Time Limit

It is expected that most students will complete all degree requirements within seven years of initial enrollment in the joint MSW/PhD program. All requirements MUST be completed within ten years from the date of initial enrollment.

Social Work MSW Learning Outcomes

Students moving from the Professional Foundation Curriculum to the Advanced Curriculum within the Masters in Social Work (MSW) Program will be able to:

- Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
- Engage diversity and difference in practice.
- Advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice.
- Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.
- Engage in policy practice.
- Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
- Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
- Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
- Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

Students graduating from the Masters in Social Work (MSW) Program will be able to, *at the level of an advanced practitioner*:

- Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
- Engage diversity and difference in practice.
- Advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice.
- Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.
- Engage in policy practice.
- Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
- Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
- Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
- Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.