

SOCIAL WORK, M.S.W.

MSW Program

The mission of the Master of Social Work Program at The University of Alabama School of Social Work is to prepare advanced scholar practitioners to improve the lives of individuals and families, enhance community well-being, and advocate for policies that support systemic change.

Graduates of the MSW Program will be able to:

- Deliver evidence-based social work practice to diverse client systems including children, adolescents and their families or adults and their families.
- Advocate for vulnerable populations to include children, adolescents and their families or adults and their families.
- Engage in culturally competent advanced social work practice with children, adolescents and their families or adults and their families.
- Analyze, formulate, and influence organizational and government policies that influence children, adolescents and their families or adults and their families.
- Apply social work values and ethics to practice with children, adolescents and their families or adults and their families.

Curriculum

The MSW Program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. The curriculum follows the curriculum policy requirements of the Council on Social Work Education and provides a balanced, integrated approach that includes a professional foundation and a choice of concentrations. The professional foundation curriculum taken the first year consists of coursework in the following:

- Social work practice. This area of the curriculum is designed to provide practice knowledge and competencies in working with individuals, groups, families, communities, and organizations.
- Human behavior and the social environment. This area of the curriculum helps the student to understand the whole person and the process of growth, change, adaptation, social functioning, and dysfunction of the environmental context, including family, groups, formal organizations, and communities. Courses in this area cover prenatal stages through the process of aging.
- Social welfare policy and services. This area of the curriculum is designed to help the student identify, appraise, analyze, and understand social change in its dynamic perspectives; the role and responsibility of social work as a profession in influencing social policy; and the delivery of service to individuals and society.
- Research methods. This area of the curriculum is designed to help the student understand social work and related research and the use of research for the improvement of services to individuals, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Field education. This area of the curriculum provides opportunities for students to integrate and apply knowledge, skills, and values in social work practice context.

MSW Curriculum Themes

The MSW Program emphasizes the following five themes underpinning the foundation and the concentration year objectives:

- Life Course Perspective: Social workers understand that the growth and development of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities are influenced by a range of psychological,

social, historical, political, and economic factors. The interaction of these factors with life events and life transitions contribute to the subsequent outcomes. This theme also serves as the conceptual framework for the entire MSW curriculum.

- Valuing Diversity: Social workers value and work respectfully with people who are different from themselves.
- Critical and Reflective Thinking: Critical and reflective thinking that challenges assumptions, and that is based on evidence to arrive at creative solutions, is the basis for competent social work practice.
- Evidence-Based Practice: Social workers favor interventions with demonstrated effectiveness. They are prepared to carefully evaluate practice and program outcomes.
- Services to the Poor and Underserved: Alabama's poor and underserved receive social services primarily from public and non-profit social service agencies. Social workers must be prepared to practice in these contexts and to challenge social injustice.

MSW Program Foundation Objectives

Foundation Year MSW students will demonstrate the ability to:

- Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
- Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.
- Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
- Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
- Understand and interpret the history of the social work profession and its contemporary structures and issues.
- Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes.
- Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Analyze, formulate, and influence social policies.
- Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions.
- Use communications skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities.
- Use supervision and consultation appropriate to social work practice.
- Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.

Concentration Objectives

In professional social work intervention with children, youth, and their families, or adults and their families, students will demonstrate:

- The ability to effectively apply selected models and methods of advanced social work practice, consistent with social work values and ethics, with an emphasis in public and non-profit social services.

- The ability to use reflectively the theoretical approaches and knowledge bases underlying their practice with particular attention to the life course perspective.
- The ability to evaluate their own practice.
- The ability to analyze the impact of social welfare policies on clients and practice situations.
- The ability to practice in ways that are culturally and gender appropriate with low-income persons and with those who have experienced social and economic injustice.

Admissions

In addition to the minimum Graduate School admission requirements, to be considered for regular admission an application must include:

- Three letters of recommendation
- A resume
- 5-6 pages "Statement of Purpose"

Prospective students with a GPA less than 3.0 but greater than 2.5 will be considered for Admission with Permission to Continue for part-time enrollment.

Please note no academic credit, course waivers, or credit for field practicum shall be granted for life experience or previous work experience.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

Curricular Requirements

MSW Program Tracks: Two formats, campus or primarily online

Advanced Standing (42 credit hour)

- Students holding a Bachelor of Social Work degree from a CSWE accredited institution.
- Admission requires a "B" average or better in all professional foundation Social Work courses including field education, with no more than one "C" in upper level Social Work courses.
- Offered Summer term only

Two Year (60 credit hour)

- Students who hold a bachelors degree from a regionally accredited institution.
- Students who do not meet Advanced Standing criteria must apply to 60 hour program.
- Offered Fall term only

MSW Program Requirements: Two formats, campus or primarily online

Advanced Standing (42 credit hour)

The Advanced-Standing Program is a 42-credit-hour program for only those who **hold** a CSWE-accredited BSW. It can be completed in one year when pursued full-time. Advanced-standing students fulfill professional foundation requirements by successfully completing 'bridge' courses offered in the summer before beginning the concentration year.

Two Year (60 credit hour)

The 60-credit-hour program is for those who currently **do not hold** a CSWE-accredited BSW. It can be completed in two years when pursued full-time. Coursework is offered in two formats, campus or primarily online.

MSW Program Concentrations

The MSW Program offers two concentrations

- Children, Adolescence and their Families (CAF)
 - SW 532 & SW 533
- Adults and their Families (AF)
 - SW 564 & SW 565

REVIEW SPECIFIC COURSES Under Concentration Options (p. 3)

Student must select one concentration to fulfill degree requirements for this program.

Field Education Practicum Requirements

Advanced Standing (42 credit hour)

- One supervised field placement
- Field practicum is taken in the spring
- A minimum of 500 clock hours
- In a field placement Monday-Friday for 32-40 hours per week for 15 weeks
 - Optional: Two variable courses in the spring and summer for 16 hours per week (varies)
- Required: SW 595

Two Year (60 credit hour)

- Two supervised field placements
- Field practicum is taken in the fall and spring
- A minimum of 500 clock hours, respectively
- In field placements Monday-Friday for 20 hours per week for 25 weeks
- Required: SW 590, SW 591, SW 595, and SW 596

The MSW Program offers additional field placement opportunities unique to the Capstone experience.

Advanced-Standing Program Curriculum - Master of Social Work (MSW) (p. 3)

Full-Time Curriculum - campus and distance learner (summer start)

Bridge Courses		Hours
SW 570	Research-Informed Practice	3
SW 577	Human Develop & Social Systems	3
SW 578	Social Welfare Policy	3
SW 579	Social Work Practice *	3
Total Hours		12

Concentration Year

Concentration Year - Fall		Hours
SW 532 or SW 564	SW Pract w/Adults Mental Hlth * SW Prac Child Adol Ment Hlth	3
SW 533 or SW 565	Mod/Meth Gerontologl SW Pract * SW Prac Child Welfare Fam Serv	3
SW 525	Evaluation Research	3
SW Elective		3
SW Elective		3
Total Hours		15

Spring	Hours
SW 501 Soc Welfare Adv Pol Analysis	3
SW 595 Field Education II-A	9
SW Elective	3
Total Hours	15

Social Work Electives	Hours
SW 506 Planning & Prog Development	
SW 513 SW Practice in Health Care	
SW 514 Chem Depend Knowledge Interven	
SW 515 Psychopathology	
SW 523 Family Preservation	
SW 528 Spirituality In SW Practice	
SW 529 Adv Clinical Social Work Prac	
SW 536 Social Service Prog Agency Adm	
SW 549 Crisis Intervention	
3 elective courses are required	

60 Credit Hour Program Curriculum - Master of Social Work (MSW)

Foundation Year - Fall	Hours
SW 500 Social Welfare Policy	3
SW 510 Human Behav Social Envir I	3
SW 511 Human Behav Social Envir II	2
SW 540 SW Practice with Indiv & Family *	3
SW 534 Integrative Seminar I-A	1
SW 590 Field Education I-A	3
Total Hours	15

Foundation Year - Spring	Hours
SW 541 SW Practice with Groups *	3
SW 542 Practice w/Communities & Orgs *	3
SW 570 Research-Informed Practice	3
SW 535 Integrative Seminar I-B	1
SW 591 Field Education I-B	5
Total Hours	15

Concentration Year	Hours
Concentration Year - Fall	
SW 532 or SW Pract w/Adults Mental Hlth	3
SW 564 SW Prac Child Adol Ment Hlth	
SW 533 or Mod/Meth Gerontologl SW Pract	3
SW 565 SW Prac Child Welfare Fam Serv	
SW 595 Field Education II-A	3
SW Elective	3
SW Elective	3
Total Hours	15

Concentration Year - Spring	Hours
SW 525 Evaluation Research	3
SW 501 Soc Welfare Adv Pol Analysis	3
SW Elective	3

SW 596	Field Education II-B	6
Total Hours		15

Social Work Electives	Hours
SW 506 Planning & Prog Development	
SW 513 SW Practice in Health Care	
SW 514 Chem Depend Knowledge Interven	
SW 515 Psychopathology	
SW 523 Family Preservation	
SW 528 Spirituality In SW Practice	
SW 529 Adv Clinical Social Work Prac	
SW 536 Social Service Prog Agency Adm	
SW 549 Crisis Intervention	
3 elective courses are required	

Please note that courses are subject to change.

MSW/MPH Coordinated Degree (p. 3)

The University of Alabama School of Social Work in Tuscaloosa and The University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health jointly offer an MSW/MPH coordinated degree program designed for people with career goals in community-oriented health services for families and children.

Students who are interested in this coordinated degree should separately apply to UA's MSW Program and to the Department of Health Care Organization and Policy at The University of Alabama-Birmingham School of Public Health for admission to the MPH Program.

For UAB curriculum guides and admission requirements, please visit the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health website.

Advanced Standing MSW/MPH (summer start)

Bridge Courses	Hours
SW 570 Research-Informed Practice	3
SW 577 Human Develop & Social Systems	3
SW 578 Social Welfare Policy	3
SW 579 Social Work Practice *	3
Total Hours	12

Concentration Year	Hours
Concentration Year - Fall	
SW 532 or SW Pract w/Adults Mental Hlth *	3
SW 564 SW Prac Child Adol Ment Hlth	
SW 533 or Mod/Meth Gerontologl SW Pract *	3
SW 565 SW Prac Child Welfare Fam Serv	
SW 501 Soc Welfare Adv Pol Analysis	3
SW Elective	3
Total Hours	12

Spring	Hours
SW 595 Field Education II-A	9

UAB (MPH) Core Requirements that transfer to UA	Hours
PUH 602 (SW Elective)	3
PUH 603 (SW 525)	3
PUH 604 (SW Elective)	3

Social Work Electives		Hours
SW 506	Planning & Prog Development	
SW 513	SW Practice in Health Care	
SW 514	Chem Depend Knowledge Interven	
SW 515	Psychopathology	
SW 523	Family Preservation	
SW 528	Spirituality In SW Practice	
SW 529	Adv Clinical Social Work Prac	
SW 536	Social Service Prog Agency Adm	
SW 549	Crisis Intervention	
3 elective courses are required		

60 Credit Hour MSW/MPH (fall start)

Foundation Year - Fall		Hours
SW 500	Social Welfare Policy	3
SW 510	Human Behav Social Envir I	3
SW 511	Human Behav Social Envir II	2
SW 540	SW Practice with Indiv & Family *	3
SW 534	Integrative Seminar I-A	1
SW 590	Field Education I-A	3
Total Hours		15

Foundation Year - Spring		Hours
SW 541	SW Practice with Groups *	3
SW 542	Practice w/Communities & Orgs *	3
SW 570	Research-Informed Practice	3
SW 535	Integrative Seminar I-B	1
SW 591	Field Education I-B	5
Total Hours		15

Concentration Year

Concentration Year - Fall		Hours
SW 532 or SW 564	SW Pract w/Adults Mental Hlth *	3
SW 533 or SW 565	Mod/Meth Gerontologl SW Pract *	3
SW 595	Field Education II-A	3
Total Hours		9

Spring		Hours
SW 501	Soc Welfare Adv Pol Analysis	3
SW 596	Field Education II-B	6
Total Hours		9

UAB (MPH) Core requirements that transfer to UA		Hours
PUH 602 (SW Elective)		3
PUH 603 (SW 525)		3
PUH 604 (SW Elective)		3
PUH 605 (SW Elective)		3

Social Work Electives		Hours
SW 506	Planning & Prog Development	
SW 513	SW Practice in Health Care	
SW 514	Chem Depend Knowledge Interven	
SW 515	Psychopathology	

SW 523	Family Preservation	
SW 528	Spirituality In SW Practice	
SW 529	Adv Clinical Social Work Prac	
SW 536	Social Service Prog Agency Adm	
SW 549	Crisis Intervention	
3 elective courses are required		

MSW/JD Coordinated Degree Program

The Master of Social Work/Juris Doctorate Degree Program is coordinated between the School of Social Work and The University of Alabama School of Law.

Before being classified as a MSW/JD coordinated degree student, applicants must be accepted in the School of Law and then the MSW program. Separate admission to each program is required. Admission requirements for the coordinated degree program are exactly the same as those currently established for the MSW Program (p. 3) and the JD Program separately. All prerequisites for both programs must be met.

Students in the MSW/JD Coordinated Degree Program must complete all the required MSW courses necessary for the degree; students have the option to complete their elective requirements (currently nine credit hours) in the Law School.

Advanced Standing and 2-year MSW/JD (only offered on-campus)

Law electives approved to count towards the MSW		Hours
LAW 633	Gender & The Law	
LAW 655	Immigration Law	
LAW 674	Family Law I	
LAW 683	Administrative Law	
LAW 696	Health Care Law	
LAW 726	Civil Rights Actions	
LAW 731	Special Topics in Law	
LAW 769	Poverty Law	
LAW 791	Juvenile Justice Jurisprudence	
LAW 819	International Human Rights Law	
LAW 821	Public Interest Lawyering	
LAW 822	Spanish for Lawyers	
LAW 834	Mental Health Law	
LAW 843	Lawyers & Social Change	

The JD program currently requires at least 90 hours of coursework, of which six hours may be fulfilled with approved courses offered outside of the Law School. The JD is a cohort-based program completed over 3-4 years. Students in the coordinated degree program are required to complete 9 hours of MSW courses as part of the 90 hours constituting study for the JD. The following MSW courses will count towards the JD, contingent upon the student having first completed a year of the JD program. MSW courses taken before that year will not count toward the JD degree. Courses taken in an online or primary online format will not count towards the JD degree.

MSW courses approved to count towards the JD		Hours
SW 500	Social Welfare Policy	
SW 501	Soc Welfare Adv Pol Analysis	
SW 578	Social Welfare Policy	
SW 532	SW Pract w/Adults Mental Hlth	
SW 533	Mod/Meth Gerontologl SW Pract	

SW 564	SW Prac Child Adol Ment Hlth
SW 565	SW Prac Child Welfare Fam Serv

The coordinated degree program requires 114 credit hours for students admitted as MSW advanced standing **42 credit hour program** and 132 credit hours for students admitted as MSW **60 credit hour program**.

Required Courses for Social Work with Children, Adolescents, and Their Families

Code and Title	Hours
SW 564 SW Prac Child Adol Ment Hlth	3
SW 565 SW Prac Child Welfare Fam Serv	3
SW 595 Field Education II-A	9
Total Hours	15

Required Courses for Social Work with Adults, and their Families

Code and Title	Hours
SW 532 SW Pract w/Adults Mental Hlth	3
SW 533 Mod/Meth Gerontologl SW Pract	3
Total Hours	6

Transfer Credit

Applicants interested in transferring graduate credit to the MSW program from another institution or graduate program must make a formal request after admission to the program. The proposal is initiated in the Graduate School with the Request for Transfer Credit Form form. Review the master's degree transfer credit details provided by the Graduate School.

*Please note the School of Social Work allows a maximum of 9 hours of transfer work for the **42 credit hour program** and a maximum of 12 hours of transfer work for the **60 credit hour program** upon approval by the program director.*

Time Limits for Degree Completion Requirements

All requirements for a master's degree must follow the Graduate School's time limit guideline.

Academic Misconduct Information

MSW students are subject to the academic performance criteria of the Graduate School.

Withdrawals & Leave of Absence Information

A graduate student may withdraw from the University. It is the student responsibility to initiate a withdrawal online.

Discontinuation of One of the degrees

If a student enrolled in the coordinated degree program were to discontinue enrollment in the program and continue seeking only one degree (MSW or JD), the student would have to meet the full requirements of that degree.

Academic Grievances Information

The School of Social Work follows the University-wide Academic Grievance Procedures.

Grades and Academic Standing

The School of Social Work follows the University-wide Grades and Academic Standing.

Graduate School Deadline Information

REVIEW IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Application for Graduation Information

READY TO GRADUATE - APPLY NOW

Coordinated Degrees Conferred in same Commencement

Both degrees are conferred during a single commencement exercise, once all degree requirements have been met. Neither degree will be granted until both degrees are earned, except in cases in which a student formally withdraws from the coordinated degree program.