

SOCIAL WORK, M.S.W.

Mission

The College of Social Work MSW Program prepares graduates to become advanced practitioners who serve diverse communities in South Carolina and beyond through specialized practice competencies in one or more of the following areas: Children, Youth, and Families; Health and Mental Health; and/or Community, Social, and Economic Development. The MSW Program will provide students essential knowledge, skills, and values to practice effectively, ethically, and collaboratively to promote social well-being and social justice for vulnerable populations.

Program Goals and Learning Outcomes

Goal 1

The program produces Master's-level social workers who provide competent and ethical practice with, and on behalf of, diverse and vulnerable populations.

- Learning Outcome 1: Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice (2.1.2)¹
- Learning Outcome 2: Engage diversity and difference in practice (2.1.4)
- Learning Outcome 3: Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (2.1.10)

Goal 2

The program produces Master's-level social workers who demonstrate a strong professional identity and ability to advance human rights and social and economic justice.

- Learning Outcome 4: Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services (2.1.8)
- Learning Outcome 5: Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly (2.1.1)
- Learning Outcome 6: Advance human rights and social and economic justice (2.1.5)

Goal 3

The program produces Master's-level social workers whose professional judgment demonstrates an understanding that person-in-environment perspective requires a critical analysis of practice contexts and research findings.

- Learning Outcome 7: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments (2.1.3)
- Learning Outcome 8: Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research (2.1.6)
- Learning Outcome 9: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment (HBSE) (2.1.7)
- Learning Outcome 10: Respond to contexts that shape practice (2.1.9)

¹ Numbers refer to the CSWE's 2008 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) Core Competencies.

Admission

The admission policy for the M.S.W. degree program applies to every applicant. All applicants must fulfill the general admission requirements of both The Graduate School and the College of Social Work. Applicants must be recommended to The Graduate School for acceptance by the MSW Program. Acceptance by The Graduate School and the M.S.W. Program is based on the evaluation of an applicant's total academic profile. The M.S.W. Program is committed to diversity in its student body. Admission is limited and competitive. Admission to the College of Social Work is contingent upon admission to The Graduate School. (<https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/graduate/policies-regulations/graduate-admissions/>)

Deadlines

- The deadline for Advanced Standing Program admissions is March 1. Classes begin in the summer.
- The deadline for Full-time and Part-time Program admissions is April 1. Classes begin in the fall.

Minimal requirements for admission include:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.
 - Applicants to the Advanced Standing program option must have earned a bachelor's degree in social work from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)-accredited institution within the last 5 years.
- A cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale).
 - Applicants to the Advanced Standing program option must have also earned a B or better GPA in the last 60 credit hours of an accredited bachelor's degree and a B or better in all required undergraduate social work classes.
- Official transcripts of all college and university credits earned
- Autobiographical statement stating the applicant's desire to enter the degree program and outlining long-term professional goals, motivation and capacity to work with people.
- At least two letters of recommendation should come from individuals who can address characteristics such as maturity, self-discipline, commitment, cooperativeness and professionalism. The M.S.W. program requires letters be written by individuals who can attest to an applicant's potential for graduate study and social work practice (e.g., professor, supervisor or community leader). Letters from those an applicant has a personal relationship with (e.g., relative, friend or neighbor) will not be adequate.
 - Applicants to the Advanced Standing program option are required to submit three letters of recommendation. Of the three letters of recommendation, one must be from the B.S.W. program director or faculty advisor recommending readiness for Advanced Standing and one must be from the undergraduate field supervisor or current social work supervisor if employed.
- A current CV or resume that demonstrates evidence of service and/or work experiences congruent with social work values, skills, and knowledge.

Note: An interview may also be required.

Applicants to the Advanced Standing program option should be aware that meeting the minimal requirements does not guarantee admission to this program option.

Progression

Students in the MSW Program must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher to be in good academic standing. Any student whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0 is no longer in good academic standing and will undergo a review by the MSW Program Coordinator, the student's Academic Advisor and Faculty Advisor. The student will also be placed on academic probation and will have one semester to raise their GPA to a 3.0 or higher. If the cumulative GPA is not 3.0 or higher at the completion of the subsequent term, the student will be suspended from the MSW Program.

Additionally, no earned course grade below C will be accepted as part of a program of study for the MSW degree. If a student earns a grade below C in a required course, they will have one attempt to retake the course for credit. If a student earns a grade below C in an elective course, they may either have one attempt to retake the course for credit or they may take a different elective for credit.

Transfer of Course Credit

The MSW Program follows the Transfer of Course Credit (<https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/graduate/policies-regulations/graduate-academic-regulations/>) policy in the Graduate Academic Regulations Bulletin (<https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/graduate/policies-regulations/graduate-academic-regulations/>). Students may request transfer of graduate course credits from other programs accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

Credit for Life Experience

In accordance with the mandates of the Council on Social Work Education, no credit is given for life experiences. Students will not receive academic credit for life experience or previous volunteer, service learning activities or assignments, or work experience in social work.

Academic credit will not be granted for life experience or previous work experience, and such experience will not be substituted for any of the courses in the professional foundation areas or the field practicum.

Degree Requirements (42-60 Hours) The College of Social Work Offers Five Master of Social Work Degree Pathways

1. Full-time in Columbia - 60 hours over two years.
2. Advanced Standing in Columbia - 42 hours over 11 months.
3. Part-time program in Columbia - 60 hours over three years.
4. Part-time program in Charleston or Greenville with one specialization - 60 hours over three years.
5. Part-time program in Korea with one specialization - 60 hours

MSW Students Must Select One of the Following Specialization Options in the Advanced Year

1. Community, Social, and Economic Development
2. Health and Mental Health
3. Children, Youth, and Families

Foundation Year (30 Hours)

Full-time and Part-time Students must successfully complete the following courses in order to move to the Advanced Year:

Course	Title	Credits
SOWK 712	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	3
SOWK 714	Diversity and Social Justice Issues for Social Work Practice	3
SOWK 716	Human Behavior and the Social Environment II	3
SOWK 722	Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups	3
SOWK 732	Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities	3
SOWK 742	Social Welfare Policy Analysis	3
SOWK 777	Advanced Theory for Social Work Practice ¹	3
SOWK 781	Field Instruction I: Generalist Social Work Practice	3
SOWK 782	Field Instruction II: Generalist Social Work Practice	3
SOWK 791	Social Work Research Methodologies	3
Total Credit Hours		30

¹ While SOWK 777 is considered to be an Advanced Year course, it is offered during the Foundation Year.

Advanced Standing Bridge Term (12 Hours)

Advanced Standing Students must successfully complete the following courses in order to move to the Advanced Year:

Course	Title	Credits
SOWK 701	Professional Development Bridge	3
SOWK 702	Writing for Professional Social Work Practice ¹	3
SOWK 777	Advanced Theory for Social Work Practice	3
Select an elective course		3
Total Credit Hours		12

¹ If a student successfully completes the online Professional Writing Skills Assessment as part of the application to the MSW Program, they are not required to take SOWK 702. Rather, they are required to take an elective course.

Advanced Year (30 Hours)

Full-time, Part-time, and Advanced Standing students must successfully complete the following courses:

Course	Title	Credits
SOWK 718	Systems Analysis of Social Work Practice	3
SOWK 778	Advanced Analysis of Social Policy, Programs, and Services	3
SOWK 779	Advanced Social Work Interventions	3
SOWK 783	Field Instruction III: Advanced Social Work Practice	3
SOWK 784	Field Instruction IV: Advanced Social Work Practice	3
SOWK 792	Evaluation of Social Work Practice	3
or SOWK 793	Evaluation of Social Work Programs	3
Select 12 hours of Electives (of which at least 3 credits must be face-to-face Practice Elective hours)		12
Total Credit Hours		30