

Social Work

The Social Work major is designed to give students an understanding of human functioning in contemporary society, the challenges and problems people encounter, and the social services available to them. The program endeavors to develop in the students an awareness of the interaction of biological, psychological, and social influences on human behavior within the social and physical environment; understanding of the impact of prejudice, discrimination, and oppression on vulnerable groups within the society; appreciation of and dedication to working for social, political, and economic justice; the ability to determine areas of social work concern and responsibility; and competence in entry level generalist social work practice, with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. This content in social welfare and social work is integrated with a liberal arts base. The primary objective of the program is to prepare students for immediate employment in social work; a secondary objective is preparation for graduate study.

The program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education for the baccalaureate level. The Mount Mercy transcript shows that the student has earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with the major in Social Work.

Students who graduate from Mount Mercy with an accredited baccalaureate social work major may be eligible for "advanced standing" in many MSW programs. This usually allows a student to complete an MSW in a shorter amount of time than the regular program takes. Students seriously considering graduate school should take a course in statistics and a course that includes the use of computers for data entry and computation. They should also be aware that a 3.00 grade point average is assumed as a minimum entrance requirement by most graduate schools of social work, and at least a grade of B in each social work course.

The Mount Mercy social work program works cooperatively with other accredited baccalaureate social work programs to evaluate the transferability of courses to satisfy the major. Students interested in these options should consult the department faculty.

The social work major aims to develop the student's ability, for example, to: demonstrate knowledge of the many facets of the social work profession; evaluate situations and determine the most effective interventions; and identify the impact diversity has on transactions between and among systems.

Career Opportunities

Graduates with the Social Work major are prepared for professional generalist social work in a variety of fields. They also are eligible to apply for social work licensure in states where it is either mandatory or voluntary at the bachelor level of practice. The majority of graduates are employed in social work or related human service positions, including child protective services, foster care, in-home family services, residential services for children and adults, substance abuse treatment, programs for people with disabilities, juvenile and adult corrections, community development, and programs for elderly people.

Admission to the Major

Admission for further study in the social work major is conducted without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed,

ethnic or national origin, disability, or political or sexual orientation. In order to be accepted for study in the social work major, students must have earned at least a C (2.00 grade points) in all required social work courses that they have taken and in PS 124 Developmental Psychology, SO 215 Methods Of Social Research, and PO 326 Politics and Public Policy if completed by the time they make application for acceptance into the major. All other courses specifically listed as required for the major must be passed with no less than a C- grade. Students also must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.25.

Application for acceptance for further study in the major occurs during the Fall term of the junior year. In addition to having completed SW 232 prior to submitting their application, students will need to have a cumulative GPA of 2.25 or above for their application to be processed. Eligible students will be provided application materials consisting of Social Work Program guidelines for submitting:

1. A written statement reflecting the students' knowledge of social work as a profession and their personal qualifications for it;
2. A brief analysis of hypothetical case material.

The deadline for submission of the materials is identified at the time the student is provided the application. All materials are reviewed by all full-time program faculty to decide on the extent the materials address the guidelines and standards for acceptance into the major. If necessary, the student is contacted by the program chair and given opportunity to supplement the materials and resubmit the application. Once the materials are in compliance, one of the faculty schedules an interview with the student to discuss his/her application for further study. The student is informed of the departmental decision during that meeting.

Following the interview, the student receives a written confirmation of the outcome of his/her application. The student may be fully accepted, provisionally accepted (with specific requirements and deadline for removal of the provision), or may be denied admission to the program (with specific reasons for the denial listed).

Students who have been accepted into the major but who have not made progress toward completion of the major during any two-year period need to contact the department chair and reactivate their admission for further study.

Appeals Procedure and Maintaining Good Standings in the Major

A student may appeal a decision considered unjust by submitting a written statement to the program director within ten working days of receiving the decision. In the statement the student must clearly outline the basis of the appeal and indicate if he/she wishes to exercise the right to meet with the program faculty. After reading all written material submitted and weighing the content of any meetings, the faculty will decide on the appeal. The department chair will notify the student in writing of the outcome of the appeal. In the event the student still believes he or she has been unjustly treated, appeal of the decision may be made to the Vice President for Academic Affairs as outlined in the "Grievance Procedure for Students" in the *Good Book*.

In order to maintain good standing in the program, students must earn at least a 2.00 grade point average in specified courses required for completion of the major. They must also display the ability to practice within accepted ethical guidelines for professional social work

consistent with those outlined in the most recent version of the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers.

Decisions about a student falling below 2.00 grade point average in one or more required courses while maintaining a cumulative average of 2.25 is handled on a case-by-case basis. The social work program follows the institution policies and procedures on handling academic grievances. These procedures are found in the publication the *Good Book* available through the Enrollment and Student Life office. Those procedures are also found in the *Student Handbook of the Social Work Program*. Each student majoring in social work is provided a copy of the Handbook when they apply for further study in the major.

Appeals of decisions not related to performance in theory or field courses will follow the same procedure outlined previously.

Field Instruction

Admission to junior and senior field courses is arranged through the Field Coordinator. This is done the term prior to the student enrolling in the field courses. Appropriate forms and information are distributed to eligible students by the Field Coordinator. Except by special permission from the program, no student on provisional acceptance will be accepted into either junior or senior field instruction.

Because the practice of social work involves a public trust, social workers in professional practice are held to high standards. They are expected to conduct themselves in ways that demonstrate collegial respect and that put their client's interests first. Professional social workers are to act in accordance with accepted ethical standards (currently as articulated in the NASW Code of Ethics) and can be subject to sanctions if violations occur.

In light of this, social work majors at Mount Mercy will be held to high academic standards and their attitudes and actions are expected to be consistent with professional standards. Course material includes the study of the NASW Code. Materials for junior and senior field instruction identify professional standards and what the faculty considers to be violations of those standards. Those materials also include circumstances in which progress through the field placement and/or the major may be interrupted or terminated. The *Social Work Student Handbook* and the junior and senior field instruction manuals contain information pertinent to this.

Depending on the nature of the client population and the services delivered, field agencies may do background checks for founded child or dependent adult abuse, and for certain kinds of criminal behavior. The results of these checks may prevent the student from doing a field placement in that agency and from becoming employed in some agencies. Students are required to sign a disclosure statement to identify impediments to obtaining a social work field placement.

Program Restrictions

The Social Work Program does not participate in the BAA/BAS degree program. In order to participate in Mount Mercy's second degree program, social work students who have already completed a degree from another college or university must have their core curriculum courses evaluated for equivalency to those required by the Social Work Program. Courses determined to be missing as well as all courses required for the major must be completed. Only courses taken through other accredited baccalaureate social work programs may be evaluated for equivalency of required social work courses. The Social

Work program does not waive any of the required coursework based on credit for life experience or for current or past employment.

Theory and Field Courses for the Social Work Major

Students are encouraged to contact one of the Social Work Program faculty members for advice on the course sequence. Some of the required courses that are not taught in the Social Work Program need to be completed before social work courses.

There are many courses offered by other majors that students are encouraged to take as electives. Social work majors typically find that course work in political science, sociology, psychology, and criminal justice enhances their knowledge base for professional practice. Program faculty also encourage social work majors to enhance their liberal arts foundation by additional course work in English, religious studies, philosophy, history, the fine arts, and offerings in other departments.

See the Graduate section (<http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/archives/2014-15/graduateprograms>) of this *Catalog* for more information on Graduate programs offered at Mount Mercy.

Major

SW 115	Introduction To Human Services	3
SW 226	Social Welfare Policies and Programs	3
SW 232	Social Work Practice I	3
SW 245	Basic Helping Skills	3
SW 265	Diversity in America	3
SW 300	Social Systems & Social Functioning	3
SW 330	Social Work Practice III	3
SW 346	Group Theory And Practice	3
SW 361	Foundation Field Instruction	6
SW 435	Senior Seminar	3
SW 461	Advanced Field Instruction	10
Select one of the following courses:		3
SW 210	Substance Abuse	
SW 225	Aging In America	
SW 235	Family Child Welfare	
SW 250	Human Sexuality	
SW 280	Marital and Family Interaction	
PS 101	Introductory Psychology	3
PS 124	Developmental Psychology	3
SO 122	Introduction To Sociology	3
SO 215	Methods Of Social Research	3
PO 111	Introduction To American Politics	3
PO 326	Politics and Public Policy	3
CO 101	Oral Communication	3
BI 123	Biology Of Human Concern	4
One course from the core curriculum writing courses		3
Total Hours		74

Social work majors may not use SW 265 Diversity in America to satisfy the Self and Society requirement. If students take any of the required, non-program courses at other colleges or universities, they should

check with program faculty to assure that the courses are equivalent to those required by the Social Work Program.

Academic Requirements

Students are reminded to review the previously stated grade requirements for courses crediting toward the Social Work major.

The following is the typical sequence of courses required for the major:

Plan of Study Grid

Freshman	Hours
PS 101 Introductory Psychology	3
SO 122 Introduction To Sociology	3
One course from core curriculum writing courses	3
CO 101 Oral Communication	3
BI 123 Biology Of Human Concern	4
SW 115 Introduction To Human Services	3
PO 111 Introduction To American Politics	3
	22
Sophomore	Hours
PS 124 Developmental Psychology	3
SW 226 Social Welfare Policies and Programs	3
SW 232 Social Work Practice I	3
SW 245 Basic Helping Skills	3
SW 265 Diversity in America	3
	15
Junior	Hours
SO 215 Methods Of Social Research	3
SW 300 Social Systems & Social Functioning	3
SW 320 Social Work Practice II	3
SW 330 Social Work Practice III	3
SW 346 Group Theory And Practice	3
SW 361 Foundation Field Instruction	6
PO 326 Politics and Public Policy	3
	24
Senior	Hours
SW 435 Senior Seminar	3
SW 461 Advanced Field Instruction	10
	13

Total Hours: 74

The required elective may be taken when the student can schedule it and when prerequisites for it are met. Transfer students should contact a department faculty member to be sure of the appropriate sequence.