

Social Work

Social work is an action-oriented, value-based profession that assists people who experience challenges living in our fast paced, rapidly changing society. At Mount Mercy, you'll learn professional practice that emphasizes compassion and empathy for humans in need, dedication to the improvement of society, and commitment to the ideals of equality and justice, especially for those vulnerable to oppression and discrimination. The Social Work major is designed to give students an understanding of how people function, the challenges and problems they encounter, and the social services available to them.

Social workers work with a wide variety of people, wherever they are and under whatever circumstances they live. Your education will prepare you to understand and respond to diverse groups of people within cultural and global contexts. The social work curriculum is grounded in the liberal arts, enhancing your understanding of human behavior in our contemporary society. You'll learn about strengths and needs people have, and how these needs are (or are not) fulfilled by our political, economic, social and cultural systems. As well, you will gain competence in how to apply an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens to assess for interventions that brings about change beneficial to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. A well-educated, well-informed social worker promotes the general welfare of their community by being an ethical professional who is committed to practice that promotes economic, racial, social, and environmental justice.

The primary objective of the program is to prepare students for immediate employment in social work; a secondary objective is preparation for graduate study.

Students who graduate from Mount Mercy with an accredited baccalaureate social work major may be eligible for "advanced standing" in many MSW programs. This designation usually allows a student to complete an MSW in a shorter amount of time. Students seriously considering graduate school should take a course in statistics. 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 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.

Career Opportunities

Graduates with the Social Work major are prepared for professional generalist social work in a variety of fields. 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. 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.

Admission to the Major

In accordance with its continued affirmation of the importance of diversity, admission for further study in the social work major is conducted without discrimination on the basis of economic or social status, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity, age, marital status,

citizenship, genetic testing, veterans'/military status, pregnancy or related medical conditions, other medical conditions, or any other factor protected by law.

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 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 2.50, and demonstrate an ability and willingness to use supervision.

Application for acceptance for further study in the major occurs during the spring term of the program's junior year curriculum. In addition to having completed SW 232 Social Work Practice with Individuals prior to submitting their application, students need to have successfully completed two courses offered by the social work program, be enrolled in or have completed SW 226 Social Welfare Policies and Programs, SW 245 Basic Helping Skills, SW 300 Human Behavior and the Social Environment and SW 320 Social Work Practice with Families and Groups, and have a cumulative GPA of 2.50 or above for their application to be processed. Students who transfer to Mount Mercy who have met all requirements (including accepted course equivalencies) are also eligible to apply for admission for further study in the major during the spring semester of the program's junior year curriculum. Eligible students will be provided application materials consisting of Social Work Program guidelines for submitting:

1. A written statement reflecting the student's knowledge of social work as a profession, motivation for seeking admission to study further, and personal qualifications for it;
2. A brief analysis of hypothetical case material utilizing the Model for Making Ethical Decisions.

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 criteria for acceptance into the major. If necessary, the student is contacted by the program director 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 program decision during that meeting. If the student continues to approach the scenario in a manner that is outside professional standards, faculty will counsel the student regarding his/her appropriateness for the major.

Within two weeks of 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 written 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 program director 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. The Social Work Practice Violations found in the *Student Handbook of the Social Work Program* includes circumstances in which progress in a field placement and/or the major may be interrupted or terminated.

Decisions about a student falling below 2.00 grade point average in one or more required courses while maintaining a cumulative average of 2.50 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 (<http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/thegoodbook/>). 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.

Field Instruction

Admission to foundation and advanced field courses is arranged through the Director of Field Education. 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 director. Except by special permission from the program, no student on provisional acceptance will be accepted into advanced 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 foundation and advanced 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 foundation and advanced 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 meet with the field director and 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 practice courses. The Social Work program does not waive any required coursework, including field instruction, 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.

Social Work Major

Required:

GS 225	How To Find Out Anything: Intermediate College Research	2
SW 226	Social Welfare Policies and Programs	3
SW 232	Social Work Practice with Individuals	3
SW 245	Basic Helping Skills	3
SW 265	Diversity in America	3
SW 300	Human Behavior and the Social Environment	3
SW 315	Methods of Social Research	3
SW 320	Social Work Practice with Families and Groups	3
SW 330	Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities	3
SW 361	Foundation Field Instruction	6
SW 435	Senior Seminar	3
SW 461	Advanced Field Instruction	10
BI 123	Biology of Human Concern	4
CO 101	Oral Communication	3
PO 111	Introduction To American Politics	3
PS 101	Introductory Psychology	3
PS 224	Developmental Psychology	3
SO 122	Introduction to Sociology	3

Select One of the Following:

SW 202	Marriage & the Family: Intimate Relationships	3
SW 210	Substance Abuse	3
SW 225	Aging In America	3
SW 235	Family Child Welfare	3
SW 310	Human Sexuality	3

One course from the core curriculum writing courses 4

Total Hours 71

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*:

Freshman

Fall	Hours	Winter	Hours	Spring	Hours
PO 111		3 SW 115		3 SO 122	3
PS 101		3		CO 101	3
Writing Competency		4		BI 123	4
Global Awareness Domain		3		Historical Roots Domain	3
				Elective	3
	13		3		16

Sophomore

Fall	Hours	Winter	Hours	Spring	Hours
SW 232		3 Ultimate Questions Domain		3 SW 265	3
SW 245		3		PS 224	3
Math Competency		3		Expressive Arts Domain	3
Fine Arts Domain		3		Ultimate Questions Domain	3
SW Elective or Elective		3		SW Elective or Elective	3
	15		3		15

Junior

Fall	Hours	Winter	Hours	Spring	Hours
SW 232		3 Holistic Health Domain		3 SW 320	3
SW 300		3		SW 226	3
SW 315		3		SW Elective or Elective	3
GS 225		2		SW Elective or Elective	3
SW Elective or Elective		1		SW Elective or Elective	1
	12		3		13

Senior

Fall	Hours	Winter	Hours	Spring	Hours
SW 361		6 SW Elective or Elective		3 SW 461	10
SW 330		3		SW 435	3
ME 450		1			
SW Elective or Elective		3			
	13		3		13

Total Hours: 122

Note: Elective courses could be used for a second major, a minor, a course of interest, internship or study abroad experience.

Note: See the Curriculum section (<http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/curriculum/#corecurriculumtext>) for more information on Portal, Competency, Domain, and Capstone courses.

*Disclaimer

The course offerings, requirements, and policies of Mount Mercy University are under continual examination and revision. This *Catalog* presents the offerings, requirements, and policies in effect at the time of publication and in no way guarantees that the offerings, requirements, and policies will not change. This plan of study represents a typical sequence of courses required for this major. It may not be applicable to every student. Students should contact a department faculty member to be sure of appropriate course sequence.

Courses

SW 100 Social Welfare: A World View Travel Course: 3 semester hours

All countries have some form of social welfare. The policies, program structure, and availability of resources may vary, but the issues of concern are often shared. Some of these universal issues include homelessness, mental illness, juvenile delinquency, aging and long-term care, child maltreatment and domestic violence. A social worker's understanding of the US social welfare system will be enhanced by exploring how other countries view social welfare problems, and work toward their solutions. This course is built as a travel course that will tour cultural and historical sites throughout selected countries, visit social service agencies, and attend lectures and complete reading specific to the country's system of social welfare. In addition to visiting social service agencies, students will participate in a service project. The majority of student time will be directed toward experiential opportunities. Fulfills the social work elective. Additional travel costs apply. Credit can range from 1 -3 semester hours.

SW 115 Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare: 3 semester hours

This course is an introduction to the array of people, programs, and organizations whose intent is to respond to human needs of various kinds and intensity. It deals with both professional and non-professional activities. The course provides a basic framework for understanding the ideology and operation of human service systems. In addition, the student will develop a beginning understanding of the relationship between social policy and various approaches to human service programming to meet the intent of those policies. Through exposure to the service system in Linn County and this area of the state, the student will become informed about the service needs that exist and the responses to those needs. Social Work majors who believe they have completed and equivalent to this course should contact the instructor to discuss whether they are required to take this course. (offering winter term.).

SW 202 Marriage & the Family: Intimate Relationships: 3 semester hours

This course examines intimate partner relationships and families as expressed throughout time and place in contemporary American society. It provides an analysis of intimate partnerships and families over the life course as social institutions with changing functions and structures. Attention will be given to intimate partnerships and the dynamics of interpersonal relationships across diverse groups and social settings. Students will gain insight into the influences of religion, politics, culture, education, and economics on individual and family-level well-being.

SW 210 Substance Abuse: 3 semester hours

This course describes commonly abused drugs and specific mental illnesses, how they interact, and the resulting impact on individuals, families, and communities. The course will introduce theories of the addictive process, prevention and treatment options for both substance abuse and mental illness, and the dilemma of dual diagnosis. This course is not intended to provide specific counseling of therapeutic skills, but a general knowledge base essential to social work and other disciplines. Prerequisite: SO 122, PS 101 and at least sophomore status. Exemption from prerequisites by consent of instructor.

SW 225 Aging In America: 3 semester hours

This course constitutes an overview of gerontology, including the major theories used to explain the physiological, psychological, and sociological aspects of aging. As the one inequality all people face, the study of aging and ageism - known as social gerontology - examines the transformations in the life course of older adults and the impacts on those they encounter. Drawing from an historical perspective, the course explores current issues and trends related to finances and retirement, health, living environments, social justice, and politics. Prerequisite: SO 122.

SW 226 Social Welfare Policies and Programs: 3 semester hours

This course examines the development of major social welfare policies and programs in the United States. It seeks to sharpen the student's ability to analyze the relationship of policy to social program, and the economic, political and ideological influence on policy and programs in the fields of housing, health, mental health, substance abuse, unemployment, and corrections are studied. Prerequisite: PO 111 and sophomore status.

SW 232 Social Work Practice with Individuals: 3 semester hours

This course combines readings, lectures, discussions, classroom exercises, and experiential activities to develop students' competencies for generalist social work practice. Students examine the person-in-environment framework, ecosystems model, strengths and empowerment perspectives, and cultural humility as guiding principles for generalist practice. They gain knowledge about the Social Work profession's values and Code of Ethics with opportunities to demonstrate how these are applied to ethical dilemmas in practice. Students also develop skills in constructing professional relationships, talking with clients, assessing client situations, planning for change, implementing change, and evaluating outcomes.

SW 235 Family Child Welfare: 3 semester hours

This course analyzes the dilemmas and issues that confront child welfare practitioners as they carry professional roles. It will provide a theory base from which to proceed in service delivery, emphasizing the special work done in family preservation and out of the home care. Legal, social, and economic-political developments that influence this field of practice are included. Recommended: PS 124, SW 226.

SW 245 Basic Helping Skills: 3 semester hours

This is an experientially-based course focusing on the values, knowledge, and skills necessary to work in the helping professions. The course provides a model of helping, including communication and basic interview techniques for working with individuals, families, and groups. Class format offers role-plays, simulation exercises, audio-visual feedback, discussion and lecture. The course is open to all majors. First priority goes to students who need this course to complete a requirement for their major. Prerequisite: PS 101 and sophomore status.

SW 265 Diversity in America: 3 semester hours

This course takes a broad view of diversity in contemporary America. Students will explore how diversity and intersectionality shape human experiences and identity development and affect equity and inclusion. The dimensions of diversity that will be discussed as the intersectionality of factors include but are not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Emphasis will be given to developing an understanding of the concept of intersectionality, a sensitivity to the experience of historically minoritized populations, and an appreciation of the unique identities, lived experiences, and different cultures in the United States. First priority is reserved for students who need this course to complete their major.

SW 300 Human Behavior and the Social Environment: 3 semester hours

The emphasis of this course is to provide the student with a social systems framework for analyzing and understanding the transactions between humans and the systems in their environment. Students will be expected to draw on content they have had in prerequisite courses, applying it to the framework. Their information base also will be supplemented by reading and discussion. Although the content of this course is developed within a social work framework, it is relevant to many students. Prerequisites: PS 101, SO 122, BI 123 (or equivalent), PS 124.

SW 310 Human Sexuality: 3 semester hours

This course examines cutting edge scholarship on the sociology of sex, gender, and sexuality. Because these are major organizing principles of contemporary social life, we will examine gender and sexuality from multiple levels of analysis including the meaning and experience of the body, self, and identity, social groups and networks, as well as social organization with in our major social institutions. We also discuss how gender intersects with other social statuses, such as race, ethnicity, social class, sexuality, and nationality to reproduce inequalities and power relations. Prerequisites: SO 122, SO 155, SO 183, or SO 200.

SW 315 Methods of Social Research: 3 semester hours

Provides an understanding of a scientific approach to knowledge building with an emphasis on teaching students to be critical consumers of research. Examines quantitative and qualitative methods and applications used in social sciences research including data analysis, program evaluation, and ethics and diversity in social worlds. Prerequisite: junior status; recommended SO 122.

SW 320 Social Work Practice with Families and Groups: 3 semester hours

Students will study effective generalist social work practice with and on behalf of families and groups. The purposes of social work at these levels and related worker roles and tasks will be emphasized. Theories of intervention will be examined for their contribution to an eclectic knowledge base. A strengths-based orientation focused on equity and inclusion in to practice with diverse populations is emphasized. Prerequisites: SW 232, SW 226 and present enrollment in or prior completion of SW 245 and SW 300.

SW 330 Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities: 3 semester hours

This course examines social work practice with large systems. Students employ anti-oppressive and anti-racists lenses while learning change models that are specific to working with organizations and communities. Each system is studied to understand its internal organization and functioning, and its linkages with other community systems. Special attention is also given to the role of politics; the effect of politics on social workers, clients, and human service agencies; the social worker's fit with political activism; and the strategies to affect change within the political arena. Students use their critical thinking skills to analyze, formulate, implement, evaluate and advocate for change in organizational, community, and social policies; to acknowledge the presence and etiology of social, racial, economic, and political injustices; and to recognize change opportunities that provide for empowerment of oppressed groups. Prerequisites: SW 232, SW 226, SW 300, PO 111, and current enrollment or prior completion of PO 326.

SW 361 Foundation Field Instruction: 6 semester hours

This educationally directed, field-based course is designed to provide an introduction to the application of theory to social work practice. Students will have an opportunity to experience both direct and indirect service with individuals and large and small systems. Students will spend 12 hours per week in the field placement where they will be supervised by an agency staff member and a Social Work faculty member. Students will be expected to do related readings, assignments, and recording of service delivery experiences. A concurrent seminar will meet two hours per week. This course is graded pass/fail. Prerequisites: SW 226, SW 232, SW 245, SW 300, and PO 326.

SW 435 Senior Seminar: 3 semester hours

An examination of current issues in Social work practice and social welfare policies with emphasis on integration of field experience and content covered in courses required for the social work major. Topics researched are analyzed in light of the major themes and content areas developed throughout the social work curriculum. Prerequisite: Successful completion of all other courses required for major.

SW 445 Social Work Independent Study: 3 semester hours

Limited to social work majors.

SW 461 Advanced Field Instruction: 10 semester hours

This educationally-directed practical experience builds on the junior field instruction and allows students to increase their ability to practice social work in a community agency. Students will spend 24 hours per week in the field placement where they will be supervised by an agency staff member and a social work faculty member. Students will be expected to do related readings, assignments, and recording of service delivery experiences. A concurrent seminar will meet two hours a week. The course is graded pass/fail. Prerequisites: SW 320, SW 361, and full acceptance into the major; prior completion or concurrent enrollment in SO 215.

SW 462 Senior Field II: 4 semester hours

This course is an educationally directed field experience in some aspect of generalist social work practice. It will involve the student in a social service agency for 12 clock hours per week per term. Students will be expected to do related readings, recording of case or agency experiences, and meet with agency supervisors and department faculty for educational guidance. This course is graded pass/fail. This does not substitute for SW 461 and must be taken concurrently or subsequently to SW 461. It does not satisfy the elective requirement for the major. Prerequisite: permission of department faculty.