

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

Program Description

Our MSW program specializes in preparing clinical social workers to make a profound impact on the lives of individuals, families, and communities. Rooted in our mission to cultivate compassionate professionals committed to evidence-based and culturally responsive practice, our program equips you with the clinical skills needed to address complex mental health and social challenges. Through comprehensive academic training and hands-on clinical experience, we empower future social workers to promote well-being and advocate for a more just world.

Our MSW graduates will be prepared for a clinical social work license that qualifies them as mental health professionals and eligible for insurance and/or grant reimbursement, as well as other funding streams needed in behavioral health services.

Program Goals & Objectives

The social work program identifies the following competencies as its student learning outcomes:

- Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
- 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

Accreditation Statement

Concordia College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The MSW program has been approved by the HLC and is currently in pre-candidacy by the Council of Social Work Education's (CSWE) Board of Accreditation (BOA).

Admission Criteria

Applicants must possess a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution with a GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Exceptions to this rule may be granted by the Graduate Programs Committee in consultation with the Admission Committee of individual programs. Applicants must be a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident.

Advanced Standing

Applicants with a baccalaureate degree in social work from a Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited program or a baccalaureate degree recognized through CSWE's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors for the advanced standing program.

Foundation Program

Applicants with eligible baccalaureate degrees in other academic areas must enroll in the foundation program curriculum before beginning advanced standing.

Admission preference will be given to applicants with 2,000 or more hours of human service and/or professional experience.

*Students who don't meet the admission requirements may be considered for provisional admission. Please address any special circumstances in your application.

Application Requirements

The following application requirements must be submitted online with your completed application:

1. GradCAS application (<https://gradcas.liaisoncas.org/apply/>)

2. A current resume (education, work, volunteer experience)

3. Letters of Reference

4. Transcripts

5. Personal Statement

Letters of Reference

Applicants are required to submit three references. One reference should be from a faculty member or advisor if you are currently in school and/or from a supervisor if you are working. Other references may include people familiar with your current or past work or volunteer experience, preferably a manager or supervisor. References from family members, personal friends, personal therapists, or employees are not acceptable.

Advanced Standing Applicants: If you have yet to graduate from your undergraduate program, one of your references must be from your senior year field placement supervisor. If you have completed your undergraduate program, we highly recommend, but do not require, a reference from your senior field placement supervisor.

Please note: All letters of recommendation must be written/dated within one year of the time you submit your application.

If you have any questions, please email Dr. Kelli Gast (kgast@cord.edu), the Master of Social Work program director.

Transcripts

Transcripts should include all previous undergraduate and, if applicable, graduate academic institutions, including study abroad transcripts. The program will accept unofficial transcripts for the application review process but will need an official transcript before starting the program. Additional materials may be required for transfer students. Academic credit is not given for life experience or previous work experience.

Personal Statement

We ask that you submit a personal statement as part of your application to the MSW program. Please note that this statement is considered a writing sample and is reviewed for content and writing quality.

Your statement should be 3-4 pages, typed (12 pt. font), double-spaced in an essay format, and should address the following topics:

- How your academic and life experiences have influenced your choice to pursue an MSW degree and prepared you for graduate studies in social work.
- How you have and would continue to uphold the ethical values of the social work profession in your studies and field work, especially as it pertains to anti-oppressive practices and social justice.

- What your short- and long-term professional goals are and how you see the MSW degree contributing to your professional preparation.

Admission ProceduresAdvanced Standing:

Application opens: Nov. 15 Priority deadline: Jan. 15
After Jan. 15, applications are accepted on a rolling basis depending on space availability.

Advanced Standing begins in summer term.

Foundation Program:

Application opens: May 1
Foundation program begins in spring term.

Tuition & Fees

For information on tuition, fees, financial aid, and loan deferments, please visit www.concordiacollege.edu/graduate/master-of-social-work

Contact Information**Kelli Gast, Ed.D, MSW, LICSW, IEMCH, CMPC**

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Graduate Teaching Faculty

Kelli Gast, Ed.D, MSW, LICSW, IEMCH, CMPC masters program director
Kristi Loberg, PhD., MSW, LICSW masters field program director
Nicole Ness, MSW, LICSW baccalaureate program field director

Karen Arnold-Truax, DSW, MSW, LCSW baccalaureate program director

Requirements

The requirements for a **Master of Social Work** are listed below:

Code	Title	Hours
SWK 600	Advanced Clinical Theory and Anti-Oppressive Practice	3
SWK 610	Advanced Clinical Practice I: Assessment/Diagnosis	3
SWK 620	Advanced Clinical Practice II: Children and Families	3
SWK 622	Advanced Evidence Based Treatment	3
SWK 624	Advanced Topics in Social Work	3
SWK 626	Advanced Research for Health Professions	3
SWK 630	Advanced Clinical Practice in Groups and Interprofessional Practice	3
SWK 632	Advanced Policy, Communities and Organizations	3
SWK 675	Advanced Field Seminar I	1
SWK 676	Advanced Field Seminar II	1
SWK 677	Advanced Field Practicum I	3
SWK 678	Advanced Field Practicum II	3
SWK 685	Advanced Capstone I	1
SWK 686	Advanced Capstone II	1
Total Hours		34

The requirements for the **Foundation** coursework are listed below:

Code	Title	Hours
SOC 228	Research Methods and Statistics	4
SWK 510	Human Behavior and the Social Environment	4
SWK 520	Social Policy and Systems Perspective	4
SWK 526	Practice I: Individuals	4
SWK 536	Practice II: Families	2
SWK 546	Social Work Practice III: Groups, Organizations, and Communities	4
SWK 592	Social Work Internship	4
SWK 594	Social Work Senior Seminar	2
Total Hours		28

SWK 510 - Human Behavior and the Social Environment, 4 credits.

A study of human behavior in the context of various social systems (bio-psycho-social and spiritual) and of life tasks, focusing on the influences individuals and the environment have on each other. There is a special emphasis on the systems perspective and human growth and development. Open to students in the Master of Social Work Program.

Frequency: Every Year - Second Semester

SWK 520 - Social Policy and Systems Perspective, 4 credits.

A study of current social policies, human services programs, and a review of related social problems. Special emphasis on systems perspective, critical analysis and human rights policy formulation. Open to students in the Master of Social Work Program.

Frequency: Every Year - Second Semester

SWK 526 - Practice I: Individuals, 4 credits.

Students will learn the values, knowledge and skills needed by social workers for effective generalist social work practice with diverse clients and constituencies. The helping relationship, its formation, and use are studied along with developing knowledge and skill in interviewing for social work practice with individuals. Open to students in the Master of Social Work Program.

Frequency: Every Year - First Semester

SWK 536 - Practice II: Families, 2 credits.

Students will learn the values, knowledge and skills needed by social workers for effective generalist practice with diverse families. Focus is on the family system and its environment as well as on social work engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation for working with current family structures and issues. Open to students in the Master of Social Work Program.

Frequency: Every Year - First Semester

Corequisites: SWK 326

SWK 546 - Social Work Practice III: Groups, Organizations, and Communities, 4 credits.

Students will learn the values, knowledge and skills needed by social workers for effective generalist social work practice with diverse groups, organizations and communities. Study includes group dynamics and processes, organizational and community processes, community action work, and evaluation. Open to students in the Master of Social Work Program.

Frequency: Every Year - First Semester

Corequisites: PEAK 400

SWK 550 - Comparative Cultural Encounter, 4 credits.

This course examines the need for cultural competency and anti-oppressive education in contemporary Western society. Includes case studies, the use of critical theory, and participatory action research. Students will explore the broad meanings of culture and the exclusion of culturally unique peoples from mainstream opportunities due to systemic institutional policy barriers and acts of individual, workplace and community discrimination. Strategies of opposition, social change, and enlightened human rights practices will be explored. Open to students in the Master of Social Work Program.

Frequency: Every Year - First Semester

SWK 592 - Social Work Internship, 4 credits.

A minimum of 400-hour professionally supervised social work internship in an approved agency. Students will integrate their previous learning and experience into a field education setting in order to demonstrate beginning competency in the application of social work values, knowledge, skill and processes. To be taken concurrently with SWK 594 and after all other courses in the major have been completed.

Frequency: Summer Session

SWK 594 - Social Work Senior Seminar, 2 credits.

Along with SWK 590, this is the capstone course in the social work major. The purpose of this course is to integrate all parts of the students' previous learning and experience in further preparing them for direct entry into generalist social work practice with beginning competency in social work methods and processes. The seminar includes content on perspectives for job interviews and procedures for taking state licensing and merit examinations. Open to students in the Master of Social Work Program.

Frequency: Summer Session

SWK 600 - Advanced Clinical Theory and Anti-Oppressive Practice, 3 credits.

This course explores the many clinical theories that make up clinical social work. This course has an important emphasis on anti-oppressive practice and how this informs our work with clients.

Frequency: Every Year - First Semester

SWK 610 - Advanced Clinical Practice I: Assessment/Diagnosis, 3 credits.

This course teaches the clinical skills needed at various stages of the helping process (i.e., engagement, assessment, goal-setting and treatment planning, intervention and termination). The helping relationship is seen as requiring collaboration between clinician and client and the strategic use of clinical skills (e.g., strengthening rapport, assessing needs and strengths, reaching for feelings, identifying goals and expectations, setting limits) throughout the process. The helping relationship is also based on sound social work values and ethics, positive regard for the full range of human diversity, and dedication to social and economic justice.

Frequency: Every Year - First Semester

SWK 620 - Advanced Clinical Practice II: Children and Families, 3 credits.

The origins of family intervention are deeply rooted in the profession of social work and the multi-theoretical approach is congruent with the tradition of viewing the family and the presenting problem in a contextual framework. This course will explore evidence-based children and family therapy assessments and interventions as well as different ethical concerns that arise with clinical practice with children and families.

Frequency: Every Year - First Semester

SWK 622 - Advanced Evidence Based Treatment, 3 credits.

The social work profession has long advocated for evidence-based practice. This course will link the diagnostic/biopsychosocial assessment to evidence-based practice for children, adolescents, adults and older adults.

Frequency: Every Year - Second Semester

SWK 624 - Advanced Topics in Social Work, 3 credits.

This course provides foundational knowledge, values, and skill development for generalist social work practice with children and adolescents using a strengths-based perspective. Students develop skills in relationship-building, collaborative problem-solving, describing problems and diagnoses, accessing resources, developing intervention plans, recognizing the role of stressors and child well-being in settings such as schools, families, and other systems, and evaluating progress with children and adolescents.

Frequency: Every Year - Second Semester

Repeatable: Yes

SWK 626 - Advanced Research for Health Professions, 3 credits.

This course commences with a review of the primary concepts and principles of social science research methodology, followed by application of these concepts and practices. Emphasis will be placed on developing skills necessary for successful practice as clinicians and health professionals. Respect for the unique characteristics of diverse populations will be stressed as the course covers social work research due to diversity, multicultural biases, and social and economic justice.

Frequency: Every Year - First Semester

SWK 630 - Advanced Clinical Practice in Groups and Interprofessional Practice, 3 credits.

This course focuses on advanced theories and techniques for clinical social work practice with groups. Students will develop an in-depth understanding of group dynamics, leadership styles, and the application of evidence-based interventions within a group setting. Through a combination of theoretical discussions, case studies, experiential exercises, and group facilitation practice, students will enhance their skills in assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating group interventions to promote positive change and growth among diverse populations. Interprofessional work is an important component of Social Work and this will be explored and practiced in this course.

Frequency: Every Year - Second Semester

SWK 632 - Advanced Policy, Communities and Organizations, 3 credits.

This course provides an in-depth exploration of the intersection between social policy and social work practice. Students will examine the impact of social policies on individuals, families, and communities, and develop skills in analyzing, advocating for, and implementing policies that promote social justice and improve the well-being of vulnerable populations. Through case studies, discussions, and real-world projects, students will develop practical strategies for applying policy knowledge to their social work practice and organization.

Frequency: Every Year - Second Semester

SWK 675 - Advanced Field Seminar I, 1 credits.

This course is an integrated seminar for advanced field practicum I. Students integrate and apply the material learned in the classroom and from previous field experiences. Students are afforded the opportunity to demonstrate all nine practice competencies and behaviors in the advanced clinical field internship. The Field Seminar offers students the opportunity to address questions and challenges experienced in the social work agency field placement, and integrate practice, policy and research. Students will develop their capacity as leaders in the field and integrate Social Work ethics and values to the field practicum.

Frequency: Every Year - First Semester

SWK 676 - Advanced Field Seminar II, 1 credits.

This course is an integrated seminar for Advanced Field Practicum I. Students integrate and apply the material learned in the classroom and from previous field experience. Students are afforded the opportunity to demonstrate all nine practice competencies and behaviors in the advanced clinical field internship. The Field Seminar offers students the opportunity to address questions and challenges experienced in the social work agency field placement, and integrate practice, policy and research. Students will develop their capacity as leaders in the field and integrate Social Work ethics and values to the field practicum.

Frequency: Every Year - Second Semester

SWK 677 - Advanced Field Practicum I, 3 credits.

In conjunction with SWK 675 Senior Seminar, this course culminates the field experience of the Master's clinical social work program. The goal of the field education program is to provide an integrative experience that brings classroom theory to the field of practice. The field education program will challenge the student to integrate professional values and personal perspectives to enhance his or her understanding of the true meaning of social work. At the advanced level, students select a specialization in a clinical setting. In this course students engage in experiential learning through a supervised part-time (16-20 hours per week) practice. This combines for a minimum of 500 hours over the two semesters to prepare for direct entry into a Master's level social work position. Participating in field placement provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate their ability to apply theoretical knowledge, skills, and values learned during their course of study into the field setting. The combination of SWK 677/678 and SWK 675/676 address all nine core competencies and related practice behaviors for social work education. The achievement of these competencies is measure through various social work field activities, assignments and evaluations.

Frequency: Every Year - First Semester

SWK 678 - Advanced Field Practicum II, 3 credits.

In conjunction with SWK 676 Senior Seminar, this course represents the capstone experience of the Master's clinical social work program. The goal of the field education program is to provide an integrative experience that brings classroom theory to the field of practice. The field education program will challenge the student to integrate professional values and personal perspectives to enhance his or her understanding of the true meaning of social work. At the advanced level, students select a specialization in a clinical setting. In this course students engage in experiential learning through supervised part-time (16-20 hours per week) practice. This combines for a minimum of 500 hours over two semesters to prepare for direct entry into a Master's level social work position. Participating in field placement provides the opportunity for students to demonstrate their ability to apply theoretical knowledge, skills, and values learned during their course of study into the field setting. The combination of SWK 678 and SWK 676 address all nine core competencies and related practice behaviors for social work education. The achievement of these competencies is measured through various social work field activities, assignments and evaluations.

Frequency: Every Year - Second Semester

SWK 685 - Advanced Capstone I, 1 credits.

This course is part of the MSW capstone experience. In this integrative course, students demonstrate social work competencies through the development of a capstone special project that contributes to professional knowledge and/or meets a community or organizational need. Prerequisite: Admission to the Advanced Standing Program.

Frequency: Every Year - First Semester

SWK 686 - Advanced Capstone II, 1 credits.

This course is part of the MSW capstone experience. In this integrative course, students demonstrate social work competencies through the development of a capstone special project that contributes to professional knowledge and/or meets a community or organizational need. Prerequisite: Admission to the Advanced Standing Program.

Frequency: Every Year - Second Semester