Program Offered

Master of Social Work

- Traditional Sequence
- Advanced Standing Option Sequence

Mission Statement

The mission of the Pacific’s MSW program is to provide a graduate level, student-centered social work program that integrates inter-professional education and innovative supervised practice field placements so that students become skilled and compassionate professionals who provide comprehensive and culturally sensitive clinical care using an evidence-based approach. The program prepares students to practice in an increasingly complex healthcare environment with the purpose of improving the quality of life for people and enhancing human potential for full, productive participation in society. Graduates will be prepared to be agents of change with excellent client care skills, to value diversity, and advocate and work to promote economic and social justice for individuals, groups and communities.

Program Overview

The MSW program is an accelerated hybrid (classroom and online) program offering two different sequences. Students with a Bachelor’s degree and foundation in the liberal arts/social sciences are eligible for admission to the traditional sequence, which can be completed in four trimesters (16 months) with a new cohort starting each Fall trimester. Students with a Bachelor’s degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) are eligible for admission to the advanced standing sequence, which can be completed in three trimesters (12 months) with a new cohort starting each Spring trimester.

The MSW curriculum complies with CSWE standards and align with the competency-based education framework introduced in the 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. The design of the foundation curriculum centered on the nine core generalist competencies to identify and assess the student’s abilities to practice within the field of social work. The design of the advanced curriculum centered on our extension of these generalist competencies to practice within the specialized area of healthcare social work.

The MSW program offers one area of specialized practice: healthcare social work. The healthcare social work specialized practice curriculum enhances and extends the core generalist practice competencies and the values of the social work profession that are introduced, reinforced, and mastered in the generalist curriculum. The specialized practice curriculum builds on generalist practice in three ways. First, knowledge, skills, values, and cognitive and affective processes acquired in generalist courses are further developed and applied to more complex and specific areas of practice. Second, students, with generalist level knowledge and skills in hand, are given the opportunity in the 30-week intensive specialized practice internship to face a range of medical and health related challenges, in inpatient and outpatient healthcare settings and in the community, for providing service to individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Thirdly, after mastering the generalist competencies, students will be prepared to learn the importance of multidisciplinary knowledge and further develop their interprofessional teamwork skills via interprofessional education and field learning opportunities during the final two trimesters of the program.

Accreditation Status

The MSW program launches in Fall 2020 and is in Pre-Candidacy for Accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education’s Commission on Accreditation. The program is going through the 3-year Candidacy Process with CSWE and expects to be fully accredited by Fall 2022. Students who enter in Fall 2020 will be retroactively recognized as having graduated from a CSWE-accredited program once the program attains Initial Accreditation. More accreditation information can be found at: CSWE’s FAQ on Accreditation (https://www.cswe.org/Accreditation/Information/Frequently-Asked-Questions). For the most current information regarding the application process and requirements, please visit the website (https://www.pacific.edu/academics/schools-and-colleges/school-of-health-sciences/programs/social-work.html).

Admission Requirements

1. Critically analyze and use evidence to guide decision-making and clinical skills to promote best practices.
2. Use knowledge of social work practice theories and policy frameworks and evidence-based practice to develop strategies to promote high quality care, innovation, and organizational change, targeting social justice and promotion of human rights.
3. Work in inter-professional teams to develop a compassionate and culturally sensitive, patient-centered approach to healthcare.

Course Credit Not Granted For Life and Work Experience

The MSW program does not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience. Both life and work experience, past and present, cannot be a substitute for field education experience or any generalist or specialized practice courses.

Master of Social Work

The program's hybrid curriculum is designed with two options: a 16-month sequence for students with any other undergraduate degree totaling 55 units, and a 12-month advanced standing sequence for students with a Council on Social Work Education accredited BSW program totaling 32 units.

Traditional Sequence – 16 months (55 units)

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Social Work Courses

SOCW 201. Social Work Theory & Practice I. 3 Units.
This course introduces a range of prevention and intervention methods grounded in generalist social work theory and the person-in-environment framework. A unifying framework of micro, mezzo and macro level practice for working with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities is introduced. The framework includes the practice phases of engagement, assessment, planning/contracting, intervention, evaluation, termination/referral, and follow-up. Students will gain a foundation upon which they can continue to add and build social work practice skills. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a hybrid format.

SOCW 203. Research-Informed Practice. 3 Units.
This course introduces students to social work research. It focuses on understanding quantitative and qualitative research methods in advancing the science of social work and evaluation of social work practice. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in an online format.

SOCW 205. Policy & Advocacy in Social Work Practice. 3 Units.
This course introduces students to the underlying values, assumptions, and philosophical perspectives that have influenced the development of the U.S. social welfare system and services. Students will learn about policy formulation, analysis, and the role of advocacy in service development and delivery within social work practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Prerequisites: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a hybrid format.

SOCW 211. Social Work Theory & Practice II. 3 Units.
This course introduces students to the global intersections and interconnections of diversity, human rights and justice. Students will develop an understanding of an integrated practice framework that advances human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice issues. Theories and strategies of human need and social justice are covered to prepare students to advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice domestically and internationally. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a hybrid format.

SOCW 207. Diversity & Social Justice. 3 Units.
This course introduces students to the global intersections and interconnections of diversity, human rights and justice. Students will develop an understanding of an integrated practice framework that advances human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice issues. Theories and strategies of human need and social justice are covered to prepare students to advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice domestically and internationally. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a hybrid format.

SOCW 209. Virtual Social Work Skills Lab. 3 Units.
This skill-based course is anchored in the knowledge base of generalist social work theory & practice. Students will develop competency in performing essential social work skills to prepare for the generalist and specialized field placement. Specific skills focused on include demonstration of ethical and professional behavior and engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation with clients and constituencies. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a lecture format.

Advanced Standing Option Sequence – 12 months (32 units)

Note: One of the two required electives may be taken in Trimester 1 from another program in the School of Health Sciences if available and approved by the student’s academic advisor.

Trimester 1 (Spring)
SOCW 213 Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) 3
SOCW 215 Social Work in Health Settings 3
SOCW 231 Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment 3
or SOCW 233 Gerontological Social Work
SOCW 217 Clinical Interventions in Health 3
SOCW 219 Social Determinants of Health 3
SOCW 231 Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment 3
or SOCW 233 Gerontological Social Work
SOCW 227 Specialized Practice Field Seminar I 1
SOCW 287B Specialized Practice Field Placement I 3

Trimester 2 (Summer)
SOCW 221 Advanced Policy in Health Systems 3
SOCW 223 Practice-Informed Research in Health Systems 3
SOCW 231 Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment 3
or SOCW 233 Gerontological Social Work
SOCW 227 Specialized Practice Field Seminar I 1
SOCW 287B Specialized Practice Field Placement I 3

Trimester 3 (Fall)
SOCW 221 Advanced Policy in Health Systems 3
SOCW 223 Practice-Informed Research in Health Systems 3
SOCW 227 Specialized Practice Field Seminar II 1
SOCW 287C Specialized Practice Field Placement II 3

Trimester 4 (Fall)
SOCW 287B Specialized Practice Field Placement I 3
SOCW 211. Social Work Theory & Practice II. 3 Units.
This course builds on integrating social work practice through a unifying framework of micro, mezzo and macro level practice for working with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. The framework will focus on integrating practice, leadership and technology skills to develop and provide social work services that advance social justice and improve well-being. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a hybrid format.

SOCW 213. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). 3 Units.
This course introduces students to the concepts and language of mental health and mental disorders with a primary focus on the widely used classification system of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). Students learn to distinguish mental health diagnostic categories and gain skills in the diagnostic process. The goals of the course are to further students’ competence in incorporating strengths in a comprehensive, multidimensional assessment and prepare students to practice in integrated health care settings. Prerequisites: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in an online format.

SOCW 215. Social Work in Health Settings. 3 Units.
Building on core knowledge common to all fields of practice, this course examines advanced practice skills and interventions relevant to health care settings in work with individual clients, families, groups, and interdisciplinary teams. Social work practice is explored in the context of the psychosocial consequences of illness and current health care delivery. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a hybrid format.

SOCW 217. Clinical Interventions in Health. 3 Units.
This course builds on generalist social work theory and practice with the addition of more intensive focus on assessment and intervention techniques with clients and constituencies. Students will develop service delivery plans based on the selection of appropriate theories, intervention models, and evidence-informed intervention utilizing a practice orientation that attends to human rights and social justice for diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Prerequisites: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a hybrid format.

SOCW 219. Social Determinants of Health. 3 Units.
This course focuses on the systematic study of social and economic conditions under which people live that determine their health. How social influences such as income, living conditions, education, infrastructure, religious affiliation, healthcare, social capital, stress, gender and race affect health and longevity will be explored. The role of public policy in shaping outcomes for communities will be examined. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a hybrid format.

SOCW 221. Advanced Policy in Health Systems. 3 Units.
The course introduces a rights-based approach to leading innovation and social change through policy practice and advocacy. Using human rights and social justice principles, students will learn how to use specific policy and advocacy frameworks to plan for and lead strategies that facilitate social change with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Prerequisites: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in an online format.

SOCW 223. Practice-Informed Research in Health Systems. 3 Units.
This course builds on basic understanding of quantitative and qualitative research methods and analysis. Students gain knowledge and skills to use appropriate research methods for empirically based knowledge building and to enhance program and practice effectiveness. Content includes single system and group design and formative and summative approaches to practice and program evaluation. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a hybrid format.

SOCW 225. Generalist Practice Field Seminar. 2 Units.
This course will coordinate with the General Practice Field Placement and use a problem-based learning approach. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program, successful completion of coursework in all first trimester MSW courses with a grade of C or higher, and in academic good standing in the MSW program with an average GPA of 3.0 or higher. Exceptions may be granted by the MSW Program’s Student Progress Committee (see MSW Program Handbook and MSW Field Handbook). This course is taught in a lecture format.

SOCW 227. Specialized Practice Field Seminar I. 1 Unit.
This course will coordinate with Specialized Practice Field Placement I and use a problem-based learning approach. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program, successful completion of coursework in all first and second trimester MSW courses with a grade of C or higher and a ‘Pass’ in SOCW 287A, and in academic good standing in the MSW program with an average GPA of 3.0 or higher. Exceptions may be granted by the MSW Program’s Student Progress Committee (see MSW Program Handbook and MSW Field Handbook). This course is taught in a lecture format.

SOCW 229. Specialized Practice Field Seminar II. 1 Unit.
This course will coordinate with Specialized Practice Field Placement II and use a problem-based learning approach. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program, successful completion of coursework in all first, second and third trimester MSW courses with a grade of C or higher and a ‘Pass’ in SOCW 287A and SOCW 287B, and in academic good standing in the MSW program with an average GPA of 3.0 or higher. Exceptions may be granted by the MSW Program’s Student Progress Committee (see MSW Program Handbook and MSW Field Handbook). This course is taught in a lecture format.
SOCW 231. Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment. 3 Units.
This course provides an overview of social work practice with alcohol and substance abusers, including the role of family systems, community networks, and experiences of trauma. The course prepares students for assessment, detection, and intervention for harmful alcohol and substance use in human services settings, with an emphasis on health care settings. The course provides a basis for understanding the prevalence of alcoholism and substance abuse, introduces models and theories of addiction and treatment, and develops skills in engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation for alcoholism and substance use with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Prerequisites: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a hybrid format.

SOCW 233. Gerontological Social Work. 3 Units.
This course provides knowledge and skills for gerontological practice in the areas of health and mental health with older adults. The course emphasizes practice with clients from diverse backgrounds, including minority and disenfranchised populations at the micro and mezzo levels. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program. Students in other University of the Pacific graduate programs may take this course as an elective with the permission of the instructor. This course is taught in a hybrid format.

SOCW 287A. Generalist Practice Field Placement. 3 Units.
A 300-hour (20 hours per week for 15 weeks) field placement to develop generalist social work skills while supporting individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program, successful completion of coursework in all first trimester MSW courses with a grade of C or higher, and in academic good standing in the MSW program with an average GPA of 3.0 or higher. Exceptions may be granted by the MSW Program’s Student Progress Committee (see MSW Program Handbook and MSW Field Handbook). This course is taught in an internship/co-op/fieldwork format.

SOCW 287B. Specialized Practice Field Placement I. 3 Units.
A 300-hour (20 hours per week for 15 weeks) field placement to develop integrative practice skills within an area of specialized practice in an interprofessional practice setting. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program, successful completion of all first and second trimester MSW courses with a grade of C or higher, and in academic good standing in the MSW program with an average GPA of 3.0 or higher. Exceptions may be granted by the MSW Program’s Student Progress Committee (see MSW Program Handbook and MSW Field Handbook). This course is taught in an internship/co-op/fieldwork format.

SOCW 287C. Specialized Practice Field Placement II. 3 Units.
A 300-hour (20 hours per week for 15 weeks) field placement to develop integrative practice skills within an area of specialized practice in an interprofessional practice setting. Prerequisite: Admission to the Master of Social Work program, successful completion of all first, second and third trimester MSW courses with a grade of C or higher, and in academic good standing in the MSW program with an average GPA of 3.0 or higher. Exceptions may be granted by the MSW Program’s Student Progress Committee (see MSW Program Handbook and MSW Field Handbook). This course is taught in an internship/co-op/fieldwork format.