SOCIAL WORK

The Marion Peckham Egan School of Nursing and Health Studies offers a major in social work. The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program at Fairfield University prepares graduates for beginning practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. The BSW curriculum is conceptualized within a generalist framework incorporating a solid foundation of coursework in social work knowledge, values and skills, interdisciplinary and interprofessional cooperation, social justice activism, research, and policy practice.

Outcomes

BSW Program Outcomes

The curriculum and learning goals reflect the competencies necessary for beginning social work practice and the accreditation requirements of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

Upon completion of the BSW Program, graduates will be:

- Competent in the methods and skills of engagement, assessment, and intervention with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations.
- Competent in analyzing, developing and advocating for policies that serve the needs of a diverse society and vulnerable populations.
- Ready to engage in interdisciplinary collaboration, with professional and community partners.
- Competent in, and committed to undertaking social work research.
- Men and women for others, recognizing social inequities and intervening as leaders for social change.

Programs


Courses

SK 0301 Human Behavior in the Social Environment I 3 Credits
Corequisite: SK 0303.
Prerequisite: SO 0192.
The purpose of this course is to engage students in an exploration of human behavior and the impact of the environment on individuals as they develop through the lifespan. It examines the biopsychosocial and spiritual aspects of human development with a further emphasis on how factors such as poverty, discrimination, racism, culture, gender, health status, and sexual orientation, affect the developmental process. Exploration of research, case examples and self-reflection, will deepen students ability to conceptualize the processes of assessment, intervention, and the person-in-environment perspective across systems with diverse populations. This course, the first in sequence, will cover human reproduction through adolescence.

SK 0302 Human Behavior in the Social Environment II 3 Credits
Corequisite: SK 0304.
Prerequisite: SO 0193.
The purpose of this course is to engage students in an exploration of human behavior and the impact of the environment on individuals as they develop through the lifespan. It examines the biopsychosocial and spiritual aspects of human development with a further emphasis on how factors such as poverty, discrimination, racism, culture, gender, health status, and sexual orientation, affect the developmental process. Exploration of research, case examples and self-reflection, will deepen students ability to conceptualize the processes of assessment, intervention, and the person-in-environment perspective across systems with diverse populations. This course, the second in sequence, will cover young adulthood through end-of-life issues.

SK 0303 Social Policy and Social Justice 3 Credits
The course will explore policy within the context of social, economic, and environmental justice issues including oppression, poverty, income inequality, food insecurity, immigration, healthcare disparity, pollution, criminal justice, and other issues that affect individual and social well-being. The impact of social policies and social programs on vulnerable populations will also be explored. Students will understand and identify with the role of social workers as agents of change in developing and advocating for social policies that meet the needs of clients. This course will include service learning in a community setting and will culminate in a project that will evaluate policy issues that arise throughout the semester.

SK 0304 Research in Social Work Practice 3 Credits
Scientific inquiry which tests theory and supports the evidence base of social work intervention is a critical component of social work education. The research course introduces students to all aspects of the research process, including forming hypotheses, framing research questions, conceptualizing and conducting a literature review, identifying variables, quantitative and qualitative measurement, sampling, data collection, coding, data analysis, and communication of results. Students will also learn to include and be sensitive to ethical guidelines in social work research and the importance of a culturally competent approach to research. This course will include service learning, and culminates with a research project that poses questions for scientific inquiry in relation to the service learning experience.

SK 0305 Generalist Social Work Practice I 3 Credits
This is the first of two courses in the generalist practice and methods curriculum. This course immerses students in the fundamental values, ethics, skills, and knowledge that are the foundation of generalist social work practice. The course will cover the NASW Code of Ethics and Standards with a strong focus on cultural competence and a strengths-based approach to practice with individuals and families. Students will be encouraged to explore the profession while developing direct practice skills, such as developing the helping relationship, assessment, conceptualizing problems, assessing strengths, using research to inform practice, setting goals and contracting, choosing and evaluating intervention strategies, and evaluating practice. Students are expected to apply knowledge of human behavior, social policy, research, and practice with diverse and vulnerable populations into the practice situation.
SK 0306 Generalist Social Work Practice II 3 Credits
Prerequisite: SK 0305.
This is the second of two courses in the generalist practice and methods curriculum. This course further immerses students in the fundamental values, ethics, skills, and knowledge that are the foundation of generalist social work practice. There will be a focus on increasing students understanding of the helping process and the development of generalist practice knowledge and skills. There will be emphasis on the importance of applying theoretical and empirical knowledge when choosing intervention strategies. Students will continue to engage in an ongoing and reflective process of exploring and evaluating their own practice and will also reflect on their “use of self” with clients and in the supervisory process. It is expected that students will integrate prior learning from previous courses and in current fieldwork concerning human behavior, social policy, research, service delivery, and practice with diverse and vulnerable populations across systems with specific focus on group work and community practice.

SK 0307 Integrative Field Practicum Seminar I 3 Credits
The course is the first of two field seminar courses and is taken in conjunction with Field Practicum I. The purpose of this course is to acclimate students to field work and to prepare them for social work practice with diverse and vulnerable populations. The course will focus on the knowledge, values, and skills required to identify as a professional social worker and to practice in the field with competence, including the professional use of self, the application of social work values and ethics in social work practice, the use of communication skills, engaging in the supervisory process, social worker roles in community practice, understanding the organizational context of practice, exploring research to inform evidence-based practice, understanding and protecting clients confidentiality, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. The seminar is designed to support students learning and integration of knowledge as they build practice skills. Students are supported through the use of small group process oriented interactions, self-reflection, role-play, case discussion, and experiential exercises. Students are also encouraged to share questions, concerns, and learning needs in regards to their field experience.

SK 0308 Integrative Field Practicum Seminar II 3 Credits
Prerequisite: SK 0307.
This second seminar course is process-oriented and is designed to provide students the opportunity to discuss, analyze, and integrate theory within their field and coursework learning while demonstrating their ability to apply multiple sources of knowledge and skills to generalist social work practice. The seminar provides the opportunity for further learning and consolidation of knowledge and skills, through self-reflection, case discussion, process recordings, presentations, experiential exercises, and a comprehensive case study paper.

SK 0309 Field Practicum I 4 Credits
As the “signature pedagogy” in the education of professional social workers, field learning is integral to the program and needs to instill in students the ability “to think, to perform, and to act with integrity” (Shulman). The Field Practicum is designed to provide students with a generalist perspective for social work practice, through supervised experience with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Provided in collaboration with human and social service agencies, the field practicum will preparation students for professional practice in social work.

SK 0310 Field Practicum II 4 Credits
As the “signature pedagogy” in the education of professional social workers, field learning is integral to the program and needs to instill in students the ability “to think, to perform, and to act with integrity” (Shulman). The Field Practicum is designed to provide students with a generalist perspective for social work practice, through supervised experience with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Provided in collaboration with human and social service agencies, the field practicum will preparation students for professional practice in social work.

SK 0311 Leadership for Interdisciplinary Health Professionals 3 Credits
This course is designed to expose students in the fields of public health and social work to conceptual frameworks through which to view leadership. Students will explore the key values and personal attributes that guide the leadership process. Students will engage in dynamic exercises and collaborative work to better understand leadership principles and work to apply these concepts to communities in their fields of study. The students will have the opportunity to reflect on leadership qualities relevant to their profession as well as personal leadership qualities that guide the relationship with vulnerable populations.

Faculty
Assistant Professor of the Practice
Oliver, Director
Instructors
Neitlich (Visiting)