SOCIAL WORK

Undergraduate Program Information

The BSW degree (CSWE accredited) allows you to join a profession dedicated to helping people in personal and social situations. As a unique and challenging field, social work addresses the complexity of human behavior and the ever-present needs and potential of people. From rural communities to inner cities, social workers are at work in social service agencies, mental health centers, hospitals, schools, neighborhood organizations, probation offices and private agencies. Social work roles are varied and flexible. Social workers practice in areas such as child abuse, community organization, direct services with individuals and families, mental health, group work, and the administration, planning and development of social programs. With each consumer group and in every agency setting, social workers help to correct the causes or alleviate the results of poverty, racism, poor health, mental illness or any condition that prohibits people from reaching their potential.

Graduate Program Information

The School of Social Work offers full-time and part-time graduate study in Las Cruces, Albuquerque, and On-Line leading to the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. The program is designed to provide academic and fieldwork education with an emphasis in Advanced Generalist Practice with Populations of the Southwest based on the foundation first year of generalist practice. The program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

Admission to the program is in accordance with the general regulations of the Graduate School, which include a completed undergraduate degree from an accredited institution. In addition to applying to the Graduate School, application must also be made to the School of Social Work. The application to the School of Social Work spells out admission requirements that include submitting an application form, a written statement, a current resume and personal references. Applicants having a degree from a non-liberal arts area must show coursework that includes two courses from the humanities, two from the natural and biological sciences (with one course containing content in human biology) and three from the behavioral and social sciences, with at least one course in sociology or psychology. Applicants are also required to complete a Basic Statistics course prior to beginning their MSW program of study. The program does not grant academic credit for work or other life experience in lieu of social work course or field content.

The School of Social Work is committed to ensuring a culturally diverse student population to enhance the social work profession at both state and national levels. To meet this goal of diversity, the school makes an effort to recruit and retain a diverse student population.

Applicants who qualify for advanced standing may complete the program with 30 credits rather than 60 credits. Admission to the advanced-standing program is for highly qualified applicants who have a Bachelor of Social Work degree (BSW) from a social work program accredited by the CSWE and earned within five years of beginning the advanced standing program, a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 and a minimum GPA of 3.5 in core Undergraduate Social Work courses.

Degrees for the Department


Loui Reyes, PhD, Interim Director

Associate Professors de la Rosa, Gurrola, Nedjat-Haiem, Whittlesey-Jerome; Assistant Professors Finno-Velasquez, Gergerich, Gherardi; College Associate Professors Cabada, Nelson, Ortiz; College Assistant Professors Montoya

O. Cabada, MSW (Texas) - mental health, social justice; I. de la Rosa, PhD (Michigan) – program evaluation, research; M. Finno-Velasquez, PhD (California)-child welfare; E. Gergerich, PhD (Arkansas) - gerontology; S. Gherardi, PhD (Illinois) - school social work; M. Gurrola, PhD (Arizona) - social justice, immigration; M. Montoya, MSW (New Mexico)-child welfare; F. Nedjat-Haiem, PhD (California) - gerontology; M. Ortiz, MSW (New Mexico)- cultural competence, practice; W. Whittlesey-Jerome, PhD (Texas) – mental health, policy, research; A. Nelson, MSW (New Mexico) trauma informed behavioral health

Social Work Courses

S WK 221G. Introduction to Social Welfare
3 Credits
A broad overview of current social problems and the role of social agencies and community members in addressing these problems.

S WK 251. Women s Issues in Social Work
3 Credits
Examines gender-specific social problems and their identification and resolution through the use of social agencies and community resources. Community Colleges only.

S WK 253. Case Management
3 Credits
Introduction to case management for social- and human-services workers. Overview of typical duties and responsibilities of a case manager, including setting goals, performing assessments, writing progress notes, and linking clients with other resources in the community. Recommended for students considering a career in social work or human services. Community Colleges only. Prerequisites: PSY 201G and S WK 221G.

S WK 300. Social Work Practice Skills
3 Credits
Introduction to generalist social work practice. Interpersonal skills, values, and ethics required in the helping relationship. Taught in a small-group format. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: S WK majors. Restricted to Las Cruces campus only.

S WK 301. Orientation to Field
1 Credit
This course will provide an orientation to requirements for a social work field practicum and to establish the transfer of learning between classroom instruction and future practicum skill application. Restricted to S WK majors.

Corequisite(s): S WK 300.
S WK 309. Sociocultural Concepts
3 Credits
Theoretical and sociohistorical perspectives on racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, and other forms of discrimination and oppression. Cultural diversity, strengths, and Southwest and border issues are examined.

S WK 311. Human Behavior and the Social Environment I
3 Credits
Major theories of human behavior and the life span from conception to adolescence. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: S WK majors.

S WK 312. Human Behavior and the Social Environment II
3 Credits
Continuation of S WK 311. Major theories of human behavior and the life span from young adulthood through old age. Restricted to: S WK majors.

Prerequisite(s): S WK 311.

S WK 313. Social Work Practice with Individuals
3 Credits
Generalist social work practice theory and skills in engagement, information gathering, assessments, planning, interventions, evaluation, and termination with individual client systems. Restricted to: S WK majors.

Prerequisite(s): S WK 300.

S WK 315. Social Work Practice with Families
3 Credits
Generalist social work practice theory and skills in engagement, information gathering, assessments, planning, interventions, evaluation, and termination with multicultural family systems. May be repeated up to 3 credits.

Prerequisite(s): S WK 300.

S WK 316. Social Work Research
3 Credits
This undergraduate course is designed to prepare students to be effective consumers of research and to evaluate their own practice. Students will learn to read, critically evaluate and use the research of others to select interventions that are based on evidence of effectiveness. Students will demonstrate the knowledge, values and skills to be critical consumers of research for effective and ethical practice as well as possess the basic skills necessary to evaluate their own social work professional practice. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: Social Work majors.

Prerequisite(s): STAT 251G, STAT 271G or A ST 251G.

S WK 331V. Introduction to Social Policy: History
3 Credits
Historical overview of the economic, political, and cultural impact on social welfare policy, institutions, and professions with international content.

S WK 401. Field Experience I
3 Credits
Supervised professional practice in a community social service agency, providing experiential learning and instruction. 240 clock hours required. Restricted to: S WK majors. S/U Grading (S/U, Audit).

Corequisite(s): S WK 412.

S WK 403. Social Work Practicum II
3 Credits
This course is a continuation of a supervised professional practice in a community social service agency, providing experiential learning and instruction. 240 clock hours required. Restricted to: S WK majors. S/U Grading (S/U, Audit).

Corequisite(s): S WK 419.

S WK 405. Service Learning
3 Credits
This course introduces students to field work as an essential component of social work education. Students are required to provide a minimum of 40 hours of service to a human services agency. This course will focus on the connection between coursework, field work, the NASW Code of Ethics and skills needed to work with people.

Prerequisite(s): S WK 301, S WK 313.

S WK 412. Practicum Seminar I
3 Credits
The practicum seminar course will provide students the opportunities to integrate coursework and field practice experience learning to develop social work competencies. Restricted to: S WK majors. S/U grading (S/U, Audit).

Corequisite(s): S WK 401.

S WK 415. Generalist Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities
3 Credits
This course focuses on generalist social work values, knowledge and skills regarding practice with larger systems. Course content will include theories of community and organizational assessment and intervention. Strategies for advocacy and change, leadership for community and organizational change. May be repeated up to 3 credits.

Prerequisite(s): S WK 300, S WK 313, S WK 315.

S WK 416. Generalist Social Work Practice with Groups
3 Credits
Generalist social work practice skills with group client systems focusing on the planned change process and the empowerment of oppressed populations. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: S WK majors.

3 Credits
Policy practice related to the formation of current social welfare policies that promote social and economic justice. Emphasis is on the development and influences of social policy, policy analysis, and the policy change process. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Consent of Instructor required. Restricted to: S WK majors.

S WK 418. Professionalism in the Field of Social Work
3 Credits
Students will use the field experience as the backdrop for assessing their own progress toward entry level generalist social work practice; to integrate coursework and field experience to develop their professional foundation. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: S WK majors.

Corequisite(s): S WK 419.

S WK 419. Practicum Seminar II
3 Credits
The practicum seminar course will provide students the opportunities to integrate coursework and field practice experience learning to demonstrate social work competencies. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: S WK majors. S/U Grading (S/U, Audit).

Corequisite(s): S WK 403.
S WK 443. Family and Child Welfare Practice
3 Credits
Current issues and interventions in child protection, foster care, family preservation and support, family reunification, adoption and permanency planning. Cannot receive credit for S WK 443 and MSW 543. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Crosslisted with: MSW 543.

S WK 447. Identifying Mental Health Concerns
3 Credits
This course is designed to advance students’ knowledge and professional skills for addressing mental health concerns in social work practice at the bachelor’s level. Students will learn to identify major mental health concerns across the life span. Culturally competent practices are considered in regard to various mental health concerns. Restricted to: SWK majors.

S WK 449. Independent Study
1-6 Credits
Individual studies directed by consenting faculty with the prior approval of the department head.
Prerequisite(s): majors or consent of instructor.

S WK 490. Family and Child Welfare Policy
3 Credits
This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the history and evolution of child welfare policies, initiatives and factors that influence advocacy and practices within the child welfare system. Child welfare policies and services specific to the state of New Mexico are infused throughout the course. Cannot receive credit for both S WK 490 and MSW 590 May be repeated up to 3 credits. Crosslisted with: MSW 590.

S WK 497. Special Topics
3 Credits
Specific subjects to be announced in the Schedule of Classes. May be used as a mandatory practice elective. Restricted to: S WK majors.
Prerequisite(s): Junior or above standing, majors or consent of instructor.

Master of Social Work Courses

MSW 500. Social Problems and Social Welfare Policy
3 Credits
An overview of social and economic problems in the United States and the historical and current social welfare policies aimed at alleviating these problems. Emphasis on developing an awareness and ability to change policies that impact vulnerable populations. May be repeated up to 3 credits.

MSW 503. Policy Analysis and Change
3 Credits
This course will emphasize policy practice focusing on policy analysis and creating and implementing policy change. Restricted to MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 500.

MSW 509. Sociocultural Concepts and Populations of the Southwest
3 Credits
Theoretical and sociohistorical perspectives on racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, and other forms of discrimination and oppression. Cultural diversity, strengths, and Southwest and border issues are emphasized.

MSW 510. Human Behavior and the Social Environment I
3 Credits
The major theories of human behavior and the life span from conception to adolescence. Focuses both on the areas of concern and risk for client systems and on the opportunities and strengths in the social environment. Required. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Corequisite(s): MSW 509.

MSW 514. Human Behavior & the Social Environment II
3 Credits
The major theories of human behavior from young adulthood to old age. This course will focus on both areas of concern and risk for client systems and on the opportunities and strengths in the social environment. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 510.

MSW 520. Social Work Practice I
3 Credits
This is the first course of a two-course sequence. An introduction to the generalist crosscultural, social work practice perspective with individuals and families, focusing on social work as a profession, social work knowledge base, professional development, relationship building and assessment with individuals and families within a framework of social work values and ethics. May be repeated up to 3 credits.
Corequisite(s): MSW 551.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): MSW 510. Restricted to: MSW majors.

MSW 521. Social Work Practice II
3 Credits
This is the second course of a two-course sequence. A continuation of the generalist crosscultural, social work practice perspective with individuals and families, focusing on goal setting, contracting, implementation, and outcome assessment. The course also applies the generalist practice perspective and methods to larger systems: groups, organizations, and communities and includes relationship building, assessment, goal setting, contracting, implementation and outcome assessment within a framework of social work values and ethics. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 520.
Corequisite(s): MSW 552.

MSW 524. Practice III: Advanced Practice with Individuals
3 Credits
This class builds on Foundation Year Practice courses (MSW 520, 521) by integrating theory and practice, and advancing skills in selecting, applying and evaluating practice interventions in a culturally sensitive manner with individuals. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 521.
Corequisite(s): MSW 556 and MSW 568, or MSW 554.

MSW 525. Practice IV: Advanced Generalist Practice with Groups
3 Credits
This course will address the knowledge, values and skills needed to work effectively with diverse populations in group settings. The course will build on Foundation Year courses (MSW 520 and 521) by integrating theory and practice, and advancing skills in selecting, applying and evaluating practice interventions in a culturally sensitive manner with social work groups. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 521.
Corequisite(s): MSW 556 and MSW 568, or MSW 554.
MSW 526. Practice V: Advanced Practice with Families
3 Credits
This class builds on Foundation Year Practice courses (MSW 520 and 521) by integrating theory and practice, and advancing skills in selecting, applying, and evaluating practice interventions in a culturally sensitive manner with families. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 524, MSW 525.
Corequisite(s): MSW 555, MSW 557, MSW 569.

MSW 527. Practice VI: Advanced Practice with Organizations and Communities
3 Credits
This class builds on Foundation Year Practice courses (MSW 520, 521) by integrating theory and practice, and advancing skills in selecting, applying, and evaluating practice interventions in a culturally sensitive manner with organizations and communities. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 524, MSW 525.
Corequisite(s): MSW 557 and MSW 569, or MSW 555.

MSW 547. Social Work Mental Health Practice
3 Credits
This course is designed to add to the practice sequence for Masters Level students in Social Work. It addresses social work assessment of major mental health issues across the life span with an emphasis on resiliency and coping skills. Culturally responsive practices are applied to the major issues of mental health. Basic psychopharmacology, neurobiology and the ways in which Social Workers interact with clients to aid education and effective treatment of medical interventions will be a prominent part of this course. Evidence-based practices useful for work in various disorders will be incorporated. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 520.

MSW 549. Generalist Field Practicum A
3 Credits
Supervised professional practice in a community social service agency, providing experiential instruction and learning; seminar required. Evaluation criteria for this course will include upholding social work practice standards for interpersonal and ethical conduct. Total of 225 hours in the field each semester is required. 3 credits each semester. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors. S/U Grading (S/U, Audit).
Corequisite(s): MSW 520, MSW 566.

MSW 550. Generalist Field Practicum B
3 Credits
Supervised professional practice in a community social service agency, providing experiential instruction and learning; seminar required. Evaluation criteria for this course will include upholding social work practice standards for interpersonal and ethical conduct. Total of 225 hours in the field each semester is required. Letter grade, 3 credits each semester. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 549.
Corequisite(s): MSW 521, MSW 567.

MSW 551. Generalist Field Practicum I
3 Credits
Corequisite(s): MSW 520.

MSW 552. Generalist Field Practicum II
3 Credits
Supervised professional practice in a community social service agency. 225 clock hours required. Seminar required. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 551.
Corequisite(s): MSW 521.

MSW 554. Advanced Generalist Field Experience I
3 Credits
Supervised professional practice in a community social service agency providing experiential learning in advanced generalist practice. 250 clock hours required. Seminar required. Crosslisted with: MSW 568. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 552.
Corequisite(s): MSW 524, MSW 525.

MSW 555. Advanced Generalist Field Experience II
3 Credits
Supervised professional practice in a community social service agency providing experiential learning in advanced generalist practice. Seminar required. Total of 250 hours in the field each semester is required. Letter grade, 3 credits each semester. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 554.
Corequisite(s): MSW 526, MSW 527.

MSW 556. Advanced Generalist Field Practicum A
3 Credits
Supervised professional practice in a community social service agency, providing experiential instruction and learning in advanced generalist practice; seminar required. Total of 250 hours in the field each semester is required. Letter grade, 3 credits each semester. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 550.
Corequisite(s): MSW 524, MSW 525, MSW 568.

MSW 557. Advanced Generalist Field Practicum B
3 Credits
Supervised professional practice in a community social service agency, providing experiential instruction and learning in advanced generalist practice; seminar required. Total of 250 hours in the field each semester is required. Letter grade, 3 credits each semester. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 556.
Corequisite(s): MSW 526, MSW 527, MSW 569.

MSW 559. Social Work Practice & Research for Advanced Standing
4 Credits
This course is required for all advanced standing students and targets provision of the conceptual orientation for the concentration year of the MSW program. The goal of this course is to enhance social work practice theory, knowledge and application skills as well as knowledge in preparation for concentration year courses in advanced generalist social work practice. The key themes and concepts presented, explored and analyzed in this course include: the fit between Social Work code of ethics and personal values and belief systems; analysis of theory, ethics, and conceptual frameworks for concentration year advanced evidenced based Social Work practice courses in diverse settings. Restricted to: MSW Advanced Standing majors.
MSW 560. Social Work Research I
3 Credits
Introduction to analytical skills used in social work research: problem formulation, research designs, measurement, instrumentation, data collection and analysis, use of human participants in research, and application of research knowledge and professional ethics to social work practice. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Corequisite(s): MSW 500.

MSW 562. Social Work Research II
3 Credits
Focused on advanced generalist practice research in multicultural settings. Advanced skills to evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in multicultural settings. Needs assessment as well as program and practice evaluation are emphasized. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 560.

MSW 566. Generalist Field Seminar I
3 Credits
The field seminar assists the student in fortifying a relationship between classroom knowledge and the field experience. In addition, it assists the student in the integration of social work practice processes in service planning and delivery. May be repeated up to 3 credits.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): MSW 551 or MSW 549, MSW 509, MSW 510, MSW 520. Restricted to: MSW majors. S/U Grading (S/U, Audit).

MSW 567. Generalist Field Seminar II
3 Credits
The field seminar assists the student in fortifying a relationship between classroom knowledge and the field experience. In addition, it assists the student in the integration of social work practice processes in service planning and delivery. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 566.
Corequisite(s): MSW 521, MSW 550.

MSW 568. Advanced Generalist Field Seminar I
3 Credits
The field seminar assists the student in fortifying a relationship between classroom knowledge and the field experience. In addition, it assists the student in the integration of social work practice processes in service planning and delivery. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Crosslisted with: MSW 554. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 567.
Corequisite(s): MSW 556, MSW 524, MSW 525.

MSW 569. Advanced Generalist Field Seminar II
3 Credits
The field seminar assists the student in fortifying a relationship between classroom knowledge and the field experience. In addition, it assists the student in the integration of social work practice processes in service planning and delivery. May be repeated up to 3 credits. Restricted to: MSW majors.
Prerequisite(s): MSW 568.
Corequisite(s): MSW 526, MSW 527, MSW 557.

MSW 590. Family and Child Welfare Policy
3 Credits
This course will enhance students’ ability to offer child welfare services that respect cultural differences, reflect current policy knowledge concerning child maltreatment, build on the advocacy and protective capacities of individuals, families and communities and encourage permanency for children and preservation of families. Required basic knowledge of child welfare and assessment skills. Outside majors require instructor permission. May be repeated up to 3 credits.

MSW 591. Systemic Integration of Alcohol and Drug Issues
3 Credits
Capstone course for the alcohol and drug minor. Covers community, agency, and systemic facilitation of prevention and intervention services for substance-affected families.
Prerequisite(s): acceptance into minor or Instructor permission.

MSW 595. Independent Study
1-3 Credits
Individual study to augment depth of knowledge in area related to course of study. May be repeated for maximum of 6 credits.
Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

MSW 597. Special Topics
1-3 Credits
Specific subjects to be announced in the Schedule of Classes. Open to graduate students in related disciplines and to community professionals in related disciplines and to community professionals in related fields. May be repeated for unlimited credit under different subtitles.
Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

MSW 599. Graduate Thesis
6 Credits
Required for thesis option. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. Restricted to MSW students.
Prerequisite: consent of instructor.