

DOCTOR OF SOCIAL WORK (DSW)

Doctor of Social Work

Not accepting applications at this time.

Program Description

The primary objective of the DSW program in the School of Social Work is designed to educate and train doctoral students who can practice at an advanced clinical level as well as teach advanced clinical theory and practice content in an undergraduate (BSW) or graduate (MSW) program. Graduates of the DSW program will be prepared to practice clinical social work at a highly advanced post-graduate level as well as teach advanced clinical theory and practice in BSW and MSW programs throughout the country.

DSW Program Options

The School of Social Work offers the DSW program on a weekend basis. The program requires 64 semester hours of credit.

Admission Requirements

Not accepting applications at this time.

- The student must have an MSW degree from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited program or a master's degree in a related area such as counseling psychology, human services, marriage, and family therapy, etc.
- The student's GPA must be 3.0 on a 4.0 GPA scale.
- The student must have at least three years of social work experience, pre-, concurrent- or post-MSW.
- The student must submit:
 - Two letters of recommendation
 - One set of official transcripts for all graduate studies, showing completion of an appropriate master's degree from a CSWE accredited program
 - A curriculum vitae or detailed resume that includes work experience, educational background, professional experience, professional activities, honors, professional publications and/or presentations, and other relevant information relating to the applicant's leadership background
 - A writing sample demonstrating an understanding of Clinical Social Work Theory and Practice
 - The qualified applicant may also go through a personal interview with the admissions committee upon the committee's discretion

Students must complete the DSW program within five years. In certain circumstances, students may petition for a one-year extension.

Application Considerations

All candidates must complete a background check. Potential applicants for the DSW program should note that a background check may render them ineligible for a field preceptorship which is a requirement to complete the DSW program. The applicant may also be ineligible for licensure after graduation as a result of the background check. Aurora University and the School of Social Work reserve the right to deny admission to the DSW program based on application materials, previous academic record, and records of past conduct, including, but

not limited to, the results of a background check or registration of a sex offense crimes.

Provisional Admission

A student seeking regular admission whose official transcripts or other required documents have not arrived by the established deadline due to circumstances beyond the applicant's control and who otherwise meets all requirements for admission to the program may be admitted provisionally for one semester. A provisional student whose admission status is not complete by the first day of the next semester (excluding summer) will be administratively dropped from classes.

Program Requirements

Not accepting applications at this time.

Code	Title	Credits
Year One Courses		
SWK-7100	The History of Psychological Theory and Practice	3
SWK-7150	The History of Clinical Social Work Knowledge and Practice	3
SWK-7200	Clinical Seminar I	6
SWK-7250	History of Social Policy	3
SWK-7300	Clinical Seminar II	6
SWK-7350	Organizational Analysis	3
Year Two Courses		
SWK-7400	Clinical Seminar III	6
SWK-7450	Teaching Clinical Social Work Theory and Practice	3
SWK-7500	Clinical Seminar IV	6
SWK-7810-9	Selected Topics in Social Work ¹	9
Year Three Courses		
SWK-8100	Research Methodology I	3
SWK-8150	Data Analysis	3
SWK-8200	Research Methodology II, Dissertation Planning	3
SWK-8250	Data Analysis II	3
SWK-8800	Dissertation Supervision	4
Total Credits		64

¹ Three 3-semester hour courses

Graduate Degree Requirements

1. Completion of all coursework specified by the graduate program.
2. Cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or higher if specified by the graduate program.
3. Submission of all pre-graduation materials required by the graduate program.
4. Acceptance of thesis or other required final project by the graduate program.
5. Submission of two copies of approved thesis or project in a specified form together with payment of binding fee where applicable.
6. Submission of Application for Graduation and payment of any graduation fees assessed by the university.

7. In the case of certification programs, submission of all governmental forms.
8. Residency Requirement: A minimum of 25% percent of the total credits required for the completion of the graduate degree or post-baccalaureate certificate or credential must be earned at Aurora University. Individual programs may establish more extensive residency requirements, including requirements that specific coursework be completed at Aurora University.

DSW Clinical Seminar and Clinical Oral Requirements

In the fall semester of their first year, the doctoral student will consult with the Director of the DSW program to secure his or her clinical preceptorship. The clinical preceptorship will begin in the spring semester of the first year in the doctoral program and run for four consecutive semesters. In addition to a four-course clinical seminar sequence, the doctoral student is required to concurrently spend eight hours a week in a preceptorship, including one hour of weekly consultation. The doctoral student may use his or her place of employment for the preceptorship with the approval of the Director of the DSW program. At the end of the four-course sequence, the doctoral student will construct a comprehensive paper describing the client being presented in a clinical oral examination. This paper will be distributed to the clinical oral committee consisting of three members; the doctoral student's clinical preceptor, the Director of the DSW Program, and a social work faculty member chosen by the student and approved by the Director of the DSW program. The doctoral student will present his or her clinical case to the committee, demonstrating mastery of a particular clinical theory and its application in clinical practice. The committee will cast a vote of pass or fail at the completion of the clinical oral and discussion. The doctoral student will need at least two out of three favorable votes to pass.

DSW Comprehensive Exam

Once the student has successfully completed the first two years of required clinical and policy courses, he or she must pass a written comprehensive exam on that material. Once a student has passed the comprehensive exam, he or she is accepted into doctoral candidacy and may begin the research-course sequence and progress toward the dissertation.

DSW Dissertation Process

Once the doctoral student has successfully completed the clinical preceptorship, passed the clinical oral, and passed the comprehensive exam, the student may begin the dissertation process. The doctoral student will secure a dissertation chair approved by the Doctoral Director and form a dissertation committee that will consist of three members: the Dissertation Chair, a content expert, and a methodologist who have been approved by the Chair.

The doctoral student will then embark upon the clinical dissertation. This process includes successfully completing the four-course research sequence, developing a successful clinical and/or leadership dissertation proposal, securing university Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, gathering and analyzing data, and defending the completed clinical dissertation.

Students will work closely with and under the guidance of their Dissertation Chair to develop the clinical and/or leadership dissertation proposal, which will ultimately be orally presented to the dissertation committee for approval. Once approved, the doctoral student must secure

Institutional Review Board approval for research on human subjects and may proceed to gather data. Once all data has been gathered, analyzed and the clinical dissertation has been written, the doctoral student will present an oral defense of his or her study to the committee and the public.

Students must enroll in four semester hours of dissertation supervision upon the successful completion of the research-course sequence. They may take all four semester hours at one time in the summer semester of their third year, or enroll in two semester hours each in the summer and fall semesters of the fourth program year. Starting in the beginning of their fifth year in the program, students continuing the dissertation process must register for a one semester hour of dissertation supervision each semester until successfully defending the dissertation. The dissertation must be completed no later the fifth year in the program. In rare circumstances, students may apply for a one-year extension to complete the dissertation in six years.

Deadline for Dissertation Defense

Semester	Date
December Graduation	November 1
May Graduation	March 15
August Graduation	July 1

Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
 - Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations.
 - Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas.
 - Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior.
 - Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession.
 - Social workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams.
 - Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective.
 - Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
 - Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status.
 - Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim.

- Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power.
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
 - Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education.
 - Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights.
 - Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.
 4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
 - Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice.
 - Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.
 5. Engage in Policy Practice
 - Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels.
 - Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development.
 - Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro-mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings.
 - Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation.
 6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 - Social workers value the importance of human relationships.
 - Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 - Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness.
 - Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies.
 - Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.
 7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 - Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 - Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness.
 - Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process.
 - Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.
 8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 - Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 - Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies.
 - Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals.
 - Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration.
 9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
 - Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 - Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness.
 - Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes.

- Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

10. Teach Clinical Social Work Effectively

- While not a Council on Social Work Education competency, the School of Social Work has added effective teaching as a program outcome because all students take a class on teaching and practice teaching while in the program.