Program Overview

The School of Social Work offers the Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) degree with a major in Advanced Practice Leadership, which prepares students for advanced specialized practice. The degree is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. Social work practice at the M.S.W. level shares a common core of knowledge, values, and skills. Throughout the curriculum, the School emphasizes social justice and professional ethics. The M.S.W. degree prepares graduates for a wide variety of positions in many diverse, interesting fields that address human needs.

Application Requirements

The items listed below are required for admission consideration for applicable semesters of entry during the current academic year. Submission instructions, additional details, and changes to admission requirements for semesters other than the current academic year can be found on The Graduate College's website (http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu). International students should review the International Admission Documents webpage (http://mycatalog.txstate.edu/graduate/admission-documents/international/) for additional requirements.

- completed online application
- $55 nonrefundable application fee
- or
- $90 nonrefundable application fee for applications with international credentials
- GRE not required
- departmental application
- resume/CV (maximum two pages)
- statement of purpose
- interview
- baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited university
- official transcripts from each institution where course credit was granted
- minimum 3.0 GPA in the last 60 hours of undergraduate course work (plus any completed graduate courses)

TOEFL or IELTS Scores

Non-native English speakers who do not qualify for an English proficiency waiver:
- official TOEFL iBT scores required with a 78 overall
- official IELTS (academic) scores required with a 6.5 overall and
- minimum individual module scores of 6.0
- This program does not offer admission if the scores above are not met.

Degree Requirements

The Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) degree with a major in Advanced Practice Leadership (Online Regular Non-BSW Holders Concentration) requires 62 semester credit hours. The first (foundation) year curriculum focuses on the generic foundation knowledge and skills necessary for general social work practice, while the second (advanced) year focuses on specialized practice.

Course Requirements

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Prescribed Elective

Choose 3 hours from the following:

- SOWK 5300E Social Work and Health Care
- SOWK 5301 School Social Work
- SOWK 5302 Hip Hop and Social Justice for Individual and Community Change
- SOWK 5303 Spirituality in Social Work Practice
- SOWK 5304 Adventure Therapy: Theory, Research & Practice
- SOWK 5312 Social Work Intervention in Drug Addiction & Abuse
- SOWK 5315 Social Work Intervention in Child Abuse & Neglect
- SOWK 5328 Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Aging
- SOWK 5332 Helping Troops Transition Back to their Families and Communities: The Invisible Wounds of War

Total Hours 62
Field Practicum
Field practicum (internship) involves the student intern working in a social service agency under the intensive supervision of a licensed master social worker. All regular track students (full- and part-time) must complete a total of 20 semester credit hours of field practicum. Regular track students complete two internships: (1) foundation field is 360 contact hours in a field practicum and (2) advanced field is 540 contact hours in a different field practicum. MSW advanced track students complete this one latter internship only; advanced field, consisting of 540 contact hours. Regular track students complete a first-year field practicum while concurrently enrolled in other classes. Part-time students will complete their field courses in two semesters. In the second year, full-time advanced standing students complete field practicum, SOWK 5378 and SOWK 5979, during the spring term. Part-time students will complete their field courses in two semesters. The first semester students will complete SOWK 5378 and SOWK 5379. In the second and final semester, part-time students will complete SOWK 5679.

Comprehensive Examination Requirement
All candidates for graduate degrees must pass one or more comprehensive examinations. Students seeking to be readmitted into the MSW program after being separated for three consecutive semesters must take a CLEP-type of exam to demonstrate mastery of the content already taken within the MSW program. If the student does not pass with a score of 70% they may be asked to review material in the content area(s) of deficiency.

Students must take the MSW Foundation Competency Exam prior to enrollment in Advanced level MSW Courses. Students must also take the MSW Advanced Competency Exam and meet all Field Office requirements prior to enrollment in Advanced Practicum (Field Placement). To be eligible for graduation a student must complete all degree requirements, pass the MSW Competency Exam with a grade of 70%, and must have a minimum Texas State GPA of 3.0 in MSW courses.

Master’s level courses in Social Work: SOWK

Courses Offered
Social Work (SOWK)
SOWK 5300E. Social Work and Health Care.
This elective course provides a generalist view of social work practice in mental health and public health, considering the social problems that affect health care, and ethical and effective intervention strategies and service delivery systems. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5300F. International Social Work.
This course covers advanced theoretical and practical approaches to empowerment, social and economic justice, and human rights. Particular cultures and specific global problems are examined in-depth to promote student acquisition of an international human rights framework. The course focuses on international human rights in a global context from an interdisciplinary standpoint.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

This graduate course focuses on applied social justice and human rights in a global context from an interdisciplinary standpoint. The course involves both experiential and classroom learning with significant international-based service learning component that intentionally integrates community service, academic learning, and civic learning.
3 Credit Hours. 12 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

This course assists students in expanding an intermediate level of knowledge, values, and skills in the area of ethics in social work. The NASW Code of Ethics (US) and the National Codes of Ethics from the International Federation of Social Workers are used.
3 Credit Hours. 12 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5300I. Social Work and Social Services in Canterbury.
The purpose of this course is to assist the student in exploring social work processes, social service provision and services to special populations in Canterbury, England. Agency visits or primary research will guide learning.
3 Credit Hours. 12 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5300J. Introduction to Trauma Informed Care.
This advanced course focuses on culturally relevant knowledge and skills for theory-based, therapeutic assessment and intervention with diverse families and groups. The course emphasizes systemic, critical analysis of contemporary mental health practice using a psychosocial, strengths-based framework. Prerequisite: SOWK 5411 with a grade of ‘C’ or better.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5300K. Innovative Community Engagement with Vulnerable Populations.
This service-learning, Study-in-America course will require students to identify, examine, and critically analyze social service programs which provide services to vulnerable populations. The course involves travel to and participation in service-learning/volunteer activities in Louisiana.
3 Credit Hours. 5 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
SOWK 5300M. ADVANCED INTERVENTION WITH INTIMATE PARTNERSHIPS (COUPLES). This advanced course focuses on culturally relevant knowledge and skills for theory based, therapeutic assessment and intervention with diverse intimate partnerships. The course emphasizes systemic, critical analysis of contemporary mental health practice using a psychosocial, strengths-based framework. Prerequisite: SOWK 5411 with a grade of 'C' or better and departmental approval.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing|Topics
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5301. School Social Work. This course explores the role of social workers in the school setting. Students learn about the unique challenges of providing social services within the educational environment. Interventions for working with children and youth in at risk situations are also introduced and practiced.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5302. Hip Hop and Social Justice for Individual and Community Change. Contemporary issues of equity and justice are investigated for potential influences on health and well-being. Students will compare professional application of Hip Hop integrated strategies within therapeutic, education, physical health, and afterschool and summer programs. Students will learn the interdisciplinary aspects of community-based strategies to promote equity and justice.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5303. Spirituality in Social Work Practice. This course provides an advanced-level framework of knowledge, values, and skills necessary for ethical and effective spiritually-relevant practice. It examines spirituality as an integral component of a strengths-based approach to social work practice with diverse and/or vulnerable clients. It integrates a contemporary global perspective with critical analysis and assessment.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5304. Adventure Therapy: Theory, Research & Practice. The course examines theory, practice and research in adventure therapy and engages the learner in hands on practice experience in outdoor, adventure therapy activities. The course guides students towards best practices in the use of adventure therapy as an innovative intervention that can be used in social work practice and other disciplines, with individuals, families and groups in a variety of settings.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5308. Human Behavior in Individual and Family Social Environments. This foundation graduate course presents individual and family dynamics across the life cycle, centering on human development, individual and group strengths, and the effects of cultural diversity. It enhances critical thinking and assessment skills about human behavior in social environments, and incorporates material on professional values, ethics, and social justice.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Multicultural Content
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5309. Human Behavior in Local and Global Social Environments. This foundation graduate course explores human functioning in the environment by studying families, groups, communities, organizations, and societies in local and global contexts. Through learning content on diversity, populations at risk, and social and economic justice, students build critical thinking and assessment skills using developmental and eco-systems frameworks.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Multicultural Content
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5310. Social Welfare Policy and Services. This foundation course studies the United States' social welfare system, emphasizing how social welfare policies affect diverse populations. Topics include social welfare history; and policy development, implementation, evaluation, and values.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5312. Social Work Intervention in Drug Addiction & Abuse. This course focuses on commonly used and abused drugs as well as the dynamics and treatment of addiction. It emphasizes social work intervention aimed at addiction prevention and treatment.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5313. Foundation Social Work Practice I. This foundation course explores generalist social work theory and practice methodology in problem-solving with individuals, families, and groups, emphasizing data collection, assessment, intervention planning, and evaluation.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5314. Foundation Social Work Practice II. This foundation skill-development course emphasizes generalist social work practice with task groups, organizations, and communities.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5315. Social Work Intervention in Child Abuse & Neglect. This course considers child welfare services available to abused and neglected children in their own homes, in substitute care, and through the community, emphasizing social work intervention with children and their families.

3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
SOWK 5316. Foundation Social Work Practice III.
This foundation course develops the student's interpersonal and communication skills with clients and other professionals. Students must demonstrate competence in interviewing, assessment, and planning skills. Students learn to collect data to support assessment, plan intervention, and evaluate practice. Prerequisite: Department approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5317. Social Work Research.
This foundation course builds introductory scientific research skills in critical thinking and knowledge of program and practice evaluation. It prepares students to read, interpret, and critique research with skepticism and rigor and to perform various research and social work practice activities. Prerequisite: SOWK 5308 and SOWK 5313 both with grades of 'B' or better.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5319. Diagnostic Assessment.
This advanced course examines how individuals, families, and groups interact with the social environment, emphasizing mental health and adaptive capacity, theories of the etiology and development of mental and emotional disorders, and how culture affects mental health. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

This advanced skill-development course emphasizes social work practice in managing small and large organizations. Students develop knowledge and skills in social work management and supervision in non-profit and public organizations. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

This advanced course, a study of social legislation affecting disadvantaged persons, emphasizes policy analysis, values, and advocacy through studying social policy history; developing, implementing, and evaluating policy; and influencing social and economic justice. (MULT) Prerequisite: Department approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Multicultural Content
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5323. Advanced Social Work Research.
This advanced course builds knowledge and skills for systematically evaluating programs and practice. It enhances effective and ethical social work practice by teaching skills necessary to design, implement, and empirically assess intervention with client and programs. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5324. Advanced Direct Practice with Families.
This advanced course focuses on theories, research, and models of practice with families. It emphasizes a systems orientation to assessment and intervention, and integrates issues of self-awareness and human diversity. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5325. Advanced Administrative Leadership Practice III: Challenges and Innovations.
This advanced course expands knowledge and skills by exploring how theories, supervision and management interventions, and social work values are applied to diverse organizational environments. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5326. MC/MP Advanced Direct Practice with Individuals.
This advanced course examines intervention theories and builds specialized skills for effective, ethical practice with individuals. It examines how culture influences individuals, and discusses how to assess individuals from multiple perspectives. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5327. Advanced Direct Practice with Groups.
This advanced course develops effective, ethical group practice skills, including assessment from multiple perspectives, facilitation of group process and intervention, evaluation, and addressing needs of diverse populations. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5328. Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Aging.
This interdisciplinary course provides a graduate-level foundation in knowledge and skills used to address a wide range of needs among the aging population, their families, and support systems. Biophysical, psychosocial, and environmental perspectives will be integrated into development of culturally competent approaches to work with elders in many fields.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5329. Organizational Development.
This advanced course examines organizational and inter-organizational social service delivery contexts; how funding, mandate, and organizational arrangements influence services; and factors to consider in modifying existing organizations. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
SOWK 5332. Helping Troops Transition Back to their Families and Communities: The Invisible Wounds of War.
The course examines topics at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community levels related to troops who are returning from current combat operations and their families. It reviews the needs, community resources, and policies in place for helping them and their families make this transition.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5339. Selected Topics in Social Work.
Students study relevant social work topics in depth. Topics, such as social work in schools or in health care, are selected according to students' needs and professional trends. Repeatable for credit.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Exclude from 3-peat Processing
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

This one-semester course highlights individualized reading, independent study and projects, and guided instruction. It is offered by invitation of the professor and with the consent of the MSW Coordinator. It may not be repeated for credit.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5370. Advanced Program Planning and Grant-Based Resource Development.
This advanced course emphasizes social work practice in building and developing non-profit and public human services organizations. Course topics include: determining organizational needs and priorities; identifying resources to address needs and priorities; and pursuing grant-funded resources to address organizational needs. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

This advanced course focuses on observational and interview-based evaluations of organizational functioning related to change, diversity, ethical decision-making, budgeting, and implementation of action plans. The course also focuses on development of supervisory strategies to effectively lead and transform an organization. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5372. Advanced Diagnostic Assessment and Intervention with Individuals.
This advanced course focuses on culturally relevant diagnostic assessment of and intervention with individuals based on current theory. The course emphasizes critical analysis of contemporary mental health practice using a psychosocial framework. (MULT) Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Multicultural Content
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5373. Advanced Intervention with Families and Groups.
This advanced course focuses on culturally-relevant knowledge and skills for theory-based, therapeutic assessment and intervention with diverse families and groups. The course emphasizes systemic, critical analysis of contemporary mental health practice using a psychosocial, strengths-based framework. (MULT) Prerequisite: Departmental approval.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Course Attribute(s): Multicultural Content
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5376. Foundation Field Practicum I.
This course is an integrative seminar for generalist social work practice in social service agencies applying micro, mezzo, and macro level knowledge. The content of the course includes social work competencies, ethical values, professional development, and basic knowledge of social work practice and the profession overall. Prerequisite: SOWK 5308 with a grade of 'C' or better and SOWK 5313 with a grade of 'B' or better.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5377. Foundation Field Practicum II.
This course is taken in conjunction with SOWK 5378 as Part I of the advanced/final field practicum courses for part-time students requiring completion of a minimum of 250 hours of internship in a social service agency. This course requires application of classroom knowledge to address complex level social justice issues. Prerequisite: SOWK 5322 and SOWK 5323 and SOWK 5370 and SOWK 5371 and SOWK 5372 and SOWK 5373 all with grades of 'C' or better and a minimum 3.0 Overall GPA. Corequisite: SOWK 5378 with a grade of 'C' or better.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

SOWK 5378. Advanced Field Practicum 1.
This course is the first part of the advanced MSW field practicum in which students participate in a field seminar course in conjunction with completing field practicum hours at an agency. Field seminar provides the opportunity for students to apply and critically analyze social work knowledge gained in core. Prerequisites: SOWK 5322 and SOWK 5323 and SOWK 5370 and SOWK 5371 and SOWK 5372 and SOWK 5373 all with grades of 'C' or better and a minimum 3.0 Overall GPA. Corequisite: SOWK 5379 or SOWK 5979 either with a grade of 'C' or better.
3 Credit Hours. 3 Lecture Contact Hours. 0 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5379. Advanced Field Practicum 2.
This course is taken in conjunction with SOWK 5378 as Part I of the advanced/final field practicum courses for part-time students requiring completion of a minimum of 250 hours of internship in a social service agency. This course requires application of classroom knowledge to address complex level social justice issues. Prerequisite: SOWK 5322 and SOWK 5323 and SOWK 5370 and SOWK 5371 and SOWK 5372 and SOWK 5373 all with grades of 'C' or better and a minimum 3.0 Overall GPA. Corequisite: SOWK 5378 with a grade of 'C' or better.
3 Credit Hours. 0 Lecture Contact Hours. 20 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5410. Foundation Field I (Concurrent).
This foundation course consists of supervised beginning generalist social work practice in agencies for a minimum of 250 clock hours, applying classroom knowledge to work with individuals, families, groups, and communities. Prerequisites: Departmental approval.
4 Credit Hours. 1 Lecture Contact Hour. 20 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter

SOWK 5411. Foundation Field II (Concurrent).
This second foundation course continues supervised generalist social work practice in agencies for a minimum of 250 clock hours, applying classroom knowledge to work with individuals, families, groups, and communities. Prerequisites: SOWK 5410 with a grade of 'C' or better and departmental approval.
4 Credit Hours. 1 Lecture Contact Hour. 20 Lab Contact Hours.
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
SOWK 5477. Foundation Field Practicum II.
This course is experiential learning through application of complex 
micro, mezzo, and macro level knowledge in social service agencies. 
This is the second course of the foundation practicum sequence, and 
requires completion of 200 hours. Prerequisite: SOWK 5308 with a grade 
of 'C' or better and SOWK 5313 with a grade of 'B' or better. Corequisite: 
SOWK 5376 with a grade of 'C' or better. 
4 Credit Hours. 0 Lecture Contact Hours. 27 Lab Contact Hours. 
Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

SOWK 5679. Advanced Field Practicum 2.
This is the second part of the advanced practicum course sequence for 
part-time students requiring completion of a minimum of 250 hours in 
a social service agency. This course continues the experiential learning 
process initiated in SOWK 5379 including application of classroom 
knowledge to address complex level social justice issues. Prerequisite: 
SOWK 5378 and SOWK 5379 both with grades of 'C' or better and a 
minimum 3.0 Overall GPA. 
6 Credit Hours. 0 Lecture Contact Hours. 20 Lab Contact Hours. 
Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit

SOWK 5979. Advanced Field Practicum 2.
This course is taken in conjunction with SOWK 5378 as part of the 
advanced/final field practicum courses for full-time students requiring 
completion of a minimum of 250 hours of internship in a social service 
agency. This course requires application of classroom knowledge to 
address complex level social justice issues. Prerequisite: SOWK 5322 
and SOWK 5323 and SOWK 5370 and SOWK 5371 and SOWK 5372 and 
SOWK 5373 all with grades of 'C' or better and a minimum 3.0 Overall 
GPA. Corequisite: SOWK 5378 with a grade of 'C' or better. 
9 Credit Hours. 0 Lecture Contact Hours. 35 Lab Contact Hours. 
Grade Mode: Credit/No Credit