

# MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

## Program Director

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## Program Description

WELCOME! The social work profession combines knowledge skill and compassion to address the common social challenges people encounter. The Master of Social Work program prepares graduates for advanced social work practice with a wide range of clients within a wide range of agency settings.

The MSW program's focus is on work with individuals and families. The organizing framework for the M.S.W. program at Youngstown State University is the strengths-based empowerment approach that emphasizes:

- helping individuals, families, and communities recognize and utilize their capacities;
- gain awareness of available options;
- understand the barriers and obstacles they may face;
- reinforce their hopes and aspirations; and
- integrate internal and external resources to improve the quality of their lives.

The purpose of the M.S.W. program is to develop competent, ethical, and effective professionals capable of utilizing advanced knowledge, skills, and values to promote social justice in the delivery of social services within a diverse society. The integration social work knowledge, values, and skills are achieved through both academic coursework and field placement experiences.

Graduates find employment the practice areas of mental health, medical social work, family services, schools, substance abuse treatment, developmental disabilities, child welfare, the courts among others. Graduates of the Master of Social Work program are eligible to apply for licensure as a Licensed Social Worker (LSW) and a Licensed Independent Social Worker (LISW). Licensure is required for the majority of positions in the human services employment sector.

## Program Locations

A full-time two-year program and part-time three- and four-year programs are available on the Youngstown campus. An advanced standing program is also available on the main (Youngstown) campus for students that have completed a Bachelor of Social Work degree. Courses on the Youngstown campus are offered on Saturdays and weekday evenings. Students should also be available at additional times (18 hours per week) for field internship engagement that most frequently occurs during daytime, weekday hours.

One-, two-, three-, and four-year programs are available in partnership with Lorain County Community College in Elyria, Ohio and Lakeland County Community College in Kirtland, Ohio. Our Advanced Standing (39 hour) programs are also available for students who have completed a Bachelor of Social Work degree at the Lorain and Lakeland community college sites. Face-to-face courses at these location are offered on Saturdays with other courses in online format. Students should be available at additional times (18 hours per week) for field internship engagement that most frequently occurs during daytime, weekday hours.

## Accreditation

The Master of Social Work program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education <http://www.cswe.org/>. Most recent accreditation was achieved in 2021. The program will be due for reaccreditation in 2028. Graduates of the MSW program are eligible for a license in social work (LISW)

granted by the Ohio Counselor, Social Work, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board.

## Admission Requirements

Applicants to the M.S.W. program are encouraged to review the admission criteria listed below, as they exceed the minimum standards established by the College of Graduate Studies. Meeting minimum criteria does not guarantee admission. Applicants are evaluated by the Social Work Department's Graduate Admissions Committee to ensure that qualifications are evaluated in a manner consistent with the M.S.W. program's requirements.

Admission to the M.S.W. program is based on the following criteria that allow evaluation of the student's potential to succeed in graduate-level social work education, as well as an assessment of their ability to engage in ethical and competent social work practice in a diverse society.

### Regular Admission

In addition to the minimum College of Graduate Studies admissions requirements, all applicants must meet the following requirements for regular admission to the Master of Social Work program:

- an undergraduate degree, preferably in a social science, from an accredited college or university;
- a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above (on a 4.0 scale) in all undergraduate coursework;
- work or volunteer experience related to preparation for professional social work practice;
- three letters of recommendation completed on official forms. Recommendations should include one academic source, one professional source, and one additional source from either of the aforementioned;
- a professional statement reflecting how completion of the M.S.W. will impact upon the student's professional goals and objectives; and if applicable, a description of the applicant's previous social work/human service work experience
- an optional personal interview and/or additional information as requested by the program's admission committee.

### Provisional Admission

Applicants with a undergraduate cumulative grade point average of 2.7 to 2.99 (on a 4.0 scale) may be admitted provisionally. Provisional students must maintain a 3.0 GPA to continue in the program. Provisionally admitted students can be changed to regular when requirements for regular admission have been met.

### advanced standing Program ADMISSION (39 semester hours)

Applicants who have a Bachelor's of Social Work degree from a Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E) program are automatically considered for advanced standing status. The advanced standing program permits students to complete all requirements of the M.S.W. degree in 39 semester hours. The regular program is completed in 60 semester hours. The Advanced Standing MSW program can be completed in as early as one year. However, students may choose to complete the required 39 semester hours within two, three, or four years.

Applicants seeking admission to the Advanced Standing Program must meet all admission requirements for the Master of Social Work Program in addition to the following:

- possess a Bachelor of Social Work degree from a C.S.W.E. accredited program within seven years prior to enrollment; individuals who completed their degree prior to seven years and have worked in the field of social work you may petition for an exception to the MSW Committee.

- have achieved a cumulative grade point average of at least a 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in all undergraduate coursework or;
- have at least a 2.7 overall GPA and achieved A's and B's in all junior and senior level social work courses.

Qualified students who have been convicted of misdemeanor or felony offenses may be admitted to the program. However, field internship opportunities may be restricted due to agency prohibitions pertaining to the engagement of students in agency work in possession of criminal records. Additionally, students should be aware that state licensure in social work may not be possible for individuals with past convictions. Students with convictions are advised to become informed of requirements pertaining to social work licensure and possible avenues of appeal as they consider enrollment in the MSW program and the limitations prior convictions may impose on their ability to practice the profession of social work.

## Graduate Faculty

**Mari L. Alschuler, Ph.D., Associate Professor**  
Reflective journaling; creative arts therapies; LGBTQI issues; student veterans; clinical supervision; group work; macro practice

**Dana Davis, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Chair**  
Harm reduction; housing; teaching methodology

**Ronald E. Davis, Ph.D., Assistant Professor**

**Dessalegn Guyo, PhD, Assistant Professor**

**Charles T. Morgan, M.S., Lecturer**

**Meenakshi Venkataraman, Ph.D., Assistant Professor**  
Psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of adult mental illness; ancient Indian culture; gerontology; research in pedagogy; social work evaluation; international social work research

**Jennifer Walker, M.S., Lecturer**

**Sherri Harper Woods, D.M., Assistant Professor**  
Integrating spirituality into the therapeutic healing process; trauma-informed care; service learning and civic engagement

## Traditional Program

Sixty semester hours of coursework are required for completion of the Master of Social Work degree. The program may be completed in two years, three years, or four years all beginning in the fall semester of each year. Foundation social work content is comprised of eight courses and two field practicums with an emphasis on the following areas:

- social work values and ethics,
- diversity,
- populations at risk,
- social and economic justice,
- human behavior in the social environment,
- social welfare policy and services,
- social work practice,
- research, and
- business skills for social workers.

The foundation field practicum is designed to provide the student with learning experiences that promote and integrate the achievement of foundation objectives. The foundation field practicum is taken in two consecutive semesters for a total of six credit hours (480 clock hours). All social work courses are 3 semester hours.

Advanced content areas consist of eight courses and two advanced field practicum with an emphasis on knowledge, skills, and values for advanced

direct social work practice with individuals and families. The advanced field practicum is designed to provide learning experiences that promote and integrate the achievement of advanced program objectives. The advanced practicum is taken in two consecutive semesters for a total of six credit hours (540 clock hours).

### PROGRESSION OPTIONS:

**MAIN CAMPUS:** The 60 semester hour program can be completed in 2, 3 or 4 years (no summer courses). Courses are offered Saturdays and weekday evenings. Students engage in field internships throughout the 2 year option, in the second and third years of the 3 year option, and the third and fourth year of the 4 year option. Field internships most frequently occur daytime business hours.

**LAKELAND and LORAIN CAMPUSES:** The 60 hour program is completed in 2, 3 or 4 years (no summer courses). Students enroll in two or three course per semester. Courses are offered on Saturdays and online. Field internships occur in the final two years of the program. Field internships most frequently occur daytime business hours.

### Course Outline: Traditional Program

COURSE	TITLE	S.H.
<b>Foundation Courses</b>		
SCWK 6900	Human Behavior and the Social Environment 1	3
SCWK 6901	Oppression and Cultural Competence	3
SCWK 6902	Social Welfare Policy and Program Analysis	3
SCWK 6903	Social Work Foundation Practice 1	3
SCWK 6904	Field Education 1	3
SCWK 6905	Human Behavior and the Social Environment 2	3
SCWK 6906	Business Skills for Social Workers	3
SCWK 6907	Social Work Foundation Practice 2	3
SCWK 6908	Research	3
SCWK 6909	Field Education 2	3
<b>Advanced Courses</b>		
SCWK 7000	Advanced Direct Practice 1	3
SCWK 7002	Trauma Informed Practices in Social Work	3
SCWK 7004	Practice Evaluation	3
SCWK 7008	Social Work and the DSM	3
SCWK 7009	Field Education 3	3
SCWK 7003	Theory and Practice of Supervision	3
SCWK 7010	Advanced Direct Practice 2	3
SCWK 7012	Field Education 4	3
SCWK 7013	Capstone	3
Graduate Elective		3
<b>Total Semester Hours</b>		<b>60</b>

## Advanced Standing Program (39 hours)

PROGRAM PROGRESSION: (Main, Lakeland and Lorain campuses)

Applicants who have a Bachelor's of Social Work degree from a Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E) program are automatically considered for advanced standing status. The advanced standing program permits students to complete all requirements of the M.S.W. degree in 39 semester hours. The regular program is completed in 60 semester hours. The Advanced Standing MSW program can be completed in as early as one year. However, students may choose to complete the required 39 semester hours within two, three, or four years.

Applicants seeking admission to the Advanced Standing Program must meet all admission requirements for the Master of Social Work Program in addition to the following:

- possess a Bachelor of Social Work degree from a C.S.W.E. accredited program within six years prior to enrollment;
- have achieved a cumulative grade point average of at least a 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in all undergraduate coursework or;
- have at least a 2.7 overall GPA and achieved A's and B's in all junior and senior level social work courses.

Course Outline: Advanced Standing Program (39 hours)

COURSE	TITLE	S.H.
SCWK 6906	Business Skills for Social Workers	3
SCWK 6910	Integrated Foundation (Graduate Elective)	3
SCWK 7000	Advanced Direct Practice 1	3
SCWK 7002	Trauma Informed Practices in Social Work	3
SCWK 7003	Theory and Practice of Supervision	3
SCWK 7004	Practice Evaluation	3
SCWK 7008	Social Work and the DSM	3
SCWK 7009	Field Education 3	3
SCWK 7010	Advanced Direct Practice 2	3
SCWK 7012	Field Education 4	3
SCWK 7013	Capstone	3
Graduate Elective		3
Graduate Elective		3
<b>Total Semester Hours</b>		<b>39</b>

## Learning Outcomes

The Master of Social Work Program at Youngstown State University is accredited by the Council for Social Work Education (CSWE) the leading accrediting body of social work education. As a result, our Learning Outcomes are dictated by the CSWE and continue to reflect the most up-to-date standards for social work education. These Learning Outcomes focus on the mastery of ten core competencies set by CSWE and reflect specific knowledge, values, skills, and resulting practice behaviors which guide assessment of student achievement.

Coursework contained in the MSW curriculum contributes to student achievement of these competencies. Foundation practice behaviors and advanced practice behaviors serve to provide a means to evaluate the extent to which these competencies have been met by students at the foundation and advanced practice levels of graduate social work education. These competencies are evaluated through the classroom and student engagement in social work field internships.

Learning Outcomes (Competencies):

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior
2. Engage diversity and difference in practice
3. Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice
4. Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice
5. Engage in policy practice
6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities
7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities
8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities
9. Evaluate (practice with) individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities

## Graduate Courses

### SCWK 6900 Human Behavior and the Social Environment 1 3 s.h.

An overview of normal individual development throughout the life span. Developmental stages, tasks, and circumstances as well as diversity in individual development will be examined. The influence of biological, psychological, and social systems on individual development throughout the life span constitutes the organizing theme for the course.

### SCWK 6901 Oppression and Cultural Competence 3 s.h.

Examination of the history, demographic trends, and cultures of diverse groups who have been disenfranchised based on differences that include race, gender, age, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, religion, and ability. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the experience of oppression among diverse groups and the implications for social work practice.

### SCWK 6902 Social Welfare Policy and Program Analysis 3 s.h.

An historical perspective on the development of social problems as well as a critical analysis of social welfare institutions, programs, policy efforts, and services. Attention is given to the consequences of social and economic injustice and the effects that policy initiatives have upon vulnerable populations.

### SCWK 6903 Social Work Foundation Practice 1 3 s.h.

A foundation methods course based on an advanced generalist social work practice perspective. This course demonstrates application of the problem-solving process or the planned change process in the context of the strengths perspective. Attention will be placed on planning interventions with diverse individuals, families, and small groups.

### SCWK 6904 Field Education 1 3 s.h.

Professionally supervised practice in approved community agencies. Focus will be on increasing the student's analytic skills and repertoire of intervention modalities. The course is based on foundation coursework that emphasizes advanced generalist practice while promoting a strengths-based approach.

**Concurrent:** SCWK 6903.

### SCWK 6905 Human Behavior and the Social Environment 2 3 s.h.

An overview of theories and knowledge of the behavior of groups, organizations, and communities as well as the impact of these systems on individual behavior. Special emphasis is given to understanding the influence of mesosystems and macrosystems on social service organizations. Empowerment-based policies are explored.

**Prereq.:** SCWK 6900.

### SCWK 6906 Business Skills for Social Workers 3 s.h.

Overview of the principles, concepts, and terminology related to social work business practice. Topics include time management, financially responsible practice, managed care issues, organizational efficiency and effectiveness, outcome measurements, performance evaluation, marketing for nonprofit organizations, community building and collaborative efforts. State-of-the-art technology will be reviewed.

**Prereq.:** Social Work Majors Only.

### SCWK 6907 Social Work Foundation Practice 2 3 s.h.

A foundation methods course based on an advanced generalist social work practice perspective. This course demonstrates application of the problem-solving process or planned change process in the context of the strengths perspective. Attention will be placed on planning interventions with diverse organizations and communities.

**Prereq.:** SCWK 6903.

### SCWK 6908 Research 3 s.h.

A review of the scientific method, quantitative and qualitative research strategies, and related concepts. Principles of conceptualization, research design, sampling, instrumentation, descriptive and inferential data analysis, scientific report writing, and the significance of research for social work practice will be emphasized. Attention will be placed on developing strengths-based performance indicators.

**Prereq.:** Social Work Majors Only.

**SCWK 6909 Field Education 2 3 s.h.**

Professionally supervised practice in approved community agencies. Focus will be on increasing both the student's analytic skills and repertoire of intervention modalities. The course is based on foundation coursework that emphasizes advanced generalist practice while promoting a strengths-based approach.

**Concurrent:** SCWK 6907.

**SCWK 6910 Integrated Foundation 3 s.h.**

An advanced course that emphasizes social work values, ethical dilemmas/implications, and the development of practice methods that integrate a strengths-based empowerment approach with individuals, families, and groups.

**Prereq.:** Social Work Majors Only.

**SCWK 7000 Advanced Direct Practice 1 3 s.h.**

The development of adversities experienced by individuals from conception through adulthood. The course employs a multisystems ecological perspective in discussing risk conditions, stressful life events, and the interplay of risk and protective factors that appear to be common to many childhood disorders and problems.

**Prereq.:** Social Work Majors Only.

**SCWK 7001 Substance Use Recovery Practices in Social Work 3 s.h.**

This course explores traditional and contemporary theories related to substance misuse and substance use disorders. Students will develop beginning-level practice application skills for intervening with individuals regarding their substance misuse. The course surveys a range of evidence-based approaches to: screening, assessment, and diagnosis of substance misuse/substance use disorder and related problems; determining the nature and severity of problems associated with substance use; evaluating readiness to change; and, treatment planning and intervention to ameliorate substance use problems. Content of this course meets the 40 hours of chemical dependency specific education in: theories of addiction, counseling procedures and strategies with addicted populations, group process and techniques working with addicted populations, assessment and diagnosis of addiction, treatment planning, ethics. Throughout the course we practice the ethical and professional use of language related to substance misuse, as well individuals engaged in addictive behavior and experiencing substance use disorders.

**Prereq.:** MSW student.

**SCWK 7002 Trauma Informed Practices in Social Work 3 s.h.**

Students will learn about trauma in a way that is relevant to clinical work through a bio-psycho-social-spiritual lens. The course will assist students in developing beginning trauma competency in clinical social work practice by introducing students to the core concepts (general theory and foundational knowledge), informing evidence-based assessment and treatment for trauma-informed care. Strength-based and empowerment practices will be highlighted along with a focus on the identification of protective and promotive factors that foster resiliency and post-traumatic growth.

**Prereq.:** Social Work Majors Only.

**SCWK 7003 Theory and Practice of Supervision 3 s.h.**

Explores advanced techniques for evaluating systems of all sizes. Methods and strategies for conducting program evaluation and single system research will be emphasized. Special emphasis will be placed on developing strengths-based performance indicators.

**Prereq.:** Social Work Majors Only.

**SCWK 7004 Practice Evaluation 3 s.h.**

This course examines social work with the elderly through critical analysis of policy, specific human behavior content, and research. Students will critique practice interventions, program design, and service strategies specific to social work practice in settings for the aged.

**SCWK 7008 Social Work and the DSM 3 s.h.**

This course examines social work in mental health and chemical dependency with an emphasis on the DSM and ICD. Application of assessment is through a bio-psycho-social-spiritual perspective with a focus on current practices.

**SCWK 7009 Field Education 3 3 s.h.**

A continuation of SCWK 7000 Advanced Direct Practice I. In addition to developing practice methods that integrate a strengths-based empowerment approach with individuals, this course incorporates theoretical frameworks and constructs from empowerment theory, the ecological perspective, solution-focused practice, the feminist perspective, person-centered practice, and other relevant, brief practice approaches.

**Prereq.:** SCWK 7000.

**SCWK 7010 Advanced Direct Practice 2 3 s.h.**

Advanced field education placement. Students participate in planned experiences that integrate theoretical knowledge, social work practice skills, and social work ethics and values in direct or macro practice settings. Theoretical frameworks address micro and macro concerns respectively by emphasizing empowerment, individual strengths, solution-focused practice, community building, collaboration and organizational structures.

**SCWK 7012 Field Education 4 3 s.h.**

Field Education IV. This course provides opportunities for students to synthesize and integrate previous coursework from their social work education. Theoretical and experiential assignments are utilized to assist students with increased self-awareness and to prepare them for the transition from college to advanced professional social work practice that emphasizes the strengths-based approach.

**SCWK 7013 Capstone 3 s.h.**

Advanced seminar on selected topics in social work theory, methods, and research. May be repeated with different topics.

**SCWK 7014 Selected Topics in Social Work 3 s.h.****SCWK 7017 Advanced Treatment Planning and Outcomes 3 s.h.**

This course explores advanced techniques for evaluating practice in the field. Scientific methods are applied to the evaluation of social work practice and social work interventions are analyzed. Attention is placed on the student's ability to identify research based treatment modalities and outcomes. Single system design methods will be emphasized. Strengths-based performance indicators are highlighted.

**Prereq.:** MSW student.

**SCWK 7020 Special Topics Elective in Social Work 1-6 s.h.**

An examination of various social work topics and issues of both current and long-standing interest.

**SCWK 7021 MSW Independent Study 1-6 s.h.**

This course involves study under the personal supervision of a faculty member with the approval of the MSW Coordinator. The course demands that student and faculty member choose a topic related to the Social Work field. For successful completion students will tie the topic to at least three different CSWE educational competencies.

**Prereq.:** MSW Student.