Master of Social Work

Built upon the commitment to a strengths perspective of social work practice, the Master of Social Work program (http://socwel.ku.edu/academics/degrees/msw/regular/overview/) offers educational opportunities for those who wish to expand their skills in helping individuals and communities develop their capacities to support and enhance the quality of life for all people. The school recognizes that individuals with a natural skill in helping come from all backgrounds and encourages them to apply.

The Master of Social Work degree prepares graduates for advanced social work practice in 1 of 2 broad areas — clinical social work practice with individuals, families, and groups or macro practice. The first level of the master’s curriculum is a generalist foundation required of all students. The foundation consists of 6 classroom courses and a 2-semester practicum that reflects the generalist intent.

At the advanced level, students choose a concentration in clinical social work practice with a focus in a particular field of practice — child and family, health/mental health, aging — or macro practice. The advanced-level practicum implements students’ choice of concentration.

Full-time students complete the social work degree program in two years. Students admitted for part-time study may extend the program for up to four years (see Completion Plans (http://socwel.ku.edu/sites/socwel.ku.edu/files/docs/Academics/msw/MSW%20Completion%20Plans%202016.pdf)). The regular M.S.W. program is offered on the main KU campus in Lawrence at the Edwards Campus in Overland Park, KS, and in alternating years in the western Kansas program (http://socwel.ku.edu/academics/degrees/msw/westernks/overview/).

The Advanced-Standing Program (http://socwel.ku.edu/academics/degrees/msw/advancedstanding/overview/) admits individuals with B.S.W. degrees and strong academic records. Applicants generally have relevant post-degree work experience.

Social Work & Law

Joint Degree in Social Work and Law

The Juris Doctor/Master of Social Work (http://socwel.drupal.ku.edu/academics/degrees/msw/mswj/overview/) joint degree program combines into 4 years of study the 3-year Juris Doctor program offered by the School of Law and the 2-year M.S.W. degree offered by the School of Social Welfare. The social work practitioner gains an understanding of the legal environment in which he or she works and its impact on social problems. The legal practitioner learns how social problems shape the law. Applicants must apply to and meet the criteria for admission to both schools. Contact each school for separate admission information.

Master of Social Work

Regular M.S.W. Program - 2-Year Full-Time or Part-Time

Applicants must have bachelor’s degrees from accredited universities before beginning the M.S.W. course and field work. Applicants’ undergraduate studies must reflect the successful completion of liberal arts courses, including those in the social sciences and humanities which focus on the development of knowledge in communication; social, biological, and behavioral sciences; history; philosophy and the ways in which knowledge is gained and applied; and the value of a multicultural and diverse society.

Advanced-Standing Program

The Advanced-Standing Program requires a bachelor’s degree from a CSWE-accredited social work program with a grade-point average of at least 3.0. A higher grade-point average is desirable. Applicants who earned their social work bachelor’s degrees within the 2 years before applying to the M.S.W. program must submit a copy of their practicum evaluation as well as a letter of recommendation for graduate studies completed by one of their practice instructors. In addition, all applicants who have been employed in a social work setting should submit a letter of recommendation from at least one supervisor who can address the applicant’s knowledge, skill, and readiness for graduate education.

Admission decisions take into account the applicants’ amount and types of social service experience, letters of recommendation, narrative statement, writing skills, and undergraduate grade-point averages and courses completed.

The Advanced-Standing Program is a full-time 1-year program or part-time 2-year program. To be considered for advanced standing, current seniors should submit transcripts that document their fall semester grades and their successful practicum experience. All applications to either the regular M.S.W. or the Advanced-Standing Program become the property of the University of Kansas.

Learn more about the M.S.W. programs (http://socwel.ku.edu/academics/degrees/msw/regular/overview/).

Admission to the M.S.W. Program

M.S.W. Admission Requirements

• Bachelor’s degree from an accredited university (Regular M.S.W.). Bachelor’s of social work degree from a CSWE-accredited social work program (Advanced Standing).

• Undergraduate grade-point average of 3.0 or above preferred. The admissions committee takes into account special circumstances such as improvement of grades in upper-division or graduate courses. We look for evidence of an applicant’s commitment to the well-being of people and communities; a well-developed sense of self; emotional maturity and the ability to think clearly, creatively, and independently.

• Online application including three electronic reference forms and student-issued transcripts from all previously attended schools regardless of degree status.

• All applicants who have been employed in a social work setting should submit an electronic M.S.W. reference form from at least one supervisor who can address the applicant’s knowledge, skill and readiness for graduate social work education as one of the three references.

• Non-refundable application fee of $65 for domestic students and $85 for international students.

• Graduate Record Examination scores are not required. Applicants are evaluated on undergraduate grade-point average, graduate course work (if any), volunteer and work experience especially related to social work, and evidence of potential for a social work career in the application narrative and references.
Deadlines
The deadline for the Advanced-Standing Program is January 15. The deadline for applications to the regular M.S.W. program (full time or part time) is February 15. Early application is encouraged.

Admission Process for All Programs
M.S.W. degree program students are admitted for fall semester only. Applications may be submitted anytime between Oct. 1 and January 15 (Advanced Standing M.S.W.) or Feb. 15 (Regular M.S.W.). All fully completed applications are reviewed upon receipt. Admission decisions are made in the spring of each year. Advanced-Standing M.S.W. students begin in June; all other M.S.W. students (full time and part time) begin in August.

Learn more about the application process (http://socwel.ku.edu/academics/degrees/msw/regular/admission/).

International Students
International students and students who indicated English as a second language, are required to show proof of English proficiency for admission purposes and must check-in at the Applied English Center (http://www.aec.ku.edu/) (AEC) upon arrival on campus for orientation. This process serves to confirm each student’s level of English proficiency and determine whether English courses will be included as a requirement of the student’s academic program. Note: Students who demonstrate English proficiency at the waiver level or who have earned a degree from one of the specified English-speaking countries listed in the policy (http://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/english-proficiency-international-students/) are not required to check in at the AEC (see eligibility requirements on the Graduate Studies website (https://graduate.ku.edu/english-proficiency-requirements/)).

Note: The need to take English courses may delay your start in or extend the length of the M.S.W. program.

If you are admitted to the M.S.W. program, your admission to the School of Social Welfare is provisional. You must visit the KU International Support Services (http://www.iss.ku.edu/) Office, iss@ku.edu, for your I-20 documentation.

You must also visit the Applied English Center (http://www.aec.ku.edu/), aec@ku.edu.

The International Conference on Social Welfare recommends that before seeking professional education for social work in the United States, a student should complete comparable study available in his or her own country and acquire a minimum of 2 years of social work experience there.

International students also must submit
1. Original bank statements showing evidence of your and/or your sponsor’s financial ability to pay for your educational and living expenses. Adequate health insurance coverage also is required.
2. Evidence of having taken the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) examination within the past 2 years. Minimum scores are subject to change. Please visit the application area of our website for the latest minimum scores.
3. 1 official, original-language copy of your academic records with a certified English translation.

Planning Your Commitment
Students are admitted on either a full- or a part-time basis. In making decisions about full- or part-time study, students should consider that each class requires several hours of preparation each week. The program is demanding; students can expect reading assignments and paper preparation and should be prepared to fulfill practicum commitments averaging 2½ to 3 days a week.

Students admitted part-time take 6 credit hours each semester the first year and the additional 10 hours, including practicum, the second year. Full-time students enroll in 16 credit hours each semester.

M.S.W. Degree Requirements
The School of Social Welfare requires a total of 64 credit hours for the M.S.W. degree, consisting of

• 36 credit hours of classroom work maintaining a grade-point average of 3.0 (B) — a total of 108 grade points on a 4.0 grading scale.¹
• 28 credit hours of field practicum with an S grade for satisfactory performance.
• 2 sequential semesters of 10-credit-hour enrollments are necessary to meet residence requirements.
• Recommendation of the faculty of the School of Social Welfare to the University Registrar that the master’s degree be granted.

¹ Students who maintain grade-point averages of at least 3.0 in the foundation courses are eligible to take additional courses beyond the minimum requirement.

M.S.W. Foundation Curriculum
Social Work Practice (SW 710, SW 711). Based on the school’s unique strengths perspective, courses provide core knowledge and skills essential for working with individuals, families, and groups.

Community and Organizational Practice (SW 713). This practice class gives students an understanding of the core elements of practice in organizations and communities.

Social Policy and Program Analysis (SW 720). Course emphasizes the effect of social problems, policies, and programs on people and gives students the skills to analyze the effectiveness of policies and programs.

Human Behavior in the Social Environment (SW 730). Theoretical underpinnings essential for effective social work practice and for understanding the behavior of individuals, families, groups, and communities.

Social Work Research (SW 740). Course offers students the opportunity to become informed consumers of social-work-relevant research and to develop skill in evaluating the effectiveness of their own work with clients and the effectiveness of the programs in which they work.

Field Practicum (SW 701 and SW 702). Community agencies throughout Kansas and western Missouri offer practicum opportunities for the application of knowledge, values, and skills learned in the classroom. Field experiences for foundation-level students extend the curriculum goal of generalist social work and are designed so that students acquire fundamental competencies and practice skills across multiple social systems.
Foundation Courses
The following courses (http://socwel.drupal.ku.edu/academics/degrees/msw/regu}
knowledge and values of social work. Knowledge and skill areas include program design, managing information, managing people, managing resources, community advocacy, and program evaluation. This concentration prepares students to be program managers, supervisors, agency administrators, program monitors, advocates and evaluators, and social planners with voluntary health and welfare planning agencies; federal, state, and local planning bodies; and advocacy and self-help organizations. Students graduating from the macro practice concentration are eligible for licensure at the LMSW level in the state of Kansas.

The following courses must be taken in the Macro concentration (32 credit hours):

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SW 804</td>
<td>Advanced Field Practicum-Macro Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW 805</td>
<td>Advanced Field Practicum-Macro Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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<td>SW 840</td>
<td>Program Design and Grant Writing</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW 841</td>
<td>Advanced Policy and Programs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW 842</td>
<td>Assessing and Managing Outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW 843</td>
<td>Program Management and Supervision</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW 846</td>
<td>Advanced Community and Advocacy Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW 849</td>
<td>Managing Financial Resources</td>
<td>3</td>
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M.S.W. Advanced-Standing Program

The Advanced-Standing program (http://socwel.drupal.ku.edu/academics/degrees/msw/advancedstanding/curriculum/) requires an enrollment of 38 credit hours, as follows:

- A summer enrollment in 2 classes:
  a. SW 712, a social work practice class organized around the school’s major curriculum themes. Students must earn a minimum grade of B in SW 712 to continue matriculating.
  b. An elective course selected by the student to broaden the base of knowledge. Electives are offered in various locations.
- The advanced level of the M.S.W. program (32 credit hours):
  a. 18 credit hours of classroom work maintaining a grade-point average of 3.0 (B)
  b. 14 credit hours of field practicum with an S grade for satisfactory performance

No credit is given for courses taken before admission. The advanced level of this program may be taken full time or extended up to 2 years. Two sequential semesters of 10-credit-hour enrollments are necessary to meet residence requirements.

Field Practicum

The field education office works with community agencies throughout Kansas and western Missouri to provide field practicum opportunities for students. Students are placed in these agencies through a collaborative process among the field education office, the student, and the agency. The field education office is responsible for ensuring that all field placements are able to provide the appropriate learning opportunities for students and that qualified field instructors will be available to the student.

Learn more about field education (http://socwel.ku.edu/academics/degrees/bsw-fe/fieldeducation/).

Prior Work Experience

In accordance with national curriculum policy, prior employment and life experience may not be credited toward classroom course work or practicum requirements.

School Social Work

The Kansas Department of Education no longer certifies school social workers. However, the School of Social Welfare strongly recommends that students interested in practicing in a school setting take the following:

- A practicum experience at the advanced level in a public school setting under the direct supervision of a school social worker.
- Clinical social work concentration.
- SW 830 Social Work in Child and Family Settings.
- SW 834 Social Work in Schools as 1 clinical elective.
- SPED 725 is highly recommended as an elective choice for students planning a future in school social work.

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