

# MAJOR IN SOCIAL WORK

Social work is distinguished by a tradition of concern for people and their interactions with society. Social work professionals are community problem solvers who intervene in organizational settings, communities, social service agencies, groups, individuals, and families with goals of enhancing well-being and promoting social and economic justice. Most social workers are employed in fields such as school social work, community organization, mental health, advocacy, child and family services, medical social work, and judicial systems.

The Social Work curriculum focuses on the practical application of social work principles, policies, and practices within human rights and social justice perspectives. Students acquire a social work practice foundation transferable to different settings, population groups, and problem areas. Attention is devoted to understanding the person in environment in the U.S., and working with individuals, families, and communities to effect the desired change. At the global level, human rights and economic, environmental and social needs are explored through international travel courses. Several practical experiences are required. Students work with an agency participant throughout their sophomore year, and then as seniors, participate in a social work agency internship. International placements may be available. The curriculum also includes a strong liberal arts base in social science research and statistics, arts, humanities, social science, and natural sciences.

CSU students are admitted to the School of Social Work (SSW) when they declare Social Work as a major. Two professional organizations, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) (<https://www.socialworkers.org/>) and the Council on Social Work Accreditation (CSWE) (<https://www.cswe.org/>) guide social work practice and education. The NASW develops the Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English/>) for practicing social workers. The CSWE accredits bachelor's and master's social work education programs in the United States. The BSW program is accredited by CSWE.

## Learning Outcomes

Graduating seniors will have demonstrated:

- Skills in conceptualizing and applying knowledge of social welfare policy and services, a systems perspective, theory, community resources, and community policy-making processes and practices.
- Knowledge and mastery of the foundation competencies as required by the CSWE for accreditation of the BSW degree.
- An understanding of the social work code of ethics including mastery of skills in maintaining client confidentiality, establishing professional boundaries, and resolving ethical dilemmas that are presented in case situations.

## Potential Occupations

Social Work graduates are employed in a variety of settings including schools, hospitals, community non-profits, public health, judicial systems, adult and child welfare agencies, and county treatment centers. Entry-level job opportunities are plentiful. Graduates should be willing to work with people of all ages and in a multitude of circumstances and settings. Internships are required. Graduates of the BSW program are eligible to apply for advanced standing in graduate programs.

Some examples of career opportunities include, but are not limited to: program manager, international development, assisted living

and rehabilitation center administrator, medical social service counselor, probation officer, client advocate, victim-witness program counselor, children and family services worker, transition age youth interventionist, crisis counselor, child protection worker, adult protection worker, gerontology, case manager, community outreach coordinator, youth program counselor, home health worker, occupational social services worker, foster parent consultant, addictions treatment counselor, domestic/intimate partner violence counselor, adoption worker.

## Progression in the Major

Progression in the Major is guided by standards required by both NASW (<https://www.socialworkers.org/>) and CSWE (<https://www.cswe.org/>) to ensure compliance with accreditation standards, and that students meet nationally recognized ethical requirements for their profession.

The NASW (<https://www.socialworkers.org/>) Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English/>) requires that social workers act ethically in their work with clients. It also requires that social workers take action when their colleagues are not acting competently or ethically. The CSWE (<https://www.cswe.org/>) requires that social work programs describe the procedures for informing students of the program's criteria for evaluating students' academic and professional performance and that the program has policies and procedures for terminating students' enrollment in the social work program for reasons of academic and professional performance.

To meet the requirements of these professional governing bodies, the School of Social Work (SSW) has developed a Progression in the Major procedure. Progression in the Major is a time in a student's academic career when faculty and students can review each student's readiness for the profession of social work. Prior to enrolling in the 300 level practice courses (SOWK 340, SOWK 341, SOWK 343), students must apply for Progression in the Major. Approval of the Progression in the Major application is a prerequisite for enrollment in SOWK 340. Generally, students who have 60 or more credits must apply for progression to graduate in the following four semesters. The application for Progression in the Major will be described in SOWK 286A and SOWK 286B.

As a professional program, academic performance and readiness to proceed in the SSW program require a minimum grade point average, completion of required course work, and behaviors appropriate to the performance of social work. Concerns in student performance may be addressed with the student at any time in the student's academic career in the SSW. Learn more about the student expectations for progression and review process on the School of Social Work website (<https://www.chhs.colostate.edu/ssw/programs-and-degrees/bachelor-of-social-work/>).

## Practicum and Internship

Students directly apply classroom knowledge, skills, and social work values through a six-credit supervised practicum, SOWK 286A, and SOWK 286B, in the sophomore year. In this practicum, students are matched with community agencies that require background checks before placement.

In the senior year, students fulfill a 10-credit field placement in a social work agency or program in a community setting. Field placement agencies also generally require background checks. Examples of available field placements include schools, adolescent service programs, centers serving aging and elderly populations, bilingual community nonprofits, refugee services, and county public service programs,

including corrections, adult and child welfare, hospitals, housing insecurity programming, rehabilitation, and mental health agencies.

For a complete list of field placements, students may visit the Field Education page on the School of Social Work website (<https://www.chhs.colostate.edu/ssw/field/>). In their field placement and under supervision, students have the opportunity to demonstrate the required CSWE competencies.

## Concentration(s)

- Addictions Counseling Concentration (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/colleges/health-human-sciences/school-of-social-work/social-work-major/addictions-counseling-concentration/>)

Learn more about the Social Work major on the School of Social Work website (<https://www.chhs.colostate.edu/ssw/programs-and-degrees/bachelor-of-social-work/>). (<https://www.chhs.colostate.edu/ssw/programs-and-degrees/bachelor-of-social-work/>)