

New Proposal

Date Submitted: 10/13/25 12:34 pm

Viewing: : **Social Work, DSW (online)**

Last edit: 11/20/25 10:11 am

Changes proposed by: Melissa Iverson

In Workflow

- 1. U Program Review
- 2. 1783-SOC\_W Head
- 3. LL Committee Chair
- 4. LL Dean
- 5. University Librarian
- 6. Grad\_College
- 7. COTE Programs
- 8. Provost
- 9. Senate EPC
- 10. Senate
- 11. U Senate Conf
- 12. Board of Trustees
- 13. IBHE
- 14. HLC
- 15. DOE
- 16. Catalog Editor
- 17. DMI

Approval Path

- 1. 10/15/25 4:46 pm  
Brianna Vargas-Gonzalez (bv4):  
Approved for U  
Program Review
- 2. 10/16/25 11:40 am  
Cheryl Street  
(street): Approved  
for 1783-SOC\_W  
Head
- 3. 10/16/25 11:41 am  
Cheryl Street  
(street): Approved  
for LL Committee  
Chair
- 4. 10/21/25 4:13 pm  
Janet Liechty

- (jliechty): Approved  
for LL Dean
5. 10/21/25 4:18 pm  
Tom Teper (tteper):  
Approved for  
University Librarian
6. 11/05/25 10:51 am  
Allison McKinney  
(agrindly): Approved  
for Grad\_College
7. 11/05/25 11:38 am  
Suzanne Lee  
(suzannel):  
Approved for COTE  
Programs
8. 11/05/25 3:01 pm  
Brooke Newell  
(bsnewell):  
Approved for  
Provost

## Proposal Type

Proposal Type: Major (ex. Special Education)

## Administration Details

Official Program Name Social Work, DSW (online)

Diploma Title Doctor of Social Work

Sponsor College Social Work, School of

Sponsor Department Social Work

Sponsor Name Janet Liechty

Sponsor Email jliechty@illinois.edu

College Contact Melissa Iverson

miverso@illinois.edu

College Contact  
Email

College Budget Officer Yvonne Shaw

College Budget Officer Email shaw14@illinois.edu

If additional stakeholders other than the Sponsor and College Contacts listed above should be contacted if questions during the review process arise, please list them here.

Melissa Iverson- miverso@illinois.edu

Does this program have inter-departmental administration?

No

### Effective Catalog Term

Effective Catalog Term Fall 2026

Effective Catalog 2026-2027

### Proposal Title

Proposal Title (either Establish/Revise/Eliminate the Degree Name in Program Name in the College of XXXX, i.e., Establish the Bachelor of Science in Entomology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, include the Graduate College for Grad Programs)

Establish the Doctor of Social Work in Social Work in the School of Social Work and the Graduate College

Does this proposal have any related proposals that will also be revised at this time and the programs depend on each other? Consider Majors, Minors, Concentrations & Joint Programs in your department. Please know that this information is used administratively to move related proposals through workflow efficiently and together as needed. Format your response like the following "This BS proposal (key 567) is related to the Concentration A proposal (key 145)"

This Social Work major proposal (key 1309) is related to the DSW degree proposal (key 1276).

### Program Justification

Provide a brief justification of the program, including highlights of the program objectives, and the careers, occupations, or further educational opportunities for which the program will prepare graduates, when appropriate.

The proposed Social Work major will support the launch of a Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program, expanding the academic offerings of our existing School of Social Work, which currently hosts undergraduate, MSW, and PhD programs. The DSW will provide an advanced practice-oriented pathway for seasoned social work professionals, focusing on leadership, evidence-based practice, and systemic change.

This social work major and corresponding DSW program will enhance practitioners' advanced knowledge and skills to address complex social issues through applied interventions, leadership in diverse settings, and advocacy for systemic equity. Students will engage in coursework and a capstone project that integrate theory with practice, preparing them to lead innovation and promote transformative solutions in the field of social work.

The expansion of the existing Social Work major for the DSW program will further solidify the School of Social Work's role as a leader in educating social work professionals across all levels of the discipline.

The Doctor of Social Work (DSW) is a professional practice doctorate, distinct from the research-oriented PhD. While there is no formal national standard requiring a specific culminating project for DSW programs, there is a growing consensus across institutions that practice doctorates in social work are best served by a rigorous capstone project rather than a traditional dissertation. Nearly all the DSW programs in the country use a capstone project or applied project in lieu of a dissertation. This approach also mirrors other professional doctorates—such as the EdD, DNP, and DrPH—which also emphasize applied scholarship over original research.

In alignment with this model, our DSW program culminates in an 8-credit hour capstone experience, divided across two courses: Capstone Planning and Design, and DSW Capstone. Rather than producing a theoretical research study, students engage in a substantial, practice-based project that addresses a leadership challenge, organizational need, or systems-level issue. Through this project, students apply advanced knowledge, conduct systems and stakeholder analyses, design and implement an intervention or strategic plan, and evaluate its outcomes.

The capstone reflects the applied nature and goals of the DSW degree—equipping social work leaders to effect change, improve services, and strengthen organizations. It maintains doctoral-level rigor while providing a more appropriate and impactful demonstration of practice expertise than a traditional dissertation.

The DSW is a professional practice doctorate, and the field has established a clear national standard in which programs culminate in an applied practice project — the DSW Capstone. This

model aligns with other professional doctorates such as the EdD, DNP, and DrPH, which assess advanced applied competence through practice-based scholarship.

In alignment with this standard, our program culminates in an 8-credit capstone experience across two courses (Capstone Planning & Design and DSW Capstone). Students design and implement an applied practice project addressing a leadership, organizational, or systems-level challenge within a real agency or practice setting. Through this work, students conduct systems and stakeholder analyses, apply advanced knowledge, implement an intervention or strategic plan, and evaluate its outcomes.

For the oral exam, students present their applied project to a faculty committee and demonstrate their ability to synthesize theory, evidence, and advanced practice methods to justify their decisions and evaluate outcomes. This oral exam, paired with the completed capstone deliverables, functions as the doctoral final examination while remaining consistent with the practice-doctorate model of assessment.

At the time of launch, the DSW program will be delivered fully online in order to ensure consistency, quality, and a smooth implementation during the initial rollout phase. Students will not have the option to take courses on campus during the early years of the program.

In the longer term, once the program is established and operational systems are in place, the School may explore opportunities to offer select courses in alternative or hybrid formats. However, no timeline has been set and no on-campus options are available at this stage.

The DSW social work courses will be delivered using a blended online format that includes both synchronous and asynchronous components. Each course is designed with approximately two hours per week of synchronous, real-time class meetings and roughly six hours per week of asynchronous instruction. This structure ensures regular live engagement while also providing flexibility for working professionals.

Note: SOCW 577, 578, 582, 583, 586, 587, 588, 590 and 591 have been approved, effective Fall 2026, and will show as course not found until the Academic Catalog rolls to the next Academic Year, in early 2026. See CIM Course approval documents in Program of Study section.

## Instructional Resources

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Will there be any reduction in other course offerings, programs or concentrations by your department as a result of this new program/proposed change?

No

Does this new program/proposed change result in the replacement of another program?

No

Does the program include other courses/subjects outside of the sponsoring department impacted by the creation/

revision of this program? If Yes is selected, indicate the appropriate courses and attach the letter of support/ acknowledgement.

Yes

Courses outside of the sponsoring department/interdisciplinary departments:

- BADM 509 - Managing Organizations
- BADM 589 - Project Management
- ACCY 500 - Atg Measuremnt, Rptng & Cntrl

Please attach any letters of support/ acknowledgement for any Instructional Resources. Consider faculty, students, and/or other impacted units as appropriate.

[Letter of Support\\_DSW-Gies Business\\_ACCY\\_BADM - signed.pdf](#)

## Program Features

Academic Level	Graduate
Does this major have transcribed concentrations?	No
What is the longest/maximum time to completion of this program?	3 years
What are the minimum Total Credit Hours required for this program?	48
What is the required GPA?	3.0
CIP Code	440701 - Social Work.
Is this program part of an ISBE approved licensure program?	No
Will specialized accreditation be sought for this program?	No

Does this program prepare graduates for entry into a career or profession that is regulated by the State of Illinois?

No

## Program of Study

Attach Program of Study related information here.

- [SOCW 577 Leadership Foundations & Gov-Grad Course Approved.pdf](#)
- [SOCW 588 Data Informed Leadership Sem-Grad Course Approval.pdf](#)
- [SOCW 586 Grant Writing & Strat Fund-Grad Course Approval.pdf](#)
- [SOCW 582 Soc Serv Policy & Reg-Grad Course Approved.pdf](#)
- [SOCW 578 Ethical & Adaptive Leadership-Grad Course Approved.pdf](#)
- [SOCW 591 DSW Capstone.pdf](#)
- [SOCW 583 Fin Planning & Stewardship.pdf](#)
- [SOCW 587 Tech & Innov in Social Svc.pdf](#)
- [SOCW 590 Capstone Planning & Design.pdf](#)

## Catalog Page Text - Overview Tab

Catalog Page Overview Text

The Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program is an advanced practice doctorate designed for experienced social work professionals seeking leadership roles in social service organizations. The curriculum integrates coursework in nonprofit leadership, human resource management, financial planning, grant writing, and program evaluation, equipping graduates with the skills to drive innovation and sustainability in the field. Emphasizing evidence-informed decision-making and strategic organizational management, the program culminates in a capstone project addressing a critical social services issue.

Statement for  
Programs of Study  
Catalog

### Required Courses

SOCW 577	Course SOCW 577 Not Found
SOCW 578	Course SOCW 578 Not Found
SOCW 582	Course SOCW 582 Not Found

<b>SOCW 583</b>	<b>Course SOCW 583 Not Found</b>	
<b>SOCW 586</b>	<b>Course SOCW 586 Not Found</b>	
<b>SOCW 587</b>	<b>Course SOCW 587 Not Found</b>	
<b>SOCW 588</b>	<b>Course SOCW 588 Not Found</b>	
<b>SOCW 590</b>	<b>Course SOCW 590 Not Found</b>	
<b>SOCW 591</b>	<b>Course SOCW 591 Not Found</b>	
<b>ACCY 500</b>	Accounting Measurement, Reporting, and Control	4
<b>BADM 509</b>	Managing Organizations	4
<b>BADM 589</b>	Project Management	4
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>48</b>

### Other Requirements

Master degree required for admission?Yes

Minimum 500 level hours required 12

Minimum GPA 3.0

Preliminary Exam Required

Final Capstone Required

Final Examination Required

Corresponding Degree DSW Doctor of Social Work

## Program Regulation and Assessment

### Plan to Assess and Improve Student Learning

*Illinois Administrative Code: 1050.30(b)(1)(D) Provision is made for guidance and counseling of students, evaluations of student performance, continuous monitoring of progress of students toward their degree objectives and appropriate academic record keeping.*



## Student Learning Outcomes

The Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program is grounded in the practitioner–scholar model and designed to prepare advanced social work practitioners to develop, translate, and advance social work practice knowledge. The curriculum emphasizes the integration of scholarship and leadership in applied settings, preparing graduates to generate and apply knowledge that advances equity, justice, and systemic change across human service systems.

Each course in the DSW program includes clearly defined learning objectives and aligned assignments that reflect one or more of the program’s overarching outcomes. These outcomes serve as the guiding framework for curriculum design, course sequencing, and assessment, ensuring that learning builds progressively from foundational leadership competencies to applied systems-level expertise demonstrated through the Capstone project.

Collectively, the six DSW Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) form the foundation for the program’s curriculum map, providing a coherent structure for both teaching and evaluation across all courses.

Upon completion of the DSW program, students will be able to:

1. Advance Practice through Innovation

Design, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to practice that promote equity, justice, and effectiveness in social work and human service settings.

2. Critically Use and Evaluate Research and Knowledge

Identify, assess, and apply research-informed knowledge to complex social work practice problems; evaluate the quality and relevance of existing literature and methodologies to improve service delivery and organizational effectiveness.

3. Engage in Doctoral-Level Scientific Inquiry

Conduct rigorous and ethical inquiry that demonstrates doctoral-level scholarship, including conceptualization, methodological design, data analysis, interpretation, and translation of findings into practice contexts.

4. Disseminate Practice-Relevant Knowledge

Develop and communicate original, practice-relevant knowledge through scholarly writing, teaching, professional presentations, mentoring, or administrative practice that advances the mission and values of social work.

5. Provide Transformational Leadership

Exhibit ethical, inclusive, and adaptive leadership in social work practice, education, or administration that reflects integrity, critical reflection, collaboration, and a commitment to continuous learning and systems improvement.

6. Cultivate and Maintain Substantive Expertise

Demonstrate and sustain deep expertise in one or more areas of advanced social work practice, contributing to the profession’s body of knowledge and the betterment of communities through ongoing inquiry and engagement.

Describe how, when, and where these learning outcomes will be assessed.

Describe here:

See attached document

Identify faculty expectations for students' achievement of each of the stated student learning outcomes. What score, rating, or level of expertise will signify that students have met each outcome? Provide rating rubrics as necessary.

See attached document

Explain the process that will be implemented to ensure that assessment results are used to improve student learning.

The DSW Program will employ a continuous improvement cycle to ensure that assessment results directly inform teaching, learning, and curricular design. The Program Director, in collaboration with the DSW Program Committee, will oversee the implementation, evaluation, and refinement of the assessment plan.

#### Annual Assessment Process

Assessment data will be collected annually from a combination of direct and indirect measures, including:

- Course-level performance on key assignments aligned to program learning outcomes
- Rubric-based assessments from faculty evaluators in each course
- Capstone project proposals and final deliverables (SOCW 590–591)
- Student reflections, peer feedback, and professional self-assessments
- End-of-course evaluations, student graduation surveys, and alumni follow-up surveys

Faculty teaching in the program will document student performance relative to each Program Learning Outcome (PLO) using standardized rubrics housed within the university's learning management system. The Program Director and DSW Committee will aggregate and review this data annually to evaluate trends across cohorts and identify strengths and areas for improvement in teaching, curriculum sequencing, and student support.

#### Review and Action Mechanism

Each year, the DSW Committee will:

1. Review Assessment Findings – Analyze data from all courses and outcomes to determine how effectively students are meeting the program's six guiding learning outcomes.
2. Identify Trends and Gaps – Compare outcome attainment across courses, cohorts, and delivery modes to detect areas needing curricular or pedagogical attention.
3. Develop Recommendations – Formulate actionable strategies such as refining course assignments, adjusting instructional approaches, enhancing technological integration, or providing targeted student support resources.
4. Prepare an Annual Assessment & Action Report – Summarize findings and recommendations and share them with the DSW faculty, School of Social Work Curriculum Committee, and academic leadership.

#### Implementation and Continuous Improvement

Approved changes will be incorporated into course syllabi, assignment design, and assessment rubrics in the subsequent academic year. Faculty will receive feedback and professional development support as needed to implement these changes. The Program Director will monitor progress on implemented actions and report outcomes in the following year's review cycle.

All six Program Learning Outcomes will be reviewed on a rotating five-year cycle to ensure comprehensive and ongoing alignment with the curriculum map and program mission. This iterative process ensures that assessment is not a static requirement but a dynamic feedback system that enhances instructional quality, strengthens the practitioner–scholar model, and promotes continuous improvement in student learning and leadership outcomes.

## Delivery Method

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This program is  
available:

Online Only - The entire program is delivered online, students are not required to come to campus.

Describe the use of this delivery method:

The Doctor of Social Work (DSW) degree program will be delivered online to create the flexibility and reach of digital learning, drawing students from Illinois and across the country. This online format facilitates access for a diverse cohort of working professionals, allowing them to balance their studies with existing work and personal commitments. The online delivery model not only broadens the program's geographic reach but also fosters a flexible, accessible learning environment that accommodates varying schedules and locations, thus attracting a wide range of students who seek to advance their careers within social work.

## Admission Requirements

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Desired Effective      Fall 2027  
Admissions Term

Provide a brief narrative description of the admission requirements for this program. Where relevant, include information about licensure requirements, student background checks, GRE and TOEFL scores, and admission requirements for transfer students.

For the social work degree, in the DSW program admission requirements will include:

- A Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Applicants with a master's degree in a closely related field—such as public administration, nonprofit management, public health, or counseling—may also be considered for admission on a case-by-case basis if their professional experience demonstrates substantial alignment with social work values, practice, or leadership within human service or nonprofit settings.
- A minimum of two years post-master's work experience
- Personal statement
- Resume or curriculum vitae
- 3 letters of reference
- Transcripts from all educational programs
- International applicants must provide a TOEFL score. Minimum TOEFL score is 103

## Enrollment

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Number of Students in Program (estimate)

Year One Estimate                      30

5th Year Estimate (or when fully  
implemented)

90

Estimated Annual Number of Degrees Awarded

Year One Estimate                      0

5th Year Estimate (or when fully  
implemented)

60

What is the  
matriculation term  
for this program?

Fall

## Budget

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Will the program or revision require staffing (faculty, advisors, etc.) beyond what is currently available?

Yes

Please explain/  
describe:

The social work major with the DSW degree program will require hiring some additional adjunct instructors to start. While some may be drawn from our current adjunct staff, we will need to recruit others to cover the new courses. As the program grows, additional faculty or advisors may be necessary, but we do not anticipate needing to add these positions until year five of the program.

Additional Budget  
Information

Attach File(s)                      [Budget Projections.xlsx](#)

## Financial Resources

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How does the unit intend to financially support this proposal?

The proposed Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program will be a self-supporting initiative, generating revenue through tuition and fees. The program is designed to be a competitive and high-value option for professionals seeking to advance into leadership roles in social service organizations.

The program is expected to attract a strong applicant pool of experienced social work professionals who recognize the value of a DSW for career advancement. Additionally, many social purpose organizations may be willing to subsidize tuition costs for employees, further enhancing accessibility. The financial model ensures that the program remains fiscally sustainable while contributing to the long-term growth and stability of the School of Social Work.

Will the unit need to seek campus or other external resources?

No

Attach letters of support

[Self-Support Justification\\_DSW\\_Final.docx](#)

[SS-program-designation-form\\_bjl.pdf](#)

What tuition rate do you expect to charge for this program? e.g, Undergraduate Base Tuition, or Engineering Differential, or Social Work Online (no dollar amounts necessary)

The Social Work i-MSW online rate will be used for this program.

Is this program requesting self-supporting status?

Yes

**IBHE**

## **Institutional Context**

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### **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**

**Describe the historical and university context of the program's development. Include a short summary of any existing program(s) upon which this program will be built.**

Explain the nature and degree of overlap with existing programs and, if such overlap exists, document consultation with the impacted program's home department(s).

The School of Social Work currently offers a BSW, an MSW with both clinical and non-clinical specializations, and a PhD in Social Work. The proposed Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program does not overlap with these existing programs, but instead represents a natural and mission-aligned progression of the School's commitment to preparing leaders across all levels of practice.

The DSW and PhD are fundamentally different in purpose and audience. The PhD is a research doctorate designed for individuals pursuing academic careers focused on the generation of original research and theoretical advancement. In contrast, the DSW is a professional practice doctorate aimed at experienced social work practitioners who wish to deepen their leadership, administrative, and advanced practice skills to address complex challenges in human service and nonprofit systems. These are distinct pathways that serve different professional goals and constituencies.

The development of the DSW has been shaped through broad faculty engagement and support. The full faculty of the School of Social Work voted to move forward with the creation of the DSW program, recognizing its strategic fit with our school's mission and its value to the profession. This proposal reflects a thoughtful and intentional extension of our academic offerings to meet the evolving needs of the social work field.

**University of Illinois**

Briefly describe how this program will support the University's mission, focus and/or current priorities. Demonstrate the program's consistency with and centrality to that mission.

The vision for the Doctor of Social Work (DSW) advances the goals outlined in the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's Strategic Plan, The Next 150, particularly in its commitment to fostering just and equitable communities through public engagement, evidence-based scholarship, and interdisciplinary collaboration. The plan emphasizes the need to "champion inclusion, foster equity, and engage with communities to advance the public good," values that are central to the mission and ethos of the School of Social Work.

The DSW degree program fulfills a strategic need for advanced macro practice leadership in social services, nonprofit management, and social innovation—sectors that are critical to addressing complex societal challenges in Illinois and beyond. Developed in alignment with the School of Social Work's focus on community impact and practitioner-informed leadership, the DSW prepares experienced social workers to lead evidence-informed systems change in public and nonprofit sectors.

When launched, Illinois' Doctor of Social Work program will position the School of Social Work as the highest-ranked social work program in the nation to offer a DSW degree. This distinction will elevate the University's visibility as a national leader in equity-focused, practice-based doctoral education and expand its reach to professionals across the country seeking advanced leadership preparation.

One of the university's signature goals is to strengthen its national and global reputation as a driver of equity-focused innovation. The DSW degree program contributes to this goal by preparing scholar-practitioners who are equipped to generate and apply practice-based evidence to transform human service systems. As an online program tailored for working professionals, it also expands access to advanced education, aligning with campus commitments to lifelong learning and inclusive excellence.

This program builds upon the School's demonstrated success in delivering high-quality online education. The Illinois MSW (iMSW) was recently ranked #1 overall by Forbes and the iBSW ranked #2 nationally for postgraduate earnings. These rankings affirm the School's excellence in digital instruction and its ability to extend the same level of innovation, rigor, and student support to the DSW program. By building on this nationally recognized foundation, the DSW program advances the University's strategic goal to "champion inclusion, foster equity, and engage with communities to advance the public good" by expanding access to high-quality, equity-driven doctoral education for working professionals who are committed to creating systemic change in their communities.



Discuss projected future employment and/or additional educational opportunities for graduates of this program. Compare estimated demand with the estimated supply of graduates from this program and existing similar programs in the state. Where appropriate, provide documentation by citing data from such sources as employer surveys, current labor market analyses, and future workforce projections. (Whenever possible, use state and national labor data, such as that from the Illinois Department of Employment Security at <http://lmi.ides.state.il.us/> and/or the U.S. Bureau for Labor Statistics at <http://www.bls.gov/>).

The demand for social workers with advanced leadership and organizational management skills is projected to grow nationally. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects a 9% increase in social work employment from 2021 to 2031, driven largely by expanding needs in social service administration, program management, and nonprofit leadership (BLS, 2024). This growth reflects the increasing complexity of social service organizations and the public sector's need for professionals equipped to lead systemic change.

The nonprofit sector, a major employer of macro social workers, has seen significant expansion. According to the 2024 Forvis Mazars State of the Nonprofit Sector Report, nonprofit employment increased by 33% over the past 15 years, substantially outpacing the 9% growth in the for-profit sector. Additionally, the 2024 Workforce Data Report from the Illinois Department of Central Management Services reveals that the median age of the state workforce is 47 years, significantly higher than the national median of 41 years. Importantly, 13% of the workforce (6,277 employees) is currently eligible for retirement, and 31% (14,576 employees) will be eligible within five years (Illinois Department of Central Management Services, 2024). This rapid growth, combined with widespread retirements among nonprofit executives, is creating critical openings for new leadership (Forvis Mazars, 2024).

Illinois reflects these national trends. The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) projects growth in social and community service manager positions, key leadership roles in social services and nonprofits, at or above the state average for professional occupations between 2022 and 2032 (IDES, 2024).

Further, the Illinois Department of Central Management Services Workforce Report (2024) highlights that nearly one-third of state employees, including those in social service leadership, are eligible for retirement within five years. This demographic shift will result in significant vacancies in senior management roles (Illinois CMS, 2024).

Currently, no Illinois institutions offer doctoral social work programs focused on leadership and organizational management. Nationwide, less than 10% of accredited social work schools offer a Doctor of Social Work (DSW) degree emphasizing macro practice.

The Illinois DSW program will address this gap and graduates will be prepared for senior roles such as Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Program Director, and Research Coordinator across nonprofits, healthcare, and public agencies.

Labor market data from state and national sources indicate strong and growing demand for social work professionals trained in macro-level leadership. Coupled with impending leadership

retirements and a limited supply of advanced training programs, there is a clear need for the Illinois DSW program. This program will help fill critical leadership gaps and enhance the capacity of social service and nonprofit sectors across Illinois.

What resources will be provided to assist students with job placement?

Students in the DSW program will have access to a wide range of professional development and job placement resources through the School of Social Work and the broader University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus. Within the School, our Student Affairs and Academic Advising teams, led by Director of Student Affairs Monica Cherry, provide individualized career support, annual professional development workshops, and alumni networking events designed to foster career connections across the social work field.

DSW students will also be able to utilize the University's Graduate College resources, including the Professional Development unit, which offers career planning tools, career advising job search support, workshops tailored to graduate students, interview prep, online video tutorials, and information on negotiating job offers. These campus-wide and school-specific resources will help ensure that DSW graduates are well-prepared to advance their careers and take on leadership roles across nonprofit, public, and human service sectors.

If letters of support  
are available attach  
them here:

### **Comparable Programs in Illinois**

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Identify similar programs and sponsoring institutions in the state, at both public and private colleges and universities. Compare the proposed program with these programs, and discuss its potential impact upon them. Provide complete responses, do not reference website links.

Currently, Aurora University is the only Illinois institution in the state offering a Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program. However, Aurora University's DSW program only has a clinically focused offering and had not accepted new students for the past two year and the website continues to state they will not be accepting any applications. This leaves Illinois without an active, practice-focused doctoral program for social work professionals seeking leadership and management training.

#### Comparison to the Proposed Program

Unlike Aurora University's clinically focused DSW, the proposed program at the School of Social Work will specialize in macro social work, focusing on organizational management and leadership. The curriculum is designed to equip students with advanced leadership, financial management, grant writing, human resource, and strategic planning skills, making it distinct from clinical-focused DSW programs. This program will prepare social work professionals for executive leadership roles in social service organizations, nonprofits, and government agencies —fields that have a growing demand for highly trained administrators and policy advocates.

#### Potential Impact on Other Programs

Since Aurora University is not currently enrolling students and its program is centered on clinical practice, the proposed organizational management and leadership DSW will not directly compete with any existing programs in Illinois. Instead, it will fill a critical gap by providing advanced training in macro-level social work, attracting professionals who may otherwise need to seek programs in other states. Additionally, by offering an interdisciplinary approach with coursework in finance, project management, and strategic leadership, the program is expected to appeal to a broader range of working professionals, strengthening Illinois' position as a leader in advanced social work education.

Comparable

Programs in Illinois

Attach Documents

### **A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth**

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IBHE is charged to develop a strategic plan to address the present and future aims and needs and requirements of higher education in Illinois (110 ILCS 205/6) (from Ch. 144, par. 186) Sec. 6). Illinois Administrative Code:

1050.30(a)(6): A) The unit of instruction, research or public service is educationally and economically justified based on the educational priorities and needs of the citizens of Illinois Respond to the following questions about how the proposed program will support the three goals of A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth Strategic Plan.

### **Equity**

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Describe institutional-level plans to close equity gaps in access, progression, completion, and attainment and the implications for the proposed program. More specifically, provide institutional-level plans for attracting, recruiting, retaining, and completing a diverse group of students including working adults, students of color, transfer and low-income students and implications for the proposed program. Explain how progress will be monitored.

At the System level, the University of Illinois prioritizes closing equity gaps among the citizens across Illinois, within our urban and rural communities, and beyond. While the fundamental needs that will drive greater economic vitality vary greatly across zip codes in the state, closing equity gaps among our citizens remains crucial to achieving the mission of the University of Illinois System.

Supportive of IBHE's A Thriving Illinois plan and aligning its Equity Strategy #2, the UI System's Access 2030 Strategic Plan is a comprehensive initiative designed to increase the number of graduates from underrepresented groups by 50 percent by the end of the decade. This will include students from disadvantaged backgrounds – ethnic and racial, rural, and urban. This initiative will strengthen the University of Illinois' bedrock commitment to the public good, ensuring that as we work to improve life in our state, we are not leaving communities behind. It will build on ongoing efforts to create more opportunities for Illinoisans of all backgrounds. The initiative is being tooled to close equity gaps throughout the pipeline, working from K-12 through college, including our community colleges. Access 2030 embodies Equity Goal 2 of A Thriving Illinois, providing a framework for and supporting the three institutions' equity plans.

At the institution level, The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's diversity, equity, and inclusion work is led by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (OVCDEI). The OVCDEI's goals, ongoing assessments, and initiatives impact students as well as faculty and staff, and student-focused programming sets the tone for the institution's efforts as they relate to all of A Thriving Illinois' equity strategies. In fall 2023, the institution administered a campus-wide climate assessment instrument to understand the degree to which students feel safe, accepted, and valued. The goal is to provide a quantitative sense of how individuals feel about their campus experiences. This assessment will include students' perceptions of the quality of their interactions with peers, faculty members, and administrators, including their sense of the campus as a place where they belong and are treated with respect. The university is partnering with the Association of American Universities (AAU), external organizations, and peer institutions to ensure the survey instrument is state of the art, has questions that shed light on multiple axes of diversity, and generates data that can be shared and benchmarked against peer institutions to tease out challenges that are unique to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus as well as those that are common to peer universities. As of May 2024, the campus received preliminary reports from the survey. These reports and data are under review in the summer of 2024 with the expectation to deliver and socialize the data to campus stakeholders in fall, 2024. The campus has charged four working groups: assessment, faculty & staff, students, and communication to guide university administration with this initiative. The working groups are tasked with developing frameworks for effectively socializing the climate survey, results, and implementation plans to the campus; disseminating reports to the university community and academic and administrative units; and

assessing opportunities for campus- and unit-level responses to the reports.

In keeping with the institutional framework led by the OVCDEI, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is engaged with a number of efforts to strategically support and bolster equity on campus. For example, in July, 2020, the university pledged \$2 million annually for the Chancellor's Call to Action to Address Racism and Social Injustice to focus the intellectual and scholarly talent of the university to examine two of the greatest challenges facing society and seek new solutions. During this second year of the program, 47 proposals were received and 25 projects were ultimately funded in three research focus areas: systemic racism and social justice; law enforcement and criminal justice reform; and disparities in health and health care, for a total of \$1.49 million. The remainder of the funds will support a symposium and other programmatic operations. Principle Investigators leading the funded proposals represent seven colleges and administrative units across 17 departments. The breadth of this year's funded projects reflects a commitment to research that centers the needs of the communities throughout our state and nation, from more equitable outcomes through the juvenile justice system, to the impact of social infrastructures and the built environment on mental health and wellbeing, to support for foster care providers. In October 2022, OVCDEI hosted the inaugural Research Symposium, which included a keynote conversation with Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, Director of the Center for Antiracist Research at Boston University. A significant number of University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign graduate students also did their undergraduate studies at Illinois, thus increasing access and attainment for undergraduate degrees can support increased access for graduate degrees. Looking at the last four years, campus graduate programs have been able to successfully recruit and enroll between 700 and 800 students from the university's undergraduate programs, which is approximately 19% of the university's total new enrollments each year. Looking specifically at those from domestic underrepresented populations, campus has been able to successfully recruit and enroll between 100-130 students from the university's undergraduate programs, which accounts for approximately 30% of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's total new enrollments for these underrepresented populations each year. Accordingly, although targeted at the undergraduate population, the campus' Student Success @ Illinois (SS@I) work also benefits graduate students. (SSI). Known as the Student Success Initiative when it kicked off in 2019, goals are:

1. increase access (reduce cost of attendance, increase aid, consider time to degree);
2. eliminate equity gaps (increase retention and graduation rates for underrepresented and minoritized students);
3. improve the Illinois experience (abandon "sink or swim" mentality, identify and broaden campus programs, support services, and opportunities for engagement).

Recognizing that Student Success is ongoing work, what was known as the "Student Success Initiative" became SS@I in 2023. A variety of projects emerged from SS@I that have enabled the university to provide greater focus on recruitment and retention efforts. Some examples of key current efforts include:

Student Success Symposium: The 4th Annual Student Success Symposium in February 2025 drew

Student Success Symposia. The 4th Annual Student Success Symposium in February 2023 drew more than 300 participants. As part of the Symposia, campus recognizes individuals and teams based on their contributions to Student Success @ Illinois with Student Success Champion Awards.

Early Alert and Outreach: An advisory group has been meeting since 2022 to research and recommend appropriate early alert markers to connect students with relevant resources early in the semester. Starting with the Spring, 2023 semester, a select group of instructors engaged in a pilot effort to utilize Canvas Learning Management System data to detect early warning signs of academic issues. Information from the pilot paired with interviews with campus academic advisors will be used to help build an equitable, sustainable early alert system and to inform a communication campaign around the importance of class attendance and engagement.

Policies: Grounded in research showing institutional labeling of students in racially and culturally charged ways leads to disproportionality negative experiences for historically underrepresented minority students, a SS@I Policy and Issues Group worked toward changing “probation language.” In 2024, the university approved revisions to this language. Effective starting in the Fall, 2024 semester, all academic standing codes at the university that used the word “probation” will be replaced with either “low GPA warning” or “college academic warning” depending on the code. Throughout 2024, this Policy and Issues Group has been examining college, departmental, and program websites to ensure consistency with the university’s revised language. Academic unit representatives are also tasked with evaluating practices in determining students’ academic status, messaging to these students, and programs available to support them.

Led by the Director for General Education, a SSS@I Policy and Issues Group is currently studying access and outcomes for historically marginalized students in general education courses and requirement categories. Using student outcomes data to look at grade disparities by group and impact on time-to-degree, the Director and the Policy and Issues Group will make recommendations to the campus General Education Board and, where appropriate, to the Academic Senate, on appropriate revisions with the goal of more equitable outcomes.

The Transfer Student Experience Task Force met throughout the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 academic years, investigating the impact of certain university policies such as the residency requirement on transfer students. The Task Force authored a proposal to reduce this requirement from 60 to 45 credit hours with the intention of reducing time to degree completion for transfer students and better alignment with peer institutions. The proposal was approved by the Academic Senate in December, 2023 and will go into effect starting with the Fall, 2024 semester.

Academic Advising: Cognizant that academic advisors are key to students’ retention and experience, SS@I is focusing on supporting the university’s advising community to advance

efforts to create a sustainable and equitable advising experience for students and a professional advising community for academic advisors and those in advising adjacent roles. SS@I hosts the Advisor Series, a monthly professional development opportunity for advisors. In addition, a group with representation from academic advising and student support units across campus came together regularly to develop a landscape analysis survey followed by focus groups to collect feedback from the advising community. Among other findings, advisors indicated a need for coordinated resources. As a first step in this direction, the SS@I website is being redesigned to include a central location for many student, advising, and staff resources.

Finally, the university hosts a series of outreach, recruitment, and transition programs on their Diversity, Equity and Inclusion website to improve access and successful outcomes in graduate education for students from historically underrepresented groups. The Summer Research Opportunities Program at Illinois brings highly competitive undergraduate students for a nine-week introduction to graduate study. Participants conduct research under the mentorship of a faculty member in their chosen field of study, explore careers in research, attend workshops, and take part in team activities that prepare them for graduate study. Aspire Illinois recruits talented students from backgrounds typically underrepresented at elite institutions to consider attending graduate school at Illinois. Toward this aim, campus fosters a webinar series to guide students through the process of selecting a graduate program and submitting competitive applications. In addition, ASPIRE applicants are supported through direct contacts with Directors of Graduate Studies and faculty as well as through campus visits. The Community of Scholars visit weekend unites newly admitted students with their admitting graduate programs and with prospective peers. Through networking and orientation to the campus, students are able to better understand how graduate study at the university can support their short and long-term goals.

In addition, the School of Social Work, has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, woven into every aspect of our mission. Social work as a profession is grounded in the principles of social justice, the dignity and worth of every person, and the importance of human relationships—values that demand intentional, ongoing work toward equity in all forms. We recognize that preparing future social workers requires intentional efforts to recruit, support, and graduate students from diverse backgrounds, particularly those historically underserved in higher education. We engage in this intention work around recruitment and retention in several ways.

The School of Social Work employs a dedicated recruitment team with a specific charge to engage students from underserved and underrepresented communities. We intentionally prioritize outreach and presence at recruitment events that elevate students from rural communities, students of color, first-generation college students, and individuals from low-income households. Our approach goes beyond visibility—we aim to build relationships with communities that have historically been excluded or underserved in higher education and in the field of social work.

Our admissions practices reflect our values through a holistic review process that considers not

only academic readiness but also lived experience, leadership, community engagement, and personal resilience. This approach ensures that we assess each applicant as a whole person and value the richness of diverse backgrounds and experiences.

As a result, the School of Social Work currently enrolls the most diverse undergraduate student body of any college on the UIUC campus. We are proud of this distinction, which reflects years of intentional and sustained efforts to foster an inclusive academic environment.

Our commitment to equity is not static. It includes continued support through advising, student-centered programming, affinity spaces, and equity-focused curriculum development. We understand that building a diverse student body is only the first step. Creating a culture of belonging where every student can thrive—academically, personally, and professionally—is at the heart of our mission. Unique to our school, is an seven person Academic Affairs Department. In addition to recruitment and admissions, the team is available for personalized advising and facilitates student support plans to ensure students are connected to resources on campus or in their geographic area.

Additionally, central to our mission is the EDEI department, led by Associate Dean Dr. Kevin Tan. The department spearheads initiatives that foster an inclusive environment and address systemic inequities. Notably, Dr. Tan has secured multiple grants to support racial healing and sustainability efforts. This department facilitates student activities, such as listening sessions and healing circles, as well as community work, offering historical bus tours of the Champaign-Urbana community.

Working in conjunction with the graduate college and admissions office, the School of Social work will monitor the success of its efforts through metrics of applications, admission, and graduation rates in order to gauge our progress and improve performance.

Describe program and institution-based high-impact practices and wrap-around student support services ensuring equitable access and success for students enrolled in the proposed program.

Access 2030 demonstrates the University of Illinois' commitment to supporting "the ongoing learning renewal of students and systemic implementation of evidence-informed student support practices." This equity-focused plan includes emphasis on the three universities' summer bridge programs, proactive advising, and high-impact practices to support retention and to ensure equitable access and success.

In addition to Access 2030, the System supports students through the President's Research in Diversity Travel Assistance award. This competitive program, primarily for graduate students, has been established for the purpose of promoting diversity and the understanding of diversity within the University. Recipients are provided a certificate and funding up to \$600 to travel to a professional conference related to diversity or identity (such as those conferences involving race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and national origin) to present papers, posters, or creative work in service to the University's interest in a diverse learning community.

At the institution level, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign prides itself on the array of



high-impact practices and services offered to students. These student support practices support the ongoing learning renewal of students and systemic implementation of evidence-informed student practices, which align with Equity Strategy 1 of A Thriving Illinois. The Counseling Center, Office of the Dean of Students, McKinley Health Center, and Student Assistance Center are accessible to all students via in-person or remote options to facilitate student wellness and retention. All students are encouraged to participate in workshops hosted by the university's Writer's Workshop and are eligible to receive assistance on writing projects through their writing assistants. For students with disabilities, Disability Resources & Educational Services (DRES) has helped thousands of students earn college degrees and Urbana-Champaign has been recognized as a national leader in the area of post-secondary education for persons with disabilities. Indeed, as the oldest post-secondary disability support program in the world, DRES has been associated with many programmatic innovations including:

- The seminal research which led to the development of the first architectural accessibility standards that would become the American National Standards Institute Standards;
- The first wheelchair-accessible fixed route bus system;
- The first accessible university residence halls;
- The first university service fraternity and advocacy group comprised of students with disabilities, Delta Sigma Omicron; and
- The first university to receive the Barrier-Free America Award from the Paralyzed Veterans of America (2012).

Additionally, poised at the crossroads of academic and student affairs, the Michael L. Jeffries, Sr. Center for Access and Academic Support (formerly known as the Office of Minority Student Affairs) is one of the oldest and most comprehensive student support programs in the nation. The Jeffries Center has embodied the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's land-grant mission by championing access for all students and providing a comprehensive array of college preparatory and support services to bolster students' success since its inception. Programs such as A&M (Advising and Mentoring), First Generation Student Initiatives and Tutoring and Academic Services the Center also align with A Thriving Illinois Equity Strategy 8 with the use of staff as advisors/coaches as well as peer and near-peer tutoring. The Jeffries Center currently houses nine departments. Veteran support is provided through the Chez Veterans Center out of our College of Applied Health Sciences, which includes individualized academic and career coaching to support progress and address barriers, peer and professional mentoring to foster community and networking, and health and wellness services to promote psychosocial adjustments and well-being.

In 2022, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign was recognized as one of 53 institutions in the National Association of Student Affairs Professionals' (NASPA) First-Gen Forward 2022-2023 cohort. First-Gen Forward was the first program to acknowledge higher education institutions for their commitment to the success of first-generation students. As a NASPA First-Gen Forward institution, the university applied and was accepted into NASPA's First Scholars Network. This membership signifies the university's competency and commitment to the success of first-generation students. Through the network, the university receives tools, resources, and expert

guidance, including data, peer networks, evidence-based approaches, and data-driven continuous improvement. The university established a First-Generation Steering Committee in January, 2023 to work with the Center for First-Generation Student Success to establish goals, identify barriers, and create improvement projects to enhance the experience of first-generation students on campus. In the 2023-2024 academic year, this Steering Committee launched their Insights Tool, which is a comprehensive diagnostic self-assessment in which members of the community share information about institutional efforts to support first-generation students. They also joined the Postsecondary Data Partnership, which provides

insights into students' academic progress and outcomes across participating institutions. In the fall of 2023, the Jeffries Center hired the inaugural Director of First-Generation Student Success. Explain institutional strategies being implemented to increase and retain faculty, staff, and administrators of color and the implications for the proposed program. Explain how progress will be monitored.

Initiatives to lead programming and service delivery to the undergraduate first-generation student community. Aligned with Equity Strategy 3 (Implement equitable talent management to increase and retain faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees of color), the UI System and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus support efforts in this area, particularly in supporting underrepresented minority faculty. The Distinguished Faculty Recruitment Program has a stated goal of increasing underrepresented minority faculty. Since 2017, the System has committed \$31.4 million to this program, the recruitment of tenured, star, or rising faculty from a range of

disciplines who can transform our universities by their exceptional scholarship and teaching. In addition to the robust services provided by the university, the School of Social Work Academic Affairs offer more than just advising and student-centered programming, as The Public Voices Fellowship is a year-long program open to tenured faculty to join a cohort of previously mentioned. We understand that building a diverse student body is only the first step. Creating a culture of belonging where every student can thrive—academically, personally, and with extraordinary support, leadership skills, and knowledge to ensure their ideas shape not only their fields, but also the greater public conversations of our age. The Leadership Initiative They also provide individualized services, such as support navigating housing or food insecurity, for Women Faculty brings together women faculty from across the UI System who are leaders providing academic coaching, developing individualized student support plans that are and/or potential leaders to identify barriers to and facilitators for advancement of women. collaboratively developed and supported by students, faculty, program directors and a member of academic affairs. The Academic Affairs department also supports students navigating recruitment plans which will also emphasize the recruitment of underrepresented minority scholarship applications, working on research with faculty or supporting them in their faculty. The President's Executive Leadership Program is a professional development professional development and preparing them for internships and the job market through opportunity and experience for senior-level faculty and administrators from across the UI professional development seminars. The department also supports several student System. Consisting of seminars held during the academic year, the objective of the leadership organizations, such as the Latinx student social work group, ensure student representation on program is to broaden participants' understanding of higher education issues and strengthen the majority of faculty committees. The School of Social Work remains committed to disrupting their skill sets in leading and managing a public institution at the university or system level. The systemic inequities, supporting inclusive excellence, and preparing graduates to lead with integrity, empathy, and justice. Board of Trustees supports the program as a mechanism for identifying and developing a diverse group of potential future university and system leaders.

As a campus, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is committed to investing in strategic hiring of faculty to maintain our academic strengths, respond to student demand, and capture opportunities. Investments from the Office of the Provost in faculty hiring, retention, and development are critical to maintaining and enhancing the academic excellence of our campus, especially at a time when the competition for top talent is intense. The Next 150 strategic plan identified a major hiring initiative to expand faculty hiring in key areas over the next five years, with the goal of expanding the overall size of the faculty. While the COVID-19 pandemic slowed that initiative, the university remains committed to hiring with the goals of enhancing faculty diversity and meeting student demand.

diversity and meeting student demand.

Though all faculty hiring is a department and college-level decision, the campus has devoted significant resources to incentivize hiring activities that support diversity, recruitment, and retention goals. Prominent among those programs are the Targets of Opportunity Program (TOP) and the Dual Career Program (DCP). The TOP program provides recurring funds for salary support for hires that enhance campus diversity, including faculty from underrepresented groups and women in STEM fields. Nearly all of these hires are identified through a traditional search process. The Provost invests ~\$1 million per year in this recurring salary support for TOP. The Office of the Provost, in conjunction with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion also announced a second year extension of the temporary modification to the TOP program to recruit more faculty of color. This initiative made an additional ~\$1 million available to units to support hiring in this area. For the DCP, the Provost provides recurring matching funds (i.e., 1/3 of the initial salary) if the partner is hired into a tenure track position through the DCP. Several years ago, the Provost modified the DCP to provide only non-recurring funding (1-3 years) for non-tenure track partner hires which has helped to reduce the overall cost of the program. Thanks to DCP, the university was ranked second in the nation in the most recent Partner Hire Scorecard.

The campus also continues to fund postdoctoral fellowships targeted to underrepresented scholars in ethnic studies programs (e.g., Latina/Latino Studies, American Indian Studies, etc.) and through the DRIVE program. These programs are intended to help provide postdocs with an opportunity to build a foundation of scholarship that will prepare them for tenure track positions. While the ethnic studies postdocs are selected through a specific advertisement, the DRIVE program identifies candidates through a search process for open faculty positions.

Finally, through a partnership with the University System Office and departments, the Provost's Office also supports the Underrepresented Faculty Recruitment Program in making available non-recurring funds for research to enhance offers of employment. Awards up to \$20,000 per year for each of the first three years of employment. The Provost's Office funds the additional search expenses incurred by bringing an additional candidate to campus if that person is from an underrepresented group.

Additional retention efforts include programming and development activities for executive officers and faculty members across ranks. Programming and resources for unit executive officers (EOs) equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary for leadership including ways to enhance their ability to support and mentor faculty within their units, particularly faculty members of color. The Office of the Provost also coordinates several leadership development programs to increase the pool of potential academic leaders on campus with intentional focus on supporting faculty members from underrepresented groups to explore campus leadership and administrative roles. The university continues to be a strong partner in the Big Ten Academic Alliance's Academic Leadership Development Programs, with numerous faculty and staff from the university participating as fellows.

The Office of the Provost also invests in faculty development. From recruitment to onboarding, through promotion, and retirement, faculty members have access to programming and resources designed to meet them and address their careers needs. The office also supports several institutional memberships that provide external resources to our faculty, such as the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity to ensure faculty members' continued access to NCFDD's resources.

To monitor progress of campus efforts to recruit and retain faculty members of color, the Provost's office collects, manages, and reports annual data through the Division of Management Information and Office for Access and Equity. Additionally, a yearly report on hiring and retention of faculty on campus is produced that includes women and faculty of color through the Faculty at Illinois report.

Within the School of Social Work, we are committed to leveraging and complementing these university-wide strategies. The School actively participates in programs such as TOP, Inclusive Hiring at Illinois, and campus-wide leadership academies to recruit and retain faculty and staff of color. Our School mandates diversity statements in promotion and tenure processes, and all search committees include trained Diversity Advocates. Furthermore, we benefit from dedicated leadership in this area, including Dr. Kevin Tan, Assistant Dean for Engagement, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, who guides and assesses DEI efforts across the unit. As our Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program grows, these institutional and school-specific strategies ensure an inclusive academic environment where diverse faculty and administrators can thrive. Progress will be monitored through continued engagement with university data systems, annual DEI reporting, and ongoing climate assessment within the School.

## Sustainability

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Describe strategies and initiatives the institution plans to implement that makes the proposed program and college more generally affordable for students and their families, including those who have been historically underserved.

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the University of Illinois System are committed to making advanced education more affordable and accessible, particularly for those who have been historically underserved. In alignment with this mission, the School of Social Work has developed the Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program to be both cost-effective and supportive of diverse student needs.

The DSW program will be offered at the same tuition rate as the online iMSW program—currently \$620 per credit hour—making it one of the more affordable options nationally for a professional doctoral degree in social work. Tuition revenue generated by the program will be reinvested directly into instruction, academic advising, experiential learning opportunities, and faculty-guided applied projects that are critical to the professional and leadership development of DSW students.

To expand access, the School of Social Work has secured \$60,000 in scholarship funding to support incoming DSW students and is actively working to increase this amount through ongoing fundraising and institutional support. Importantly, these scholarships will prioritize financial need and support students from historically underrepresented communities, including first-generation college students, students of color, and individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

The School has also received an Investment for Growth grant from the University of Illinois System to support the launch and outreach for the DSW program. This funding is being used to promote the program to a wide audience, with an emphasis on inclusive recruitment strategies that reach professionals from underserved and underrepresented backgrounds across Illinois and the nation.

In addition to scholarships and university-based financial aid, the School will support students using workplace tuition benefits or employer stipends, which many of our MSW students already utilize to pursue graduate education while continuing their professional roles. The program will also accept veterans' education benefits, including the GI Bill and Illinois National Guard Grant, to ensure that active and former military members can fully access and fund their doctoral studies.

DSW students will also be eligible for broader university-based financial aid and fellowships, including the Graduate College Fellowship program. This program provides tuition and partial fee waivers, along with generous stipend support, to graduate students from historically underrepresented groups. These fellowships currently provide \$25,000 annual stipends for doctoral students, with additional funding from the student's academic unit to support their success throughout the program.

Taken together, these initiatives reflect the School of Social Work's deep commitment to making the DSW program financially accessible while advancing educational equity and preparing a diverse new generation of social work leaders.

Provide tuition cost analysis for comparable

When analyzed against comparable programs in Illinois and across the country, the proposed Doctor of Social Work (DSW) at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) offers a highly competitive and affordable tuition structure.

programs and institutions in Illinois.

The UIUC DSW program is set at \$620 per credit hour, totaling approximately \$29,760 for the 48-credit program. In comparison, Aurora University's DSW program charges \$750 per credit hour, amounting to \$33,750 for a 45-credit program. Aurora is currently—and for the foreseeable future—not accepting new applicants to its DSW program and offers only a clinical practice track. In contrast, UIUC's DSW program, with its focus on organizational management and leadership, fills a critical gap in the state by addressing the growing need for advanced macro practice training among experienced social workers.

Nationally, there are approximately 30 active DSW programs, with tuition costs ranging widely from about \$20,000 to \$89,000. The UIUC DSW will be positioned on the affordable end of this range—ranking as the second most affordable program in the country. When compared with institutions of similar size and research stature, UIUC remains among the most cost-effective options. For example, the University of Alabama's DSW program costs approximately \$20,000, while Rutgers University is \$62,000, Tulane University is \$69,999, the University of Kansas is \$42,000, the University of Pennsylvania is \$47,000, and the University of Southern California is \$89,000.

These comparisons demonstrate that the UIUC DSW program will not only offer one of the lowest tuition rates nationally but will also deliver a high-value education from a top-tier public research university. This combination of affordability, institutional reputation, and innovative program design underscores the program's accessibility and alignment with the University's mission to advance equity and expand access to high-quality graduate education.

## Growth

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Provide a supply and demand analysis for the proposed program that, at minimum, does the following: a) Provides evidence of student interest in the proposed program including any strategies to incentivize students to stay in Illinois. b) Identifies and provides evidence of a high-quality credential with viability for future careers.

There is strong demand among MSW-trained professionals in Illinois for advanced, practice-oriented education that prepares them for leadership and systems-level impact. Currently, 23.7% of our graduates pursue macro-level careers in government and nonprofit administration upon graduation (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign School of Social Work). These professionals are interested in deepening their expertise through a DSW focused on advanced, specialized macro practice, rather than pursuing a research-intensive PhD.

Additionally, many clinically trained MSW graduates report moving into supervisory or leadership roles within three years of obtaining their LCSW, but they lack formal education in areas such as budgeting, supervision, program evaluation, and organizational leadership. A DSW with a macro-practice focus can address these gaps, supporting both systems change and improved client services, while offering an advanced practice pathway for continued professional growth.

We also know that 92% of our graduates stay in the Midwest after graduation. To further incentivize social workers to remain in Illinois, we are actively supporting state legislation designed to reduce barriers to licensure and increase workforce retention. Recent legislative wins include House Bill 2365, which creates an alternative licensure pathway for clinical social workers, removing a significant barrier posed by the ASWB clinical exam (NASW-IL, 2023). Additionally, the proposed Social Work Licensure Compact Act would allow licensed Illinois social workers to practice across state lines while maintaining regulatory authority within the state. These policy efforts make Illinois a more attractive and accessible place to practice social work and enhance our ability to retain highly trained DSW graduates within the state.

Explain how the program engaged with business and industry in its development and how it will spur the state's economy by leveraging partnerships with local, regional, and state industry, business leaders and employers.

The development of the proposed Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program has been deeply informed by engagement with over 300 nonprofit and human service agencies across Illinois that host student interns from the School of Social Work. Through sustained collaboration, these agencies have identified a critical need for advanced administrative, leadership, and systems-level competencies to support their missions and long-term sustainability. To deepen our understanding of regional workforce needs, we have also partnered with local philanthropic leaders—such as United Way and the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois—to survey human service providers across 13 counties. The responses were overwhelmingly aligned: agencies expressed the greatest demand for education and resources focused on leadership, strategic planning, supervision, financial management, and organizational development.

The DSW is uniquely designed to meet this demand by integrating social work values with advanced management training. Graduates of the program will be prepared to lead nonprofits and human service organizations with robust competencies in financial oversight, fundraising, grant writing, supervision, and change leadership—areas that have historically challenged social work professionals who transition into leadership roles. These skills will enhance organizational effectiveness across Illinois and position DSW-trained professionals to drive innovation, equity, and sustainability in the nonprofit sector.

This program will also spur economic development and bolster Illinois' social infrastructure through its connections with existing university-community initiatives. The Community Learning Lab (CLL), housed in the School of Social Work, provides nonprofit and public sector organizations with free student-led support on projects ranging from data analysis and marketing to program evaluation and strategic planning (Community Learning Lab, University of Illinois). The DSW program will strengthen this applied learning infrastructure by integrating advanced practice doctoral students into high-impact, community-based projects, creating a continuous cycle of applied innovation that meets the region's evolving human service needs. Additionally, the DSW will connect with other established community partnership efforts, such as the We CU Community Engaged Scholars program and the Campus-Community Compact under the Chancellor's Call to Action. These initiatives reinforce the university's role as a community-engaged institution committed to social equity and public impact. For example, between 2020 and 2024, We CU supported 798 service projects and 56,115 hours of student-led engagement, addressing critical local needs through collaboration with nonprofits and community leaders.

Finally, the university's I-Engage faculty program has helped solidify academic-industry connections by introducing new faculty—including those in social work—to key sectors driving the state's economy, such as healthcare, education, agriculture, and social services. This culture of interdisciplinary and community-rooted engagement enhances the DSW's ability to serve as a leadership pipeline and knowledge hub for Illinois' nonprofit workforce.

By preparing social workers to lead with both clinical insight and organizational acumen, the DSW will contribute directly to workforce development, economic vitality, and the health and well-being of communities throughout Illinois.



Describe how the proposed program will expand access and opportunities for students through high-impact practices including research opportunities, internships, apprenticeships, career pathways, and other field experiences.

The proposed Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program is intentionally designed to expand access to advanced education through high-impact, practice-oriented learning experiences that strengthen students' professional pathways and applied leadership skills. Central to the program is a strong emphasis on experiential learning that integrates theory with real-world practice in human service settings.

Students are encouraged to apply their learning directly within their own workplaces through course assignments, which are designed to be flexible and relevant to current professional roles. This embedded model ensures that students continuously build capacity in strategic planning, supervision, budgeting, and evaluation while contributing tangible improvements to their agencies and communities.

A cornerstone of the program is the two-course, 8-credit Capstone Project, which serves as the culminating experience of the DSW. Students develop and implement an agency-based project that addresses a pressing issue or opportunity, either within their current workplace or through a partnership with a local nonprofit organization via the School of Social Work's Community Learning Lab (CLL). Through the CLL, students are connected to agencies in need of applied expertise in areas such as program design, evaluation, data use, or organizational leadership—creating reciprocal benefits for students and community partners alike.

- Capstone Planning and Design course focuses on project design, including stakeholder engagement, resource planning, and methodology development.
- The DSW Capstone course centers on implementation, outcome evaluation, and a final presentation that demonstrates innovation, leadership, and systems-level impact.

In addition to the capstone, students will have opportunities to participate in faculty-led research, independent studies, or collaborative inquiry projects based on their interests and career goals. These avenues support deeper exploration into leadership, equity, and policy challenges facing the nonprofit and social service sectors.

Together, these high-impact practices ensure that the DSW not only prepares students for advanced leadership but also strengthens the capacity of Illinois' social service ecosystem through real-time application of knowledge and sustained partnerships with the community. The program expands educational access for working professionals and supports career advancement through meaningful, hands-on experiences that drive social change.

Explain how the proposed program will expand its models of teaching and learning, research, and/or public service and outreach that provide opportunity for students to succeed in the work of the future.

The proposed Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program is built to prepare students for the evolving demands of the social work profession and the broader human service workforce. The program expands traditional models of teaching and learning by integrating applied, interdisciplinary content with flexible delivery and community-embedded practice. It is designed for working professionals and reflects emerging workforce trends, including the increasing need for cross-sector leadership, data-informed decision-making, and systems-level thinking.

The DSW utilizes a course model that blends asynchronous and synchronous online learning, allowing students to access a rigorous doctoral program while remaining employed. Courses are structured to bridge the classroom and the workplace, with assignments and projects that draw directly from students' agency contexts. This approach ensures learning is immediately applicable and fosters the development of leadership competencies rooted in real-world conditions.

Courses intentionally incorporate skills that are highly sought after in the future of work, including financial planning, grant writing, human resource management, technology and data use, and organizational change. These competencies are vital for leading nonprofit and social service organizations in complex, resource-constrained environments.

The Capstone Project shifts the research model from traditional dissertation writing to practice-based scholarship. Students identify a leadership challenge or opportunity within a real agency and design, implement, and evaluate a change initiative. This approach promotes innovation, inquiry, and research grounded in lived community needs. Additionally, students can engage in independent studies or faculty-led research to deepen inquiry into topics such as equity, policy, or evidence-informed management.

The program expands the university's public service mission through partnerships facilitated by the Community Learning Lab, the We CU initiative, and the Campus-Community Compact. These partnerships allow students to contribute directly to the local and regional human service ecosystem by applying their advanced skills to agency challenges. This reinforces the University of Illinois' land-grant mission and strengthens social infrastructure across the state.

By offering a specialized curriculum aligned with contemporary challenges—such as workforce shortages, cross-sector collaboration, and administrative demands—the DSW prepares graduates to be adaptive, ethical leaders. Students learn how to drive systemic change, support high-performing teams, and innovate in complex environments—skills essential to the future of work in social services, public policy, and nonprofit leadership.

Through its flexible format, interdisciplinary content, and deep community integration, the DSW expands what doctoral social work education can look like—making it more accessible, applied, and responsive to both current and future workforce needs.

Beyond workforce need, describe how the program broadly addresses societal needs (e.g., cultural or liberal arts contribution, lifelong learning of Illinois residents, or civic participation).

Beyond meeting pressing workforce needs, the proposed DSW program advances key societal goals by promoting civic leadership, equity-driven systems change, and a lifelong commitment to social betterment. Grounded in the values of social justice, ethical practice, and public service, the program prepares scholar-practitioners who are not only organizational leaders but also active participants in advancing the public good across Illinois and beyond.

The DSW cultivates leaders who understand the role of policy, advocacy, and civic engagement in shaping equitable communities. Through coursework and the capstone project, students gain tools to lead systemic change efforts—whether through legislative advocacy, program design, or community organizing. These experiences deepen their roles as engaged citizens and amplify the civic capacity of the organizations they serve.

The program offers a flexible, accessible model of advanced education for working professionals—many of whom are already embedded in Illinois communities. By allowing students to pursue doctoral education without leaving their jobs, families, or communities, the DSW supports lifelong learning and professional advancement across rural, suburban, and urban areas. This is particularly impactful for those in downstate and underserved regions where doctoral-level training is less accessible.

Through its integration of social work, leadership, and business principles, the program contributes to broader cultural and intellectual discourse about the future of care, equity, and organizational life. It supports an interdisciplinary model of education that reflects the complexity of today’s social challenges, while reinforcing the cultural value of public service as a noble and necessary endeavor.

Graduates of the DSW program will serve in leadership roles across nonprofits, government agencies, foundations, and advocacy groups—entities that form the civic backbone of Illinois communities. By preparing these leaders with the skills and vision to navigate complexity and promote justice, the DSW actively contributes to the strength and resilience of our state’s civic infrastructure.

A Thriving Illinois:  
Higher Education  
Paths to Equity,  
Sustainability, and  
Growth - Attach  
Documents

### Program Description and Requirements

Illinois Administrative Code:

1050.30(b)(1) A) The caliber and content to the curriculum assure that the objectives of the unit of instruction will be achieved; B) The breadth and depth of the curriculum are consistent with what the title of the unit of instruction implies; C) The admission and graduation requirements for the unit of instruction are consistent with the stated objectives of the unit of instruction.

1050.30(b)(3): Appropriate steps shall be taken to assure that professional accreditation needed for licensure or entry into a profession as specified in the objectives of the unit of instruction is maintained or will be granted in a reasonable period of time.

1050.50 (a)(2)(C) Requirement for Programs in which State Licensure is Required for Employment in the Field: In the case of a program in which State licensure is required for employment in the field, a program can be found to be in good standing if the institution is able to provide evidence that program graduates are eligible to take the appropriate licensure examination and pass rates are maintained as specified in the objectives of the unit of instruction. If there is no such evidence, the institution shall report the program as flagged for review.

## Program Description

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Provide a description of the proposed program and its curriculum, including a list of the required core courses and short ("catalog") descriptions of each one. (This list should identify all courses newly developed for the program).

Provide Program Description here:

See attached

Attach Program [DSW Program Description.pdf](#)  
Description Files if  
needed

## Graduation Requirements

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Provide a brief narrative description of all graduation requirements, including, but not limited to, credit hour requirements, and, where relevant, requirements for internship, practicum, or clinical. For a graduate program, summarize information about the requirements for completion of the thesis or dissertation, including the thesis committees, and the final defense of the thesis or dissertation. If a thesis or dissertation is not required in a graduate program, explain how the functional equivalent is achieved.

The proposed Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program will require 48 post-master's credit hours for completion. For applicants entering with a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from a CSWE-accredited program (or equivalent), this structure reflects advanced preparation beyond the MSW and aligns with national trends for practice doctorates in social work.

At our university, research-based PhD programs traditionally require 96 total credit hours, which include master's-level coursework (typically transferred in) followed by additional doctoral coursework. While that structure suits research-focused programs, the DSW is a practice doctorate, and national trends across institutions offering DSW programs support a distinct, practice-oriented curriculum that begins at the post-MSW level. As such, the 48 required credit hours for the DSW reflect advanced professional preparation beyond the MSW, consistent with practice doctorate norms.

MSW programs vary in credit hour requirements depending on prior educational background.

- Advanced Standing MSWs (for BSW holders): typically 32–35 credits
- Traditional MSWs: typically 49–62 credits

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) does not mandate a set number of credit hours for MSW degrees. Instead, CSWE requires a minimum of 900 supervised field hours and emphasizes competency-based learning. As a result, MSW credit hour totals vary by institution. Applicants entering the DSW program with an MSW will already hold between 32 and 62 graduate credit hours, depending on the structure of their MSW program (Advanced Standing vs. Traditional).

Adding the 48 required DSW credit hours, total graduate credit hours for a DSW graduate will typically fall within the following range:

- Minimum total:

32 MSW credits (Advanced Standing)

o 48 DSW credits

= 80 total graduate credit hours

- Maximum total:

62 MSW credits (Traditional)

o 48 DSW credits

= 110 total graduate credit hours

Thus, the total credit accumulation for DSW graduates entering with an MSW ranges from 80 to 110 credit hours, which is consistent with doctoral-level study when combined with the practice-based nature of the degree.

The DSW's 48 credit hours are designed to build on this existing graduate education, providing a rigorous and practice-focused doctoral experience that complements—but does not duplicate—the training received in MSW programs.

## Plan to Evaluate and Improve the Program

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Describe the program's evaluation plan.

The DSW Program Director will oversee the collection and analysis of data reflecting the success of the program and the extent to which student learning objectives are met. Each core and elective course will have clearly articulated learning outcomes that identify the skills, knowledge, and competencies students are expected to master, which align with the overall program objectives and professional practice standards in advanced social work leadership, management, and scholarship.

At the programmatic level, the DSW Program Director and DSW Committee will track the number of students enrolled in the program, demographic and professional background data, course completion rates, retention and graduation rates, time-to-degree, and post-graduate employment and/or advancement outcomes. This information will be used to update advising and curricular planning processes. Periodic alumni and employer surveys will be administered to assess satisfaction, alignment with workforce demands, and preparedness of graduates to engage in leadership, supervision, research-informed practice, and systems-level change. Student learning assessment will occur through a variety of tools, including coursework, applied projects, capstone research deliverables, and standardized rubrics aligned with program competencies. Students will complete a self-assessment at matriculation and again upon degree completion to evaluate their perceived growth across key domains. Instructional effectiveness will be evaluated through course evaluations, peer review, and input from the Curriculum Committee.

Program evaluation will follow a two-year rotating cycle:

- In year one, the DSW Committee will conduct a macro-level analysis of the curriculum, including alignment with learning outcomes, student feedback, and national trends in advanced social work education and practice.
- In year two, the committee will engage in a more focused review of course content, syllabi, teaching methods, and assignment scaffolding. This will include a review of inclusive pedagogy, the use of technology, and how courses support integrative learning and application to real-world practice.

In both years, an agile Assessment and Action process will be implemented. During this phase, the DSW Committee and Program Director will analyze evaluation data and develop timely, evidence-informed improvements to curriculum design, instructional quality, student support, and program operations. An Annual Assessment and Action Report will be prepared each Spring and shared with the Dean of the School of Social Work, the DSW Faculty Advisory Committee, and other key stakeholders.

## Budget Narrative

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### Fiscal and Personnel Resources

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*Illinois Administrative Code: 1050.30(a)(5): A) The financial commitments to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are sufficient to ensure that the faculty and staff and support services necessary to offer the unit of instruction, research or public service can be acquired and maintained; B) Projections of revenues necessary to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are based on supportable estimates of state appropriations, local tax support, student tuition and fees, private gifts, and/or governmental grants and contracts.*

#### Budget Rationale

Provide financial data that document the university's capacity to implement and sustain the proposed program and describe the program's sources of funding.

Is the unit's (Department, College, School) current budget adequate to support the program when fully implemented? If new resources are to be provided to the unit to support the program, what will be the source(s) of these funds? Is the program requesting new state funds? (During recent years, no new funds have been available from the state (IBHE) to support new degree programs).

- The Doctor of Social Work (DSW) is designed as a self-supporting online program.
- The program is projected to be financially sustainable through tuition revenue and does not rely on external funding.
- The tuition rate is set at \$620 per credit hour, with expected revenue increasing as the cohort size grows over a 10-year period.
- The School has received \$135,000 in central investment funding over two years with additional funding (up to \$300k total) if we need additional support. The DSW program is expected to be net positive by year 3.
- The School also has sufficient ICR startup funds that it can exchange for state funds if additional funding is needed, though this is unlikely.
- Because the program is structured to be self-sustaining through tuition revenue, additional state funding should not be required.
- The School of Social Work has planned for minimal additional staffing, relying on current adjunct instructors, hiring adjuncts and utilizing existing administrative resources.
- The program is projected to have a return on investment (ROI) of +16.1% by year 5 and +28.92% by year 10.
- The DSW program is not requesting new state funds.
- The initial \$135,000 (up to \$300k allotted) central investment request is intended to support program startup costs.
- The School of Social Work anticipates additional expenses for adjunct faculty, IT fees, recruiting, and program administration, but these will be covered by tuition revenue.

### Faculty Resources

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Will current faculty be adequate to provide instruction for the new program or will additional faculty need to be hired? If additional hires will be made, please elaborate.

The social work major with the DSW degree program will require hiring additional adjunct instructors. While some may be drawn from our current adjunct staff, we will need to recruit others to cover the new courses. As the program grows, additional faculty or advisors may be necessary, but we do not anticipate needing to add these positions until year five of the program.

Please address the impact on faculty resources including any changes in numbers of faculty, class size, teaching loads, student-faculty ratios, etc.

The proposed DSW program is designed to make optimal use of our current faculty resources without requiring an overall increase in faculty numbers. One current faculty member will assume the role of DSW Director on a 40- 50% appointment, which will necessitate a slight reduction in their teaching load. To ensure that course delivery is not adversely affected, we plan to bring on an additional adjunct instructor to cover the courses impacted by this reallocation.

Beyond this adjustment, all other aspects of faculty allocation will remain consistent with our existing standards. Class sizes will continue at their current levels, teaching loads for other faculty members will remain unchanged, and the overall student-to-faculty ratios will be maintained. This approach ensures that the quality of instruction and academic support remains high, while efficiently integrating the new program within our established academic framework.

Describe how the unit will support student advising, including job placement and/or admission to advanced studies. Will current staff be adequate to implement and maintain the new program or will additional staff be hired? Will current advising staff be adequate to provide student support and advisement, including job placement and or admission to advanced studies? If additional hires will be made, please elaborate.

For student admissions and advising, our prospective DSW Director, Dr. Melissa Iverson, will collaborate closely with our Graduate Recruiter, Cheryl Street will play a key role in guiding prospective DSW students through the admissions process, offering essential support, and advising them on course enrollment and progression. To maintain an equitable workload and ensure a high level of student satisfaction, current staff duties may need to be adjusted as the program grows to ensure that each student receives the personalized attention necessary for success in the program.

Are the unit's current facilities adequate to support the program when fully implemented? Will there need to be facility renovation or new construction to house the program?

Yes, the unit's current facilities will provide adequate to support the program when fully implemented. No, there will not need to be facility renovation or new construction.

## Library Resources

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Describe your proposal's impact on the University Library's resources, collections, and services. If necessary please consult with the appropriate disciplinary specialist within the University Library.

After consulting with the library Social Work curriculum specialist, Yali Feng and Head Social Sciences Librarian, Nancy O'Brien, their assessment was that the proposed online Doctor of Social Work (DSW) degree program will have a minimal impact on the University Library's resources, collections, and services. The Library currently maintains a robust collection of materials relevant to leadership, social service management, and macro practice, which are central to the DSW curriculum. Given that the Library actively collects in these areas to support existing social work programs, no significant adjustments to subject collection priorities are necessary.

Summarize information about library resources for the program, including a list of key textbooks, a list of key text and electronic journals that will support this program, and a short summary of general library resources of the University that will be used by the program's faculty, students, and staff.

While the program is expected to increase demand for electronic resources, such as e-books and databases, the anticipated enrollment of 30 students per cohort (with a maximum of 90-150 students at full capacity) does not necessitate a substantial increase in electronic resource acquisitions. Therefore, the impact on the Library's budget and collection priorities is expected to be small.

#### Library Resources for the Program

##### Key Databases:

Social Services Abstracts

PAIS Index

Social Work Abstracts

SocINDEX with Full Text

PsycINFO

GuideStar

Human Resources Abstracts

Business Source Ultimate

EMARKETER

##### Key Journals:

Administration in Social Work (1977-2013), now Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance (2014-)

##### Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly

##### General Library Resources:

The University Library provides extensive support services, including access to research databases, citation management tools, and instructional support. Faculty and students will also benefit from services such as literature review assistance, research consultations, and citation management workshops.

Are any sources of funding temporary (e.g., grant funding)? If so, how will the program be sustained once these funds are exhausted?

There are no temporary funding sources, such as grants, currently allocated for library support specific to this program. The Library anticipates being able to sustain resource availability within its existing budget. If additional electronic resources are needed, cost-sharing strategies may be explored, including identifying open educational resources (OER) or leveraging partnerships with external organizations, such as the Network for Social Work Management.

If this is a graduate program, please discuss the intended use of graduate tuition waivers. If the program is dependent on the availability of waivers, how will the unit compensate for lost tuition revenue?

Regarding graduate tuition waivers, the program is not expected to be dependent on these, as it will be a self-supporting program.

- Budget Narrative
- Fiscal and
- Personnel
- Resources
- Attachments

Personnel Budget

Category                      Year One                      Year Five                      Notes

Faculty (FTE)

Faculty FTE Year1	Faculty FTE Year 5	Faculty FTE Notes
1	2	Year 1 includes 1.0 FTE for a director with some teaching release and course development. Year 5 increases to 2.0 FTE as the program scales. Includes director teaching release and adjunct faculty hiring for course instruction.

Faculty (\$)

Faculty Year 1	Faculty Year 5	Faculty Notes
\$150,000	\$250,000	Covers course development, adjunct teaching, and director release time. Estimated 3% annual increase.

Advising Staff (\$)

Advising Staff Year 1	Advising Staff Year 5	Advising Staff Notes
\$5,000	\$10,000	2.5% of an advisor and 2.5% of a student affairs coordinator allocated.

Graduate Students (\$)

Graduate Students Year 1	Graduate Students Year 5	Graduate Students Notes
\$0	\$0	\$0

Other Personnel Costs

Other Personnel	Other Personnel	Other Personnel Costs Notes
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Costs Year 1	Costs Year 5	
\$10,000	\$20,000	Covers IT support, recruiting, advertising, and administrative needs.

Budget Narrative

Attachments

## Facilities and Equipment

*Illinois Administrative Code: 1050.30(a)(4): A) Facilities, equipment and instructional resources (e.g., laboratory supplies and equipment, instructional materials, computational equipment) necessary to support high quality academic work in the unit of instruction, research or public service are available and maintained;*

*B) Clinical sites necessary to meet the objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service;*

*C) Library holdings and acquisitions, owned or contracted for by the institution, that are necessary to support high quality instruction and scholarship in the unit of instruction, research and public service, are conveniently available and accessible, and can be maintained.*

Describe the facilities and equipment that are available, or that will be available, to develop and maintain high quality in this program. Summarize information about buildings, classrooms, office space, laboratories and equipment, and other instructional technologies for the program.

The Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program is designed as a fully online program and does not require additional physical facilities for instruction. All courses and program activities are delivered through a robust online learning platform, ensuring accessibility and flexibility for students regardless of their location.

For faculty and instructors who choose to teach online from the School of Social Work, two classrooms have been recently updated with advanced instructional technology to support high-quality live teaching and pre-recorded lectures. These classrooms are equipped with OWL technology, additional monitors, and new screens, enabling an enhanced virtual learning experience for students. These technological upgrades facilitate interactive and engaging online instruction, ensuring that faculty can effectively deliver course content and engage with students in real time or through asynchronous methods.

Given the online nature of the DSW program, clinical sites are not a required component of the curriculum.

Overall, the program is structured to utilize existing university resources and technology to deliver high-quality academic instruction, research, and public service activities in a fully online format. The available facilities and instructional technologies ensure that faculty and students have the necessary tools to succeed in this innovative and accessible learning environment.

Will the program require new or additional facilities or significant improvements to already existing facilities?

No

Will the program need additional technology beyond what is currently available for the unit?

No

Are there other costs associated with implementing the program?

Yes

#### Other Costs

Other Costs Year 1	Other Costs Year 5	Other Costs Notes
\$15,000	\$20,000	Implementing the DSW program will require additional investments in website development, marketing, and student recruitment efforts to ensure strong program visibility and enrollment. Additionally, there will be costs associated with developing high-quality online courses, including instructional design support and technology enhancements. To support these necessary expenses, the School of Social Work has secured an Investment for Growth grant, which will provide funding to cover these initial program development and implementation costs. This strategic investment will ensure the successful launch and sustainability of the DSW program. These other costs include: online learning platform enhancements, additional instructional technology (e.g., OWL cameras, upgraded software), and tech support for faculty/ students; digital advertising, promotional materials, recruitment events, and outreach campaigns; reviewing/ updating curriculum and integrating student/faculty feedback.

Facilities and  
Equipment  
Attachments

#### Faculty and Staff

*Illinois Administrative Code: 1050.30(a)(3): A) The academic preparation and experience of faculty and staff ensure that the objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are met; B) The academic preparation and experience of faculty and staff, as evidenced by level of degrees held, professional experience in the field of study and demonstrated knowledge of the field, ensure that they are able to fulfill their academic responsibilities; C) The involvement of faculty in the unit of instruction, research or public service is sufficient to cover the various fields of knowledge encompassed by the unit, to sustain scholarship appropriate to the unit, and to assure curricular continuity and consistency in student evaluation; D) Support personnel, including but not limited to counselors, administrators, clinical supervisors, and technical staff, which are directly assigned to the unit of instruction, research or public service, have the educational background and experience necessary to carry out their assigned responsibilities.*

Describe the personnel resources available to develop and maintain a high quality program, including faculty (full- and part-time, current and new), staff (full- and part-time, current and new), and the administrative structure that will be in place to oversee the program. Also include a description of faculty qualifications, the faculty evaluation and reward structure, and student support services that will be provided by faculty and staff.

The program will be supported by a combination of existing and new personnel to ensure the development and maintenance of a high-quality program. Faculty resources will include both current full-time faculty and adjunct instructors with extensive practice experience. The program director, a full-time faculty member, will oversee curriculum development, student advising, and overall program administration. This faculty member will have expertise in social work leadership and nonprofit management and will receive a partial teaching release to fulfill administrative responsibilities. Additional full time faculty will be drawn from the School of Social Work to develop and teach the courses, ensuring that courses integrate both social work and business principles. Adjunct instructors will be hired, as needed, to teach specialized courses, particularly those requiring significant practice experience. These adjuncts will be selected based on their professional expertise in nonprofit management, policy advocacy, and executive leadership, ensuring that students receive instruction grounded in real-world applications.

Full time faculty evaluation structure will follow university guidelines, with tenure-track and specialized faculty assessed based on teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and contributions to curriculum development. Part-time adjunct instructors will be evaluated through course evaluations, peer observations, and periodic reviews to maintain instructional quality.

Administrative support for the program will be provided by existing staff within the School of Social Work, including the Director of Recruitment and Admissions, who will oversee student these areas. They will assist with enrollment processes, course sequencing, and student progress monitoring. A portion of an advisor's time, as well as support from a student affairs coordinator, will be allocated to provide student guidance, course registration assistance, and academic support services. The program will also leverage our Director of Online Learning, Dr. Justin York, for online learning support services to ensure smooth course delivery.

Student support services will include academic advising, career development resources, and faculty mentorship. In addition to the services listed above, faculty will engage with students through online office hours, advising sessions, and career preparation workshops. This is already partially built into faculty duties, as we have a protracted PhD program. The program's structure will facilitate strong faculty-student interactions, ensuring that students receive personalized guidance throughout their professional education.

The overall administrative structure will be housed within the Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, ensuring oversight of curriculum integrity and compliance with CSWE accreditation standards. A faculty-led DSW curriculum committee will provide ongoing

guidance to maintain academic excellence and alignment with emerging best practices in social work leadership education. These combined personnel resources will ensure that the DSW program is well-supported, sustainable, and capable of delivering a high-quality educational experience to future social work leaders and administrators in the field.

Summarize the major accomplishments of each key faculty member, including research/scholarship, publications, grant awards, honors and awards, etc. Include an abbreviated curriculum vitae or a short description.

The following full-time faculty members from the School of Social Work will contribute to the proposed DSW through teaching, curriculum development, advising, and program oversight. These faculty bring expertise across a wide range of areas essential to the program, including nonprofit management, financial capability, labor policy, organizational leadership, legal and ethical practice, and social policy. Their combined research, professional experience, and academic leadership ensure that the DSW program is grounded in applied scholarship and designed to prepare students for executive and strategic roles in human service organizations. Faculty contributors, in order of appearance, include: Melissa Iverson, Benjamin Lough, Steve Anderson, Chi-Fang Wu, Hyojin Cho, Min Zhan, Sandra Kopels, and Kate Wegmann. Current adjuncts include: Anita Balgopal, Linda S Kingery, Cady Landa, Patrick Decker-Tonnesen, Tiffany Laursen, David Chih.

Faculty and Staff

Attachments

[Abbrevuated Faculty CV's.docx](#)

[Adjunct List.docx](#)

## HLC Section

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### Credit Hours

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Existing or repackaged curricula (Courses from existing inventory of courses):	Number of Credit Hours:	12 25	Percent of Total:
Revised or redesigned curricula (Courses for which content has been revised for the new program):	Number of Credit Hours:	0 0	Percent of Total:
New curricula (Courses developed for the new program that have never been offered):	Number of Credit Hours:	36 75	Percent of Total:
Total Credit Hours of the Program:	Number of Credit Hours:	48 100	Percent of Total:

### New Faculty Required

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Will new faculty expertise or new faculty members be needed to launch this program?

No

Please explain  
existing coverage:

The proposed DSW program is designed to make optimal use of our current faculty resources without requiring an overall increase in faculty numbers. One current faculty member will assume the role of DSW Director on a 40-50% appointment, which will necessitate a slight reduction in their teaching load. To ensure that course delivery is not adversely affected, we plan to utilize an additional adjunct instructor to cover the courses impacted by this reallocation.

Beyond this adjustment, all other aspects of faculty allocation will remain consistent with our existing standards. Class sizes will continue at their current levels, teaching loads for other faculty members will remain unchanged, and the overall student-to-faculty ratios will be maintained. This approach ensures that the quality of instruction and academic support remains high, while efficiently integrating the new program within our established academic framework.

### Additional Funds

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Will the proposed program require a large outlay of additional funds by the institution?

No

### Institutional Funding

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Please explain institutional funding for proposed program:

The proposed DSW program has received institutional funding through a \$135,515 Investment for Growth grant from the university. This grant will support key aspects of program development, including marketing, recruitment, website enhancements, and the creation of high-quality online courses. Beyond this initial investment, the program is designed to be fully self-supporting, generating sufficient revenue through tuition to cover ongoing operational costs. This financial model ensures the program's long-term sustainability without requiring additional institutional funding.

### EP Documentation

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EP Control Number      EP.26.083

Attach Rollback/  
Approval Notices      [ep26083\\_response\\_from\\_sponsor\\_20251114.pdf](#)

### Non-EP Documentation

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U Program Review  
Comments

Rollback      [Re\\_DSW\\_Proposal.pdf](#)



Documentation and  
Attachment

DMI Documentation

Attach Final [FW\\_ New Degree Program Screening Form Submitted.pdf](#)

Approval Notices

Banner/Codebook  
Name

Program Code:

Minor Code	Conc Code	Degree Code	Major Code
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Senate Approval  
Date

Senate Conference  
Approval Date

BOT Approval Date

IBHE Approval Date

HLC Approval Date 11/20/25

DOE Approval Date

Effective Date:

Program Reviewer  
Comments