

PROPOSAL TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

TITLE OF THE PROPOSAL

The School of Social Work currently offers four graduate concentrations in the Master of Social Work (MSW) program. This proposal is for approval and recognition of an additional fifth concentration and the revision of an existing concentration. The existing four concentrations are:

1. Child Welfare
2. Health Care
3. Mental Health
4. School Social Work

Proposal 1: Establish a new MSW concentration titled "Advocacy, Leadership, and Social Change" which focuses on macro practice (policy and administration)

Proposal 2: Revise current "Child Welfare" concentration curriculum and rename as "Children, Youth and Family Services"

SPONSOR: School of Social Work, Barry Ackerson, Associate Dean, 244-5223

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Each concentration in the School of Social Work represents a field of practice within the social work profession. Each one consists of advanced knowledge in social work as well as specific courses that address substantive specialized content. All new MSW students who do not have a BSW degree, or whose BSW degree is either over seven years old or not from an accredited School of Social Work, must take four foundation courses in social work. These four courses are at the 400 level and total 16 credit hours. Because they constitute general areas of knowledge in social work, they are not included in the description of the concentrations. A description of all other required coursework for the concentrations are listed on the following pages, along with the number of credit hours.

All internships (a.k.a. field placements) are in the student's concentration area. All students must have a GPA of 3.0 or better in their social work graduate coursework in order to be eligible to enter their field placements/internships. Internships occur after all coursework (with the exception of the field seminars) has been completed.

Students with a BSW degree in the past seven years from an accredited social work program may be admitted to the Advanced Standing Program. They receive some credit for previous social work coursework and internship. Total required hours for students in the Advanced Standing program is 44 hours, which includes an internship in their specialization area. The reduced requirements for advanced standing students are reflected in the following description for each concentration.

Advocacy, Leadership and Social Change

This concentration provides students with specialized knowledge and skills for leadership roles in which they may plan, administer, and evaluate social service programs. Alternatively, they may engage in advocacy and public policy related to social services and social change. Students may be employed in non-profits/NGOs, state or federal government, community social service agencies and advocacy programs or institutes. Expected enrollment is 15-20 students per year.

Required advanced courses (Total = 56 hours; 44 hours Advanced Standing):

SOCW 521, Leadership and Social Change (4 hours)

SOCW 541, Research Seminar [Program Evaluation section] (4 hours)

Any three (two for Advanced Standing) of the following “macro methods/policy” courses (8-12 hours): SOCW 520, SOCW 522, SOCW 525, SOCW 526, SOCW 584.

One of the following courses may be taken to satisfy the “macro methods requirement above: SOCW 513, 514, 516, 519, 580, 589.

One of the following diversity and inequality in social environment courses (4 hours): SOCW 412, SOCW, 551, SOCW 554

Electives (4-8 hours): Any graduate level social work course related to the student’s focus area. Students are allowed to take one elective in a related discipline, such as political science or community development. Two electives are required with the exception of advanced standing students who take one elective.

Internships: SOCW 568 and 569, Field Instruction I & II (8 credit hours each semester, 16 credit hours total; Total clock hours = 30-32 hours per week for 31 weeks; Advanced Standing: first semester internship is 15-16 hours a week for 4 hours credit, second semester is 30-32 hours per week for 8 hours credit, 12 credit hours total)

Internship Seminars: SOCW 531 and 532 (4 hours each, 8 hours total)

Children, Youth and Family Services

This concentration provides students with specialized knowledge and skills for delivering social services to children and families served by the child welfare system and related social service agencies. Students may be employed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS), by one of many private agencies that contract with IDCFS for services to children and families, or by family service agencies. The curriculum has been revised to provide for both an administrative track and a clinical track. Expected enrollment is 15 - 25 students per year.

Required advanced courses/Clinical track (Total = 56 hours; 44 hours Advanced Standing):

SOCW 516, Child Welfare Policy and Services (4 hours)

SOCW 580, Advanced Child Welfare (4 hours)

SOCW 541, Research Seminar (4 hours)

SOCW 552, HBSE II: Mental Disorders (4 hours)

SOCW 589, Social Work and the Law (4 hours)

Any two (one for Advanced Standing) of the following “methods” courses (4-8 hours): SOCW 500, SOCW 501, SOCW 505, SOCW 506, SOCW 509

An elective (not required for Advanced Standing) (0-4 hours): Any of the “methods” courses listed above or other relevant graduate level coursework.

Required courses/Administrative track (Total = 56 hours; 44 hours Advanced Standing)

SOCW 516, Child Welfare Policy and Services (4 hours)

SOCW 580, Advanced Child Welfare (4 hours)

SOCW 541, Research Seminar [Program Evaluation section] (4 hours)

SOCW 551, HBSE II: Women's Issues **OR** SOCW 552, HBSE II: Mental Disorders (4 hours)

SOCW 589, Social Work and the Law (4 hours)

Any one of the following "macro methods" courses (4 hours): SOCW 520, SOCW 522, SOCW 525, SOCW 526, SOCW 584

Two electives (not required for Advanced Standing) (0-8 hours): Any of the "macro methods" courses listed above or other relevant graduate level coursework.

Both tracks complete approved field placements/internships in social work.

Internships: SOCW 568 and 569, Field Instruction I & II (8 credit hours each semester, 16 credit hours total; Total clock hours = 30-32 hours per week for 31 weeks. Advanced Standing: first semester internship is 15-16 hours a week for 4 hours credit, second semester is 30-32 hours per week for 8 hours credit, 12 credit hours total)

Internship Seminars: SOCW 531 and 532 (4 hours each, 8 hours total)

JUSTIFICATION:

These concentrations are consistent with professional specialization areas in social work and reflect the advanced coursework that MSW students take in our program. Including these concentrations on the transcript convey to potential employers a student's academic preparation for a particular field of practice, helping students compete for jobs in their specialty area. NASW, the professional association for social work, has increasingly been recognizing and licensing specialty areas of practice. Therefore, recognition of the proposed concentrations will convey that a student's curriculum has prepared them to meet licensing and certification standards. The revised concentration is more consistent with what is seen in other MSW programs in the state and more accurately reflects work force needs. Most of the coursework for the new concentration has been taught for years in the MSW program and reflects a longstanding area of macro specialization within the social work profession. However, we have redesigned this curriculum to address both the policy/advocacy area as well as preparation for leadership roles as supervisors and administrators. We have piloted this revised curriculum the last two years and developed two new courses that incorporate social entrepreneurship as a central theme. We believe this new concentration creates a special niche for our MSW program. With the addition of the fifth concentration we are also eliminating the individual plan of study option for students as most of these in the past were related to macro practice areas.

BUDGETARY AND STAFF IMPLICATIONS:

Since all of the courses needed are currently offered by the School of Social Work, no additional dollars or faculty are needed to implement these proposals. The only anticipated impact will be on the School's record officer who will submit information to OAR in support of each student meeting requirements for their concentration. The School already maintains this information for each student in its MSW program files and has been submitting this information for the four existing concentrations.

CLEARANCES:

Shymae J. Korn
School of Social Work

7-14-08
Date

Kelly Japparda
Graduate College

10/29/08
Date

STATEMENT FOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY CATALOG:

Replace the following wording in the current Programs of Study:
"Students choose from one of the following concentrations: child welfare, health care, mental health, or school social work. Each concentration consists of 56 hours of coursework; students without a BSW, or whose BSW is more than 7 years old or is not from an accredited school of social work, must take four foundation courses (for a total of 16 hours) in addition to the coursework required for each concentration. With the exception of school social work, students may specialize in direct service or in policy, planning, and administration within their concentration."

Substitute the following:

"Students choose from one of the following concentrations: 1) advocacy, leadership and social change, 2) children, youth and family services; 3) health care, 4) mental health; or 5) school social work. Students in children, youth and family services may specialize in either a clinical track or an administrative track. Students in health care and mental health may specialize in direct service or in policy, planning, and administration within their concentration."

Other revisions in the POS regarding credit hours and required courses have already been submitted to Grad College.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Fall 2008