

**IOWA**

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

School of Social Work

2023-2024

# BASW STUDENT HANDBOOK



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# WELCOME

Welcome to the University of Iowa School of Social Work. You are beginning professional education in a school with a history of commitment to social change and a mission to prepare effective social work professionals for evidence-based social work practice. Social work is distinctive among the helping professions with its commitment to social justice and social change and serving the individual and environmental needs of individuals marginalized by our society. This commitment is expressed in the School's focus on systems theory and the person-in-environment perspective and on a family- and community-based approach to social work practice.

# MISSION

The specific mission of the BASW program in social work is to prepare culturally aware generalist social workers whose practice is consistent with social work values and ethics, including a commitment to social justice and social change. The program's goals are to:

- prepare students for culturally competent generalist social work practice with individuals, families, small groups, organizations, and communities;
- provide students with a base for continuing graduate education in social work and for lifelong learning; and
- prepare students for active engagement with issues of social justice, oppression, and social welfare in local, state, regional, national, and global goals.

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# BASW PROGRAM ADMISSIONS, REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR AND CURRICULUM INFORMATION

## Admission to the Social Work Major

*These are the policies that were in place for students entering the program in fall 2023 and before. This policy is under review for the future.*

The School of Social Work seeks to maintain a heterogeneous student body by enrolling students with diverse backgrounds and cultural perspectives. The School admits approximately 45 students to the major each year. **The application deadline is February 15th.**

Students typically apply in their sophomore year and complete the program in two years. However, students can apply in their junior year and complete the program in a year and a summer. To be admitted to the program, you must:

- 1) Completed SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States (or an equivalent course taken at another 4-year institution or a community college) with a grade of C or higher (this course can be in progress at the time you submit your application);
- 2) Submit an application form and essays by the February 15<sup>th</sup> deadline before the fall semester you plan to enter the program.
- 3) Have a cumulative GPA of 2.50 (on a 4.0 scale) at admission. The School will consider applicants who do not meet the minimum GPA on an individual basis. If your GPA is below the minimum, in your application materials you must demonstrate familiarity with social work through considerable volunteer work, a strong commitment to social justice, and describe in an optional essay your plans for improving your GPA in the program

Ideally, students should apply in their sophomore year, enter the program as juniors, and complete their social work courses over two years. However, students can apply in their junior year and complete the major in a year and a summer.

The School does not require or accept recommendations or reference letters. See the BA Social Work Admissions Policy Statement and Guidelines for Application in Appendix A for more detailed information on the application process.

## Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Competencies

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is the accrediting body for schools of social work in the US. The University of Iowa's social work program has been continually accredited by CSWE since 1974. CSWE sets the competencies you will learn and demonstrate to be competent BA level social workers. Course outlines for all social work courses in the major list the competencies you will be expected to demonstrate in that course. You will also have the opportunity to demonstrate these competencies in your field placement. See Appendix D for a full list of the 2022 CSWE competencies.

## The Curriculum

The Bachelor of Arts with a major in social work (BASW) requires a minimum of 120 s.h., including at least 60-64 s.h. of coursework in the major.

**The major in social work requires the following:**

### **SOCIAL WORK COURSES IN THE MAJOR (35- 38 s.h.):**

SSW:1022	Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States (or transfer equivalent)	3 S.H.
SSW:3840	Human Behavior and the Social Environment	4 S.H.
SSW:3841	Fundamentals of Social Work Practice	3 S.H.
SSW:3842	Interpersonal Skills Laboratory	2 S.H.
SSW:3844	Introduction to Social Work Research	4 S.H.
SSW:3845	Social Work Processes	4 S.H.
SSW:3847	Discrimination, Oppression, and Diversity	3 S.H.
SSW:4189	Field Experience Seminar	1 S.H.
SSW:4893	Field Experience	8-11 S.H.
SSW:4843	Social Welfare Policy and Practice	3 S.H.

### **REQUIRED ELECTIVES**

Students must complete one of two options:

- 1) 6 s.h. of social work electives AND 6 s.h. of courses in the same outside discipline closely related to social work. Outside disciplines include African American studies (AFAM); aging and longevity studies (ASP); American studies (AMST); communication studies (COMM); criminology, law and justice (CRIM); entrepreneurial management (ENTR); global health studies (GHS); journalism and mass communication (JMC); management and entrepreneurship (MGMT); political science (POLI); psychological and brain sciences (PSY); public health (CPH); sociology (SOC); social justice (SJUS); Spanish (SPAN); and gender, women's, and sexuality studies (GWSS).
- OR
- 2) 12 s.h. of social work electives

Students working on a minor or a certificate may apply up to 6 s.h. of social work electives towards the certificate or minor. You cannot use courses that fulfill GE CLAS Core requirements towards your elective requirements.

### **CO-REQUIREMENTS**

PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology	3 s.h.
POLI:1100 Intro to American Politics	3 s.h.
SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology	3 s.h.

### **UI GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

Students must also complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences [General Education Program](#). The SSW:1022\_Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States (3 s.h.) fulfills the General Education Program's Values, Society, and Diversity requirement. Introduction to Social Work courses taken at other institutions do not fulfill this general education requirement.

Students can also use other co-required courses to meet general education requirements (PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology, SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology, or POLI:1100 Introduction to American Politics for the Social Sciences requirement).

GPA Requirement in the Major

Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA in their social work courses in the major (excluding the co-required courses) and an overall 2.00 GPA in all courses.

Recommended Course Sequences

Most social work courses are offered only once each year. You can take social work electives in any semester, including the final semester of your field placement. You must complete all the required social major courses (excluding electives and co-reqs) before you can enter your field placement.

First and Second Years

General Education courses including:

SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States	3 s.h.
POLI:1100 Introduction to American Politics	3 s.h.
PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology	3 s.h.
SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology	3 s.h.

You can take social work electives or electives in another discipline before being admitted to the major.

IF you begin the program as a **JUNIOR**, the course sequence is:

<b>Third Year – Fall Semester</b>		<b>Fourth Year – Fall Semester</b>	
SSW:3840 Human Behavior in the Soc Env.	4 s.h.	SSW:3841 Fundamentals of Social Work Pract	3 s.h.
SSW:3847 Discrimination Oppression Diversity		3 s.h.	SSW:3842
Interpersonal Skills Laboratory		2 s.h.	
Social Work elective		SSW:4843 Social Welfare Policy and Practice	3 s.h.
<b>Third Year – Spring Semester</b>		Social Work elective	3 s.h.
SSW:3844 Intro to SW Research	4 s.h.	<b>Fourth Year – Spring Semester</b>	
SSW:3845 Social Work Processes	4 s.h.	SSW:4189 BA Generalist Seminar	1 s.h.
		SSW:4193 BA Generalist Practicum	8-11 s.h.

If you begin the program as a **SENIOR**, the course sequence is:

**Third year – Summer Semester** – we may recommend 3 s.h. of social work electives in the summer before beginning the program if you have not taken any electives, although there are limited social work electives available to BASW students in the summer.

<b>Fourth Year – Fall Semester</b>		<b>Fourth Year – Spring Semester</b>	
SSW:3840 Human Behavior in the Soc Env.	4 s.h.	SSW:3842 Interpersonal Skills Laboratory	2 s.h.
SSW:3841 Fundamentals of Social Work Pract.		3 s.h.	SSW:3844 Intro
to SW Research	4 s.h.		
SSW:4843 Social Welfare Policy and Practice		3 s.h.	SSW:3845
Social Work Processes	4 s.h.		
SSW:3847 Discrimination Oppression Diversity		3 s.h.	Social Work Elective
	3-6 s.h.		
		<b>Fourth Year – Summer Semester</b>	
		SSW:4189 BA Generalist Seminar	1 s.h.
		SSW:4193 BA Generalist Practicum	8 s.h.

## Four-Year Graduation Plan

To stay on the University's four-year graduation plan, you must meet minimum requirements by certain semesters.

**Before the third semester** begins, you should have completed at least 30 s.h. of the 120 s.h. required for graduation.

**Before the fifth semester** begins, you should have completed:

- SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States
- Four courses that can be applied to the major – either electives or co-required courses
- Been admitted to the School of Social Work
- Completed at least 60 s.h.

**Before the seventh semester** begins, you should have completed:

- Six more courses in the major
- At least 90 s.h.

**Before the eighth semester** begins, you should have completed:

- All the courses in the major except for SSW:4189 BA Generalist Seminar and SSW:4193 BA Generalist Practicum.
- Finalized your field placement.

**During the eighth semester**, you must complete any remaining co-requirements, electives, or general education requirements and be registered for the remaining hours needed to earn 120 s.h. for graduation.

## Certificate Programs

The School offers three certificate programs. Students can count six semester hours of required social work electives towards their certificate program. For more information, check out the link for each certificate program on the School's website.

**Certificate in Critical Cultural Competence** - <https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/undergraduate/certificate-critical-cultural-competence>

**Certificate in Aging and Longevity Studies** - <https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/undergraduate/certificate-aging-longevity-studies>

**Certificate in Resilience and Trauma Informed Perspectives** - <https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/undergraduate/certificate-resilience-and-trauma-informed-perspectives>

### Honors in the Social Work Major

The School of Social Work has an honors program leading to a Bachelor of Arts with honors in social work. You must have a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.33 and complete a 6 s.h. honors project (see Appendix B for more information about honors in the major).

### Minor in Social Work

A minor in social work requires a minimum of 15 s.h. in social work courses, including 12 s.h. in courses numbered 3000 or above taken at The University of Iowa. You must maintain a 2.00 GPA in all courses for the minor. You can not take coursework for the minor pass/non-pass (S/U). You must also take SSW:1022 Social Justice and Welfare in the United States or, for transfer students, an equivalent introduction to social work course from another institution approved by the department. Students completing the minor cannot take required social work major courses. These courses are only available to students admitted to the social work program.

### Individual Study SSW:3191

Individual Study allows you to pursue an area of interest that is not offered in the regular curriculum. To complete an individual study, you ask a professor with expertise in your topic to supervise your study. You must complete a *Contract for Individual Study* form, signed by you and your professor and approved by your advisor at least three weeks after the start of classes. Information about each faculty members areas of expertise are on the school's website: <http://clas.uiowa.edu/socialwork/people>



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# BA GENERALIST PRACTICUM

Field Experience is an integral component of the curriculum in social work education. In your field placement you will engage in supervised social work practice and apply classroom learning in the field setting. Detailed information regarding Field Experience and Field Seminar are available on our Field Education website (<https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/field-education>) and our Field Education manual (<https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/field-education/manual>). Our Field Director, Sarah Witry ([sarah-witry@uiowa.edu](mailto:sarah-witry@uiowa.edu)) is also available to answer any questions you have about field placement. Below are some details you should be aware of as they prepare for your field placement.

## Completing all Social Work Courses in the Major

You must complete all your social work courses in the major before you can enter field placement. You do not have to have completed all your social work electives or other degree requirements before entering field.

## Semester and Clock Hours for Completing BA Generalist Experience

Field Experience and Seminar are offered in the spring and summer semesters. Field Experience is graded S/U. You will register for a minimum of eight (8) semester hours for field experience and complete 400 clock hours in your field placement. If you are completing field in the spring semester, this averages out to 26-27 hours per week over the semester. If you complete field experience in the summer (mid-May through August, 12-weeks) you will be in field placement for 33-34 hours per week. Total hours for the term are more important than the weekly hours since as your weekly hours may vary according to activities and learning opportunities in the agency or community. You must make up any time missed because of agency holiday(s), planned vacation and/or illness, etc.. Make-up time is negotiated between you and your field instructor.

You can register for additional semester hours (up to 11) with advisor and Field Director approval. Each additional semester hour requires you to complete an additional 50 clock hours (11 semester hours = 550 hours) in the spring semester.

Students are discouraged from taking any additional semester hours during the summer due to shortness of that term.

We recommend you take a light load of courses (no more than 12 s.h.) while enrolled in Field Experience and Field Experience Seminar to meet the time commitment necessary to achieve your field learning objectives and complete your clock hours. You should carefully consider the balance of work obligations with your field hours. We strongly discourage you from working while completing field in the summer.

## BA Generalist Seminar

The seminar is a one (1) semester hour required course which is offered concurrently with Field Experience. The seminar provides opportunity for students to exchange their experiences in their generalist practice settings using an interactive group format. Application of knowledge, skills and values is facilitated through seminar activities, helping students grow into professional identities as culturally competent practitioners.

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# STUDENT ADVANCEMENT AND SUPPORT

## Student Advancement in the Program

Because the BA is a professional degree, meeting academic performance standards is a necessary, but not sufficient, outcome for ensuring advancement in the social work program. As future social work professionals, social work students must meet the *academic standards* (knowledge, skills, and competencies) and *professional behavior standards* of the program which are based on, but not limited to the requirements of the NASW Code of Ethics and the University of Iowa's Code of Student Life.

Each semester, the BA Program Director will review your progress with faculty. If you are making satisfactory academic progress and meeting the professional behaviors standards, you are automatically advanced to the next semester. If a faculty member shares a concern, the BA Director may address this with you informally. If there are more serious concerns about your progress, the faculty member or BA Director may initiate our Student Advancement and Problem Resolution process. This process is intended to support you in remediating the concerns so you can continue to advance in the program. For more information about this process, see the Policy on Student Advancement in the Social Work Major in Appendix C.

## Student Services Center

The School's Student Services Center is located in 308 North Hall. The Center is open Monday through Friday from 8 am – 4:30 pm. Staff are available to answer your questions.

## Academic Advisors

**Academic Advisor.** You will have a faculty or staff member as your academic advisor. Your advisor monitors your progress throughout the program. Each semester, you are required to meet with your advisor to review your degree audit and get approved to register. Advisors will not clear you to register without meeting first. All advisors are available during their published office hours or by appointment.

Academic advisors help with:

- ✓ Class registration
- ✓ Questions about financial aid, scholarships, etc.
- ✓ Clarifications on School policies and procedures
- ✓ Dropping or adding a class
- ✓ Learning more about academic certificates, the Honor's program, and immersion opportunities

If a faculty member is concerned about your advancement in the program, your advisor assists with developing the remediation plan to address the concern (see Student Advancement Policy in Appendix C).

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# COMMUNICATION AND FACULTY AND STAFF YOU SHOULD KNOW

## Methods of Communication

The following are different ways you will receive information from faculty and staff about your courses, registration, scholarship and job opportunities.

**University (uiowa.edu) email.** You should check your uiowa.edu email account DAILY! The university requires that all communications are sent to your university email account. Faculty often communicate with students in their courses via email (directly or through ICON). Your academic advisor will email you about important registration information. All communications from university administrative offices (financial aid, billing, registrar, etc.) are sent to your uiowa.edu account. Finally, the university instructs faculty and staff not to respond to students through personal email accounts.

**School of Social Work Email Listserv.** The school maintains an email listserv for all BASW students. We regularly send out notices about campus or community jobs notices, scholarship opportunities, campus events, and information about graduation. The Social Work Student Association (SWSA) will also communicate with you through the listserv.

**Mailboxes.** You will be assigned a mailbox outside of Room 308 North Hall.

**North Hall Electronic Video Monitors.** Be sure to check hallways and electronic video monitors for notices about planning or advising sessions, as well as for optional educational or social events.

**Bulletin Boards.** There are several bulletin boards in North Hall with dedicated informational purposes. The undergraduate bulletin board is located on the North wall opposite Room 332.

## Faculty and Staff

The following faculty oversee various administrative functions of the school:

**Miriam Landsman, Associate Professor, Director of the School.** The Director of the School oversees all operations of the School of Social Work, and oversees grade grievances and dismissal appeals.

**Alison Oliver, Associate Professor of Instruction, BASW Program Director.** The BASW Program Director is responsible for developing and maintaining the BASW educational program, resolving concerns about students' academic or professional behaviors, and serving as a resource for students.

**Sarah Witry, Clinical Assistant Professor, Director of Field Education.** The Director of Field Education oversees all operations related to field placements.

### The following staff are available to assist you:

#### **Kate Kemp, MSW, LISW, Program Administrator**

Kate administers and provides program planning for the School's educational programs in support of the program directors (BA, MSW, and PhD) and the School's director. She interprets and enforces University, College, School, CSWE policies and procedures, provides faculty and student advising consultation, and is responsible for ensuring the programs comply with these policies and procedures. (office is 308 North Hal 319-335-1254) She is also an academic advisor for many BA students.

#### **Tomeka Petersen, MSW, LISW, Admissions and Program Coordinator**

Tomeka recruits students and facilitates information sessions about the BA and MSW programs and the application process. She staffs the Admissions Panels and maintains the applicant and student databases and works closely with the UI College Admissions office. She serves as an academic advisor.

#### **Chuck Wieland, Administrator**

Chuck administers the Operations of the School, including preparing budgets and overseeing financial accounts, research and teaching assistantship appointments, and departmental financial aid and awards.

#### **Wynne Worley, Operations Coordinator**

Wynne assists the Director and provides coordination and support for School operations, including space and equipment.

The following faculty direct or coordinate our certificate programs:

**Aging Studies and Longevity Studies Certificate**  
**Resilience and Trauma Informed Perspectives Certificate**  
**Critical Cultural Competence Certificate Coordinator**

Nadia Sabbagh-Steinberg ([nadia-saggagh@uiowa.edu](mailto:nadia-saggagh@uiowa.edu))  
 Harmony Linden ([harmony-linden@uiowa.edu](mailto:harmony-linden@uiowa.edu))  
 Yolanda Spears ([yolanda-spears@uiowa.edu](mailto:yolanda-spears@uiowa.edu))

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# STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

There are many opportunities for involvement in the School, the campus, and the community. Participating in opportunities outside the classroom help you learn more about the field of social work. The following are ways in get involved:

## **Student Feedback**

The School collects your input through student evaluations of each course and instructor using the university wide system of Assessing the Classroom Environment (ACE) forms. Also, the school surveys graduating students about their experiences in the program. Your feedback is important to us. We hope you'll respond!

## **The Social Work Student Association (SWSA)**

The Social Work Student Association (SWSA) is a formally recognized undergraduate organization by the University of Iowa Office of Student Life. SWSA is open to social work majors and social work interest students. The goals and functions of SWSA are determined through student input and participation. The benefits of SWSA are numerous.

SWSA focuses upon community service activities, fundraising, providing social networking opportunities, hosting invited speakers and connecting with NASW concerning social issues and social legislation. Meetings are announced on the BA email listserve.

## **Phi Alpha Honor Society**

Delta Nu, founded by the School of Social Work in 1995, is a chapter of Phi Alpha, a national social work honor society. Students meeting the requirements for participation are invited to apply for membership in the fall of their senior year. Contact Kate Kemp, Program Administrator, for details.

## **Volunteering**

Volunteer experiences are an essential part of a student's preparation for a career in social work. Students are encouraged to volunteer throughout their undergraduate work. There is a listing of [volunteer opportunities](#) on the School of Social Work website.

