

IOWA

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

School of Social Work

2024-2025

**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.

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 2024.

Students directly declare the social work major at the time of admission to the University of Iowa. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences [First-Year Admissions](#) and [Transfer Admission](#) requirements.

Students can register for the professional core social work courses when they've successfully met the criteria of completing the following three prerequisite courses with a C or above:

- SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the U.S. or approved Intro to Social Work course (3 s.h.)
- PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology or transfer equivalent (3 s.h.)
- SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology or transfer equivalent (3 s.h.)

And meet these requirements:

- 2.0 GPA minimum overall
- Completion of 45 s.h. or more
- Submits a signed Professional Social Work Agreement form (signed after criteria met)

Ideally, students enter the BA in Social Work program as juniors, and complete their professional core social work courses over two years. However, students can enter their junior year and complete the major in a year and a summer.

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 practicum 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 56 s.h. of coursework in the major.

The major in social work requires the following:

PREREQUISITE COURSES:

SSW:1022	Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States (or transfer equivalent)	3 S.H.
PSY:1001	Elementary Psychology (or transfer equivalent)	3 S.H.
SOC:1010	Introduction to Sociology (or transfer equivalent)	3 S.H.

SOCIAL WORK COURSES IN THE MAJOR (32- 35 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	BA Generalist Practicum Seminar	1 S.H.
SSW:4893	BA Generalist Practicum	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); American studies (AMST); aging and longevity studies (ASP); communication studies (COMM); public health (CPH); criminology, law and justice (CRIM); entrepreneurial management (ENTR); global health studies (GHS); gender, women's, and sexuality studies (GWSS); journalism and mass communication (JMC); management and entrepreneurship (MGMT); political science (POLI); psychological and brain sciences (PSY); sociology (SOC); and social justice (SJUS).
OR
- 2) 12 s.h. of social work electives

Students working on a minor or a certificate may apply up to 6 s.h. toward the social work major.

Courses that fulfill GE CLAS Core requirements cannot be used towards elective requirements

CO-REQUIREMENT

POLI:1100	Intro to American Politics	3 s.h.
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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 2.0 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 practicum placement. You must complete all the required social major courses (excluding electives and co-reqs) before you can enter your BA Generalist Practicum placement.

First and Second Years

Pre-requisite courses earning a C or higher:

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

Co-requirement course:

POLI:1100 Introduction to American Politics	3 s.h.
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You can take social work electives or electives in another discipline before enrolling in the professional core social work courses.

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

Third Year – Fall Semester

SSW:3840 Human Behavior in the Soc Env.	4 s.h.
SSW:3847 Discrimination Oppression Diversity	3 s.h.
Social Work elective	3 s.h.

Third Year – Spring Semester

SSW:3844 Intro to SW Research	4 s.h.
SSW:3845 Social Work Processes	4 s.h.

Fourth Year – Fall Semester

SSW:3841 Fundamentals of Social Work Pract	3 s.h.
SSW:3842 Interpersonal Skills Laboratory	2 s.h.
SSW:4843 Social Welfare Policy and Practice	3 s.h.
Social Work elective	3 s.h.

Fourth Year – Spring Semester

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.

Fourth Year – Fall Semester

SSW:3840 Human Behavior in the Soc Env.	4 s.h.
SSW:3841 Fundamentals of Social Work Pract.	3 s.h.
SSW:4843 Social Welfare Policy and Practice	3 s.h.
SSW:3847 Discrimination Oppression Diversity	3 s.h.

Fourth Year – Spring Semester

SSW:3842 Interpersonal Skills Laboratory	2 s.h.
SSW:3844 Intro to SW Research	4 s.h.
SSW:3845 Social Work Processes	4 s.h.
Social Work Elective	3-6 s.h.

Fourth Year – Summer Semester

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 are required to have met the criteria to register for the professional core social work courses by completing the following three prerequisite courses with a C or above:

- SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the U.S. or approved Intro to Social Work course (3 s.h.)
- PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology or transfer equivalent (3 s.h.)
- SOC:1010 Introduction to Sociology or transfer equivalent (3 s.h.)

And meet these requirements:

- 2.0 GPA minimum overall
- Completion of 45 s.h. or more
- Submits a signed Professional Social Work Agreement form (signed after criteria met)

One other course that can be applied to the major – either electives or POLI1100 Introduction to American Politics.

Before the seventh semester begins, you should have completed:

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

Before the eighth semester begins, you should have completed:

All the professional core courses in the major except for SSW:4189 BA Generalist Seminar and SSW:4193 BA Generalist Practicum.

Finalized your BA Generalist Practicum 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 working on a minor or a certificate may apply up to 6 s.h. toward the social work. For more information, check out the link for each certificate program on the School's website.

Certificate in Aging and Longevity Studies - <https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/undergraduate/certificate-aging-longevity-studies>. This certificate will no longer be offered starting Fall 2025.

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

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 that have declared a social work major and have met the criteria the enroll in the professional core social work courses.

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>

BA GENERALIST PRACTICUM

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

Completing all Social Work Courses in the Major

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

Semester and Clock Hours for Completing BA Generalist Experience

BA Generalist Practicum Experience and Seminar are offered in the spring and summer semesters. BA Generalist Practicum is graded S/U. You will register for a minimum of eight (8) semester hours for practicum experience and complete 400 clock hours in your practicum placement. If you are completing practicum in the spring semester, this averages out to 26-27 hours per week over the semester. If you complete practicum experience in the summer (mid-May through August, 12-weeks) you will be in practicum 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 the you and your practicum instructor.

You can register for additional semester hours (up to 11) with advisor and Practicum Education 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 BA Generalist Practicum Experience and BA Generalist Practicum Seminar to meet the time commitment necessary to achieve your practicum learning objectives and complete your clock hours. You should carefully consider the balance of work obligations with your practicum hours. We strongly discourage you from working while completing practicum in the summer.

BA Generalist Seminar

The seminar is a one (1) semester hour required course which is offered concurrently with Practicum 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.

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 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).

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.

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, Practicum Education Director. The Practicum Education Director oversees all operations related to practicum placements.

Marcia Valadez, Practicum Education Coordinator. Collaborates with Practicum Education Director with practicum placements.

Additional staff available to assist you:

Tomoka Petersen, MSW, LISW, Program and Admissions Manager

The Program and Admissions Manager provides support to the Director, Administrator, Faculty Program Directors and

Certificate Coordinators with developing, interpreting and implementing School, CLAS and Graduate College, and CSWE educational policies and procedures. They provide administrative support for planning and delivery of the school's programs, for student retention and success and alumni services.

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.

Admissions Specialist – to be hired

The following faculty direct or coordinate our certificate programs:

Ageing Studies and Longevity Studies Certificate

Resilience and Trauma Informed Perspectives Certificate

Critical Cultural Competence Certificate

Mercedes Bern-Klug (mercedes-bern-klug@uiowa.edu)

Harmony Linden (harmony-linden@uiowa.edu)

Yolanda Spears (yolanda-spears@uiowa.edu)

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.