MASTER’S PROGRAM

SOCIAL WORK

Helen Bader School of Social Welfare
The mission of the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare is to improve lives and strengthen communities through research, education and community partnerships. Our graduate students play a key role in that mission by becoming highly skilled, culturally competent and ethical social workers who are leaders in the practice of social justice.

Ready to make a difference? Start here.

ON THE COVER: Britney Morrow ’13 at Elm Creative Arts School. Britney was a social work graduate student in the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare and completed a school social work field placement at Elm Creative Arts School.
The Curriculum

You know you want to make a difference — but where and how?

Our MSW program allows you to cater your studies to your interests and career aspirations. Your specific coursework is determined by your chosen concentration area and method of practice:

Concentrations

**PHYSICAL, BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH** – This concentration prepares you for advanced social work practice involving the delivery of health, mental health and substance abuse services to individuals, families, groups and the community.

**CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE** – This concentration focuses on the study of family systems, child and family welfare/well-being, and advanced social work interventions to enhance the lives of children and families.

**GERONTOLOGY** – This concentration centers on the physical, psychological and social processes of aging, which includes family roles and responsibilities, social support networks, the use of health and social services, and cultural influences.

Methods

**DIRECT PRACTICE** – Through this method of social work practice students focus on knowledge, skills and interventions that are delivered directly to individuals, families and groups.

**MACRO PRACTICE** – This method emphasizes the knowledge and skills necessary for guiding planned change with organizations and communities through social work roles in policy, planning, administration, supervision, program development and community practice.

**DOUBLE METHODS** – This option is ideal for students who are interested in gaining knowledge and skills in both of the above social work methods areas. In addition to coursework in both areas, Double Methods requires field placement practice experience in direct and macro settings. This may require an additional semester of field placement for some students; please consult your advisor for further information.
Specialties

UWM’s MSW program also allows you to specialize in areas beyond the concentrations and methods listed. Some specializations enable you to meet Wisconsin’s required coursework for state certification in a particular specialty, and others are UWM-granted certificate programs.

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE CREDENTIALS

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK – Students interested in school social work choose Child and Family Welfare as their primary concentration area and Direct Practice as their methods area. Electives are pre-determined and are specific to school social work practice topics. This track’s courses meet the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction’s educational requirements for certification as a school social worker.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELING – Students who wish to focus on substance abuse counseling choose Physical, Behavioral and Mental Health as their concentration area and Direct Practice as their methods area. Electives are pre-determined and are specific to substance abuse practice topics. This track’s courses meet the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services’ educational requirements for certification as a substance abuse counselor.

SCREENING, BRIEF INTERVENTION, AND REFERRAL TO TREATMENT FOR SUBSTANCE MISUSE (SBIRT) – Students can pursue training on substance misuse issues and become certified through the State of Wisconsin in use of the SBIRT approach to the delivery of early intervention and treatment services for substance misuse. SBIRT training is beneficial to students specializing in the substance abuse counseling (SAC) program and is also very relevant for students in other concentrations.

UWM GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Additional seven to nine credits of completed coursework required beyond the credits for the MSW degree.

APPLIED GERONTOLOGY – This certificate provides students with the knowledge and skills needed to successfully pursue or advance careers within aging services organizations or academic research in aging. It is coordinated through the Center for Aging and Translational Research.

TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE – This certificate provides students with knowledge to implement trauma-informed policy, supervision and intervention within professional settings, including child welfare agencies, substance use treatment centers, outpatient mental health clinics and community-based health clinics.

NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT – Offered in partnership with the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management, this certificate builds on our requirements in “macro” methods (community and organizational practice) and is for graduate students interested in organizational leadership and management roles.

WOMEN’S STUDIES – This certificate is designed for students enrolled in a graduate program in any field who wish to complement their training with an additional specialization in Women’s Studies.

COMBINATION PROGRAM

YOUTH-ORIENTED SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND TRAUMA (YOSAT) COUNSELING PROGRAM – This program is designed for students with interests in the intersecting issues related to trauma experiences and substance abuse among adolescents and transitional-aged young adults. The YOSAT program includes a $5000 scholarship for two semesters of a full-time student’s studies while they are in field placement. The curriculum includes the coursework required for both the graduate certificate in Trauma-Informed Care and Substance Abuse Counseling certification in Wisconsin.
The UWM Advantage

A REPUTATION FOR EXCELLENCE: As Wisconsin’s premier urban research university, UWM is nationally known for excellence in research, teaching and community engagement. Our MSW program is the largest in Wisconsin and is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

A LEADER IN ADVANCED SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE: We offer some distinctive specialties you won’t find anywhere else in the state, including a graduate certificate in the fast-growing area of Trauma-Informed Care and a specialization in substance abuse counseling that meets Wisconsin’s credentialing requirements. Through UWM’s Center for Aging and Translational Research, the Center for Applied Behavioral Health Research and other research collaborations, faculty at the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare are deepening our understanding of aging, child welfare, trauma, and substance abuse among other areas.

A VIBRANT COMMUNITY: Our campus is the most diverse in the University of Wisconsin system and attracts nearly 28,000 students from 49 states and 83 countries.

FLEXIBILITY: Our flexible curriculum — including many evening courses — will help you reach your academic goals.

THE CITY IS YOUR LAB: Take advantage of the hundreds of resources, agencies and organizations clustered in Wisconsin’s largest city. Studying social work at an urban university offers you powerful connections to field experiences, jobs and professional networks that will give you an edge after graduation. You’ll benefit from our deep connections in the community, including nearly 500 field experience options, many of which are supervised by UWM alumni.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION: UWM’s campus is located in a charming, walkable neighborhood just five minutes from Lake Michigan and 15 minutes from downtown. Known for its summer festivals, abundant outdoor recreation, professional sports, performing arts, breweries and growing culinary scene, Milwaukee offers a small-town feel with big-city amenities. We’re also only 90 minutes away from Chicago, which offers additional opportunities for work and play.
Flexibility

Unlike a lot of other MSW programs, you don’t have commit to being either full time or part time at UWM.

You can set your own pace through the program in a way that meets your individual needs, and you can often choose from multiple sections of required courses, including evening sections. If you work or have other significant life responsibilities, it’s still possible to arrange a feasible class schedule if you work closely with your advisor and plan ahead.

Field Placement

Field placement education (internship) is a critical aspect of the MSW educational experience.

MSW students participate in field placement for three or four semesters. Field placement is completed for course credit and a grade and generally requires 16-20 hours a week on average (more in summer). We’ve established nearly 500 field placements throughout the Milwaukee metro area and far beyond so that your field placement can be arranged as close to home as possible. Please note: Night and weekend field placements are few and cannot be expected.

MSW students without a BSW

For students whose bachelor’s degree is in a discipline other than social work, the MSW degree requires 56 credit hours.

This program includes the professional foundation curriculum (22 credits) and the advanced curriculum (34 credits). For full-time students, the MSW curriculum generally takes six semesters or 24 months to complete (including summers). Part-time students usually complete the program in 10 semesters or 39 months (including summers).

Advanced Standing

The advanced curriculum is made up of 34 credit hours and includes three consecutive semesters of field placement.

Students who have earned a bachelor’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program within the past five years are automatically admitted to the advanced curriculum phase of the MSW program. For full-time students, the advanced curriculum generally takes four semesters or 15 months to complete (including summer). Part-time students generally complete the program in six semesters or 24 months.

Social Work-related Experience

The MSW degree is an advanced-level education and training in social work practice, and admission to the program is competitive.

In addition to a strong academic background, positive letters of reference and a solid narrative statement, successful applicants most often bring social work-related or other professional experience that enhances an understanding of what it means to be a social worker. Such experience is gained from volunteer work, field placements or internships, and/or paid employment.

STUDY ABROAD

The Helen Bader School of Social Welfare offers a number of study abroad opportunities, including some limited international field placement options. Current selections include programs in: Austria, South Africa and Costa Rica.
Financing your Education

UWM offers many ways to make your graduate studies more affordable, including a limited number of graduate assistantships, fellowships and scholarships specifically for students in the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare.

LEARN MORE:
▶ graduateschool.uwm.edu/students/financial-support
▶ finaid.uwm.edu
▶ uwm.edu/hbssw/scholarship

Admission

FALL SEMESTER START ONLY

The MSW program begins in the fall. The application deadline is always the January 2 before the fall in which you wish to enroll (i.e., to start Fall 2015, you must apply by January 2, 2015).

NO GRADUATE ENTRANCE EXAM REQUIRED

The MSW program at UWM does not require a graduate entrance exam like the GRE (Graduate Record Exam) or the MAT (Miller Analogies Test).

To Apply

For the most up-to-date application instructions, forms and links, please visit our website at:
▶ uwm.edu/hbssw/social_work/sw_ms

Application deadline is January 2.

For more information

Have additional questions or want to know more?

If you have other questions or wish to schedule a personal consultation about the MSW program and/or the admissions process, we’d love to hear from you.

CONTACT MSW ADMISSIONS AND ADVISING:
▶ Amy Kirby, MSW, LCSW at kirby@uwm.edu or 414-229-6486.

Or connect with us online:
▶ uwm.edu/hbssw/social_work

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