

# PHD PROGRAM IN SOCIAL WORK

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## DEGREE OFFERED

PhD

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The mission of the School of Social Work's Doctor of Philosophy program is to prepare graduates to conduct interdisciplinary research and to become exemplary social work scholars and educators.

## PROGRAM ADMISSIONS

Beyond the Graduate School's minimum admission requirements, applicants must have a master's degree in social work from an accredited Council on Social Work Education Master of Social Work program or an equivalent degree. Also, the PhD program in social work maintains a strict language requirement for non-native speakers of English. All applicants to the PhD program whose native language and/or language of the home is not English are required to submit results from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). This guideline includes international students/non-native speakers of English who have completed a master of social work or similar degree from a U.S. college or university.

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The 51-credit curriculum begins with 21 credits of core courses: quantitative and qualitative research design and methods (9 credits), data analysis (6 credits), and research practicum (6 credits). Additional required courses include intervention research (3 credits), an integrative seminar (3 credits), a course on teaching methods (3 credits), an advanced research or data analysis course in the student's area of interest (3 credits), and a theory course in the student's area of interest (3 credits). Finally, students have 3 credits of electives. After completing 36 credits, students take a comprehensive examination. The final phase of the program is completion of 12 hours of doctoral dissertation credits.

## COURSES

### SOWK 804 Research Methods in Social Work I ..... 3

This course offers an introduction to conceptual understanding, fundamental research skills, and design and measurement necessary for students to do advanced social work research. The course covers historical trends in social work research problems, hypothesis formulation, selection and testing of measurement strategies, and diverse research designs, including experimental, quasi-experimental, single subject, survey, and quantitative design.

### SOWK 805 Data Analysis I ..... 3

This course's focus is on how to select and do the appropriate quantitative data analysis strategies. The course provides conceptual understanding and skills necessary for selection of appropriate statistical procedures, computer computation of procedures, and appropriate interpretation of statistical measures. Content includes basic descriptive statistics through an introduction to the General Linear Model using multiple regression and correlation analysis.

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor

### SOWK 806 Research Methods in Social Work II ..... 3

This course offers advanced conceptual understanding of skills used in complex research design and measurement as part of advanced social work research. The course covers advanced hypothesis formulation development, and selection and testing of measurement strategies in complex research designs, including experimental, quasi-experimental, single subject, survey, and quantitative design.

Prerequisites: Grade of B or better in SOWK 804 and SOWK 805

### SOWK 807 Data Analysis II ..... 3

This course provides conceptual understanding of multivariate statistics. Students develop skills to use statistical software to conduct analyses and interpret the statistics. Students become skilled in using these techniques to analyze results of research designs used for social work research. Emphasis is on the relationship of data analysis and research design.

Prerequisites: SOWK 804 and a grade of B or better in SOWK 805

### SOWK 808 Social Work Knowledge and Theory ..... 3

This course examines the nature of knowledge and the processes of knowledge building within the context of application of scientific methods and development of generalizations from social work practice, wisdom, and experience. The focus is on knowledge and theory construction, history of ideas, and knowledge building in social work. Psychological and social science perspectives help students examine theory development in social work.

### SOWK 809 Multilevel Modeling ..... 3

This course is intended to introduce multilevel modeling for analyzing nested or multiple level data. Students will identify situations in which multilevel modeling should be used, will compare and contrast multilevel modeling with other data analysis techniques, and will conduct multilevel data analyses. Finally, students will write a journal article based on a multilevel analysis using a data set of their choice.

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor

### SOWK 810 Research Practicum I ..... 3

This course enhances students' ability to undertake significant and methodologically rigorous social work research in a substantive area. Each student participates as part of a research team to design, carry out, analyze, and distribute a research project. Students select the research topic, design, and measures for the study.

Prerequisites: SOWK 804 and SOWK 805

### SOWK 811 Research Practicum II ..... 3

This course expands knowledge learned in SOWK 810 to enhance ability to undertake significant and methodologically rigorous social work research in a substantive area. The student research team will finish collecting data as planned during SOWK 810, enter, organize, and analyze the data collected; and write a journal article that is ready to submit for publication review.

Prerequisite: SOWK 810

### SOWK 812 Integrative Seminar ..... 3

This seminar focuses on the relationship between theory and research methods in the development of research questions and a research design. It discusses the meaning of theory and theoretical frameworks; the difference between theoretical and conceptual frameworks; the difference between theories and logic models; different approaches to theory and research within different disciplines and in interdisciplinary work; the connections between research and context (history, policy, practice); the role of researcher passions and values in the construction and implementation of research projects; and the role of ethics in both theoretical development and research design. At the conclusion of the seminar, students will have a clearer understanding of what to expect in the dissertation process and a rough outline of the structure of a dissertation proposal.

Prerequisites: SOWK 804, SOWK 805, SOWK 806, SOWK 807, SOWK 810, SOWK 811, SOWK 826

### SOWK 814 Intervention Research ..... 3

The evolution of social work practice calls for implementing systematic methods for developing and testing macro and micro social work interventions. This requires social work scholars to integrate their practice knowledge and wisdom with theories of social problems. Furthermore, scholars must undertake deliberate strategies for implementing methods for documenting and evaluating interventions to respond to social problems affecting systems of all sizes (e.g., individual, family, group, and neighborhood). The purpose of this advanced research seminar for PhD students is to introduce

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participants to the five steps of intervention development, testing, and dissemination, and to provide opportunities for practicing elements of these stages based on their individual social work practice and research interests. Students demonstrate competence to develop or adapt a social work intervention and to prepare a research proposal to test the efficacy of the intervention.

Prerequisites: SOWK 804, SOWK 805, SOWK 806, SOWK 807, SOWK 810, SOWK 811, SOWK 826

**SOWK 822 Structure and Content  
of Social Work Education ..... 3**

This course covers the evolution of social work education as part of the American university. Attention is on seminal issues that have been of concern to social work educators and curriculum development and educational structure, rather than teaching methodologies or techniques.

**SOWK 826 Qualitative Research Methods ..... 3**

This course provides introduction to qualitative research and its role in the development of social work knowledge. It covers material on paradigms underlying qualitative inquiry, basic ideas, and major methods. The course fosters students' ability to conduct qualitative research through gathering and analyzing data.

**SOWK 827 Seminar in Advanced Qualitative  
Data Analysis: Grounded Theory**

This advanced seminar is offered for doctoral students who want to learn about qualitative data analysis for current or future research, or who want to do a qualitative dissertation or a mixed-method dissertation. Most introductory courses offer students the opportunity to work on the early phases of a qualitative project (e.g., data gathering, writing a proposal) but not the opportunity to work on the later phases, such as data analysis and writing. The seminar is designed to take up where these courses leave off by focusing on qualitative data analysis. Doctoral students will have the opportunity to go into more depth in one of the major qualitative research traditions (grounded theory), learn a variety of techniques for

data analysis, and have opportunities to develop their ideas and to present their work. Grounded theory is one of the most developed methods of qualitative data analysis.

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor

**SOWK 834 Comparative Social Policy ..... 3**

This course emphasizes comparative analysis of national approaches to social policy in different societies. It provides a comparative analysis of dimensions of various social welfare systems including social security, social services, and health care policy. It covers methodology of comparative analysis with attention to governmental involvement in social policy, the nature of public and private sector relations, and the assessment of social policy regarding the analytical ideas of adequacy, equity, inclusiveness, comprehensiveness, effectiveness, and efficiency.

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor

**SOWK 835 Theories and Practice  
of Social Work Teaching ..... 3**

This course focuses on the development of teaching skills used for social work education. Students learn teaching strategies and classroom methodologies. Students develop and deliver sample lectures that include use of audiovisual materials.

**SOWK 836 Survey Research in Social Work ..... 3**

This course provides the advanced student with hands-on experiences in the design, use, and analysis of survey research. Students learn to write a report interpreting findings from the research.

**SOWK 838 Selected Topics in Social Work ..... 3**

Faculty members design and carry out a course devoted to a special topic area. To monitor content and quality, faculty members submit a detailed course outline to the program director before the course is added to the semester course schedule.

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor

**SOWK 897 Independent Study ..... 1 to 3**

Students select topics of professional interest and study with a graduate faculty member who has competence in the subject. Study plan must include provision for tutorial conferences and a formal paper or report. The student's advisor, instructor, and doctoral program committee must approve the study before registration. Repeatable to a maximum of 6 credits.

Prerequisite: Completion of core courses

**SOWK 898 Pre-Candidacy Research ..... 1 to 8**

**SOWK 899 Doctoral Dissertation Research ..... 1 to 12**