

# SOCIAL WORK MSW

The School of Social Work offers an undergraduate degree in social work as well as the Master of Social Work which may be completed in a one-year, two-year, or three-year program. All courses are offered in an on-campus format and also in a distributed learning (DL) format which allows students to largely take courses online with periodic visits to the campus. All of our programs combine a robust curriculum with practical experience in the field for future social workers wishing to work with children, families, groups, and communities.

The MSW Program's advanced generalist concentration presents students with a broad-based set of knowledge, skills, and values necessary for multiple levels of advanced social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The major emphases for the concentration year are direct services to individuals, families, and groups; community and organizational practice; policy analysis and practice; and research as practice.

## Graduate Advising Requirement

Prior to the beginning of classes, students should contact the School of Social Work office with questions regarding the MSW program and their graduate education experience. After the beginning of classes, students should contact their assigned faculty advisor.

## Research with Human Participants or Animals

All research projects which involve human participants must be reviewed for adherence to ethical guidelines as outlined in departmental and University policies (EM 93-004 (<https://www.csuchico.edu/pres/em/1993/93-004.shtml>)). No research involving human subjects will be conducted until a review of the project has been carried out and written approval given. All activity with animals must adhere to the guidelines outlined in the University Animal Welfare Policy (EM-09-006 (<https://www.csuchico.edu/pres/em/2009/09-006.shtml>))). Guidelines on the use of human or animal subjects are available from Chico State Enterprises (<https://www.csuchico.edu/cse/>).

## Standards of Professional Behavior and Conduct

Refer to the standards in the undergraduate section and the MSW Student Handbook on the School of Social Work (<http://www.csuchico.edu/swrk/>) website.

## Federal Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Program

The MSW program is a participant in the Federal Title IV-E Program. The program provides stipends to on-campus students who commit to up to two years (depending on your MSW program) of postgraduate employment in public or tribal child welfare. Title IV-E provides financial supports to distributed learning social work students who commit to a minimum of two years of postbaccalaureate employment in public or tribal child welfare. Interested students should contact the MSW Director and the Title IV-E Coordinators in the School of Social Work.

## Requirements for the Master of Social Work

### Field Education Requirement

The Master of Social Work requires a total of 480 hours of practicum during the foundation year, and 720 hours of practicum during the concentration year. Employment-based practica are considered on an individual basis when agencies are able to provide students with a position that is educationally focused and involves tasks other than normal work duties.

### Advanced Generalist Concentration

The concentration year presents students with a broad-based set of knowledge, skills, and values necessary for multiple levels of advanced social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The major emphases for the concentration year are direct services to individuals, families, and groups; community and organizational practice; policy analysis and practice; and research as practice.

For the MSW to be conferred, students must meet the following criteria:

1. Completion of all requirements as established by the School of Social Work MSW Program Committee and Graduate Studies;
2. Completion of a culminating activity as specified in Master's Degree Requirements (<https://catalog.csuchico.edu/graduate-requirements/masters-degree-requirements/>) and as approved by the MSW Program Committee. The MSW program requires students to satisfactorily complete (1) a thesis, (2) a project, or (3) a comprehensive examination (along with two electives) as a condition of graduation. Students work with their faculty advisor or the Comprehensive Examination Committee Chair in deciding which option will best fulfill their academic and professional goals. The student is required to choose the type of culmination activity the spring semester of the Foundation year.
3. Approval by the School's MSW Program Director and the Graduate Coordinators on behalf of the faculty of the University.
4. Minimum grade requirement in all courses of C (C- is not acceptable). If a student earns less than a C grade in a MSW course, they will be required to repeat the course (see the MSW Handbook and Guide to Graduate Studies regarding policy for repeating graduate courses).

### Requirements for the Two-Year and Three-Year MSW Programs

Students who do not possess a baccalaureate in social work must complete 31 units of 600-level social work professional foundation courses prior to the 30-32, depending on program plan, units of 600-level social work concentration year courses. The only exception to the required 600-level courses in the Two-Year MSW Program and Three-Year DL MSW program is that a student may enroll in one 500-level elective in lieu of one 600-level elective following approval by the MSW Program Director and/or DL Coordinator. Twelve hundred hours of field education practicum are required. Requirements for the Three-Year DL program are the same as for the Two-Year program, but the courses are offered in a different sequence. The social work professional foundation courses for the Two-Year program must be taken in the following sequence:

Course	Title	Units
<b>Foundation Courses (First Year)</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
SWRK 601	Human Behavior and Social Environment	3

SWRK 605	Social Welfare Policy and Services	3
SWRK 608	Generalist Social Work Theory and Practice I	3
SWRK 617	Research Methods for Social Work Knowledge and Practice	4
SWRK 631	Foundation Practicum	3
<b>Units</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>Spring</b>		
SWRK 609	Generalist Social Work Theory and Practice II	3
SWRK 610	Generalist Social Work Theory and Practice III	3
SWRK 612	Diversity and Social Justice	3
SWRK 632	Foundation Practicum	3
SWRK 644	Human Behavior and the Social Environment II	3
<b>Units</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>Concentration Courses (Second Year)</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
SWRK 641	Advanced Practice in Micro Social Work Settings	3
SWRK 643	Assessment of Individuals and Families	3
SWRK 648	Advanced Practicum I	4
SWRK 652	Supervision, Program Development, and Administration	3
Thesis/project/elective		2-3
<b>Units</b>		<b>15-16</b>
<b>Spring</b>		
SWRK 653	Research: Program Evaluation for Social Work	3
SWRK 655	Advanced Policy Practice for Social Work	3
SWRK 656 or SWRK 681	Advanced Social Work Macro Practice or Advanced Family and Child Treatment	3
SWRK 658	Advanced Practicum II	4
Thesis/project/elective		2-3
<b>Units</b>		<b>15-16</b>
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>61-63</b>

Course	Title	Units
<b>Students who select the Comprehensive Exam choose six units from the following:</b>		
SWRK 673	Trauma and Loss	3
SWRK 674	Policies and Practice with Older Adults and Their Families	3
SWRK 677	Substance Use: Etiology and Treatment	3
SWRK 678	Mental Health Wellness and Recovery	3
SWRK 687	Advanced Child Welfare	3
SWRK 697	Independent Study	1-3

## Requirements for the One-Year Program

Applicants who have completed all social work program requirements and obtained a social work baccalaureate degree accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) within five years of entry into the MSW program, and who meet the School of Social Work's criteria for acceptance in the One-Year program (entry into the concentration year), must complete 34-36 units of 600-level social work courses, including a minimum of 720 hours of field practicum. The One-Year program (concentration year) includes the 30-32 units listed above plus one course (4 units) completed during the summer prior to entering the program. The only exception to the required 600-level courses in the One-Year MSW program is that a student may enroll in one 500-level elective in lieu of one 600-level elective following approval by the MSW Program Director.

Criteria for acceptance to the One-Year program are

1. Qualifies for admission to classified status;
2. Has a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale) and a B average or higher in professional undergraduate social work courses;
3. Has completed all courses required in the social work major, earning a baccalaureate degree in social work, within five years of entry.

## Applicants Who Have Completed the Foundation Year at a CSWE Accredited MSW Program

Applicants who have completed the first year (foundation year) at a CSWE Accredited MSW Program within the last four years with a 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale), and are considered in good standing with the previous institution, must apply to the California State University, Chico Two-Year Program. Once accepted into the Chico State Two-Year MSW Program, the student may request that his/her coursework at the previous MSW Program be evaluated to ensure it is reflective of the foundation year coursework in the Chico State MSW Program.

If the courses for the previous CSWE Accredited MSW Program are comparable and meet the Chico State MSW Program's Foundation Year competencies, the student may request admittance to the One-Year MSW Program. Thus, the students begin studies in the summer of the year accepted with the first course enrolled being the SWRK 636 summer bridge course. Upon completion of this course with a 3.0 GPA (out of 4.0), the student would progress to the Concentration Year of the MSW Program in the fall semester, following the course sequencing. Note that all program requirements must be met within the five-year time limit.

Course	Title	Units
<b>Summer Session</b>		
SWRK 636	Contemporary Issues in Social Work Practice and Research	4
<b>Concentration Courses (listed above)</b>		<b>30-32</b>
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>34-36</b>

Other Approved Graduate Courses outside the discipline of Social Work may be accepted upon approval of the MSW Director.

## Special Rules Governing Course Enrollment

1. Not more than 15 units may be taken before admission to classified status.
2. No more than 9 units of transfer credit may be included in the program. (Correspondence courses and UC Extension coursework are not acceptable for transfer.) The MSW Program Director must approve acceptance of transfer credit. At the discretion of the School of Social Work, a maximum of 30 percent of the units counted toward the degree requirements may be special session credit earned in non-matriculated status combined with all transfer coursework. This applies to special session credit earned through Open University, or in courses offered for academic credit through Regional and Continuing Education.
3. Students may enroll in a maximum of 6 units of Independent Study.
4. Not more than 2 units of SWRK 699T or SWRK 699P may be taken per semester, with no more than 4 units total.
5. After being accepted into the Two-Year MSW Program or Three-Year MSW DL Program, students with a social work baccalaureate degree obtained within the last five years may challenge selected courses from the professional foundation year of the MSW program if they believe they have mastered the objectives and content through

previous courses. If successful, students will substitute elective courses in the program to meet the unit requirement for the degree. For detailed information, see "Proficiency Examination Policy" in the MSW Student Handbook.

- All program courses must be taken for a letter grade with the exception of the foundation year and concentration year practicums that are credit/no credit (SWRK 631, SWRK 632, SWRK 648, and SWRK 658) and SWRK 699T/SWRK 699P.

## Graduate Grading Requirements

All courses included in the MSW program (with the exception of practicum courses and thesis/project) must be taken for a letter grade. While grading standards are determined by individual programs and instructors, it is also the policy of the University that unsatisfactory grades may be given when work fails to reflect achievement of the highest standards, including high writing standards, expected of students pursuing the MSW degree.

Students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average in each of the following three categories: all coursework taken at any accredited institution subsequent to admission to the master's program; all coursework taken at Chico State subsequent to admission to the program; and all courses on the approved master's degree program.

Continuous enrollment is required. A maximum of 9 units of transfer credit may be applied toward the degree. At the discretion of the School of Social Work, a maximum of 30 percent of the units counted toward the degree requirements may be special session credit earned in non-matriculated status combined with all transfer coursework. This applies to special session credit earned through Open University, or in courses offered for academic credit through Regional and Continuing Education.

Thirty-four units are required for students who have a baccalaureate from social work programs accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and who meet the criteria for admission to the One-Year Program. Sixty-one units are required for students who meet the criteria for admission to the Two-Year program or Three-Year program.

## Graduate Time Limit

All requirements for the degree are to be completed within five years of the end of the semester of enrollment in the oldest course applied toward the degree. See Master's Degree Requirements (<https://catalog.csuchico.edu/graduate-requirements/masters-degree-requirements/>) for complete details on general degree requirements.

## Graduate Requirement in Writing Proficiency

All students must demonstrate competency in writing skills as a requirement for graduation. Students in the MSW program will demonstrate their writing competence through successful completion of SWRK 641 during the concentration year of the program.

## Admission Application Procedures

The School of Social Work accepts applications from October 1st to mid-January each year (see the School's website for exact deadlines). Students are admitted to the MSW Program each fall semester for the Two-Year program, and in the summer for entering the One-Year program. The Three-Year DL program is offered only on specified years. See the Social Work Website (<https://www.csuchico.edu/swrk/>) or call the department office for additional information. The Graduate

Studies application is available online at Cal State Apply (<https://www2.calstate.edu/apply/>).

## Prerequisites for Admission to Conditionally Classified Status

Conditionally classified status indicates the student has been admitted to the MSW program but has not been formally approved for MSW study. The student is progressing toward meeting the requirements outlined by the University and the School of Social Work to qualify for Classified Status by the end of the first semester of the MSW program. Conditionally Classified admission may be granted to applicants who have a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 (on a 4.0 point scale) in their undergraduate academic coursework. If all requirements are met after the first semester, then the graduate status will be changed to "classified".

MSW students are required to maintain an average 3.0 GPA at all times during their program. Students admitted Conditionally Classified because of a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 and have obtained a baccalaureate-level degree from any state or territory within the United States or the international equivalent of a baccalaureate-level degree as determined by Graduate Studies, must submit a written request with appropriate documentation based on having met at least one of the following criteria:

- Completed 12 units of academic postbaccalaureate graduate level coursework with a GPA of 3.0 or higher from an accredited college or university;
- Provided outstanding paid or volunteer experience in human service agencies;
- Performed successful grant writing for human service organizations;
- Achieved Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores that indicate an ability to complete graduate level work;
- Shown significant potential for advanced social work practices. In this circumstance, students must also have obtained approval by the School of Social Work MSW Admissions Committee and Graduate Studies.

## Prerequisites for Admission to Classified Status

In addition to meeting the requirements stated above, students must have:

- A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale) in their academic coursework, and
- Approval by the School of Social Work MSW Admissions Committee and Graduate Studies.

## Advancement to Candidacy

Students achieve Candidacy status when they have clearly demonstrated the ability and aptitude for attaining their MSW degree. The student must have:

- Classified graduate standing;
- Completed at least 15 units of the concentration year of the MSW program;
- Passed the Graduate Requirement in Writing Proficiency;
- Finished all "incomplete" grades in courses included in the MSW program;

5. Filed a plan with the School of Social Work regarding completion of a culminating activity (thesis, project, or comprehensive examination);  
and
6. Approval by the MSW Program Director of the School of Social Work.