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 Master of Social Work (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 that involve human participants must be reviewed for adherence to ethical guidelines as outlined in departmental and University policies (EM 93-004). 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). 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 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.
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 is a grade of C or higher (C- is not acceptable). If a student earns a grade of C- or lower 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:
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 their 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. 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.

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 nine 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 Professional & Continuing Education.
3. Students may enroll in a maximum of six units of Independent Study.
4. Not more than two units of SWRK 699T or SWRK 699P may be taken per semester, with no more than four 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.
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. Proficiency
Graduate Requirement in Writing
All students must demonstrate competency in writing skills as a requirement for graduation. Students in the MSW program will have:

1. Completed 12 units of academic postbaccalaureate graduate level coursework with a GPA of 3.0 or higher from an accredited college or university;
2. Provided outstanding paid or volunteer experience in human service agencies;
3. Performed successful grant writing for human service organizations;
4. Achieved Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores that indicate an ability to complete graduate level work;
5. 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.

Continuous enrollment is required. A maximum of nine 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 Professional & Continuing Education.

Thirty-four units are required for students who have a baccalaureate degree 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:

1. Completed 12 units of academic postbaccalaureate graduate level coursework with a GPA of 3.0 or higher from an accredited college or university;
2. Provided outstanding paid or volunteer experience in human service agencies;
3. Performed successful grant writing for human service organizations;
4. Achieved Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores that indicate an ability to complete graduate level work;
5. 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:

1. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale) in their academic coursework, and
2. 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:

1. Classified graduate standing;
2. Completed at least 15 units of the concentration year of the MSW program;
3. Passed the Graduate Requirement in Writing Proficiency;
4. 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.