

SOCIAL WORK MSW

The Master of Social Work (MSW)

The School of Social Work offers a Master of Social Work (MSW), which may be completed in a one-year, two-year, or three-year program. Our MSW programs are delivered in two formats: on-campus and distributed learning (DL), which allows students to largely take courses online with periodic visits to the campus. Our programs combine a robust curriculum with practicum education experience for future social workers wishing to work with children, families, groups, and communities.

The MSW'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.

Standards of Professional Behavior and Conduct

Refer to the standards in the MSW Student Handbook (<https://www.csuchico.edu/swrk/ma/handbooks.shtml/>). Additionally, students should become familiar with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) *Code of Ethics*.

Title IV-E Program

The MSW program is a participant in the California Title IV-E Program. The federally-funded, state directed program provides financial and other educational supports to students who commit to post-graduate employment in public or tribal child welfare. Interested students should contact the Title IV-E Program (<https://www.csuchico.edu/swrk/child-welfare-stipend/index.shtml/>) in the School of Social Work.

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 23-030 (<https://www.csuchico.edu/pres/em/2023/23-030.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 23-031 (<https://www.csuchico.edu/pres/em/2023/23-031.shtml/>)). Guidelines on the use of human or animal subjects are available from Chico State Enterprises (<https://www.csuchico.edu/cse/>).

Requirements for the Master of Social Work

Practicum Education Requirement

The MSW requires a total of 480 hours of practicum during the foundation coursework, and up to 720 hours of practicum during the concentration coursework. An employment-based practicum can be 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 courses present 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 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. The MSW program requires students to satisfactorily complete (1) a thesis, (2) a project, or (3) a comprehensive case review (along with two electives) as a condition of graduation. Students work with their faculty advisor or the Comprehensive Case Review 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 prior to starting concentration courses.
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 an MSW course, they will be required to repeat the course (see the MSW Student Handbook (<https://www.csuchico.edu/swrk/ma/handbooks.shtml/>) and Guide to Graduate Studies (https://www.csuchico.edu/graduatestudies/_assets/documents/a-guide-to-graduate-studies-policies-procedures-and-format.pdf) 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. Of these units, four-six units are elective, thesis, or project 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. Up to 1,200 hours of practicum are required. Requirements for the two-year MSW program and three-year DL MSW program are the same, but the courses are offered in different sequences.

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 MSW program, must complete 34-36 units (depending on the program plan) of 600-level social work concentration courses. Four of these units are completed initially as a summer bridge course, and four-six of these units are elective, thesis, or project courses. The only exception to the required 600-level courses in the one-year MSW program and one-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. Up to 720 hours of practicum are required. Requirements for the one-year MSW program and one-year DL MSW program are the same, but the courses are offered in different sequences.

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.

Course	Title	Units
Foundation Courses		
SWRK 601	Human Behavior and Social Environment I	3
SWRK 605	Social Welfare Policy and Services	3
SWRK 608	Generalist Social Work Theory and Practice I	3
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 617	Research Methods for Social Work Knowledge and Practice	4
SWRK 631	Foundation Practicum I	3
SWRK 632	Foundation Practicum II	3
SWRK 644	Human Behavior and the Social Environment II	3
Concentration Courses		
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, Leadership, and Administration	3
SWRK 653	Research: Program Evaluation for Social Work	3
SWRK 655	Advanced Policy Practice for Social Work	3
SWRK 658	Advanced Practicum II	4
SWRK 681	Advanced Family and Child Treatment	3
or SWRK 682	Core Components and Skills for Trauma Informed Practice	
Culminating Activity		
Thesis/project/elective		4-6
Total Units		61-63

Course	Title	Units
Students who select the comprehensive case review choose six units from the following:		
SWRK 656	Advanced Social Work Macro Practice	
SWRK 673	Trauma and Loss	

SWRK 674	Policies and Practice with Older Adults and Their Families
SWRK 677	Substance Use: Etiology and Treatment
SWRK 678	Mental Health Wellness and Recovery
SWRK 687	Advanced Child Welfare
SWRK 697	Independent Study

Total Units 6

Course	Title	Units
Students who select the thesis or project choose four units from the following:		
SWRK 699P	Master's Project	
SWRK 699T	Master's Thesis	

Total Units 4

Course	Title	Units
Summer Bridge Course		

Students in a one-year program complete the following:

SWRK 636	Contemporary Issues in Social Work Practice and Research	4
----------	--	---

Total Units 4

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

Applicants who have completed the foundation coursework at a CSWE Accredited MSW program within the last four years with a GPA of 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 MSW 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 courses 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 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 progresses to concentration courses 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.

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.

- Students may enroll in a maximum of six units of Independent Study.
- Not more than two units of SWRK 699T or SWRK 699P may be taken per semester, with no more than four units total.
- 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 foundation-level courses from 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 (<https://www.csuchico.edu/swrk/ma/handbooks.shtml/>).
- All program courses must be taken for a letter grade with the exception of the foundation and concentration practicum courses (SWRK 631, SWRK 632, SWRK 648, and SWRK 658), and thesis and project courses (SWRK 699T/SWRK 699P), which are taken as credit/no credit.

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 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 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 January 15th each year (see the Apply to the MSW Program (<https://www.csuchico.edu/swrk/ma/apply-msw.shtml/>) website for exact deadlines). The Graduate Studies application is available online at Cal State Apply (<https://www.calstate.edu/apply/graduate/>).

- One-year and one-year DL students are admitted each year, with a summer start
- Two-year students are admitted each year, with a fall start
- Three-year students are admitted every three years, with a fall start

See the Master's Degree of Social Work (<https://www.csuchico.edu/swrk/ma/index.shtml/>) website or call the department office for additional information.

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 when they have provided verification of prerequisites of course completion and/or provided verification of baccalaureate-level degree completion prior to starting the MSW program. Additionally, the student who was admitted with a GPA of less than 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) is progressing toward meeting the requirements outlined by the University and the School of Social Work to qualify for Classified Status when they have completed 12 units (minimally) of letter-graded, MSW program coursework at a 3.0 GPA or higher. 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 as Conditionally Classified because of a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 and who 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:

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.