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About the University of Louisville

The University of Louisville is a state supported research university located in Kentucky's largest metropolitan area that offers 170 majors and degrees, certificates and professional development programs. The University of Louisville's mission is to be a premier, nationally recognized research university with a commitment to the liberal arts and sciences and the intellectual, cultural, and economic development of our diverse communities and citizens through the pursuit of excellence. With a student body exceeding 22,500 and with more than faculty members, the University of Louisville paves the road for students of all ages to achieve their academic professional and personal goals through quality education.

About the Kent School of Social Work

The Kent School of Social Work at the University of Louisville has been proudly educating social workers since 1936. The Kent School of Social Work addresses complex problems through education, research and service to create a just and better world. In the context of a research institution, Kent School is able to provide current research information in the preparation of its students for work with individuals, families and communities.

Accreditations

Both BSW and MSW degrees are fully accredited by the Commission of the Council on Social Work Education: www.cswe.org/Accreditation.aspx.

The Couple and Family Therapy (CFT) Program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education: <http://www.aamft.org/iMIS15/AAMFT/>.

The University of Louisville is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACACOC): <http://louisville.edu/oapa/accreditation-academic-programs-1/about-uofl>.

Points of Pride

- 👉 Founded in 1936
- 👉 Enrollment >600
- 👉 Kent School is ranked 32nd of 235 accredited graduate programs by US News and World Report
- 👉 Kent School is rated the #1 social work program in Kentucky by US News and World Report
- 👉 Kent School is ranked 3rd for online MSSW online programs in the US by Social Work Degree Guide

From the Desk of the Dean



Many of us choose social work to make a difference. Whether it's fighting for social justice; giving voice to the marginalized; or seeking solutions to racism, violence, and oppression, we work to protect those most vulnerable in our society. We also strive to respond to the tough social issues facing people at home and abroad. Whatever your reason for choosing the Kent School of Social Work, you will become part of a community of learners leading the way in confronting daunting societal challenges.

At the Kent School, you will find a strong generalist orientation in the foundation curriculum preparing you for work with client systems ranging from individuals to groups, families, organizations, and communities. In the advanced curriculum, you will use complex critical thinking and best-practice evidence to deepen your understanding of social challenges. Our faculty are engaged in interdisciplinary research seeking answers to complex social issues – enhancing the classroom experience. Also, dual degrees in law, theology, women and gender studies, bioethics, and Pan African studies enable students to reach their professional goals within the context of social work.

We make every effort at the Kent School to meet a range of students' needs as we prepare you for advanced practice in the field of social work. The BSW program offers an exciting opportunity for undergraduate students to learn about generalist evidence-based social work practice on the main campus. The MSSW program with its strong reputation for excellence, gives students the option of studying at the main campus with courses offered during the day, evening, and Saturdays, or online. The Ph.D. program prepares students for research and leadership in addressing challenges extending from the Commonwealth to the world community. I am confident each of these educational ventures will challenge and excite you.

I look forward to welcoming you to the Kent School family!

David Jenkins, Ph.D.
Dean

Degree Programs

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN SOCIAL WORK

The BSW Program at the Kent School of Social Work is a full-time, campus based program that prepares students for entry level professional social work practice. The BSW Program also provides the foundation for graduate study in social work. Students may also qualify for advanced Level placement in graduate social work programs.

The BSW Program Curriculum builds on a liberal arts base. The curriculum is designed to promote the development of generalist social work knowledge and skills in using critical thinking to analyze, plan and implement effective interventions to address complex social problems and their impact in individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities with respect to cultural considerations, and social and economic justice. Students gain experiences through service learning and social work practicum.

The BSW Program offers the Public Child Welfare Certification Program (PCWCP) in partnership with the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) to prepare students for immediate employment as child welfare social work practitioners by CHFS upon graduation. This two year program is competitive. In return for full in-state tuition and a stipend, students make a two year employment commitment with CHFS.

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN SOCIAL WORK

**On campus and fully accredited online programs

The Kent School of Social Work offers a graduate program of study leading to the Masters of Science in Social Work degree. The MSSW program is designed to help students achieve their maximum potential through a carefully structured curriculum of foundation and specialized courses.

The Kent School offers a variety of both 60-hour and advanced standing 30-hour (for qualified BSW applicants) curriculum plans, including options for full-time, part-time, weekend and online classes. Both the foundation and advanced years include a 16 hour/week and 18 hour/week field practicum. There are opportunities to specialize in: Alcohol and Drug Counseling, Couple and Family Therapy, Gerontology, Mental Health Counseling, Military Social Work, Psychosocial Oncology, and School Social Work while obtaining your MSSW.

Admission to the Kent School of Social Work is competitive. The selection process includes

an evaluation of each applicant's demonstrated and potential abilities as a student, practitioner and leader in the social work field.

Students considered for admission to Kent School will have a minimum GPA of 3.00, or an acceptable score on either the Miller Analogies Test or the Graduate Record Exam.

DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The Ph.D. program, a joint program with the University of Kentucky, in social work prepares academically motivated master's level social workers to take on teaching, research, administrative and policy analysis positions.

The program focuses on building research, teaching and analytic competencies through courses on social work theories, advanced research design and analysis, teaching, ethics, special topics seminars, guided research practicums and independent studies.

Students have the opportunity to collaborate with a diverse group of nationally recognized faculty within the school and university with expertise in the areas of social and child welfare, child & family wellbeing, gerontology, health & mental health, justice & criminality, school social work, substance abuse and international social work.

Along with coursework, students are guided in developing expertise in an area of social sciences research. Areas of research have included examination of social and health disparities, social work interventions, predictors and risk factors for substance abuse, long term effects of maltreatment and trauma, and evaluation of training.

Field is the Heart of Social Work Education

The practicum learning experience is designated as the Signature Pedagogy for social work education by the Council on Social Work (CSWE), the accrediting body for social work programs. Field is recognized as the place where the knowledge, theories, social work values and ethics are integrated into applied social work practice. Field represents the ultimate goal of what motivates a student to undertake the study of social work: to advocate for and make change happen in the lives of individuals, families, communities and society at large. With this education comes the opportunity to practice and to polish the skills that distinguish social workers from other professional disciplines.

Human service organizations open its doors to embrace students who may later be enticed to join the organizational team as an employed practitioner. The memories of students' experiences throughout their practicum linger long after the degree is awarded, while their practicum supervisor leaves a life-long impression as the model of social work practice.

Students also make a difference in the organization as they leave behind a newly generated or updated resource guide for staff's ongoing use in providing services to clients; the outcomes of a fresh exploration into the best practices for a practice issue of particular interest to the organization; the marketing of the organization as students reach out into the community and as they share aspects of their placement site during discussions with peers in their courses; a completed grant submitted and eventually funded; the additional provision of client services for overworked staff; coverage for staff who are absent due to illness or family crises; or assistance with lobbying for policy changes and funding needs.

The Kent School of Social Work at the University of Louisville invites you to join with us to work together in the professional development of emerging social work practitioners.

Lynetta Mathis, MSW, LCSW
Director, Field Education

Field Practicum Options

BSW Program

All students admitted to the BSW program are required to complete a yearlong practicum during the senior year. The BSW Practicum provides students experiences in developing knowledge and skills in generalist social work practice. All practicum are comprised of two continuous semester placements which occur in the fall and spring semester. Students complete 16 hours weekly, 225 hours per semester, totaling 450 hours for the academic year.

MSSW 60 Credit Hour Program

All students admitted to the 60 credit-hour program are required to complete two separate and different practicum, one at the foundation level and another at the advanced level. All practicum are two semester placements, continuous in the same agency across the fall and spring semesters.

The foundation courses of Kent School's 60-hour program are designed to provide the student with a broad, generalist base for social work practice. Foundation year practicum education is consistent with this purpose. Students complete 16 hours weekly, 225 hours per semester, totaling 450 hours for the academic year.

The advanced level curriculum and practicum, provide the opportunity for an in-depth and focused educational experience in the student's chosen area of education. It is intended

that the student will gain applied experience with various aspects of their career interest: i.e., client populations, service delivery systems and structures, methodologies, and professional issues confronting the career area. Students complete approximately 18 hours weekly, 250 hours per semester, totaling 500 hours for the academic year.

MSSW 30 Credit Hour Program

Students admitted as advanced standing (entering Kent School with a B.S.W. degree earned within the past seven years from an accredited program) into the 30 credit hour program are required to complete only one practicum. Students complete 18 hours weekly, 250 hours per semester, totaling 500 hours for the academic year.

The advanced level curriculum and practicum education, provide the opportunity for an in-depth and focused educational experience in the student's chosen area of education. It is intended that the student will gain applied experience with various aspects of their career interest: i.e., client populations, service delivery systems and structures, methodologies, and professional issues confronting the career area.

Expectations for the Field Experience

BSW and Foundation (1st Year) MSSW Practicum Students

Students are expected to work directly with client populations served by the agency and should include a diversity of clientele, including women, ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged populations. Students should carry a "learner's" caseload of individuals/couples/families, participate in the intake and assessment process and carry client assignments which include as many phases of the problem solving process as possible. Practicum activities should include opportunities to practice the social work roles of conferee, broker, mediator and advocate.

The Generalist practicum experience should include a broad exposure to social work practice opportunities at the micro, mezzo and macro levels of social work. This should include direct work with clients (individuals, couples, families, and small groups), work with committees and/or community coalitions, the development/revision of policies, program evaluation and research, and exploration of administrative and policy issues significant to the agency and clientele served.

Advanced (2ndYear) MSSW Practicum Students

Advanced practicum students have the same requirements as BSW and Foundation MSSW students except they should be challenged with more complex client situations and increased responsibilities in assignments. Practice settings more macro focused in nature should develop a learner's caseload of a variety of policy work, projects and meetings within the agency and community.

Practicum Education Partnership

Role of the Student

- Exemplify the conduct of a professional social worker and abide by agency regulation and practices
- Develop skills in critical analysis
- Develop increasing knowledge in human behavior and social issues and problems
- Understand interpersonal dynamics
- Be aware of environmental, ethical, cultural, political, and financial systems and their influence upon social conditions
- Identify and work effectively with client systems
- Share constructive criticism
- Assume leadership appropriately
- Link previous learning to new knowledge and experiences
- Consistently expand repertoire of skills
- Incorporate a variety of treatment modes
- Identify and enhance skills
- Refine communication skills

Within the function of the agency, the student is expected to:

- Acquire fundamental knowledge of agency philosophy and function, its legal or legislative base, policy determination, eligibility requirements, limitations and ranges of services
- Understand policy making procedures
- Acquire knowledge of personnel policies as they affect staff, student and service delivery
- Assess the appropriateness of agency function to client need
- Identify, develop and utilize agency resources
- Become familiar and comfortable with the knowledge the he/she represents the agency in an official capacity in all contacts with the public
- Participate appropriately in interagency and interdisciplinary programs
- Understand that his/her role is similar to that of agency staff members, it is emphatically that role of a learner
- Satisfy the expectations of the practicum syllabus

Role of the Agency:

The agency and Kent School of Social Work are educational partners in the professional preparation of social workers. The agency provides the opportunity for the student to apply, test and integrate the knowledge, values and skills learned in other courses and to

develop a professional identification through the use of self in increasingly responsible professional activities.

Level of Practice

The agency should have a well-established service delivery program. It should be characterized by clarity about the focus of the program and its methods. Students are expected to fill roles in the agency that entail learning activities appropriate for the student's educational and professional development level in social work.

Release Time for Practicum Supervisors

The agency needs to make explicit arrangements for time in the workload of the agency practicum supervisors to carry out the practicum education process. It is difficult to estimate precisely the amount of time required for practicum instruction. Practicum supervisors are expected to schedule a minimum of one hour per week for formal educational supervision with students. If there are several students, time may be used in group conferences. It is most important that practicum supervisors be accessible for informal, on the spot consultations and to intervene where difficulties arise.

In general, the use of a practicum placement agency for several practicum students is preferred to having only one student per agency. Students benefit by learning from each other and from the mutual support.

Availability of Faculty to Agencies

Agency executives, other administrative personnel and practicum supervisors are encouraged to consult with the Dean of the Kent School, the Associate Deans for Research, and with the Director of Field Education. Members of the faculty are available for consultation on agency research and practice issues, within the limits of their competence, interests and workloads.

Role of the Supervisor

All undergraduate level Kent School students are required to be supervised by a social worker with a Bachelor's degree or Master's degree in social work from an accredited program of social work and a minimum of two years of full-time, post-degree experience.

All graduate level Kent School Students are required to be supervised by a social worker with a Master's degree in social work from an accredited program of social work and a minimum of two years of full-time, post-master's experience. Supervisors with the LCSW or LISW credential are preferred, but not required, for students in the MSSW advanced practice practicum.

The agency practicum supervisor has primary responsibility for the provision of learning

opportunities that facilitate the student's growth within the profession. Supporting this responsibility is a part of the practicum supervisor's commitment to professional training and to the profession of social work.

Practicum Supervisors are expected to:

- Plan and implement student orientation to the agency, including introduction to agency personnel and to persons of collateral significance
- Interpret policy, legal structure, rules and regulations
- Acquaint the student with client systems and their interactions with the agency
- To follow the guidelines enumerated in the *Practicum Tasks and Responsibilities*; see this document on the practicum web page: <http://louisville.edu/kent/academics/field-education/practicum-information>
- Determine student learning needs and to give direction through which these needs are met
- Provide ongoing assessment of student performance
- Make assignments which progressively develop and utilize the knowledge, skills and experience of the student
- Promote the student's development of critical thinking skills
- Require the student to provide a written agenda to each weekly supervisory conference, following an outline which incorporates the student's competency learning tasks, and encourages reflective thinking
- Provide supervision and learning through regular conferences, group sessions, seminars, etc., including a minimum of one hour of face-to-face, educationally-focused supervision weekly. Supervisors may elect to mentor more than one student at the same time, i.e. group supervision up to a maximum of 6 students. However, when there are conjoint supervisory sessions, there should always be opportunity for each student to have some private time with the supervisor each week, even if only for 15 minutes.
- Provide feedback on the student's work in the assignments, monthly reports and critical thinking skill assignments.
- Participate actively in the mid-semester evaluation and final evaluation conferences
- Draw from their own competence, academic and experiential, in enhancing the student's growth
- Communicate concerns to the practicum faculty in a timely manner

Role of the Practicum Faculty

Practicum faculty are comprised of both full-time and part-time members, and some are stationed in the metropolitan Louisville area whereas others are geographically located in various sites where there are a group of students engaged in their practicum. This provides for easier direct access to faculty members by both students and agency supervisors. Part-time practicum faculty must hold a master's degree in social work from an accredited school of social work, and are recruited based on their years of practice, their prior experience in

supervising social work students (preferably a minimum of five years), their interest in teaching, and their abilities to guide a student's educational practice experience.

Practicum Faculty are expected to:

- Participate with the agency supervisor in the design of practicum experiences which contain content and substance for the competent learning of practice skills
- Maintain monthly contact with the agency practicum supervisor and the student
- Share with student and practicum supervisor in ongoing assessment of student's performance culminating in evaluation of student performance at mid-semester and at the end of the semester
- Be readily accessible to the student and to the practicum supervisor
- Serve as a resource guide and professional model for social work practice
- Be constructively critical in sharing knowledge
- Encourage a spirit of inquiry and critical analysis skills
- Promote linkage of past experience with present learning
- Provide guidelines by which to integrate theory and practice
- Relate practicum learning within the broad context of social work education
- Assign the Practicum grade - Pass/Fail/Incomplete
- Meet initially with student during the Practicum Orientation to get acquainted, establish expectations about communications, submission of monthly reports, and critical thinking assignments and respond to student's concerns and questions.
- Meet with the student and supervisor together five times during the two-semester practicum placement:
 - Within the first two weeks of the semester to get acquainted, and establish expectations;
 - Fall mid-term evaluation;
 - Fall final evaluation;
 - Spring mid-term; and,
 - Spring final evaluation.
 - In addition to these sessions, faculty may meet as requested for conferences with the student and supervisor to assist in resolving concerns about the student's practice performance.

Practicum Supervisor Orientation and Training

Prior to the start of each Fall semester, an orientation to practicum is offered to practicum supervisors either in-person or online. This introduces the agency supervisors to various faculty of the Kent School, introduces role of an educational supervisor, explains the supportive role of the practicum faculty member, explores the practicum policies, reviews the student evaluation process, addresses student performance issues

in practicum, and shares the various forms utilized for the practicum. Complimentary CEUs are provided to the supervisors for this orientation. This orientation is conducted in Louisville and made available online for the remotely located practicum supervisors.

Additionally, the practicum office provides periodic trainings for agency supervisors on various topics that enhance the supervisors' understanding of the Kent School curriculum, the theories being taught, and other subjects of interest to a practicum supervisor. Complimentary CEUs are provided to supervisors who participate in these trainings too.

Lastly, the Kent School hosts an annual day of appreciation for the supervisors, at the end of the academic year. One outstanding practicum supervisor is recognized and a guest speaker presents on a topic of special interest. Complimentary CEU's are given for this event as well. Every effort will be made to record this event and make it available to remotely located supervisors.

Practicum Supervisors

Several times each year, open forums are held with agency practicum supervisors. These are informal sessions held during the lunch period usually in the conference room of a practicum agency willing to host the session. All practicum supervisors are invited to participate and discuss any areas of interest related to the practicum education program. Complimentary CEU's are given to participants in these forums.

Contact Us

**Kent School of Social
Work Phone: 502-852-
7418**

**Oppenheimer Hall
2217 South Third Street
Louisville, KY 40292**
www.louisville.edu/kent

**Lynetta Weathers Mathis, MSW, LCSW
Director, Field Education
502-852-6137
lynetta.mathis@louisville.edu**

**Rebecka Bloomer, MSSW,
CSW
Field Coordinator
502-852-0425
rebecka.bloomer@louisville.edu**

**Sherry Gass, MSW, ACSW, LCSW
Field Coordinator
502-852-6404
sherry.gass@louisville.edu**

**Tony Helm, MSSW
Field Coordinator
502-852-7374
tony.helm@louisville.edu**

**Kim Rogers
Program Coordinator
502-852-8039
kim.rogers@louisville.edu**