

## **MSSW Required Foundation Courses**

### **SW 601: Human Behavior in the Social Environment I (3)**

Social work has historically used the idea of person-in-environment to develop a holistic understanding of human behavior. The purpose of the HBSE sequence with its 2 courses (601 and 619) is to help students breathe life into the abstract idea of person-in-environment. SW 601 is the first course in this sequence and focuses on society at large (e.g. social movements, social institutions and social structure), larger environments (e.g. physical environment, formal organizations and communities) and small groups. The focus is on macro theories as well as the impact of social and economic forces on individuals and social systems. Contents are provided about the ways in which systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving optimal health and well-being.

### **SW 602: Social Welfare Institutions, Policies and Services (3)**

This is the first course in the Social Policy and Services (SPS) sequence, and like the second course, its overall purpose is to help students to develop an ability to: 1) analyze social problem conceptualizations; 2) evaluate social program design options that address social problems; and, 3) assess the interrelationships between problem conceptualization and policy options and their impact on social work practice and clients. This first course explores the historical context and evolution of social welfare policy, and how dominant values and contextual factors shape policy in a broad range of social welfare arenas. Particular emphasis is given to analyzing poverty and income maintenance programs. We also focus on social work as a profession and how social work issues, values, and ethical dilemmas are experienced in social policy. Relationships between disenfranchised populations and social welfare policies and practices are stressed, giving particular attention to institutional racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, and ageism. Students will automatically be registered for the same section of SW 622 Issues in Policy and Service Delivery before early Spring registration.

### **SW 603: Social Justice Practice (3)**

This foundation course is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills for social work practice with people who are subject to various forms of oppression such as racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ageism, and ableism operating at the individual, community and institutional levels of society. Diversity, strengths, and social justice practice are emphasized. Developing greater professional and personal awareness about the impacts of various forms of oppression and social justice responses are addressed.

### **SW 604: Social Work Practice I (3)**

Prerequisites: Concurrent registration with SW 670.

Foundation practice is rooted in a generalist practice model in which the simultaneous impact of many systemic levels (individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities) on clients' lives is critically analyzed and recognized. Social Work Practice I is part of a two-course sequence also comprised of Social Work Practice II (605). Both courses are focused on the development of critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice. Social Work Practice I (604), addresses the development of the knowledge and skills necessary for generalist social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups. Special attention

is given in each course to working with ethnic minorities, women, gays and lesbians, aging populations, and disabled people. In addition, both classes in the Foundation Practice sequence are designed to provide students with an understanding of the social work profession's mission, values, ethics, and roles.

### **SW 605: Social Work Practice II (3)**

Prerequisites: Successful completion of SW 604; concurrent registration in SW 671.

Foundation practice is rooted in a generalist practice model in which the simultaneous impact of many systemic levels (individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities) on clients' lives is critically analyzed and recognized. Social Work Practice II is part of a two-course sequence also comprised of Social Work Practice I (604). Both courses are focused on the development of critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice. Social Work Practice II (605), addresses the development of the knowledge and skills necessary for generalist social work practice with larger groups, organizations, and communities. Special attention is given in each course to working with ethnic minorities, women, gays and lesbians, aging populations, and disabled people. In addition, both classes in the Foundation Practice sequence are designed to provide students with an understanding of the social work profession's mission, values, ethics, and roles.

### **SW 619: Human Behavior in the Social Environment II (3)**

Prerequisites: Successful completion of SW 601

This second course in the Human Behavior in the Social Environment sequence builds on the first course and focuses on families, dyads, and the individual person (e.g. biological person, psychological person, spiritual person and the life course). This course provides content about theories and knowledge of the human bio-psycho-social-development, including theories and knowledge about the range of smaller social systems in which individuals live. Family and marital life is assessed based on different theoretical perspectives. Human development theory is analyzed, with the focus on a culturally sensitive perspective to these theories. Different alternative lifestyles are investigated and analyzed based on human theories. Content about values and ethical issues related to bio-psycho-social theories are included. Students are taught how to evaluate theory and apply theory to client situations.

### **SW 622: Issues in Policy and Service Delivery (3)**

Prerequisites: Successful completion of SW 602.

This course emphasizes the interrelationship between problem conceptualization, policy options and their impact on social work practice and clients. Students analyze these interrelationships in the following four areas: child welfare, health, mental health and aging. In addition, students analyze the current delivery system in these four areas from a systems perspective. Most service delivery systems deliver a specific benefit or service, and developing a student's skill in judging the fit between that benefit or service and the social problem or client need is an important emphasis of this class. Consequently, students explore how reimbursement, planning, quality assurance, case management and client targeting policies affect service outcomes. Students develop their ability to critically assess current service delivery problems as they impact client need, giving particular attention to vulnerable population groups. Students review current social service programs as to purpose, eligibility requirements, service provision and evaluation results.

### **SW 626: Research Methodology and Design (3)**

Prerequisites: Successful completion of SW 601, SW 602, SW 670.

This course provides students the foundation knowledge for scientific inquiry. It covers all aspects of the research process from problem formulation to writing of the research report. It introduces students to qualitative, quantitative, and single-subject methods of conducting research and evaluating practice. Ethical issues associated with conducting research and evaluating practice are addressed. The uses of research to inform practice, policy, and to promote social justice are considered.

### **SW 670 & SW 671: Foundation Social Work Practicum I (3) & II (3)**

Prerequisites: SW 670: Concurrent registration in SW 604. SW 671: Successful completion of SW 604, SW 670 and concurrent registration in SW 605.

These courses are designed to provide an educationally supervised practicum within a human services organization. This is a generalist fieldwork experience based on the strengths model of social work practice and taken concurrently with the Social Work Practice I and II courses. This practicum integrates class assignments and assists the student in developing a social work perspective and skills in working with a range of client systems: individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, communities and the larger society. The practicum experience provides for the integration of theory learned across the foundation courses related to human behavior, diversity, organizational and community dynamics, policy and research. Students practice under the supervision of a qualified agency-based social worker and the guidance of a school-based faculty liaison. An integral feature of the practicum is the sharing of practicum experiences with other students in foundation classes. These classes provide opportunities to present the student's work in a guided learning environment and to strengthen the integration of theory and practice. A minimum of 225 total hours (16 hours per week) of practice within an agency setting is required for each practicum semester. The student continues in the same agency from the Fall through the Spring semesters, for this two-semester field placement and a grand total of 450 hours in the foundation practicum.