

Social Work

Degrees Offered

- Master of Social Work
- Doctor of Philosophy
- Dual JD/MSW

Nature of the Program

MSW MISSION STATEMENT AND OVERVIEW

The mission of the WVU MSW program is to educate students to become advanced integrated practice social workers. The specialization in advanced integrated practice builds on generalist practice and prepares students to integrate micro, mezzo, and macro practice skills across service sectors and within interdisciplinary teams to effectively address social and human problems pertinent to a wide range of professional practice areas, with a particular emphasis on effective models of rural service delivery. The advanced integrated practice curriculum provides an integrative approach to social work where students are prepared for both direct practice and administrative roles. This curriculum prepares WVU MSW graduates to be well-rounded advanced practitioners who can respond to the complex realities of practice in a variety of roles and settings

The program offers two degree plan options (Regular Standing and Advanced Standing) and two course delivery modalities (on campus and online). The Advanced Standing degree plan is available to students who have either earned a baccalaureate degree in Social Work (BSW) within the previous 8 years from a program accredited by the Council of Social Work Education, that is recognized through its International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service, or that is covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors. Each degree plan can be completed through a full-time or a part-time option. The full-time program is offered through the on-campus delivery modality only. The WVU MSW program is nationally accredited by the Council for Social Work Education (CSWE).

A dual degree option resulting in the Doctor of Jurisprudence (JD) and the Master of Social Work (MSW) is also available through the School of Law and the School of Social Work. The JD/MSW degree can be completed in 4 years for Regular Standing students and in 3 years for Advanced Standing students. Students can learn more about the JD degree here: <https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/academics/graduate-programs/law-d> (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/academics/graduate-programs/law-d/>)

Students interested in the dual-degree program must apply to and be accepted by each program (JD and MSW) separately.

Students interested in applying for the MSW program should consult the School of Social Work website: <http://socialwork.wvu.edu> (<http://socialwork.wvu.edu/>) or contact:

MSW Admissions
School of Social Work
West Virginia University
P.O. Box 6830
Morgantown, WV 26506-6830

Phone: (304) 293-3280

Email: socialwork@mail.wvu.edu

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The MSW curriculum prepares students to work in a wide variety of social work settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Graduates of the MSW program are employed throughout the U.S. and internationally. They work in multiple roles, such as individual, family, and group treatment specialists, community planners, social work educators, and social service administrators. Graduates provide social work services in a wide variety of settings, including mental health clinics, hospitals, correctional institutions, courts, aging programs, child welfare, drug and alcohol use programs, and many others. Social workers currently are the largest group of mental health service providers in the country and there has been constant growth in the need for professional social workers. Moreover, the U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics estimates that demand for social workers is expected to continue to grow.

PHD PROGRAM MISSION AND OVERVIEW

The mission of the PhD Program is to prepare scholars who excel in research, teaching, and leadership. The program mission derives from and incorporates the School of Social Work Mission. It prepares students to develop and disseminate impactful research derived from the purpose of social work, which is to promote human and community well-being. The program provides a community-focused research structure and students are prepared to translate scholarly knowledge through teaching in higher education and/or through leadership in organizations.

The PhD program has full-time and part-time options, with a hybrid course plan that allows flexibility to complete latter portions of the program remotely. The program provides a strong in-person first year foundation, with intentional opportunities to build relationships and identify research mentors and

increased flexibility for hybrid and remote learning as students move through the program. Full-time students follow the sequence described below. Part-time students will take an additional year to complete coursework.

- Year 1: In-person courses and first-year seminar provide a strong foundation and promote relationship building with faculty and fellow students. Courses are scheduled over two consecutive days.
- Year 2: Required courses are hybrid, with six in-person meeting times spaced through each semester.
 - Course schedules are coordinated so all required courses meet in-person the same weeks and day.
 - Elective courses (1 each semester) taken outside the School of Social Work have varying schedules.
- Year 3: One course that is fully online (Integrative Seminar) and dissertation work.
- Year 4: Dissertation work.

Students interested in applying for the PhD program should consult our website at <https://socialwork.wvu.edu/students/phd> (<https://socialwork.wvu.edu/students/phd/>) or contact Carrie Rishel, PhD Program Director at Carrie.rishel@mail.wvu.edu (carrie.rishel@mail.wvu.edu).

FACULTY

DIRECTOR

- Deana Morrow - Ph.D. (North Carolina State University)

PROGRAM DIRECTORS

- Mary Christensen - Ph.D. (Simmons College)
MSW Program Director
- Megan Gandy - Ph.D. (Virginia Commonwealth University)
BSW Program Director
- Lindsey Rinehart - MSW (New York University)
Field Education Director
- Carrie Rishel - Ph.D. (University of Pittsburgh)

PROFESSORS

- Kristina Hash - Ph.D. (Virginia Commonwealth University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Aging and Healthcare, Family Caregiving, Geriatric Education, Technology, Conflict Coaching and Meditation
- Deana Morrow - Ph.D. (North Carolina State University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Social Work Education, Social Work Practice Regulations, Sexual Minority Populations, Older Adults, Mental Health
- Carrie Rishel - Ph.D. (University of Pittsburgh)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Rural Integrated Health Training Director; Children's Mental/Behavioral Health, Prevention of Mental Health Problems, Risk and Protective Factors Related to Child Outcomes, Prevention-Focused Social Work Practice, Integrated Models of Service Delivery
- Leslie Tower - Ph.D. (Barry University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Women's Issues, Health Care Administration, Domestic Violence

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Mary Christensen - Ph.D. (Simmons University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Master's Program Director; Suicide Prevention, Substance Abuse, Health Service Disparities, Evidence-Based Social Work Practice
- Megan Gandy - Ph.D. (Virginia Commonwealth University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; LGBTQ Populations, Mental Health Services, Social Justice, Technology in Social Work Education
- Jiyoung Tabone - Ph.D. (University of Chicago)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Child Maltreatment and Later Outcomes, Prevention and Intervention Research, Mental Health Services, Risk and Resilience, Program Evaluation

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Bridget Bailey - Ph.D. (Ohio State University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Adolescent and Adult Behavioral Health, Suicide, Bipolar and Mood Disorders, Co-occurring Trauma, Substance Use Disorders, Evidence-Based Treatments, Trauma-Informed Care, Community Engaged Research
- Megan Fabbri - Ph.D. (Ohio State University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Human Rights, Global Perspectives, Migration, Sex Work, Worker Rights, Health Disparities, Community Organizing, International Social Work Education
- Andrew Irish - Ph.D. (University of Buffalo)

Regular Graduate Faculty; Socioeconomic Status Inequality and Behavioral Health, Recovery Capital and Substance Misuse, Policy Mapping and Multilevel Modeling Methodologies

TEACHING INSTRUCTORS

- Rebekah Dunaway - M.S.W., M.P.A. (West Virginia University)
Youth and Families, Communities, Program Development, Grant Writing, Training Development
- Jacqueline Englehardt - M.S.W., M.A. (West Virginia University)
Nonprofit Management, Child Welfare, Online Teaching and Learning, Professional Development
- Rhonda Hayes - M.S.W. (West Virginia University)
Substance Abuse & Recovery, Family Victimology, Grant Writing, Social Agency and Program Administration
- Jamie Mesar - M.S.W. (University of Pittsburgh)
Child Welfare, Forensic Interviewing, Child Neglect and Maltreatment
- Fanica Payne - M.S.W. (West Virginia University)
Behavioral Health, Substance Use Disorders, Diverse Populations, Civil Rights
- Lindsey Rinehart - M.S.W. (New York University)
Field Education, Service Learning, Community Engagement, Homelessness
- Mandy Weirich - M.S.W. (West Virginia University)
Policy and Advocacy, Geriatric Education, Use of Technology in Teaching and Research

EMERITUS FACULTY

- Carol Amendola - M.S.W. (West Virginia University)
- Marjorie H. Buckholz-Cleveland - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
- Patricia Chase - Ed.D. (West Virginia University)
- Linda Ferrise - M.S.W. (West Virginia University)
- Karen Harper-Dorton - Ph.D. (Ohio State University)
- Roger A. Lohmann - Ph.D. (Brandeis University)
- Nancy Lohmann - Ph.D. (Brandeis University)
- Caroline T. Mudd - M.S.W. (University of Pennsylvania)
- Neal Newfield - Ph.D. (Texas Tech University)
- Michael Zakour - Ph.D. (Washington University)

Admissions for 2025-2026

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK (MSW)

The Master of Social Work (MSW) program is offered via on-campus and online modalities and applicants are classified as either Regular or Advanced Standing. On-campus applicants may apply for the full- or part-time degree plan option. The online program is offered on a *part-time* basis only. Because of visa requirements, international applicants may only apply to the on-campus program.

Regular Standing

Domestic applicants who have a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university may apply to the Regular Standing MSW program. International applicants must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.

Advanced Standing

Domestic applicants who have received a BSW from a Council on Social Work Education-accredited program within the last eight years may apply to the Advanced Standing MSW program. International applicants to the Advanced Standing Program must have received a BSW from a Council on Social Work Education-accredited program, recognized through its International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Services, or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors within the last eight years.

GPA Requirements for Admission to the MSW Program

- At least a 2.75 overall GPA from the institution granting the applicant's undergraduate degree (3.0 is preferred) or a 2.75 overall GPA from a completed graduate degree.
- For Advanced Standing applicants, at least a 3.25 or higher GPA in the applicant's Social Work courses is preferred.

Application Requirements for the MSW

- Completed graduate application with appropriate fee (see this website (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/>) for information and link)
- Transcripts for all institutions attended (unofficial ones may be submitted for the application review; final transcripts must be uploaded prior to starting the program)
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae

- Three letters of recommendation (specific requirements on program website (<https://socialwork.wvu.edu/students/msw/admissions-requirements/>))
- Admissions essay (specific requirements on program website (<https://socialwork.wvu.edu/students/msw/admissions-requirements/>))

MSW Application Deadlines

- The MSW program admits once per year. The full-time Advanced Standing program starts in the summer term (May). All other MSW programs start in the fall term (August).
- The priority review deadline for the MSW full-time, on-campus programs is January 15. The final deadline is March 1.
- The priority review deadline for the MSW part-time on-campus and online programs is February 1. The final deadline is April 15.
- For provisionally licensed social workers in West Virginia who are accepted as non-degree students, admission deadlines may differ. Please contact the MSW program director for details.

PH.D. IN SOCIAL WORK

The Ph.D. program is offered on a full-time and part-time basis and is offered via a hybrid (on-campus and online) modality.

GPA and Degree Requirements for the Ph.D.

- At least an overall 2.75 GPA from the institution granting the applicant's undergraduate degree (3.0 is preferred) or a 2.75 overall GPA from a completed graduate degree
- Applicants for the Ph.D. program must have an MSW degree from a CSWE-accredited institution or international equivalent.
- Two years post-M.S.W. practice experience is encouraged, but not required.

Application Requirements for the Ph.D.

- Completed graduate application with appropriate fee (see this website (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/>) for more information and link)
- Transcripts from all institutions attended.
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV).
- Three letters of recommendation with at least one from a faculty member and one from a post-MSW supervisor if applicable.
- Admissions Essay (specific requirements on program website (<https://socialwork.wvu.edu/students/phd/admissions-requirements/>)).
- Academic or professional writing sample (specific requirements on program website (<https://socialwork.wvu.edu/students/phd/admissions-requirements/>)).

Application Deadlines:

- The Ph.D. program admits once per year and begins in the fall (August).
- The priority review deadline for the Ph.D. program is January 15th. The final deadline is March 1st.
- Exceptional Ph.D. applicants may be nominated by the School of Social Work for competitive University Fellowships. Qualified applicants will be notified if they are nominated. More information on WVU fellowships can be found here (<https://graduateeducation.wvu.edu/finances/fellowships/>).

International Applicants (for both programs):

- See the steps to apply for admissions and access the application here (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/>).
- International applicants should view additional requirements here (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#internationaltext/#internationaltext>) and here (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/information-for/international-students/>).
- Language proficiency is required in order to hold a graduate teaching assistantship. See here (<https://elli.wvu.edu/testing-resources/english-proficiency-gtas/>).

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS IN THE MSW AND PH.D. PROGRAMS

- All full-time applicants who apply by the priority deadlines will be considered for financial support in the form of graduate service assistantships (GSAs), graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs), and graduate research assistantships (GRAs) in the School of Social Work if available.
- For questions, please contact: socialwork@mail.wvu.edu

Certain application requirements may be waived based on a preliminary review of an application by the program.

MSW on-campus: 1407

MSW online: 14C5

Ph.D.: 14F1

For specific information on the following program, please see the link to the right:

- Social Work, M.S.W.

For specific information on the following program, please see the link to the right:

- Social Work, Ph.D.

Degree Progress- MSW

The School of Social Work outlines specific timelines for degree completion and policies for evaluation of student progress. Students have a total of 8 years from the date of acceptance to complete their MSW degree. If students have not been registered for courses for 24 months or more and do not have a signed degree plan indicating their continuance plan, they must re-apply to the program to continue towards completion of the degree. Previously completed coursework that falls outside the 8-year timeline must be revalidated or retaken to count toward the degree requirements. Students who are applying for advanced standing status after a period of inactivity must have a BSW degree within 8 years of their most recent acceptance date. Similarly, if a student was previously accepted as an advanced standing student, but has become inactive, his or her advanced standing status is considered based on the most recent acceptance date.

TIMELINES FOR DEGREE COMPLETION

Typical timelines for degree plans are as follows:

- Advanced Standing, full-time: 1 year (3 semesters)
- Advanced Standing, part-time: 2 years (6 semesters)
- Regular Standing, full-time: 2 years (5 semesters)
- Regular Standing, part-time: 3 years (9 semesters)
- Dual Degree (LAW/MSW), Advanced Standing: 3 years (8-9 semesters)
- Dual Degree (LAW/MSW), Regular Standing: 4 years (11-12 semesters)

Timelines for degree completion are uniform for face-to-face and online delivery options. However, the online MSW program is offered on a part-time basis only.

Students are asked to sign a copy of their designated degree plan upon admission to the program. If they wish to deviate from the outlined degree plan, they must have an alternate degree plan that outlines their plan of completion that is approved and signed by the MSW director in order to continue in the program.

DEGREE PROGRESS- PHD

The School of Social Work outlines specific timelines for degree completion and policies for evaluation of student progress. The PhD program offers full-time and part-time options. Full-time students complete coursework by the end of fall of Year 3 and then complete the comprehensive exam/dissertation proposal and dissertation research process. Once a student has successfully defended their dissertation proposal and is admitted to candidacy, the student has no more than five years to complete the doctoral program. Most full-time students are advised to complete their dissertation by the end of Year 4.

TIMELINES FOR DEGREE COMPLETION

Typical timelines for PhD program completion for full-time students are as follows:

- Year 1- 10 credit hours of course work fall and spring semesters; 20 hours per week GTA/GRA for funded students
- Year 2- 9 credit hours of course work fall and spring semesters; 20 hours per week GTA/GRA for funded students
- Year 3- 3 credit online course in fall semester; Comprehensive exam/dissertation proposal defense late fall/early spring; 20 hours per week GTA/GRA for funded students
- Year 4- Dissertation- complete and defend when ready

A part-time degree plan option is available and adds an additional year to complete coursework prior to the comprehensive exam/dissertation proposal.

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

Students who are on track in their degree progression are notified yearly in writing that they are in academic good standing. For times when a student's academic performance falls below the threshold, or when there are concerns regarding academic dishonesty or unprofessionalism/policy violations at the school or field placement site, the MSW and PhD programs have detailed review and remediation procedures that are clearly outlined in the MSW/PhD Student Handbooks.

MSW Requirements

- **Benchmarks:** In addition to maintaining GPA requirements, students must pass all field courses, adhere to academic standards, and demonstrate professional ethics consistent with social work practice (see MSW Handbook for details).
- **Additional Requirements:**

- Regular Standing students are required to complete two community-based field internships (generalist, 6 credits; advanced; 9 credits)
- Advanced Standing students are required to complete one advanced community-based field internship (9 credits).

PhD Requirements

- **Benchmarks:** In addition to maintaining GPA requirements, students must adhere to academic standards and demonstrate professional ethics consistent with social work practice (see PhD Handbook for details). See the above timeline of progress toward the degree. The majority of coursework is completed by the end of the spring of Year 2 (with the exception of the integrated research seminar completed in the fall of Year 3). The comprehensive exam in the format of a dissertation proposal (written and oral components) is expected to occur near the end of the fall semesters or the beginning of the spring semester of Year 3. Once the dissertation committee has approved the written proposal and oral defense, the committee will recommend that the student should be advanced to candidacy. Most students are expected to complete the dissertation process and defend by the end of Year 4. For part-time students, an additional year is taken to complete coursework prior to the comprehensive exam/dissertation proposal.
- **Additional Requirements:** The WVU guidelines state that once a student is admitted to candidacy, the student has no more than five years to complete the doctoral program. If a student needs more than five years to complete the doctoral program following candidacy, the PhD Program Committee must approve an extension and follow relevant university guidelines.

DOCTOR OF JURISPRUDENCE/MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

- Admission. Students seeking to enter the Program must apply separately and be admitted independently to the College of Law's JD and Eberly's MSW program in accordance with each college's standard admission procedure.
- For additional details and requirements for each program, please visit the Law page (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/law/>) or the Social Work page (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/eberlycollegeofartsandsciences/socialwork/>).
- Students will develop a combined plan of study with their graduate advisers in Social Work and in the College of Law.
- Only courses included in an approved plan of study will satisfy graduation requirements.
- Students admitted to an approved dual degree program should plan to have their two degrees conferred simultaneously upon completion of all requirements for both degrees.
- Students must meet the academic standards of both degree programs.

| Code | Title | Hours |
|---|--|-------|
| Master of Social Work Regular Standing | | |
| SOWK Coursework | | 54 |
| SOWK 513 | Research Methods | |
| SOWK 520 | Human Behavior in the Social Environment | |
| SOWK 530 | Professional Identity and Social Justice | |
| SOWK 531 | Social Welfare Policy and Programs | |
| SOWK 540 | Generalist Practice 1: Individuals, Families, and Groups | |
| SOWK 541 | Generalist Practice 2: Rural Community Macro Practice | |
| SOWK 581 | Generalist Field Experience | |
| SOWK 616 | Evaluation Research in Social Work | |
| SOWK 633 | Social Policy Analysis, Advocacy, and Deliberation | |
| SOWK 643 | Assessment and Diagnosis | |
| SOWK 649 | Practice with Individuals | |
| SOWK 650 | Practice with Families and Groups | |
| SOWK 654 | Organizational Administration and Leadership | |
| SOWK 656 | Financial Management and Grant Writing | |
| SOWK 682 | Advanced Field Experience | |
| LAW Electives (share 6 credits) | | |
| Jurisprudence Doctorate | | |
| LAW Coursework | | 38 |
| LAW 641 | Introduction to Legal Research | |
| LAW 700 | Legal Analysis, Research and Writing 1 | |
| LAW 703 | Contracts 1 | |
| LAW 705 | Criminal Law | |
| LAW 707 | Property | |
| LAW 709 | Torts 1 | |
| LAW 711 | Legal Analysis, Research and Writing 2 | |

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|--|---|----|
| LAW 725 | Constitutional Law 1 | |
| LAW 793 Civil Procedure | | |
| LAW 793 Introduction to the Profession | | |
| LAW 793 Legal Writing Intensive | | |
| LAW 715 | Appellate Advocacy | |
| LAW 742 | Professional Responsibility | |
| Seminar | | 2 |
| Administrative Law Requirement | | 3 |
| Perspective | | 2 |
| Capstone | | 4 |
| Electives | | 39 |
| SOWK Electives (share 6 credits) | | |
| SOWK 626 | Child Mental Health: Promotion, Prevention, and Treatment | |
| SOWK 627 | Clinical Practice in Integrated Healthcare | |
| SOWK 675 | Addiction and Social Work Practice | |
| SOWK 680 | Child Welfare Continuum | |
| GERO 645 | Fundamentals of Gerontology | |
| GERO 681 | Rural Gerontology | |

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|-------------|--|-----|
| Total Hours | | 142 |
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| Code | Title | Hours |
|--|--|-------|
| Master of Social Work Advanced Standing | | |
| SOWK Coursework | | 30 |
| SOWK 616 | Evaluation Research in Social Work | |
| SOWK 633 | Social Policy Analysis, Advocacy, and Deliberation | |
| SOWK 643 | Assessment and Diagnosis | |
| SOWK 649 | Practice with Individuals | |
| SOWK 650 | Practice with Families and Groups | |
| SOWK 654 | Organizational Administration and Leadership | |
| SOWK 656 | Financial Management and Grant Writing | |
| SOWK 682 | Advanced Field Experience | |
| LAW Electives (share 6 credits) | | |
| Jurisprudence Doctorate | | |
| LAW Coursework | | 38 |
| LAW 641 | Introduction to Legal Research | |
| LAW 700 | Legal Analysis, Research and Writing 1 | |
| LAW 703 | Contracts 1 | |
| LAW 705 | Criminal Law | |
| LAW 707 | Property | |
| LAW 709 | Torts 1 | |
| LAW 711 | Legal Analysis, Research and Writing 2 | |
| LAW 725 | Constitutional Law 1 | |
| LAW 793 Civil Procedure | | |
| LAW 793 Introduction to the Profession | | |
| LAW 793 Legal Writing Intensive | | |
| LAW 715 | Appellate Advocacy | |
| LAW 742 | Professional Responsibility | |
| Seminar (any LAW 688, 689, or 796 course) | | 2 |
| Administrative Law Requirement | | 3 |
| Perspective | | 2 |
| Capstone | | 4 |
| Electives | | 39 |

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|----------------------------------|---|
| SOWK Electives (share 6 credits) | |
| SOWK 626 | Child Mental Health: Promotion, Prevention, and Treatment |
| SOWK 627 | Clinical Practice in Integrated Healthcare |
| SOWK 675 | Addiction and Social Work Practice |
| SOWK 680 | Child Welfare Continuum |
| GERO 645 | Fundamentals of Gerontology |
| GERO 681 | Rural Gerontology |
| Total Hours | 118 |