

Social Work, B.S.W.

Degree Offered

- Bachelor of Social Work

Nature of the Program

The School of Social Work provides students with a comprehensive program of professional education in social work, including degree programs at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctorate levels, and a range of part-time and continuing education opportunities.

The BSW and MSW programs at West Virginia University are fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, which makes graduates eligible to seek licensure as social workers in West Virginia and other states, depending on individual state laws. The degree programs offered by the School of Social Work allow students the opportunity to prepare for entry-level professional practice at the baccalaureate level and to specialize at the advanced (graduate) level of study. The baccalaureate program prepares social workers for generalist practice and is a recognized national leader in the development of baccalaureate-level curriculum to support this educational goal.

B.S.W. Program Mission

The mission of the BSW program is to educate students to become generalist social workers. The program mission derives from and incorporates the School of Social Work mission. Generalist social work is grounded in the liberal arts, the person-in-environment framework, and competency-based education. Generalist social workers use a range of prevention and intervention methods in social work practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Generalist social workers identify with the profession and apply ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice. Generalist social workers recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resilience of people. They are strengths-based, and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They incorporate an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective in support of respect for all people and the quest for social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on practice.

The 2 + 2 Program

WVU and several colleges have entered into a joint commitment to increase the college-going rate within the state of WV and throughout the country, as well as the number of social workers within the state, through a special 2+2 arrangement that will lead to a Bachelor of Social Work degree from WVU. Current affiliation agreements for the 2 + 2 program include, in West Virginia: Blue Ridge Community and Technical College, Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College, New River Community and Technical Community and Technical College, Pierpont Community and Technical College, and West Virginia Northern Community College. In Maryland: Frederick Community College, and Garrett College. In Pennsylvania: Lackawanna College, Pennsylvania Highlands Community College, and Westmoreland County Community College. For students from these colleges to enjoy the benefits of the 2+2 program they must be ready to enter the major when they matriculate to WVU. Students in the 2+2 program must meet the admissions standards for WVU and the B.S.W. program and must follow the B.S.W. program's policies for transfer students.

FACULTY

DIRECTOR

- Deana Morrow - MSW (University of Georgia), Ph.D. (North Carolina State University)
Director, Eberly Family Professor for Outstanding Public Service

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)
Ph.D. Program Director, Director - Rural Integrated Behavioral Health Training Program

PROGRAM COORDINATORS

- Savanna Brown - MSW (West Virginia University)
Program Coordinator - Rural Integrated Behavioral Health Training Program
- Rebekah Dunaway - MSW, MPA (West Virginia University)
BSW Recruitment & Advising Coordinator

- Jacqueline Englehardt - MSW (West Virginia University)
MSW Admissions & Recruitment Coordinator; Title IV-E Coordinator
- Jamie Mesar - MSW (University of Pittsburgh)
Online Field Education Coordinator
- Mandy Weirich - MSW (West Virginia University)
MSW Online Coordinator; Gerontology Program Coordinator

PROFESSORS

- Kristina Hash - Ph.D. (Virginia Commonwealth University)
Aging and health care, Family caregiving, Gay and lesbian issues, Geriatric education, Use of technology in teaching and research
- Deana Morrow - Ph.D. (North Carolina State University)
Social work education, Older adults, Social work licensure and regulation, Mental/behavioral health, Sexual minority populations, Ethics, Social work and counseling theories and methods, Health care
- Carrie Rishel - Ph.D. (University of Pittsburgh)
Children's 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, Trauma-informed prevention and intervention
- Leslie Tower - Ph.D. (Barry University)
Assessment Coordinator; Social Work Research Methods, Social Welfare Policy, Healthcare Systems (Public Administration), Health Policy: Health, Women's Health, Health Law & Ethics (Public Administration)

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Mary Christensen - Ph.D. (Simmons College)
Routine suicide risk screening and assessment in outpatient settings and primary care, Development and evaluation of training and pedagogical initiatives related to suicide, Evaluation of current suicide risk screening practices in primary care and other outpatient settings
- Megan Gandy - Ph.D. (Virginia Commonwealth University)
LGBTQ+ populations, Mental Health services research, Young adults, Faith communities, Social Justice, Social work education, Technology in social work education, Virtual Reality
- Jiyoung Tabone - Ph.D. (University of Chicago)
Childhood Trauma, Trauma-Informed Care, Prevention and Intervention Service Research, Risk and Resilience Research, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Obesity

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Bridget Bailey - Ph.D. (Ohio State University)
Adolescent and adult behavioral health, School-based mental health, Suicide prevention, Bipolar/mood disorders, Trauma, Underserved and diverse populations, Evidenced based treatments (i.e. dialectical behavior therapy, interpersonal social rhythms therapy; Attachment Regulation and Competency Framework), Intervention, prevention and implementation research, Community engaged research
- Megan Fabbri - Ph.D. (Ohio State University)
Migration, Sex Work, Human Rights, Social Welfare Policy, Global Social Work
- Andrew Irish - Ph.D. (University of Buffalo)
Economic Inequality and Health, Substance Use/Misuse and Recovery, Mental Health & Suicidality

TEACHING INSTRUCTORS

- Rebekah Dunaway - MSW, MPA (West Virginia University)
Nonprofit Administration and Organizational Leadership, Policy and Advocacy, Youth and Young Adult Populations, Social Work Theories and Methods, Community Systems
- Jacqueline Englehardt - MSW (West Virginia University), MA, Instructional Design & Technology (West Virginia University)
Nonprofit Management, Child Welfare, Online Teaching and Learning, Professional Development
- Rhonda Hayes - MSW (West Virginia University)
Children and Families, Clinical Interventions
- Jamie Mesar - MSW (University of Pittsburgh)
Field Education, Social Work Practices with Children and Families, Human Behavior In the Social Environment, Title IV (or Child Welfare Courses)
- Fanica Payne - MSW (West Virginia University)
Human Diversity, Professional Identity and Social Justice, Clinical social work practice
- Lindsey Rinehart - MSW (New York University)
Field education, Nonprofit leadership, Community Engagement
- Mandy Weirich - MSW (West Virginia University)
Policy and Advocacy, Geriatric Education, Use of technology in teaching and research

EMERITUS FACULTY

- Carol Amendola - MSW (West Virginia University)
- Majorie H. Buckholz-Cleveland - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
- Patricia Chase - Ed.D. (West Virginia University)
- Linda Ferrise - MSW (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 - MSW (University of Pennsylvania)
- Neal Newfield - Ph.D. (Texas Tech University)
- Michael Zakour - Ph.D. (Washington University)

Admissions for 2025-2026

- First-time freshmen are admitted directly to the major.
- Students transferring from another major at WVU are directly admitted if they have a cumulative GPA of a 2.0. Students who have earned more than 58 earned credits are urged to speak with a Social Work adviser to establish a plan of study toward a timely graduation.
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Major Code: 1407

General Education Foundations

Please use this link to view a list of courses that meet each GEF requirement. (<http://registrar.wvu.edu/gef/>)

NOTE: Some major requirements will fulfill specific GEF requirements. Please see the curriculum requirements listed below for details on which GEFs you will need to select.

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundations		
F1 - Composition & Rhetoric		3-6
ENGL 101 & ENGL 102 or ENGL 103	Introduction to Composition and Rhetoric and Composition, Rhetoric, and Research Accelerated Academic Writing	
F2A/F2B - Science & Technology		4-6
F3 - Math & Quantitative Reasoning		3-4
F4 - Society & Connections		3
F5 - Human Inquiry & the Past		3
F6 - The Arts & Creativity		3
F7 - Global Studies & Diversity		3
F8 - Focus (may be satisfied by completion of a minor, double major, or dual degree)		9
Total Hours		31-37

Please note that not all of the GEF courses are offered at all campuses. Students should consult with their advisor or academic department regarding the GEF course offerings available at their campus.

Degree Requirements

Students must complete WVU General Education Foundations requirements, School of Social Work (major) requirements, and electives to total a minimum of 120 hours.

SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK

The undergraduate social work program consists of a foundation in the liberal arts, and students must complete all courses outlined below, with 58 credits at the 200-level or above. Students are encouraged to consult with the social work adviser regarding the selection of electives appropriate for their career interest.

- **Capstone Requirement:** The university requires the successful completion of a capstone course, preferably in the major. Social Work majors satisfy these requirements by completing SOWK 481.

- **Writing and Communication Skills Requirement:** Social Work BSW students fulfill the Writing and Communication Skills requirement by completing ENGL 101 and ENGL 102 (or ENGL 103), and two additional **SpeakWrite Certified Courses™**: SOWK 320 and SOWK 481.
- **Calculation of Major GPA:** A minimum GPA of a 2.0 is required in all courses applied to major requirements, with a minimum grade of C- in all SOWK courses except SOWK 491 which is taken P/F. If a course is repeated, all attempts will be included in the calculation of the GPA, unless the course is eligible for a D/F repeat.
- **Field Instruction Requirements:** Students must successfully complete 12 credits of field placement.

Curriculum Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
	University Requirements	51
	Social Work Major Requirements	69
	Total Hours	120

University Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
	General Education Foundations (GEF) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 (31-37 Credits)	
	Outstanding GEF Requirements 1, 2, 3, 6, and 8	24
SOWK 191	First-Year Seminar	1
	General Electives	26
	Total Hours	51

Social Work Major Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
	Foundation Social Work Requirement	6
SOWK 147	Human Diversity	
SOWK 151	Introduction to Social Work	
	Social Science Electives:	15
	One class on Government (POLS 102, POLS 210, POLS 220, POLS 250, HIST 250, or other as approved)	
	One class on Family 200 level or above (SOC 221, COMM 332, CDFS 110, CDFS 112, DISB 380, or other as approved)	
	One class in PSYC 200 level or above	
	One class in SOC, ANTH, or CRIM 200 level or above	
	One additional class in POLS, PSYC, SOC, CRIM, ANTH, COMM or ECON 200 level or above	
	Minority Content Class:	3
	Select one of the following:	
ASP 220	Introduction to Africana Studies	
COMM 212	Gender Communication	
COMM 317	Communication and Aging	
ENGL 154	African American Literature	
ENGL 251	American Folklore and Culture	
ENGL 252	Appalachian Fiction	
ENGL 254	African American Literature	
ENGL 285	Images of Women in Literature	
ENGL 352	Topics in Appalachian Studies	
ENGL 387	Topics in Women's Literature	
HIST 250	West Virginia	
HIST 473	Appalachian Regional History	
NAS 200	Introduction: Native American Studies	
POLS 337	Gender/Politics and Policy	
PSYC 232	Sex Roles and Behavior	
PSYC 345	Adulthood and Aging	
SOC 235	Race and Ethnic Relations	

SOC 323	Sociology of Rural Life	
SOC 360	Sociology of Gender	
WGST 170	Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies	
WGST 242	Women's Health and Fitness	
Advanced Social Work Courses		24
SOWK 300	Social Welfare Policy and Services 1	
SOWK 310	Social Welfare Policy and Services 2	
SOWK 320	Social Work Methods 1	
SOWK 322	Social Work Methods 2	
SOWK 324	Methods 3: Organizations and Communities	
SOWK 330	Human Behavior in the Social Environment	
SOWK 345	Interprofessional Social Justice Practice	
SOWK 360	Social Work Research and Statistics	
Social Work Practice Electives		6
Select one of the following:		
GERO 212	Introduction to Gerontology	
GERO 410	Rural Gerontology	
SOWK 293	Special Topics	
SOWK 370 Wellness & Resilience for the Helping Professions and Beyond		
SOWK 380	Child Welfare	
Select an additional course at the 300 or 400 level from the list above, or from the list below, or from a minor		
COMM 309	Health Communication	
GEOG 300	Geographical Data Analysis	
GEOG 312	Migration and Human Rights	
HIST 439	History of Modern Mexico	
HIST 451	African-American History-1900	
HIST 452	African-American Since 1900	
HIST 473	Appalachian Regional History	
HIST 478	American Immigration History	
HIST 470	United States Civil Rights Movement	
HIST 477	Working Class America	
Field Instruction		12
SOWK 491	Professional Field Experience	
Capstone Experience		3
SOWK 481	Senior Capstone (Capstone)	

Total Hours 69

Suggested Plan of Study

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
SOWK 191		1 ENGL 102 (GEF 1)	3
SOWK 151 (GEF 5)		3 SOWK 147 (GEF 7)	3
ENGL 101 (GEF 1)		3 GEF 2	3
GEF 3		3 General Elective	3
GEF 6		3 General Elective	3
General Elective		3	
		16	15

Second Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
SOWK 300		3 GEF 8	3
GEF 2		3 PSYC 200-level Elective	3
SOC 200-level Elective		3 Family 200-level Elective (GEF 8)	3

Government Elective (GEF 4)		3 Minority Content Course	3
General Elective		3 General Elective	3
		15	15
Third Year			
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
SOWK 320		3 SOWK 310	3
SOWK 330		3 SOWK 322	3
GEF 8*		3 SOWK 360	3
General Elective		3 SOWK Elective 1	3
General Elective		2 General Elective	3
		14	15
Fourth Year			
Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
SOWK 324		3 SOWK 481 (Capstone)	3
SOWK 345		3 SOWK 491	6
SOWK 491		6 Social Science Elective	3
SOWK Elective 2		3 General Elective	3
		15	15

Total credit hours: 120

*

Student completing a minor, a second major or a dual degree already fulfill F 8.

Degree Progress

Application to Professional Level:

By January of the 4th semester, students must petition to enter the *professional* level.

For the petitions, students:

- must have earned a final grade of C- or higher in SOWK 147 and 151.
- must complete 50 hours verified volunteer service.
- must submit a personal statement, self-assessment, and a reference from academic or volunteer service individual.
- have earned a minimum overall GPA of 2.0 GPA. (Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA overall after admission to the professional major).
- All majors must meet with their SOWK advisor each semester.

Students who do not meet these benchmarks are not eligible to petition to enter the *professional* level and may be removed from their major.

Code of Ethics:

Additionally, the BSW is a professional degree accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) (<https://www.cswe.org/>). Therefore, students must remain in compliance with accreditation standards, including compliance with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics (available at <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English> (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English/>)) and the BSW Student Handbook (available at <https://socialwork.wvu.edu/students/bsw> (<https://socialwork.wvu.edu/students/bsw/>)). Inability to comply with these requirements may make it difficult or impossible to complete the degree. Students should speak with a SOWK advisor regarding these requirements.

Major Learning Outcomes

SOCIAL WORK

Upon successful completion of the B.S.W. degree, **Social Work** majors will demonstrate:

1. Competence for entry-level generalist practice, with an emphasis on rural and small town settings, gained through a curriculum including liberal arts and social work foundations, human behavior in the social environment (HBSE) practice, policy, assessment/research with individuals, families, groups, communities, and society.
2. Ability to engage in effective practice that is responsive to changing the social context, with an existing value base and ethical standards of the social work profession.
3. Skills for effective for practice with diverse, vulnerable, and oppressed populations and to further social and economic justice.

4. A foundational identity as a professional social worker and commitment to conduct oneself accordingly.
5. Sensitivity, knowledge, and understanding of human needs and rights, social welfare issues, and approaches toward resolving social problems.