



MSW DEGREE PLANNING PACKET

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

MSW@Denver



MSW@Denver Program

For students beginning the program Fall 2023 or after

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Graduate Bulletin Information

The [University of Denver Graduate Bulletin](#) outlines Graduate School of Social Work program requirements. The advising and academic planning information in this manual is based in the 2023-2024 University of Denver Graduate Bulletin, and is specific to students who started within this academic year (Fall 2023-Summer 2024).

Section 1: Degree Requirements

Students at the Graduate School of Social Work will complete the requirements for the **Advanced Social Work Practice** degree program to earn their Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. The Advanced Social Work Practice degree program will prepare students with the theoretical knowledge, applied skills, and values to work across a continuum of services at micro, mezzo and macro levels. Our model prepares students to practice with a wide range of populations and settings to meet the needs of your community.

The curriculum emphasizes culturally responsive practice needed for the increasing diversity within communities at a local, state, national or global context. Faculty expertise anchors a curriculum that encourages students to focus their degree in alignment with specific areas of interest or career goals. Practice courses are taught by instructors who are actively involved in community engaged social work. The combination of scholarship and applied expertise synergizes the learning experience.

GSSW has structured the curriculum to meet the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) [Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards](#) for MSW programs. Competency-based education rests on a shared view of the nature of competence in professional practice. Social work competence is the ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes to practice situations in a culturally responsive, purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community well-being. Competency-based education is an outcome-oriented approach to curriculum design. Overall, professional competence is multi-dimensional and composed of 9 inter-related competencies:

- Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- Competency 2: Advanced Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- Competency 3: Engage in Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
- Competency 4: Engage in Practice Informed Research, and Research Informed Practice
- Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
- Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

For MSW students, the minimum total credits required for the Master of Social Work degree is 81. The requirement for Advanced Standing MSW students, who enter the program with a Bachelor of Social Work degree, is 54 total credits.

The information below outlines the courses required for MSW foundation requirements and Advanced Standing MSW prerequisite requirements, as well as the concentration overview of credits needed for all students.



MSW Foundation Requirements

Foundation requirements must be completed prior to moving forward with concentration requirements

SOWK 4000: Professional Development Seminar **(1 credit)**

SOWK 4001: Clinical Social Work Skills **(3 credits)**

SOWK 4020: Integrated Practice for Social Justice **(4 credits)**

- *This course is a prerequisite for SOWK 4003, 4007, & 4120.*

SOWK 4132: Power, Privilege, and Oppression **(3 credits)**

SOWK 4006: Human Behavior and the Social Environment **(3 credits)**

- *This course is a prerequisite for SOWK 4003.*

SOWK 4003: Clinical Social Work Theory and Practice **(3 credits)**

SOWK 4007: Community/Macro Social Work Theory and Practice **(4 credits)**

SOWK 4201: Evidence for Practice **(3 credits)**

- *This course is a prerequisite for SOWK 4900.*

SOWK 4120: Social Policy, Analysis, Advocacy, and Practice **(3 credits)**

- *This course is a prerequisite for SOWK 4655.*

SOWK 4950: Foundation Field Internship **(total of 9 credits)**

- *This course is a prerequisite for 4970.*

= 36 total foundation credits

Advanced Standing MSW Prerequisite Requirements

Prerequisite requirements must be completed prior to moving forward with concentration requirements

SOWK 4299: Advanced Standing Seminar **(3 credit)**

*SOWK 4302: Advanced Standing: Advanced Evidence for Practice **(3 credits)**

*SOWK 4303: Advanced Standing: Engaging in Anti-Opressive Social Work **(3 credits)**

= 9 total prerequisite credits

**Will be offered starting Fall 2024*



Advanced Social Work Practice Concentration Curriculum Requirements

Select one from the menu of required course option by each category

See pathway information for course suggestions based on career interests

Required Theory - 3 total credits (choose one course from below)

SOWK 4325: Evolving Perspectives & Trends in Health & Wellness

SOWK 4345: Intersections of MH, Substance Use, & Trauma

Required Assessment Skills (Practice class, per CSWE) - 3 total credits

SOWK 4338: Assessment of MH Across the Lifespan

Required Ethics, Safety, & Supervisory Skills (Practice class, per CSWE) - 3 total credits (choose one course from below)

SOWK 4340: Leadership & Supervision Skills

SOWK 4752: Trauma Informed Assessment & Interventions

SOWK 4784: Suicide Assessment & Interventions

Required Intervention Skills (Practice Skills, per CSWE) - 3 total credits (choose one course from below)

SOWK 4401: Integrated Health Care

SOWK 4430: Substance Use Interventions

SOWK 4700: Solution Focused Brief Therapy

SOWK 4723: SW Practice in Health

SOWK 4730: Cognitive Behavioral Therapies

Required Policy & Advocacy Skills - 3 total credits

SOWK 4655: Mental Health & Health Care Policy

Required Evaluation & Research Skills - 3 total credits

SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs

Required Values - 3 total credits (choose one course from below)

SOWK 4235: Disproportionality & Disparities

SOWK 4545: SW Practice with LGBTQIA Communities

SOWK 4643: Digital Justice

SOWK 4790: Human Sexuality

Required Field Internship - *12 total credits

SOWK 4970: Concentration Field Internship

**A select few SOWK 4970 Concentration Internship placements are designated as "Extended Field Learning" opportunities that are pre-approved for additional hours and credits. If you are interested in this option please consult with your Placement Specialist.*

Required Electives (elective courses may be fulfilled by courses not accounted for in required category)

SOWK 4521: Advanced Skills for Working with Military Families

= 45 total concentration curriculum credits

Visiting Student Opportunity

All students may take up to 10 credits in another graduate school or through Denver Campus toward degree completion through the [Visiting Student process](#). (This includes [International Courses and Experiences](#)).



Section 2: Academic Plan Overviews

Use the [link](#) provided to access the following Academic Plan Overviews.

Advanced Standing

Advanced Standing Online MSW Program 4 Quarter Accelerated Track

Advanced Standing Online MSW Program 6 Quarter Track

Advanced Standing Online MSW Program 9 Quarter Track

Online MSW Two Agency Placement

Online MSW Program 7 Quarter Accelerated Track *Two Agency Placement*

Online MSW Program 9 Quarter Track *Two Agency Placement*

Online MSW Program 12 Quarter Track *Two Agency Placement*

Online MSW Program 14 Quarter Track *Two Agency Placement*

Online MSW VFX + One Agency Placement

Online MSW Program 7 Quarter Accelerated Track
Virtual Field Experience + One Agency Placement

Online MSW Program 9 Quarter Track
Virtual Field Experience + One Agency Placement

Online MSW Program 12 Quarter Track
Virtual Field Experience + One Agency Placement

Online MSW Program 14 Quarter Track
Virtual Field Experience + One Agency Placement



Section 3: Pathway Information

This packet has shown you the nuts and bolts of what is required to obtain an MSW degree; adding a Pathway interest helps you think about how best to apply course content to achieve that goal to align with your interests and career aspirations.

Q: How do I use this Pathway option?

A: You have a choice to create a curriculum plan that is a broad “Advanced Generalist” degree, solely based on a variety of interests in each requirement area (Theory for Practice, Assessment Skills, Ethics, Safety, & Supervisory Skills, Intervention Skills, Policy & Advocacy Skills, Evaluation & Research, Values, and Electives) OR you could focus your curriculum choice toward an area of practice, population, or a social work setting that appeals to you and your career interests.

Q: If I choose a pathway, do I need to follow the course recommendations exactly?

A: No. Pathways are designed to give you flexibility for both your specific interests as well as course availability. If one of the classes that is suggested is not available, you may wait until another quarter or choose a different course that is listed within that category to fulfil the degree requirements. Pathways are *suggestions*!

Q: What if I want a specific type of license after my MSW degree?

A: You should consult the state licensing board for your particular area, such as LSW, LCSW, CAC, School Social Worker, etc. ([LINK TO PORTAL PAGE ON LICENSURE](#)). Some courses will be more geared toward specific types of social work practice. Students should think ahead about which courses would be best to take for their future licensure wants or needs. Students can always consult the GSSW Career Services team for more specific questions.

Q: How do I meet the Elective requirement with only one class listed?

Courses that are not taken to meet specific requirements (i.e. theory, assessment skills, intervention skills, etc.) can be taken to fulfill the credit requirements for electives. Please take a look at the sample plans below for a few examples of what this may look like.

Q: What if I want to complete a certificate or stipend?

Please see information in Section 4 of this Planning guide regarding certification and stipends



Mental Health & Trauma Focus

Sample Mental Health & Trauma Pathway, with a Substance Use & Addictions Focus

Sample Job titles may include: Case Manager, Clinical Social Worker, Clinical Therapist, Clinician, Counselor, Mental Health Therapist, Social Worker, Behavioral Health Therapist

Required Theory

SOWK 4345: Intersections of MH, Substance Use, & Trauma

Required Assessment Skills

SOWK 4338: Assessment of MH Across the Lifespan

Required Ethics, Safety, & Supervisory Skills

SOWK 4752: Trauma Informed Assessment & Interventions ***taken as elective*

SOWK 4784: Suicide Assessment & Interventions

Required Intervention Skills

SOWK 4401: Integrated Health Care ***taken as elective*

SOWK 4430: Substance Use Interventions

SOWK 4700: Solution Focused Brief Therapy ***taken as elective*

Required Policy & Advocacy Skills

SOWK 4655: Mental Health & Health Care Policy

Required Evaluation & Research Skills

SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs

Required Values

SOWK 4790: Human Sexuality

Additional Electives

SOWK 4521: Advanced Skills for Working with Military Families ***taken as elective*

Sample Mental Health & Trauma Pathway, with a Trauma-Informed Focus

Sample Job titles may include: Case Manager, Clinical Social Worker, Clinical Therapist, Clinician, Counselor, Mental Health Therapist, Social Worker, Behavioral Health Therapist

Required Theory

SOWK 4345: Intersections of MH, Substance Use, & Trauma

Required Assessment Skills

SOWK 4338: Assessment of MH Across the Lifespan

Required Ethics, Safety, & Supervisory Skills

SOWK 4752: Trauma Informed Assessment & Interventions

SOWK 4784: Suicide Assessment & Interventions ***taken as elective*

Required Intervention Skills



SOWK 4700: Solution Focused Brief Therapy ***taken as elective*
SOWK 4730: Cognitive Behavioral Therapies

Required Policy & Advocacy Skills

SOWK 4655: Mental Health & Health Care Policy

Required Evaluation & Research Skills

SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs

Required Values

SOWK 4235: Disproportionality & Disparities ***taken as elective*
SOWK 4643: Digital Justice

Additional Electives

SOWK 4521: Advanced Skills for Working with Military Families

Sample Mental Health & Trauma Pathway, with a Community Focus

Sample Job title may include: Case Manager, Community Outreach Specialist, Community Advocate, Community Liaison

Required Theory

SOWK 4345: Intersections of MH, Substance Use, & Trauma

Required Assessment Skills

SOWK 4338: Assessment of MH Across the Lifespan

Required Ethics, Safety, & Supervisory Skills

SOWK 4340: Leadership & Supervision Skills ***taken as elective*
SOWK 4752: Trauma Informed Assessment & Interventions
SOWK 4784: Suicide Assessment & Interventions **taken as elective*

Required Intervention Skills

SOWK 4430: Substance Use Interventions
SOWK 4730: Cognitive Behavioral Therapies **taken as elective*

Required Policy & Advocacy Skills

SOWK 4655: Mental Health & Health Care Policy

Required Evaluation & Research Skills SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs

Required Values

SOWK 4545: SW Practice with LGBTQIA Communities

Additional Electives

SOWK 4521: Advanced Skills for Working with Military Families



Health, Equity & Wellness Focus

Health, Equity & Wellness with a Community Health Focus

Sample Job titles may include: Health Advocate, Public Health Educator, Health Equity Specialist, Community Health Advocate, Community Wellness Clinician

Required Theory

SOWK 4325: Evolving Perspectives & Trends in Health & Wellness

Required Assessment Skills

SOWK 4338: Assessment of MH Across the Lifespan

Required Ethics, Safety, & Supervisory Skills

SOWK 4340: Leadership & Supervision Skills

SOWK 4752: Trauma Informed Assessment & Interventions

SOWK 4784: Suicide Assessment & Interventions

Required Intervention Skills

SOWK 4700: Solution Focused Brief Therapy

SOWK 4723: SW Practice in Health

SOWK 4730: Cognitive Behavioral Therapies **taken as elective*

Required Policy & Advocacy Skills

SOWK 4655: Mental Health & Health Care Policy

Required Evaluation & Research Skills

SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs

Required Values

SOWK 4235: Disproportionality & Disparities

SOWK 4545: SW Practice with LGBTQIA Communities **taken as elective*

SOWK 4790: Human Sexuality **taken as elective*

Additional Electives

SOWK 4521: Advanced Skills for Working with Military Families

Health, Equity & Wellness with a Medical Focus

Sample job titles may include: Medical social worker, dialysis social worker, hospice social worker, outpatient clinical social worker, LCSW, Behavioral Health Clinician/Therapist

Required Theory

SOWK 4325: Evolving Perspectives & Trends in Health & Wellness

Required Assessment Skills

SOWK 4338: Assessment of MH Across the Lifespan

Required Ethics, Safety, & Supervisory Skills

SOWK 4752: Trauma Informed Assessment & Interventions



SOWK 4784: Suicide Assessment & Interventions **taken as elective*

Required Intervention Skills

SOWK 4401: Integrated Health Care

SOWK 4723: SW Practice in Health **taken as elective*

SOWK 4730: Cognitive Behavioral Therapies **taken as elective*

Required Policy & Advocacy Skills

SOWK 4655: Mental Health & Health Care Policy

Required Evaluation & Research Skills

SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs

Required Values

SOWK 4235: Disproportionality & Disparities

SOWK 4790: Human Sexuality **taken as elective*

Section 4: GSSW Certificate & Stipend Overviews

GSSW students can further customize their learning by adding on a certificate or stipend to their degree plan. The below information can be used in conjunction with information posted on the Student Portfolio page in order to determine if a stipend/certificate is right for you. Some stipends/certificates have strict deadlines associated with them; take care to submit all materials by posted deadlines. Noting your interest in a stipend/certificate in your GSSW application does not enroll you in a stipend/certificate program. Students must follow all directions in order to be considered for a stipend/certificate.

Certificate Options

Human-Animal-Environment Interactions in Social Work (HAEI-SW) certificate

About the Certificate

The Human-Animal-Environment Interactions in Social Work (HAEI-SW) certificate prepares students to recognize the importance and impact of human-animal-environment interactions (HAEIs) in culturally responsive and ethically advanced professional social work practice settings. Clinical and community settings such as mental health agencies, schools, and shelters are emphasized. The certificate centers social justice and highlights intersecting systems of oppression and violence directed towards humans, animals, and the environment.

- The certificate can be combined with any concentration in the MSW program.
- There is no requirement for a specialized field placement related to the certificate.

Visit the [Human-Animal-Environment Interactions in Social Work Certificate webpage](#) to learn about career options and learning outcomes.

Application

MSW@Denver online students may apply to take Human-Animal-Environment Interactions in Social Work (HAEI-SW) courses in the Denver Campus MSW program through the [Visiting Student](#) option. If you are interested in this option, please read the below process and disclaimers in full:

- The HAEI-SW courses are meant to be taken sequentially. SOWK 4795 (3 credits) is the first course, SOWK 4796 (3 credits) is second, and SOWK 4797 (3 credits) is the final course in the sequence. Only the first course (SOWK 4795) is available as a standalone course offering.
- If approved, the HAEI-SW courses are counted as electives in your program.
 - Traditional students have six total credits of elective requirements. If a Traditional student is interested in taking all three courses, please note this would exceed the total credit requirements for your program.
 - Advanced Standing students have nine total credits of elective requirements.
- HAEI-SW online courses will be held through the online learning management system, Canvas, as opposed to 2DU.
- Though the goal is to provide some sections of these courses online through Canvas, we cannot guarantee courses will be offered each term and/or fully online throughout the academic year, as these are Denver campus-based courses. Therefore, some students may not have access to the courses.
 - On the online schedule, under the course title: “Lecture” signifies an on-campus course and “Online/Distance” signifies an online course.
 - Students must apply for the courses through the Visiting Student application. If approved, Visiting Students can take up to 10 credit hours outside of their ‘home’ program. Students must submit their request through an online form at least 6 weeks



before the start of the quarter.

- More information [here](#)
- Please be aware of the listed application due dates
- Approval is not guaranteed and courses are subject to availability
- The Summer term for Denver campus does not follow the typical 10 week structure that the MSW@Denver program follows. Students can find the GSSW academic calendars [here](#).
- At this time, the HAEI-SW MSW Certificate of Specialization is specific to the Denver campus program. As such, the HAEI-SW Certificate cannot be listed on your transcript even if you complete the three, sequential courses. The courses will be listed as courses completed on your transcript. If you would like to document your completion of the HAEI-SW requirements, you may request a letter of completion from the HAEI-SW Certificate Coordinator, Nina Ekholm Fry (Nina.Ekholm-Fry@du.edu)

HAEI-SW Certificate Information Sheet

Course Requirements

- **SOWK 4795 Foundations for Human-Animal-Environment Interactions in Social Work**
 - *offered Summer, Fall, and Spring quarters (starting the course sequence in Spring quarter is only available to first year students)*
- **SOWK 4796 Human-Animal-Environment Interventions in Social Work Practice**
 - *offered Fall and Winter quarters*
- **SOWK 4797 Professional Integration of Human-Animal-Environment Interactions in Social Work**
 - *offered Winter and Spring quarters*

Course Planning

Courses are taken in sequence (SOWK 4795, SOWK 4796, SOWK 4797), primarily during the Concentration year. There is no requirement for a specialized field internship connected to the HAEI-SW certificate.

Optional Courses

In addition to the required course sequence, optional 1-credit course offerings are available to deepen learning:

- **SOWK 4990 Canine Interactions in Social Work Practice: Pro-Active Handling and Training**

Typically offered in Winter and Spring quarters – please check with certificate coordinator

- **SOWK 4990 Social Work in Nature: Green Care and Nature Therapeutics**

Typically offered in Fall and Spring quarters – please check with certificate coordinator

- **SOWK 4990 Green Chimneys and HAI Research**

Typically offered in Spring quarter – please check with certificate coordinator

Students pursuing the HAEI-SW certificate have access to a dedicated Canvas container with information about additional learning opportunities and events for HAEI-SW certificate students.

Certificate Coordinator

The Certificate Coordinator oversees the certificate curriculum. Students wishing for any modification to the course sequence in the certificate must obtain approval from the Coordinator.

Nina Ekholm Fry

HAEI-SW Certificate Coordinator

Nina.Ekholm-Fry@du.edu



Stipend Options

CLIMB@DU Stipend

- Program Requirement: Any program, with Colorado and/or Four Corners residence
- Concentration Requirement: Any
- Field Requirement: Concentration internship in an Integrated Behavioral Health setting
- Travel Requirement: Interregional Internship Exchange (Spring)
- Other Requirements: Fall kick-off, orientation, monthly/quarterly cohort meetings, IDI, Interprofessional Speaker Series
- Additional information can be found on the [CLIMB Website](#)

Upcoming Due Dates:

- Priority deadline typically end of Spring term
- Applications will be accepted until all stipends are awarded
- When available, the application can be found at the [CLIMB Website](#)
- The decision date is generally by Fall term

Course Requirements:

- SOWK 4401 Integrated Health Care: Models & Practice
 - offered Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer quarters
- SOWK 4390 Cultural & Linguistic Competency in Integrated Behavioral Health
 - offered Winter quarter only
- One Additional Course from the list of courses on the [CLIMB Website](#) (see application for course listings)
- Psychopharmacology - One weekend workshop

Contacts: If interested, contact Erin.Poole@du.edu



Section 5: Putting it All Together - Tracking Your Degree Progress

Track your progress towards degree completion as soon as you begin the program. Students are expected to complete foundation or advanced standing requirements as pre-requisite to the Advanced Concentration curriculum. The best way to track your degree progress is to use the GSSW Degree Tracking Tool. This tool is currently under construction and will be available by July 2023. This document will be updated with a link to the degree tracking tool when it is ready for use.