



**Graduate School
of Social Work**
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

MSW CONCENTRATION YEAR

Career Pathway and Certificates Planning Guide

Advisor & Student Planning Resource

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Each pathway provides recommended courses per required curriculum category, plus recommended electives (12 elective credits required).

Course selection is for guidance. Work with your academic advisor to build your individualized plan.

Note: All course selections are guided recommendations, but you are welcome to take courses that interest you as it relates to career pathways. Any unused required-category course may also count as an elective. Up to 10 credits may come from other DU graduate programs with advisor approval. Consult your academic advisor for a final degree audit.

Table of Contents

Pathways

[Pathway Information \(FAQs\)](#)
[Aging Services & Policy Pathway](#)
[Child Welfare Pathway](#)
[Children & Youth Pathway](#)
[Ecological Justice Pathway](#)
[Family Systems Practice Pathway](#)
[Health & Wellness Pathway](#)
[Mental Health Pathway](#)
[Organizational Leadership & Policy Practice Pathway](#)
[Off the Beaten Path... build your own pathway!](#)

Certificates

[School Social Work Certificate](#)
[Global Social Work Certificate](#)
[Latinx Social Work Certificate](#)
[Human-Animal-Environment Interactions in Social Work Certificate](#)
[Mental Health for Ecological Resilience and Adaptation Certificate](#)

Career Pathway Information

This packet has shown you the overall requirements to obtain an MSW degree; adding a Pathway interest helps you think about how best to apply course content to align 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 an Advance Social Work Practice degree, solely based on a variety of interests in each requirement area (Theory for Practice, Assessment Skills, Engage & Intervene: Organizations & Communities, Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families, Groups, Policy & Advocacy Skills, Evaluation & Research, Values, and Electives) OR you could focus your curriculum 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. You do not need to officially pick a pathway and the pathways sheets are only suggestions, but not required. 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 or there is another course that interests you more, 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. Some courses will be more geared toward specific types of social work practice. Think ahead about which courses would be best to take to meet your future licensure wants or needs. Consult the [Licensure page](#) in the MSW Student Resource Portal and reach out to GSSW Career Services team for more specific questions. You can also request to meet with an advisor [here](#) under the “Advising-Ways to Connect” tab.

Q: What if the courses I want are mostly listed in the “Electives” category?

A: If you are struggling to find courses that you want within the required categories, please check in with a faculty academic advisor using the ‘[Advising-Ways to Connect](#)’ tab on the MSW Student Resource Portal. Faculty academic advisors can help you think through how your interests may be represented within our current required course offerings or suggest electives that may be eligible for a waiver-substitution in some rare cases.

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

A: Review specific requirements associated with scholarships, certificates, or dual degrees. Some courses may fulfill multiple requirements within the MSW degree. If a course is required for a certificate and meets one of the mandatory categories of the Advanced Practice Concentration curriculum, it can count towards the degree as well as the certificate/stipend requirement. The total number of credits per category and for the degree must still be met. For questions about stipends, certificates, or dual degrees, please visit the [MSW Student Resource Portal](#).

Q: What if I want to take a class within another program at GSSW?

A: Students in the Denver Campus, Four Corners, or Western Colorado programs may take classes as offered or cross listed between these 3 programs and may take up to 10 credits in the MSW@Denver program as a visiting student, as space allows. Additionally, students in these 3 programs may take up to 10 graduate course credits within any other institution within the University of Denver, with approval from an academic advisor and the course instructor. Students in the MSW@Denver program may take up to 10 credits in any other GSSW program.

Aging Services & Policy Pathway

A pathway in Aging Services will prepare you for a career working with older adults and their families, or to lead change efforts related to aging services both locally and nationally. This course list is a recommendation and not a requirement. Any course we offer in the required category will fulfill degree requirements. Students interested in expanding their studies may also want to explore the opportunity to earn a [Master of Public Health](#) alongside the MSW degree. For more information about dual degree options, please visit the [Dual Degrees](#) page in the MSW Student Resource Portal. We recommend meeting with an academic advisor for additional guidance. Check out the [Career Snapshots](#) located on the MSW Student Resource Portal or connect to the Crimson Constellation [GSSW Pathway: Aging Services & Policy](#) Pathway group to learn more and to interact with peers and alumni with similar career interests. Reach out to GSSW Career Services at gssw.careers@du.edu for 1:1 assistance.

DEGREE REQUIREMENT CATEGORY	RECOMMENDED COURSES
Theory	SOWK 4320: Family Systems Theories SOWK 4325: Evolving Perspectives & Trends in Health & Wellness
Assessment Skills	SOWK 4501: Wellness Assessment & Promotion Across the Lifespan SOWK 4338: Assessment of Mental Health Across the Lifespan
Engage & Intervene: Organizations & Communities	SOWK 4465: Human Security SOWK 4340: Leadership & Supervision Skills
Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families, & Groups	SOWK 4401: Integrated Health Care SOWK 4420: Advanced Assessment and Intervention with Family Systems SOWK 4723: Social Work Practice in Health SOWK 4725: Mind-Body Connections in Social Work Practice SOWK 4784: Suicide Assessment & Interventions
Policy Advocacy	SOWK 4630: Family Policies & Services SOWK 4645: Health Care Policy SOWK 4650: Aging Policy SOWK 4712: Social Work & the Law
Evaluation & Research	SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs SOWK 4903: Photovoice as Intervention and Research Methodology
Values	SOWK 4240: Intergenerational Justice SOWK 4742: Disability Studies
Electives	SOWK 4523: Care Management Skills SOWK 4741: Grief & Loss Across the Lifespan SOWK 4445: SW Assessment & Intervention in Aging

Child Welfare Pathway

A pathway in Child Welfare will prepare you for a career working with children, youth and families across the continuum of care within the child welfare system, from entry to exit in both public and private child welfare agencies. Consider adding on the [Colorado Child Welfare Scholarship](#) to your degree plan in order to maximize learning and employability. This course list is a recommendation and not a requirement. Any course that we offer in the required category will fulfill degree requirements. We recommend you meet with an academic advisor for additional guidance. Check out the [Career Snapshots](#) located on the MSW Student Resource Portal or connect to the Crimson Constellation [GSSW Pathway: Child Welfare](#) Pathway group to learn more and to interact with peers and alumni with similar career interests. Reach out to GSSW Career Services at gssw.careers@du.edu for 1:1 assistance.

DEGREE REQUIREMENT CATEGORY	RECOMMENDED COURSES
Theory	SOWK 4315: Critical Theories of Child and Adolescent Development SOWK 4370: Community & Organizational Change SOWK 4320: Family Systems Theories
Assessment Skills	SOWK 4338: Assessment of Mental Health Across the Lifespan SOWK 4752: Trauma Informed Assessment & Interventions
Engage & Intervene: Organizations & Communities	SOWK 4340: Leadership & Supervision Skills SOWK 4465: Human Security
Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families, & Groups	SOWK 4418: Child Welfare Practice SOWK 4420: Advanced Assessment and Intervention with Family Systems SOWK 4454: Child & Adolescent Trauma SOWK 4700: Solution Focused Brief Therapy
Policy Advocacy	SOWK 4600: Child Welfare Policies and Services SOWK 4610: Policies & Programs for Children & Youth SOWK 4630: Family Policies & Services SOWK 4660: Social Policy Advocacy SOWK 4712: Social Work & the Law
Evaluation & Research	SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs SOWK 4902: Public Impact for Policy, Community Organizing and Research Dissemination
Values	SOWK 4235: Disproportionality & Disparities
Electives	SOWK 4732: Disrupting Privilege through Anti-Oppressive Practice SOWK 4520: Advanced Clinical SW Practice with Families SOWK 4741: Grief & Loss Across the Lifespan SOWK 4710: Intimate Partner Violence

Children & Youth Pathway

A pathway in Children and Youth will prepare you to work across developmental stages from birth to early adulthood in settings that include mental health clinics, family services, community and government agencies, schools, youth programs, treatment centers and the juvenile legal system. Consider adding on the [School Social Work certificate](#). This course list is a recommendation and not a requirement. Any course that we offer in the required category will fulfill degree requirements. We recommend you meet with an academic advisor for additional guidance. Check out the [Career Snapshots](#) located on the MSW Student Resource Portal or connect to the Crimson Constellation [GSSW Pathway: Children & Youth](#) Pathway group to learn more and to interact with peers and alumni with similar career interests. Reach out to GSSW Career Services at gssw.careers@du.edu for 1:1 assistance.

DEGREE REQUIREMENT CATEGORY	RECOMMENDED COURSES
Theory	SOWK 4315: Critical Theories of Child & Adolescent Development SOWK 4320: Family Systems Theories SOWK 4360: Social-Eco Resilience: Connecting Human & Environmental Wellbeing
Assessment Skills	SOWK 4338: Assessment of Mental Health Across the Lifespan SOWK 4752: Trauma Informed Assessment & Interventions
Engage & Intervene: Organizations & Communities	SOWK 4340: Leadership & Supervision Skills SOWK 4465: Human Security SOWK 4202: Creating a Regenerative Future
Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families, & Groups	SOWK 4412: Practice Elements in Interventions with Children & Youth SOWK 4454: Child & Adolescent Trauma SOWK 4715: School Social Work Interventions SOWK 4784: Suicide Assessment & Interventions SOWK 4245: Restorative Approaches in Social Work Practice
Policy Advocacy	SOWK 4610: Policies & Programs for Children & Youth SOWK 4712: Social Work & the Law
Evaluation & Research	SOWK 4425: Positive Youth Development Programming SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs SOWK 4904: Introduction to Human Centered Design for Evaluation & Program Development
Values	SOWK 4240: Intergenerational Justice SOWK 4545: Social Work Practice with LGBTQIA
Electives	SOWK 4410: Prevention & Treatment of Adolescent Substance Use SOWK 4500: Foundations of Play Therapy with Young Children

Ecological Justice Pathway

A pathway in Ecological Justice will prepare you to cultivate a compassionate human presence on Earth guided by social work values of equity and justice. This specialty will challenge you to envision and create a world—inclusive of natural and built environments—that is thriving, healthy and regenerative for all. Consider adding the [Human-Animal-Environment Interactions in Social Work certificate](#), the [Mental Health for Eco Resiliency and Adaptation Certificate](#), or the [Global Social Work Certificate](#) to this pathway. This course list is a recommendation and not a requirement. Any course that we offer in the required category will fulfill degree requirements. We recommend you meet with an academic advisor for additional guidance. Check out the [Career Snapshots](#) located on the MSW Student Resource Portal or connect to the Crimson Constellation [GSSW Pathway: Ecological & Environmental Justice](#) Pathway group to learn more and to interact with peers and alumni with similar career interests. Reach out to GSSW Career Services at gssw.careers@du.edu for 1:1 assistance.

DEGREE REQUIREMENT CATEGORY	RECOMMENDED COURSES
Theory	SOWK 4325: Evolving Perspectives & Trends in Health & Wellness SOWK 4360: Social-Ecological Resilience: Connecting Human & Environmental Well-Being SOWK 4370: Community & Organizational Change
Assessment Skills	SOWK 4501: Wellness Assessment & Promotion Across the Lifespan SOWK 4565: Social & Environmental Impact Assessments
Engage & Intervene: Organizations & Communities	SOWK 4202: Creating a Regenerative Future SOWK 4203: Environmental Change & Resilience for Mental Health SOWK 4205: Contemporary Eco Justice Issues SOWK 4435: Grassroots Organizing for Social Justice SOWK 4465: Human Security
Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families, & Groups	SOWK 4420: Advanced Assessment and Intervention with Family Systems SOWK 4245: Restorative Approaches in Social Work Practice
Policy Advocacy	SOWK 4204: Policy Advocacy for Eco Justice in the U.S. SOWK 4635: Immigration Policies SOWK 4765: Global Social Change
Evaluation & Research	SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs SOWK 4903: Photovoice as Intervention and Research Methodology SOWK 4904: Human Centered Design
Values	SOWK 4240: Intergenerational Justice SOWK 4480: Social Justice in Mental Health Practice SOWK 4754: Historical Trauma & Healing
Electives	SOWK 4375: Economic Theory & Social Work SOWK 4727: Experiential Therapy in Nature

Family Systems Practice Pathway

A pathway in Family Systems Practice prepares you for a career in family systems and family therapy. If you are interested in working from a family systems perspective with clients in a variety of direct service, private practice, and family policy settings, then this is the pathway for you. This course list is a recommendation and not a requirement. Any course we offer in the required category will fulfill degree requirements. Students interested in complementing this pathway may also want to explore the [Latinx Social Work Certificate](#). For more information about certificate options, please visit the [Certificates](#) page in the MSW Student Resource Portal. We recommend meeting with an academic advisor for additional guidance. Check out the [Career Snapshots](#) located on the MSW Student Resource Portal or connect to the Crimson Constellation [GSSW Pathway: Family Systems](#) Pathway group to learn more and to interact with peers and alumni with similar career interests. Reach out to GSSW Career Services at gssw.careers@du.edu for 1:1 assistance.

DEGREE REQUIREMENT CATEGORY	RECOMMENDED COURSES
Theory	SOWK 4315: Critical Theories of Child & Adolescent Development SOWK 4320: Family Systems Theories
Assessment Skills	SOWK 4338: Assessment of Mental Health Across the Lifespan SOWK 4501: Wellness Assessment & Promotion Across the Lifespan SOWK 4752: Trauma Informed Assessment and Interventions
Engage & Intervene: Organizations & Communities	SOWK 4202: Creating a Regenerative Future
Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families, & Groups	SOWK 4420: Advanced Assessment and Intervention with Family Systems SOWK 4700: Solution Focused Brief Therapy SOWK 4735: Interpersonal Counseling Approaches
Policy Advocacy	SOWK 4630: Family Policies & Services SOWK 4712: Social Work & the Law
Evaluation & Research	SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs SOWK 4902: Public Impact for Policy, Community Organizing and Research Dissemination SOWK 4904: Introduction to Human Centered Design for Evaluation & Program Development
Values	SOWK 4240: Intergenerational Justice SOWK 4480: Social Justice in Mental Health Practice SOWK 4764: Historical Trauma & Healing
Electives	SOWK 4410: Prevention & Treatment of Adolescent Substance Use SOWK 4520: Advanced Clinical SW Practice with Families SOWK 4521: Advanced Skills for Working with Military Families SOWK 4741: Grief & Loss Across the Lifespan SOWK 4710: Intimate Partner Violence

Health & Wellness Pathway

This pathway will prepare you to be a practitioner in a variety of traditional and medical based settings, integrated health clinics, and wellness centers. This course list is a recommendation and not a requirement. Any course we offer in the required category will fulfill degree requirements. Students interested in expanding their studies may also want to explore the opportunity to earn a [Master of Public Health](#) alongside the MSW. For more information about dual degree options, please visit the [Dual Degrees](#) page in the MSW Student Resource Portal. We recommend meeting with an academic advisor for additional guidance. Check out the [Career Snapshots](#) located on the MSW Student Resource Portal or connect to the Crimson Constellation [GSSW Pathway: Health & Wellness](#) Pathway group to learn more and to interact with peers and alumni with similar career interests. Reach out to GSSW Career Services at gssw.careers@du.edu for 1:1 assistance.

DEGREE REQUIREMENT CATEGORY	RECOMMENDED COURSES
Theory	SOWK 4325: Evolving Perspectives & Trends in Health & Wellness SOWK 4370: Community & Organizational Change
Assessment Skills	SOWK 4338: Assessment of Mental Health Across the Lifespan SOWK 4501: Wellness Assessment & Promotion Across the Lifespan SOWK 4752: Trauma Informed Assessment & Interventions
Engage & Intervene: Organizations & Communities	SOWK 4340: Leadership & Supervision Skills SOWK 4535: Planning & Program Development
Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families, & Groups	SOWK 4723: Social Work Practice in Health SOWK 4401: Integrated Health Care SOWK 4430: Substance Use Interventions SOWK 4725: Mind-Body Connections in Social Work Practice
Policy Advocacy	SOWK 4645: Health Care Policy SOWK 4640: Mental Health & Substance Use Policies SOWK 4650: Aging Policy SOWK 4712: Social Work & Law
Evaluation & Research	SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs SOWK 4902: Research Dissemination for Public Impact
Values	SOWK 4235: Disproportionality & Disparity SOWK 4390: Cultural & Linguistic Competencies in Integrated Behavioral Health SOWK 4480: Social Justice in Mental Health Practice SOWK 4742: Disability Studies SOWK 4555: Spirituality and Social Work SOWK 4362: EmBODYed Practice: Ethical Approaches to Fatness and the Body
Electives	SOWK 4410: Prevention & Treatment of Adolescent Substance Use SOWK 4523: Care Management Skills SOWK 4741: Grief and Loss Across the Lifespan

Mental Health Pathway

This pathway supports work with individuals, families, groups, and communities facing trauma, mental health challenges, and complex life systems. Consider the [Mental Health for Ecological Resilience and Adaptation Certificate](#) or the [Latinx Social Work Certificate](#). This course list is a recommendation and not a requirement. Any course that we offer in the required category will fulfill degree requirements. We recommend you meet with an academic advisor for additional guidance. Check out the [Career Snapshots](#) located on the MSW Student Resource Portal or connect to the Crimson Constellation [GSSW Pathway: Mental Health](#) Pathway group to learn more and to interact with peers and alumni with similar career interests. Reach out to GSSW Career Services at gssw.careers@du.edu for 1:1 assistance.

DEGREE REQUIREMENT CATEGORY	RECOMMENDED COURSES
Theory	SOWK 4345: Intersections of Mental Health, Substance Use, & Trauma SOWK 4325: Evolving Perspectives & Trends in Health & Wellness SOWK 4315: Critical Theories of Child and Adolescent Development SOWK 4320: Family Systems Theories for Social Work Practices
Assessment Skills	SOWK 4338: Assessment of Mental Health Across the Lifespan SOWK 4752: Trauma Informed Assessment & Interventions
Engage & Intervene: Organizations & Communities	SOWK 4203: Environmental Change & Resilience for Mental Health SOWK 4465: Human Security
Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families, & Groups	SOWK 4784: Suicide Assessment & Interventions SOWK 4430: Substance Use Interventions SOWK 4454: Child & Adolescent Trauma SOWK 4700: Solution Focused Brief Therapy SOWK 4730: Cognitive Behavioral Therapies SOWK 4723: Social Work Practice in Health
Policy Advocacy	SOWK 4640: Mental Health & Substance Use Policies SOWK 4645: Health Care Policy SOWK 4712: Social Work & Law
Evaluation & Research	SOWK 4425: Positive Youth Development Programming SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs SOWK 4902: Public Impact for Policy, Community Organizing and Research Dissemination SOWK 4904: Introduction to Human Centered Design for Evaluation & Program Development
Values	SOWK 4480: Social Justice in Mental Health Practice SOWK 4742: Disability Studies SOWK 4764: Historical Trauma & Healing
Electives	SOWK 4410: Prevention & Treatment of Adolescent Substance Use SOWK 4521: Advanced Skills for Working with Military Families SOWK 4705: Forensic Orientation in Social Work Practice SOWK 4741: Grief & Loss Across the Lifespan

Organizational Leadership & Policy Practice Pathway

If you want to build the capacity of communities, organizations, and policy makers to advance human rights, social justice and the well-being of all people, then Organizational Leadership & Policy Practice (OLPP) may be the right pathway for your MSW degree. Consider adding on the [Latinx Social Work Certificate](#) to this pathway. Consider adding on the [Global Social Work Certificate](#) to this pathway. This course list is a recommendation and not a requirement. Any course that we offer in the required category will fulfill degree requirements. We recommend you meet with an academic advisor for additional guidance. Check out the [Career Snapshots](#) located on the MSW Student Resource Portal or connect to the Crimson Constellation [GSSW Pathway: Organizational Leadership & Policy Practice](#) Pathway group to learn more and to interact with peers and alumni with similar career interests. Reach out to GSSW Career Services at gssw.careers@du.edu for 1:1 assistance.

DEGREE REQUIREMENT CATEGORY	RECOMMENDED COURSES
Theory	SOWK 4370: Community and Organization Change Theory
Assessment Skills	SOWK 4501: Wellness Assessment & Promotion Across the Lifespan SOWK 4565: Social & Environmental Impact Assessments
Engage & Intervene: Organizations & Communities	SOWK 4340: Leadership & Supervision Skills SOWK 4436: Grassroots Organizing for Social Justice SOWK 4465: Human Security SOWK 4535: Planning & Program Development
Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families, & Groups	SOWK 4420: Advanced Assessment and Intervention with Family Systems
Policy Advocacy	SOWK 4635: Immigration Policies SOWK 4660: Social Policy Advocacy SOWK 4712: Social Work & the Law SOWK 4765: Global Social Change SOWK 4204: Policy Advocacy for Ecological Justice in the U.S.
Evaluation & Research	SOWK 4425: Positive Youth Development Programming SOWK 4900: Methods for Evaluating Practice & Programs SOWK 4902: Public Impact for Policy, Community Organizing and Research Dissemination SOWK 4903: Photovoice as Intervention and Research Methodology
Values	SOWK 4232: Critical Race Theory SOWK 4235: Disproportionality & Disparity SOWK 4762: Bosnia in Transition SOWK 4786: Human Trafficking
Electives	SOWK 4375: Economic Theory & Social Work SOWK 4530: Poverty & Community Economic Development SOWK 4749: Culturally Responsive Practice with Latinx Communities

Charting My Own Path... build your own pathway!

Often students have a very specific population, cause, or focus of practice that they feel called to pursue. Check out the [Career Snapshots](#) located on the MSW Student Resource Portal or connect to the Crimson Constellation [GSSW Pathway: Charting My Own Path](#) group explore and to interact with peers and alumni with similar career interests. Reach out to GSSW Career Services at gssw.careers@du.edu for 1:1 assistance.

Areas of Practice:

- International Social Work
- Substance Use and Addiction
- Pediatric Health Care
- Community Organizing
- Corporate Social Work
- Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Sports Social Work
- Social Work & the Courts
- Hospice Care
- Emergency Assistance
- Domestic Violence & Intimate Partner Violence
- Spirituality & Social Work
- Human Trafficking
- Housing & Food Insecurity/Justice
- Abolition
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Populations:

- LGBTQIA2S+
- Military & Veterans
- Immigrants & Refugees
- Latinx Communities (see Latinx certificate)
- Incarcerated Individuals

Types of Social Work:

- Administration/ Management
- Advocacy & Community Organizing
- Aging
- Child Welfare
- Disability
- Healthcare
- International
- Mental Health & Clinical
- Mental Health & Substance Use
- Occupational & Employee Assistance
- Policy Planning
- Politics
- Public Welfare
- Research
- School Social Work

School Social Work Certificate

12 credits (3 required courses + school-based field internship in Colorado)

The School Social Work Certificate explores all aspects of school social work—crisis intervention, school-based assessments, legal frameworks—and prepares students to work in Colorado schools from preschool through high school. Students must be enrolled in an approved school placement supervised by a school social worker.

Application: Email gsswschoolsocialwork@du.edu to declare intent, then complete the School Social Work Certificate Application. Deadline: June 1 (MSW students) / September 1 (Advanced Standing students).

CERTIFICATE CATEGORY	COURSE — TITLE — DESCRIPTION — DEGREE REQUIREMENT
Required	SOWK 4712 Social Work & the Law <i>Legal principles and procedures relevant to school social work—IDEA, Section 504, mandated reporting, FERPA, and juvenile law. This course is a prerequisite for SOWK 4718.</i> Degree Requirement: Policy & Advocacy
Required	SOWK 4715 School Social Work Interventions <i>Examines the varied roles of school social workers, special education law and process, collaborative teamwork with school and community professionals, and preventive programs for at-risk youth. Required for Colorado School Social Work Certification.</i> Degree Requirement: Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families & Groups
Required — Certificate Students Only	SOWK 4718 School SW Assessment & Realities <i>Advanced skills in assessment within the school ecosystem, including field trips to interact with practicing school social workers. Open only to School Social Work Certificate students; manually registered by GSSW Registrar.</i> Degree Requirement: Elective

Global Social Work Certificate

12 credits — 4 steps: 1 required course + 1 Step 2 course + 1 Step 3 course + Global field placement

Social work practice increasingly takes place within a global context shaped by colonial legacies, environmental change, evolving human rights frameworks, and Global North/South inequities. Social workers today must be prepared to understand how global forces influence local communities and how local practice connects to international systems and policies.

The Global Social Work Certificate prepares students to engage ethically and effectively with global social issues both domestically and internationally. Grounded in social work values and professional ethics, the certificate emphasizes cultural humility, human rights, and collaborative approaches to community engagement. The program emphasizes community-engaged and participatory approaches that elevate indigenous knowledge and community-driven solutions to social problems.

Through interdisciplinary coursework and applied learning, students develop the knowledge and skills necessary to understand global inequalities, analyze international policy systems, and contribute to justice-oriented practice across cultures and contexts.

Through this certificate, students will:

- Analyze global social problems using human rights, development, and social justice frameworks.
- Examine how global systems—including migration, economic structures, environmental change, and conflict—shape the wellbeing of communities.
- Apply culturally responsive and ethically grounded approaches to working across cultures and national contexts.
- Critically examine power, privilege, and positionality in global engagement.
- Identify ethical roles for social workers in international collaboration and transnational practice.
- Develop strategies for advocacy, policy change, and community-based interventions addressing global social challenges.

Application: Contact Dr. Colleen Fisher (Colleen.Fisher@du.edu) to schedule a Certificate Advising Session and complete the declaration form. Process begins in Quarter 2 for MSW students; Quarter 1 for Advanced-Standing students.

CERTIFICATE CATEGORY	COURSE — TITLE — DESCRIPTION — DEGREE REQUIREMENT
Step 1 — Required	SOWK 4759 Global Cultural Perspectives: Ethical Considerations <i>Foundational required course. Values and ethics of social work practice in global contexts of power, privilege, and oppression. Examines ethical dilemmas in global settings and develops culturally responsive practice skills. Bucket: Engage & Intervene w/Orgs & Communities.</i> Degree Requirement: Engage & Intervene: Orgs & Communities
Step 2 — Choose One	
Step 2 Option	SOWK 4765 Global Social Change <i>International social policy, global governance, and the role of social workers in global social change movements. Bucket: Policy & Advocacy Skills.</i> Degree Requirement: Policy & Advocacy
Step 2 Option	SOWK 4465 Human Security <i>Human security frameworks addressing global vulnerabilities—food insecurity, displacement, conflict, poverty, and rights-based approaches to community wellbeing. Bucket: Engage & Intervene w/Orgs & Communities.</i> Degree Requirement: Engage & Intervene: Orgs & Communities

Step 2 Option	SOWK 4642 Global Trauma <i>Collective trauma from war, genocide, and forced displacement with global intervention frameworks for healing and recovery. Bucket: Values.</i> Degree Requirement: Values
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CERTIFICATE CATEGORY	COURSE — TITLE — DESCRIPTION — DEGREE REQUIREMENT
Step 2 Option	SOWK 4990 Global Social Justice & Human Rights <i>Examination of global social justice and human rights frameworks as foundations for international social work practice and advocacy. Bucket: Values. Offered TBD — check with advisor for availability.</i> Degree Requirement: Values

Step 3 — Choose One

Step 3 — Specialized Issue	SOWK 4355 Genocide: A Social Justice Issue <i>Genocide under international law; propaganda, nationalism, and the role of global institutions in prevention and response. Specialized Issue Course. Bucket: Values.</i> Degree Requirement: Values
Step 3 — Specialized Issue	SOWK 4635 Immigration Policies and Services <i>U.S. immigration law and international refugee policy; strategies for practice with displaced populations. Specialized Issue Course. Bucket: Policy & Advocacy Skills.</i> Degree Requirement: Policy & Advocacy
Step 3 — Specialized Issue	SOWK 4786 Human Trafficking: Prevention, Intervention, and Support of Its Victims <i>Human trafficking from a global social work perspective—prevention, intervention, and victim advocacy across regional contexts. Specialized Issue Course. Bucket: Values.</i> Degree Requirement: Values
Step 3 — Study Abroad	SOWK 4763 Social Work & Social Justice in South Africa <i>Short-term study abroad course. Post-apartheid social work practice and community development examined through a social justice lens, with visits to NGOs, universities, and community sites. Bucket: Values.</i> Degree Requirement: Values
Step 3 — Study Abroad	SOWK 4766 Women's & Children's Rights in India <i>Short-term study abroad course examining women's and children's rights in the Indian context. Bucket: Values. Offered Fall/Interim — check with advisor for availability.</i> Degree Requirement: Values

Field Placement: Step 4 — Global Field Placement: Complete your concentration field experience in a placement designated as 'Global.' To qualify, the placement must meet TWO criteria: (1) The student's primary responsibilities must either (A) involve consistent, direct interaction with a global population (e.g., newcomers, asylum-seekers) AND consistent engagement around a primarily global issue — OR (B) take place outside the U.S. (international placement); AND (2) the student's direct field supervisor must regularly engage with global populations and global issues in the course of their daily work. Global placements can be found in ELC (formerly Tevera) by filtering search results using the 'global' tag. Placement approval is made jointly by the Office of Field Education and the certificate coordinator.

Latinx Social Work Certificate

12 credits (3 required courses + 1 optional course + approved field internship)

The Latinx Social Work Certificate prepares students to provide culturally responsive practice with individuals and families of Latin American origin. Students develop acumen in social work practice grounded in the culture, politics, histories, and legacies of domestic and international Latin American communities. Non-Spanish speakers are eligible for all certificate courses; all students create language learning plans.

Application: Complete the Latinx Social Work Certificate Application and schedule a meeting with the certificate coordinator. Submit a copy of your current resume/CV. Contact certificate coordinator for details.

CERTIFICATE CATEGORY	COURSE — TITLE — DESCRIPTION — DEGREE REQUIREMENT
Required — Take First	SOWK 4750 Critical Perspectives on the Latinx Context <i>Framework for culturally responsive social work with Latinx communities: social justice, privilege and oppression, human and civil rights, globalization, immigration, poverty, and Latinx cultural movements. Must be completed before SOWK 4749.</i> Degree Requirement: Theory
Required	SOWK 4749 Culturally Responsive Practice with Latinx <i>Mental health needs of Latinx populations in the U.S. with intervention and theoretical approaches for cross-cultural practice with Latinx communities. Prereq: SOWK 4750.</i> Degree Requirement: Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families & Groups
Required	SOWK 4753 Social Development in Latin America <i>Social, political, economic, and cultural realities of Latin America; skills for effective change efforts. Students may substitute an equivalent course with coordinator approval.</i> Degree Requirement: Policy & Advocacy
Optional — If Other Courses Unavailable	
Optional	SOWK 4635 Immigration Policies and Services <i>U.S. immigration law and international refugee policy; strategies for practice with displaced and immigrant populations. May be taken as an optional substitute if SOWK 4749 or SOWK 4753 is unavailable.</i> Degree Requirement: Policy & Advocacy

Field Placement: Students must discuss the field internship plan with both the certificate coordinator and their field advisor. The placement must fulfill requirements of both the concentration year and the certificate.

Human-Animal-Environment Interactions in Social Work Certificate

9 credits (3 required courses taken in sequence + field internship connection requirement)

The HAEI-SW Certificate prepares students to recognize the importance and impact of human-animal-environment interactions in culturally responsive social work. Settings including mental health agencies, schools, and shelters are emphasized. The certificate centers social justice and intersecting systems of oppression directed toward humans, animals, and the environment.

Application: Meet general certificate admission requirements; complete the HAEI-SW Certificate declaration once enrolled. Attend extracurricular HAEI activities. Students have access to a dedicated Canvas page with additional learning opportunities.

CERTIFICATE CATEGORY	COURSE — TITLE — DESCRIPTION — DEGREE REQUIREMENT
Required — Course 1	SOWK 4795 Foundations for Human-Animal-Environment Interactions in Social Work <i>Foundational course with broad survey of the field and value exploration. Introduction to cultural and social justice aspects of HAEI. Formation of personal HAEI-SW vision and ethical framework. This is Course 1 in the sequence and must be taken first.</i> Degree Requirement: Elective
Required — Course 2	SOWK 4796 Human-Animal-Environment Interventions in Social Work Practice <i>Skill development for integrating animals in social work practice. Exploration of clinical and community practice frameworks across the lifespan. This is Course 2 and requires SOWK 4795 or instructor permission.</i> Degree Requirement: Elective
Required — Course 3	SOWK 4797 Professional Integration of Human-Animal-Environment Interactions in Social Work <i>Culmination course with a focus on applying knowledge and demonstrating competence through service or program design. Includes professional development and job preparation unique to HAEIs in social work. Requires completion of SOWK 4795 and SOWK 4796.</i> Degree Requirement: Elective

Optional Enrichment Courses (1 credit each):

Optional	SOWK 4990 Canine Interactions in Social Work Practice — Pro-Active Handling and Training <i>1-credit optional enrichment course; check with coordinator for availability.</i>
Optional	SOWK 4990 Social Work in Nature — Green Care and Nature Therapeutics <i>1-credit optional enrichment course; check with coordinator for availability.</i>
Optional	SOWK 4990 Green Chimneys and HAI Research <i>1-credit optional enrichment course; check with coordinator for availability.</i>

Field Placement: There is NO requirement for a specialized field internship placement to complete the certificate. However, students must integrate HAEI-SW concepts into their concentration-year field placement. Animals in therapy or as therapy animals-in-training are not required.

Mental Health for Ecological Resilience and Adaptation Certificate

12 credits (3 required courses + choice of 1 additional course OR 3 field internship credits)

The MHERA Certificate prepares social service professionals to confront environmental crises, build psycho-social resilience in the face of global environmental change, create a regenerative world, and cultivate a compassionate human presence on Earth.

Graduates are ready to help humans build resilience in themselves, their communities, and the world, while bolstering adaptation to intersecting global crises.

Application: Contact Dr. Sarah Bexell (sarah.bexell@du.edu) for an initial advising session. Complete the MHERA Certificate declaration once enrolled. Attend extracurricular MHERA activities quarterly (Fall, Winter, Spring).

CERTIFICATE CATEGORY	COURSE — TITLE — DESCRIPTION — DEGREE REQUIREMENT
Required	SOWK 4202 Creating a Regenerative Future <i>Regenerative design, permaculture, and futures thinking for socio-ecological transformation. Explores how to move beyond sustainability toward regenerative futures that are life-renewing for people and planet.</i> Degree Requirement: Engage & Intervene: Orgs & Communities
Required	SOWK 4203 Environmental Change Impacts and Resilience Strategies for Mental Health <i>Mental health implications of the climate crisis and ecological injustice. Builds resilience to climate grief, solastalgia, eco-anxiety, and climate trauma using a strengths-based perspective.</i> Degree Requirement: Engage & Intervene: Orgs & Communities
Required	SOWK 4206 Clinical Interventions for Building Resilience for Global Environmental Change <i>Advanced clinical skills for treating mental health diagnoses related to environmental change—PTSD, ecological grief, climate anxiety, and nervous system dysregulation.</i> Degree Requirement: Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families & Groups
CHOOSE ONE (3 CREDITS)	
Option	SOWK 4204 Policy Advocacy for Ecological Justice in the U.S. <i>Critical analysis of U.S. policies for ecological justice; advocacy skill development at local and state levels.</i> Degree Requirement: Policy & Advocacy
Option	SOWK 4360 Social-Ecological Resilience: Connecting Human and Environmental Wellbeing <i>Social ecology perspective emphasizing integrated human-ecological systems theory.</i> Degree Requirement: Theory
Option	SOWK 4454 Child and Adolescent Trauma <i>Trauma-focused work with children and adolescents—applicable to climate-impacted youth populations.</i> Degree Requirement: Engage & Intervene: Individuals, Families & Groups
Option	SOWK 4565 Social and Environmental Impact Assessments <i>Assessment of development project impacts on human and ecological systems.</i> Degree Requirement: Assessment

CERTIFICATE CATEGORY	COURSE — TITLE — DESCRIPTION — DEGREE REQUIREMENT
Option	SOWK 4752 Trauma Informed Assessment and Interventions <i>Trauma-informed assessment and intervention frameworks—applicable to climate and disaster contexts.</i> Degree Requirement: Assessment
Field Placement: Students may choose a qualifying elective course OR apply 3 field internship credits toward this certificate. Field placements do not need to be specifically ecology-focused but should allow integration of MHERA concepts.	