



# Widener University

Center for Social Work Education  
2011–2012 Graduate Catalog



# Center for Social Work Education 2011–2012 Graduate Catalog

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## **GENERAL DIRECTORY**

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### **INFORMATION LINE**

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### **BOOKSTORES**

Main Campus, 610-876-7300

Delaware Campus, 302-478-0606

Harrisburg Campus, 717-541-3905

### **BUSINESS OFFICES**

Main Campus, 610-499-4150

Delaware Campus, 302-477-2207

Harrisburg Campus, 717-541-3905

### **CAMPUS SAFETY**

Main Campus, 610-499-4201

Delaware Campus, 302-477-2200

Harrisburg Campus, 717-541-3948

### **FINANCIAL AID**

Main Campus, 610-499-4174

Delaware Campus, 302-478-2209

Harrisburg Campus, 717-541-3961

### **LIBRARIES**

Main Campus, 610-499-4066

Delaware Campus, 302-477-2244

Harrisburg Campus, 717-541-3926

### **REGISTRAR**

Main Campus, 610-499-4141

Delaware Campus, 302-477-2009

Harrisburg Campus, 717-541-3904

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# Widener University Information

## UNIVERSITY POLICY

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It is the policy of Widener University not to discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, national origin or ethnicity, religion, disability, status as a veteran of the Vietnam era or other covered veteran, sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status in its educational programs, admissions policies, employment practices, financial aid, or other school-administered programs or activities. This policy is enforced under various federal and state laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended by the Civil Rights Act of 1991, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Further, in compliance with state and federal laws, Widener University will provide the following information upon request: (a) copies of documents pertinent to the university's accreditations, approvals, or licensing by external agencies or governmental bodies; (b) reports on crime statistics and information on safety policies and procedures; and (c) information regarding gender equity relative to intercollegiate athletic programs—Contact: Senior Vice President for University Advancement, Widener University, One University Place, Chester, PA 19013, 610-499-4123. Comments or requests for information regarding services and resources for disabled students should be directed to: Director of Disability Services, Widener University, One University Place, Chester, PA 19013, 610-499-1266; or Dean of Students, Delaware Campus of Widener University, P.O. Box 7474, Wilmington, DE 19803, 302-477-2177.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination based on gender in educational programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. Such programs include recruitment, admissions, financial aid, scholarships, athletics, course offerings and access, hiring and retention, and benefits and leave. Title IX also protects students and employees from unlawful sexual harassment (including sexual violence) in university programs and activities. In compliance with Title IX, the university prohibits discrimination and harassment based on sex in employment, as well as in all programs and activities. The university's Title IX coordinator monitors compliance with Title IX and its accompanying regulations. Individuals with questions or concerns about Title IX or those who wish to file a complaint of non-compliance may contact the university's Title IX coordinator. The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is the division of the federal government charged with enforcing compliance with Title IX. Information regarding OCR can be found at: [www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html).

This publication contains information, policies, procedures, regulations, and requirements that were correct at the time of publication. In keeping with the educational mission of the university, the information, policies, procedures, regulations, and requirements contained herein are continually being reviewed, changed, and updated. Consequently, this document cannot be considered binding and must be used solely as an informational guide. Students are responsible for keeping informed of official policies and meeting all relevant requirements.

The university reserves the right and authority at any time to alter any or all of the statements contained herein, to modify the requirements for admission and graduation, to change or discontinue programs of study, to amend any regulation or policy affecting

the student body, to increase tuition and fees, to deny admission, to revoke an offer of admission, and to dismiss from the university any student at any time, if it is deemed by the university to be in the best interest of the university, the university community, or the student to do so. The provisions of this publication are subject to change without notice, and nothing in this publication may be considered as setting forth terms of a contract between a student or a prospective student and Widener University.

## ACCREDITATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS

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**Widener University is a member of the Association for Continuing Higher Education and is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.**

Widener University's graduate programs are additionally accredited by the following: AACSB International—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (School of Business Administration), Accreditation Commission of ABET (School of Engineering), American Bar Association (School of Law), American Psychological Association (Doctor of Psychology and Clinical Psychology Internship), Commission on Accreditation for Healthcare Management Education (Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Management), Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (Doctor of Physical Therapy), Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (School of Nursing), Commission on Continuing Legal Education of the Supreme Court of Delaware (School of Law), Council on Social Work Education (Center for Social Work Education), National Association for Education of Young Children (Child Development Center), National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Educators (Center for Education), Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing (School of Nursing), Pennsylvania Continuing Legal Education Board of the Supreme Court (School of Law), Pennsylvania Department of Education (Center for Education), Pennsylvania Department of Welfare (Child Development Center), Pennsylvania Private School Board (Center for Education).

Widener University's graduate programs hold membership in the following: Academic Council of the American Physical Therapy Association (Institute for Physical Therapy Education), American Society for Engineering Education (School of Engineering), Association of Engineering Colleges of Pennsylvania (School of Engineering), Association of University Programs in Health Administration (School of Business Administration), Association of American Law Schools (School of Law), Association of Graduate Liberal Studies Program (Master of Arts in Liberal Studies), Greater Philadelphia Engineering Deans Economic Development Council (School of Engineering), Engineering Deans Institute (School of Engineering), Engineering Research Council of the American Association of Engineering Societies (School of Engineering), Engineering Workforce Commission (School of Engineering), National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (Master of Public Administration), National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (School of Law), National Council for Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology (Institute for Graduate Clinical Psychology), National League for Nursing and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (School of Nursing).

# School of Human Service Professions Information

## GRADUATE PROGRAMS

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### Center for Education

- Master of Education (MEd)
- Certification Programs
- Doctor of Education (EdD)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

### Center for Social Work Education

- Master of Social Work (MSW)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

### Institute for Graduate Clinical Psychology

- Doctor of Psychology (PsyD)

### Institute for Physical Therapy Education

- Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT)

## PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAMS

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The School of Human Service Professions aspires to prepare individuals to become innovative scholars-practitioners-citizens. The disciplines of the school use dynamic teaching, active scholarship, personal attention, and community involvement in order to foster leadership, ethical and professional decision-making, interdisciplinary dialogue, a competent responsiveness to the needs of a culturally diverse community, and a commitment to the value of lifelong learning.

## COURSE OFFERINGS

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Graduate studies brochures are published for the fall and spring semesters and summer sessions. These fully describe registration policies, course schedules, and tuition and fee obligations.

### DROP/ADD POLICY

Students may withdraw from the course at any time prior to the final examination and receive the grade of W. If a course offered through these programs does not include a final examination, the deadline for withdrawing from the course with a grade of W is the final class meeting of the course. Students taking a course in the clinical psychology program, the social work program, or the physical therapy program may withdraw from the course up to four weeks prior to the last day of classes for the semester and receive the grade of W.

Graduate students begin the withdrawal process by notifying their program director's office of their intent to withdraw, either orally or in writing. The program director's office submits a drop/add form, which includes the student's last date of attendance at an academically related activity, to the Registrar's Office.

Students may add a course without special permission no later than one week after the semester has begun. If a student wishes to add a course after one week, written permission must be obtained from both the instructor and the program director's office.

### AUDITING

Students will be permitted to audit courses in the graduate program with the approval of the instructor. No grade or credit is given for auditing a course, and examinations need not be taken;

however, the registration procedure and fee structure are the same as that for other students.

## GRADING SYSTEM

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Grades are recorded as follows:

A	4.0 points
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7*
F	0.0
I (Incomplete)	0.0
W (Withdrawal without prejudice)	0.0
P/NP (Pass/No Pass)**	0.0
AU (Audit—no credit)	0.0

*\*for physical therapy courses only*

*\*\*only for courses offered on a Pass/No Pass basis*

NOTE: Individual instructors may elect, at their discretion, not to use plus/minus grades.

The grade of I is given when a student has not completed course requirements because of excusable reasons. A student who receives a grade of incomplete must arrange to make up all deficiencies with the instructor issuing the grade. In the Social Work program, the student receiving a grade of I must have a plan to make up the incomplete work approved by the instructor within two weeks from the end of the course. If the work is not made up within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which the incomplete is received, the grade will be automatically converted to F, unless the course in question is a thesis research course or a dissertation research course. Upon completion of the requirements, the instructor will institute a change of grade. (Note: A student does not register again for a course in which the grade of incomplete has been received.) A student cannot be awarded a degree when there is an outstanding incomplete grade on the transcript, even if the incomplete is in a course not required in the degree program.

If a course is repeated, both grades will be recorded on the transcript, but only the most recent grade will be used in calculating the grade point average (GPA). When a student is found to have violated Widener's academic fraud policies, that student is prohibited from exercising the repeat-of-course option to remove the F grade (given as a result of fraud) from the GPA calculation.

If a student fails to meet the degree requirements in a timely manner or if repeated failure has occurred, the center or school may terminate the graduate program for the student. Conduct inconsistent with the ethical and professional standards of the discipline, whether it occurs before or after matriculation, is also grounds for dismissal from the program. Such conduct includes academic fraud. A student dismissed for academic fraud may no longer enroll in the graduate programs of the university and may not apply for admission into another division of the university. Please see the section entitled "Standards for Academic Integrity."

## **STANDARDS FOR ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT**

Widener University strongly supports the concepts of academic freedom and academic integrity and expects students and all other members of the Widener University community to be honest in all academic endeavors. Cheating, plagiarism, and all other forms of academic fraud are serious and unacceptable violations of university policy. Widener University expects all students to be familiar with university policies on academic honesty and will not accept a claim of ignorance—either of the policy itself or of what constitutes academic fraud—as a valid defense against such a charge.

This statement was adopted by the Faculty Council on February 24, 1998, upon recommendation of the Academic Affairs Committee.

### **DEFINITION OF VIOLATIONS OF THE STANDARDS FOR ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Violations of the Standards of Academic Integrity constitute academic fraud. Academic fraud consists of any actions that serve to undermine the integrity of the academic process, including:

- unauthorized inspection or duplication of test materials, cheating, attempting to cheat, or assisting others to cheat in a classroom test, take-home examination, final examination, or comprehensive/qualifying/candidacy examination.
- post-test alteration of examination responses.
- plagiarism.
- electronic or computer fraud.

Additionally, each university program may have specific acts particular to a discipline that constitute academic fraud.

### **DEFINITION OF PLAGIARISM**

One of the most common violations of the Standards for Academic Integrity is plagiarism. Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional. However, since each student is responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism, unintentional plagiarism is as unacceptable as intentional plagiarism and commission of it will bring the same penalties. In many classes, faculty members will provide their definitions of plagiarism. In classes where a definition is not provided, students are invited to follow the standards articulated in the following statement.

#### **STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM**

PLAGIARISM—passing off the work of others as your own – is a serious offense. In the academic world, plagiarism is theft. Information from sources – whether quoted, paraphrased, or summarized - must be given credit through specific in-text citations. All sources used in the preparation of an academic paper must also be listed with full bibliographic details at the end of the paper. It is especially important that paraphrase be both cited and put into your own words. Merely rearranging a sentence or changing a few words is not sufficient.

### **PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS ACCUSED OF VIOLATING THE STANDARDS FOR ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

#### **Informal Process**

- A faculty member who obtains evidence of academic fraud should inform the student of this evidence, either orally or in writing. The faculty member may also provide the student with the opportunity to respond to the charges. If the matter

is resolved informally between the faculty member and the student, the faculty member must communicate in writing to the dean of his/her school or college the nature of the charges made against the student and how the matter was resolved.

- If the faculty member cannot resolve the matter satisfactorily with the student, he or she may file a formal complaint against the student through the office of the dean of the faculty member's school or college.

#### **Formal process**

- Upon receiving formal charges of academic fraud, the office of the dean of the school or college shall thereupon notify the student in writing of the complaint, the evidence upon which the complaint is based, the penalty to be imposed, and all rights of appeal.
- If a student wishes to contest the allegations of the complaint, he or she may do so according to the process stipulated in the by-laws of the school or college in which the alleged offense occurred. In such a case, the student will also be informed of the time and location of a hearing on the complaint and of all rights of appeal.
- Upon determination by the school/college committee that hears the initial appeal that sufficient evidence exists to support the allegations contained in the complaint, or in cases in which the student chooses not to contest the complaint, the prescribed penalty shall be imposed.
- The dean will notify the associate provost in writing of the name of the student who has been found to have engaged in academic fraud.
- Appeals beyond an individual school/college body may be made by the student to the university's Academic Review Board. Please see the following section for board duties. Appeal to the Academic Review Board must be initiated by the student through the Office of the Associate Provost.
- In the event a complaint is filed against a student alleging academic fraud and the student is not enrolled in the course in which academic fraud is alleged, action will be taken by the dean's office of the school/college where the student is matriculated.
- An "F" for academic fraud will supersede any other mark including a "W" for withdrawal. When a student is found to have engaged in academic fraud under Widener's academic fraud policies, that student is prohibited from exercising the repeat-of-course option to remove the "F" grade (given as a result of fraud) from the GPA calculation.
- A confidential, centralized listing of students disciplined for academic fraud will be maintained by the Office of the Provost. In the event of the filing of a complaint alleging a second offense, the student will be informed, in writing, by the Office of the Provost of such complaint. Names will be dropped from the list of first offenders upon graduation or at the end of seven years after the last attendance.
- The above articulated steps constitute due process when students are accused of academic fraud.

#### **PENALTIES**

- The minimum penalty for individuals found through the formal complaint process described above to have engaged in academic fraud will be failure in the course. For a second offense, the penalty will be failure in the course and expulsion from the university.

- For attempting to steal or stealing an examination for a course, students will be failed in the course and expelled from the university. For attempting to steal or stealing a comprehensive/qualifying/candidacy examination in a program, students will be expelled from the university.
- Programs that require comprehensive/qualifying/candidacy examinations may elect to impose the penalties of failure on the examination and expulsion from the university for individuals who cheat or attempt to cheat on the comprehensive/qualifying/candidacy examination.
- Individuals found through the formal complaint process described above to have engaged in academic fraud in the completion of a dissertation or thesis may be expelled from the university.

*These policies and procedures were approved by Faculty Council on April 28, 2008.*

## **ACADEMIC REVIEW BOARD**

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The Academic Review Board consists of the provost, the associate provosts, the deans of each school/college, the vice-chairperson of the Faculty Council, and the chair of the Faculty Council Academic Affairs Committee. Duties of the board include: (1) hearing petitions for the waiver of academic regulations that transcend a single school/college (e.g., withdrawal from a course); (2) serving as the appeal body in cases where there is an alleged violation of procedure in school/college Academic Council hearings.

## **ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE APPEAL PROCEDURE**

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If a student has a grievance concerning a class in which he or she is enrolled, he/she will first try to resolve the problem with the instructor of the class. If a student has a grievance concerning an academic requirement of the program (e.g., comprehensive examination, final clinical oral examination, clinical placements), he/she will first try to resolve the problem with the director of the program. If it is impossible to resolve the matter at this initial level, the grievance must be placed in writing. Then the student may appeal to the next higher level. The student should inquire in the office of the dean responsible for the course or program in question for the proper appeal procedure if the student's grievance is not resolved to the student's satisfaction after initial appeal to the instructor or the program director.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND AWARDING OF DEGREES**

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*Students are responsible for knowing and meeting curriculum requirements as shown in this bulletin.*

Those who expect to receive either the master's or doctoral degree should make clear their intentions to their advisors. A student who completes requirements for the degree at the conclusion of either summer session will be awarded the degree in August of that year; **the student must submit a graduation petition online at [www.widener.edu/registrar](http://www.widener.edu/registrar) by March 1.** A student who completes requirements for the degree at the conclusion of the fall semester will be awarded the degree in December of that year; **the student must submit a graduation**

**petition online at [www.widener.edu/registrar](http://www.widener.edu/registrar) by July 1.** A student who completes requirements for the degree at the conclusion of the spring semester will be awarded the degree in May of that year; **the student must submit a graduation petition online at [www.widener.edu/registrar](http://www.widener.edu/registrar) by November 1 of the previous year.** The university holds only one formal commencement in the spring to which August, December, and May graduates are invited.

**A student who petitions for graduation and who, for whatever reason, is not awarded the degree, must re-petition.**

## **STUDENT STATUS**

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Students pursuing the full-time option in the master of social work (MSW) program must register for at least 12 semester hours each semester until all course work in the program has been completed. Students in the MSW program may not register for more than 18 credits a semester. Part-time enrollment is defined as a minimum of 6 credits per semester.

Once students who are enrolled in the joint MSW/PhD in human sexuality dual degree program have completed the MSW, they are considered to be full-time students when they are enrolled in 9 or more credits of graduate study or when they are enrolled in ED 999 Dissertation Research. They are considered part-time students if enrolled in at least 5 semester hours.

## **TRANSCRIPTS**

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Students in good financial standing may have copies of their transcripts forwarded to employers, agents, or institutions of higher education by contacting the Office of the Registrar. The first transcript offered on behalf of any student is provided without cost.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

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Widener University offers a wide range of financial aid programs. Financial information is available on the university's web site at [www.widener.edu/about/administration/enrollmentservices/studentfinancialservices](http://www.widener.edu/about/administration/enrollmentservices/studentfinancialservices). The *Financial Aid Handbook* is located under "Forms and Publications" on this site.

## **ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

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At the start of each semester, students should check online at CampusCruiser's "Calendars" section for their graduate program's academic calendar and deadline information.

## **CAMPUS SAFETY**

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Widener is committed to the safety and security of all members of the Widener University community. The university's annual Campus Safety and Fire Safety Reports are on the Widener website and contain information on campus security and personal safety, including crime prevention, university law enforcement authority, crime reporting policies, disciplinary procedures, and other campus security matters. The Campus Safety Reports contain statistics for the three previous calendar years on reported crimes that occurred on campus, in certain off-campus buildings and property owned and controlled by the university, and on public property within or immediately adjacent to and accessible from campus.

The Fire Safety Report contains information on fire safety systems in on-campus student housing facilities, the number of fire drills held during the previous year, the university's policies on portable electrical appliances, smoking, and open flames in student housing facilities, the university's procedures for student housing evacuation in the case of a fire, policies regarding fire safety education and training programs provided to students and employees, a listing of persons or organizations to which fires should be reported, and plans for future improvements in fire safety. It also contains statistics (commencing with calendar year 2009) for the three most recent calendar years concerning the number of fires and cause of each fire in each on-campus student housing facility,

the number of persons who received fire-related injuries that resulted in treatment at a medical facility, the number of deaths related to a fire, and the value of property damage caused by a fire.

The annual Campus Safety and Fire Safety Reports for the Main and Exton Campuses are available online at [www.widener.edu](http://www.widener.edu) by selecting "Quick Clicks" then "Campus Safety." The annual security reports for the Delaware and Harrisburg Campuses are available online at [www.law.widener.edu](http://www.law.widener.edu) by selecting "More Links," then "Campus Safety." If you would like a printed copy of these reports, contact the Campus Safety Office at 610-499-4203 to have a copy mailed to you. The information in these reports is required by law and is provided by the Campus Safety Office.

# Center for Social Work Education Information

## MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

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### GOALS

The master of social work (MSW) program is designed to prepare social workers for agency-based clinical social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups. The program equips social workers with the knowledge base necessary to provide a range of skilled interventions with diverse client populations and systems. The program emphasizes critical thinking and the acquisition of skills for effective work within human service organizations. The program stresses commitment to the principles of client self-determination, the strengths-perspective, social and economic justice, and the other values upon which the social work profession is founded. Students are provided with the opportunity to clarify their own values in relation to the values of the profession and with the skills needed to continue their professional development throughout their careers.

### PROGRAMS OF STUDY

The MSW program has two admission options—regular admission and admission with advanced standing. Students accepted for regular admission complete 63 credits of graduate study in two years of full-time study or three years part-time. Students holding a BSW from an accredited program may be accepted for advanced standing and complete 39 credits of graduate study in three semesters of full-time study or five semesters part-time.

On the Chester Campus, regular admission students begin the program in the fall semester, and advanced standing students begin in the summer. On the Harrisburg Campus, both regular and advanced standing students begin in the fall semester.

**Chester Campus Classes**—Chester Campus graduate classes are generally held on Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Late afternoon, evening, and Saturday classes are available for part-time students. Part-time students may be required to take some late afternoon classes in order to complete the program.

**Harrisburg Campus Classes**—All required core curriculum courses and many electives are available on the Harrisburg Campus. Harrisburg Campus classes are held on weekday evenings and in a variety of weekend formats. Students enrolled through the Harrisburg Campus may need to complete elective requirements by taking Saturday classes on the Chester Campus.

**Field Placement**—All regular admission students complete four semesters of field practica. Field placement is a corequisite for identified practice courses (SW 505, 506, 630, and 639). In the first year of field practice, students spend two eight-hour days each week (typically Monday and Tuesday) at their field site. In the second year, students spend three eight-hour days each week (typically Monday, Tuesday, and Friday) at their field site. Students may select the extended field option for second-year field instruction. This option allows students to do two instead of three days of field instruction. Field instruction, however, continues into the summer to ensure that students complete the required number of field hours. Part-time regular admission students begin the field practica in their second year.

Advanced standing students complete two semesters of field practice, spending three eight-hour days (typically Monday, Tuesday, and Friday) at their field site. Part-time advanced standing students begin field practica in their second year of the program. The extended field option is also available. Although some students may be able to partially fulfill field instruction requirements during non-traditional work hours, all students must be available for at least one-full traditional workday (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) in order to participate in field instruction and field agency meetings.

Work-site settings for completion of field practica are fully supported as long as the work-site field practicum meets the program's field placement criteria.

### REGULAR ADMISSION

Admission to the MSW program at Widener University is granted on a selective basis. Applicants for admission must have:

- a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.
- an undergraduate cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 point scale. Applicants with undergraduate GPAs below 3.0 may be admitted to the program. If an applicant is admitted whose undergraduate GPA was below 3.0, the applicant will be informed at the time of admission that she or he must achieve a minimum 3.0 GPA at the end of the first semester of enrollment in order to continue in the MSW program. If a 3.0 GPA is not achieved at the end of the first semester of enrollment in the MSW program, the student may be dismissed for failure to meet academic requirements.
- undergraduate course work in the liberal arts covering the social, psychological, and biological determinants of human behavior and diverse cultures, social conditions, and social problems. At a minimum, applicants must have successfully completed at least 6 credits in the arts and literature (humanities, literature, and philosophy); at least 3 credits in history; and at least 12 credits in the social sciences (economics, political science, psychology, sociology, and social work/social welfare), with at least one course in human development.
- the personal qualities and values that are needed for agency-based social work practice with oppressed and disadvantaged populations. These include evidence of the ability to form professional helping relationships with clients from diverse backgrounds and value systems; the ability to respect human dignity and to be nonjudgmental; concern over social justice and the empowering of oppressed individuals and groups; and a commitment to helping others.

### ADVANCED STANDING ADMISSION

A limited number of advanced standing students are admitted into the MSW program each year. In addition to the basic admission requirements, advanced standing applicants must have:

- a baccalaureate degree from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited social work program earned within six years from the date of matriculation into the MSW program.
- an overall GPA of 3.0 or better, and a GPA of 3.3 in the social work major.



## ADMISSION PROCEDURES

To be considered for admission, applicants must submit a completed application packet that includes the following:

- the online application form.
- two letters of recommendation.
- transcripts from all previously attended collegiate institutions.

The applicant will receive notification that his or her application packet is completed when all materials have been received. Upon receipt of the completed application packet, the material is reviewed by the center's Admissions Committee. An interview with the candidate may be requested. Candidates wishing to meet with a member of the faculty may request a personal interview.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students should consult the International Student Services web page at [www.widener.edu](http://www.widener.edu) for international graduate student guidelines or contact the Office of Multicultural and International Student Services at Widener University, One University Place, Chester, PA 19013; phone: 610-499-4499.

## TRANSFER CREDIT

Students, at the time of application for admission, may request transfer of a maximum of 27 semester hours of graduate credit from master's of social work programs accredited by CSWE. A maximum of 9 semester hours may be transferred for graduate courses completed in disciplines related to social work.

To be accepted for transfer credit: courses must be equivalent to the program's required graduate social work courses and electives; must have been completed within six years from the date of matriculation; have been taken subsequent to completion of the undergraduate degree; and have a recorded grade of B or better. Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience is not given.

## COURSE REGISTRATION

MSW course schedules are published for the fall and spring semesters and summer sessions. These fully describe registration policies, course schedules, and tuition and fee obligations. Pre-registration takes place in March for the summer and fall semesters and in November for the spring semester.

## COURSE LOADS

Full-time students take at least 12 credit hours per semester, and part-time students must take at least 6 credit hours each semester. Students must follow the curriculum ladders for their program of study—that is, regular admission, full-time; regular admission, part-time; advanced standing admission, full-time; advanced standing admission, part-time.

## PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS

Students accepted for regular admission may waive the foundation courses in policy, human behavior and the social environment, and research (social work practice and field are excluded) by passing a proficiency examination. Such waivers do not reduce the credit hour requirements for the degree, but enable students to take additional elective courses. Requests for proficiency examinations are made through the associate dean. There is a fee of \$200 to take a proficiency examination.

## ACCREDITATION

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredits social work education programs at both the baccalaureate and master's levels. The baccalaureate program and the MSW program at Widener are fully accredited by the CSWE.

## FACULTY ADVISORS

All students are assigned a faculty advisor when they begin their course work. Students are encouraged to meet with their advisors periodically during the school year to discuss academic and professional goals.

## MSW STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The MSW Student Organization is a student-run body created by students to assist them in their academic, professional, and social lives, and to provide students with a formal mechanism to channel information back and forth between students and the program. All graduate social work students are encouraged to participate in the MSW Student Organization by attending meetings, serving on various committees, and participating in sponsored activities.

The center's student chapter of the National Association of Black Social Workers was founded in 1998 to provide support, mentoring opportunities, and professional development to social work students of African descent. In addition, the organization espouses a commitment to community service and engages in a number of volunteer efforts throughout the academic year.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

To be eligible for the master of social work degree, students must have fulfilled the course requirements as prescribed by the curriculum within a four-year period from the date of initial registration. Regular admission students must have a minimum of 63 credit hours, and advanced standing admission students must have a minimum of 39 credit hours. Please note that a waiver of any requirement for the degree must be approved in writing by the associate dean of the Center for Social Work Education.

## PROBATION AND DISMISSAL

**Academic Probation and Dismissal**—A student is placed on academic probation if her or his grade point average (GPA) falls below 3.0 or when a grade of "C" or below is received in any course. The associate dean will notify the student when the student is placed on probation. Upon receipt of notification, the student must arrange to meet with her or his academic advisor to develop a documented plan aimed at resolving the student's academic difficulties, including repetition of any core curriculum course for which a grade of "C" or below was received. A course for which a student has received a grade of "C" or below can be repeated only once. For more detailed procedures regarding academic probation and appealing grades, see the *MSW Student Handbook*.

The associate dean has the authority to dismiss students for failure to meet academic requirements. If a student receives a second grade of "C" or below and/or the student's GPA falls below a 3.0 for a second time, the student will be dismissed from the program. *If a student earns an "F" as a result of a determination of academic fraud, the student is prohibited from exercising the repeat-of-course option and will be dismissed from the program.*

**Field Education Probation and Dismissal**—A student who fails to earn a grade of Pass ("P") in the field may be dismissed from the program. The director of field education will make the

final disposition of the grade for field instruction in consultation with the student's faculty field liaison and field instructor. In addition, the director of field education may terminate field instruction for a student at any time if the student demonstrates interpersonal difficulties in the field that interfere with the student's capacity to engage in professional social work practice. The director of field education will make the field termination disposition in consultation with the student's faculty field liaison and field instructor. If a student is dismissed from the field for failure to earn a grade of Pass ("P") or for interpersonal difficulties, the director of field education will refer the matter to the center's Committee on Academic Affairs for review of the student's status in the program. For more details regarding field probation and dismissal, see the *MSW Student Handbook*.

**Dismissal for Non-Academic Reasons**—A student can be dismissed from the program for inappropriate or inadequate performance in the field, for violations of professional standards of behavior, for violations of the Student Code of Conduct, for academic fraud, or for documented interpersonal difficulties, such as a pattern of interpersonal relationships that interfere with the student's capacity to engage in professional social work practice. A pattern of impaired relationships may include difficulty in relating to others in the program (e.g., peers, faculty, staff, field instructors, and clients), inability to establish trusting relationships, lack of respect for others, inability to recognize the needs of others in interactions, or inability to accept critical feedback may undermine the student's capacity for social work practice and may place clients at risk. The center's Committee on Academic Affairs will review the status of any student in jeopardy of dismissal for non-academic reasons. For more details regarding dismissal for non-academic reasons, see the *MSW Student Handbook*.

**Program Status Review**—The Committee on Academic Affairs will review the status of any student in jeopardy of dismissal from the program for reasons other than failure to meet academic requirements. Upon hearing the evidence, the committee will make a recommendation to the associate dean regarding the student's status. If warranted by the evidence, the committee's recommendation may include termination from the program or a period of probation during which the student will have the opportunity to remediate the identified performance or interpersonal difficulties. The committee will review the student's performance at the end of the probationary period. Based on its review, the committee will make a recommendation to the associate dean regarding the student's retention in the program. The associate dean has the authority to implement the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Committee. A student cannot have more than one period of probation for any reason during her or his matriculation through the program. If a student is referred to the Committee on Academic Affairs for a second time and the committee's review substantiates the concerns, the associate dean will dismiss the student from the program. For more details regarding program status review procedures, see the *MSW Student Handbook*.

**Program Reinstatement**—A student dismissed from the program for any reason may reapply for admission by completing a new admissions application. Students do not need to resubmit copies of their transcripts. In addition to the other admission requirements, students applying for readmission must present a two- to three-page statement that presents evidence that he or she has resolved whatever challenges that resulted in dismissal from the program. Readmitted students must adhere to the curriculum

requirements in effect at the time of their readmission. Students may be required to retake courses completed prior to dismissal. An evaluation of course credit will be completed as part of the readmission process. A personal interview may be required.

**Right to Appeal**—A student has the right to appeal a disposition of the associate dean or the Committee on Academic Affairs regarding his or her status in the program to the dean of the School of Human Service Professions. The appeal must be submitted to the dean in writing within 2 business days from the date of receiving the disposition. For more details regarding appeals procedures, please see the *MSW Student Handbook*.

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

### REGULAR ADMISSION

Students enrolled in the regular admission MSW program must complete 33 credit hours of core foundation courses, 21 credit hours of advanced concentration, and 9 hours of electives for a total of 63 credit hours.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS		Credits
<i>Core Courses</i>		
SW 501	Human Behavior & the Social Environment I . . .	3
SW 502	Human Behavior & the Social Environment II . . .	3
SW 503	Interpersonal Processes . . . . .	3
SW 505	Generalist Social Work Practice . . . . .	3
SW 506	Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, & Groups . . . . .	3
SW 520	Methods of Social Work Research . . . . .	3
SW 522	Qualitative & Quantitative Analysis . . . . .	3
SW 540	Social & Economic Justice I . . . . .	3
SW 541	Social & Economic Justice II . . . . .	3
SW 550	Field Instruction I . . . . .	3
SW 551	Field Instruction II . . . . .	3
<i>Advanced Concentration Courses</i>		
SW 630	Clinical Social Work with Individuals . . . . .	3
SW 633	Clinical Social Work with Families . . . . .	3
SW 635	Clinical Social Work with Groups . . . . .	3
SW 636	Advanced Policy & Program Development (formerly SW 632) . . . . .	3
SW 639	Clinical Social Work Seminar . . . . .	3
SW 657	Field Instruction III (formerly SW 650) . . . . .	3
SW 658	Field Instruction IV (formerly SW 651) . . . . .	3
<i>Elective Courses</i>		
	One free elective course . . . . .	3
	Two clinical elective courses . . . . .	6

**REGULAR ADMISSION CURRICULUM SEQUENCE  
CHESTER CAMPUS FULL-TIME PROGRAM**

**YEAR ONE**

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**Summer**

SW 503 Interpersonal Processes (*intensive week-long session*)

**Fall**

SW 501 Human Behavior & the Social Environment I

SW 502 Human Behavior & the Social Environment II

SW 505 Generalist Social Work Practice

SW 520 Methods of Social Work Research

SW 540 Social & Economic Justice I

**Spring**

SW 506 Social Work Practice with  
Individuals, Families, & Groups

SW 522 Qualitative & Quantitative Analysis

SW 541 Social & Economic Justice II

SW 550 Field Instruction I

SW 551 Field Instruction II

**YEAR TWO**

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**Fall**

SW 630 Social Work Practice with Individuals

SW 633 Social Work Practice with Families

SW 636 Advanced Policy & Program Development  
(formerly SW 632)

SW 657 Field Instruction III (formerly SW 650)

One free elective

**Spring**

SW 635 Social Work Practice with Groups

SW 639 Advanced Social Work Practice Seminar

SW 658 Field Instruction IV (formerly SW 651)

Two clinical electives

**REGULAR ADMISSION CURRICULUM SEQUENCE  
CHESTER CAMPUS PART-TIME PROGRAM**

**YEAR ONE**

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**Fall**

SW 501 Human Behavior & the Social Environment I

SW 503 Interpersonal Processes

SW 540 Social & Economic Justice I

**Spring**

SW 502 Human Behavior & the Social Environment II

SW 520 Methods of Social Work Research

**Summer**

SW 522 Qualitative & Quantitative Analysis  
One free elective

**YEAR TWO**

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**Fall**

SW 505 Generalist Social Work Practice

SW 541 Social & Economic Justice II

SW 550 Field Instruction I

**Spring**

SW 506 Social Work Practice with  
Individuals, Families, & Groups

SW 551 Field Instruction II

SW 636 Advanced Policy & Program Development  
(formerly SW 632)

**Summer**

SW 635 Clinical Social Work with Groups

One clinical elective

**YEAR THREE**

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**Fall**

SW 630 Clinical Social Work with Individuals

SW 633 Clinical Social Work with Families

SW 657 Field Instruction III (formerly SW 650)

**Spring**

SW 639 Clinical Social Work Seminar

SW 658 Field Instruction IV (formerly SW 651)

One clinical elective

**REGULAR ADMISSION CURRICULUM SEQUENCE  
HARRISBURG CAMPUS PART-TIME PROGRAM**

**YEAR ONE**

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**Fall**

SW 501 Human Behavior & the Social Environment I  
SW 503 Interpersonal Processes  
SW 540 Social & Economic Justice I

**Spring**

SW 502 Human Behavior & the Social Environment II  
SW 520 Methods of Social Work Research

**Summer**

SW 522 Qualitative & Quantitative Analysis  
SW 541 Social & Economic Justice II

**YEAR TWO**

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**Fall**

SW 505 Generalist Social Work Practice  
SW 550 Field Instruction I  
One free elective

**Spring**

SW 506 Social Work Practice with  
Individuals, Families, and Groups  
SW 551 Field Instruction II  
One clinical elective

**Summer**

SW 635 Social Work Practice with Groups  
SW 636 Advanced Policy & Program Development  
(formerly SW 632)

**YEAR THREE**

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**Fall**

SW 630 Clinical Social Work with Individuals  
SW 633 Clinical Social Work with Families  
SW 657 Field Instruction III (formerly SW 650)

**Spring**

SW 639 Clinical Social Work Seminar  
SW 658 Field Instruction IV (formerly SW 651)  
One clinical elective

**ADVANCED STANDING CURRICULUM SEQUENCE  
CHESTER CAMPUS FULL-TIME PROGRAM**

**YEAR ONE**

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**Summer (Preceding Fall)**

SW 502 Human Behavior & the Social Environment II  
SW 503 Interpersonal Processes  
SW 600 Clinical Social Work Practice

**Fall**

SW 630 Clinical Social Work with Individuals  
SW 633 Clinical Social Work with Families  
SW 636 Advanced Policy & Program Development  
(formerly SW 632)

SW 657 Field Instruction III (formerly SW 650)  
One free elective

**Spring**

SW 635 Clinical Social Work with Groups  
SW 639 Clinical Social Work Seminar  
SW 658 Field Instruction IV (formerly SW 651)  
Two clinical electives

**ADVANCED STANDING CURRICULUM SEQUENCE  
CHESTER CAMPUS PART-TIME PROGRAM**

**YEAR ONE**

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**Summer (Preceding Fall)**

SW 502 Human Behavior & the Social Environment II  
SW 503 Interpersonal Processes  
SW 600 Clinical Social Work Practice

**Fall**

SW 633 Clinical Social Work with Families  
One free elective

**Spring**

SW 636 Advanced Policy & Program Development  
(formerly SW 632)  
One clinical elective

**Summer**

SW 635 Clinical Social Work with Groups  
One clinical elective

**YEAR TWO**

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**Fall**

SW 630 Clinical Social Work with Individuals  
SW 657 Field Instruction III (formerly SW 650)

**Spring**

SW 639 Clinical Social Work Seminar  
SW 658 Field Instruction IV (formerly SW 651)

## ADVANCED STANDING CURRICULUM SEQUENCE HARRISBURG CAMPUS PART-TIME PROGRAM

### YEAR ONE

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#### Fall

- SW 503 Interpersonal Processes  
SW 600 Foundations for Clinical Social Work Practice  
One free elective

#### Spring

- SW 502 Human Behavior & the Social Environment II  
One clinical elective

#### Summer

- SW 635 Social Work Practice with Groups  
SW 636 Advanced Policy & Program Development  
(formerly SW 632)

### YEAR TWO

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#### Fall

- SW 630 Social Work Practice with Individuals  
SW 633 Social Work Practice with Families  
SW 657 Field Instruction III (formerly SW 650)

#### Spring

- SW 639 Advanced Social Work Practice Seminar  
SW 658 Field Instruction IV (formerly SW 651)  
One clinical elective

### ELECTIVE REQUIREMENTS

All students must complete 9 credit hours of electives: 3 credits of a free elective and 6 credits of clinical electives. *Free electives* address social work practice domains (e.g., populations, policy, service delivery), research, and evaluation (e.g., practice evaluation, program evaluation), or human behavior and the social environment (e.g., developmental, social, and environmental issues associated with special populations). *Clinical electives* address advanced clinical practice skills with individuals, families, and small groups and the application of clinical practice models and interventions.

### FREE ELECTIVES

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- SW622 Social Work & the Environment  
SW623 Social Work Practice with Addicted Persons  
& their Families  
SW625 Program Evaluation  
SW648 Child Welfare Policy\*  
SW654 Social Work with HIV/AIDS  
SW671 Human Sexuality for Social Workers  
SW674 Spirituality & Social Work  
SW680 Comparative Social Work & Social Welfare

### CLINICAL ELECTIVES

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- SW626 Biographical Timeline\*  
SW642 Social Work with Children & Adolescents\*  
SW649 Social Work Practice in Mental Health  
SW653 Social Work Practice with Couples  
SW655 Social Work with People Who Have  
Developmental Disabilities  
SW660 Advanced Social Work Practice with Families  
SW663 Social Work Practice with Addicted Persons &  
Their Families  
SW664 Treating Trauma\*  
SW667 Brief Treatment  
SW668 Clinical Supervision  
SW669 Cognitive Behavioral Interventions  
SW670 Grief & Loss  
SW673 Relational on Clinical Social Work Practice

\*These electives have been approved for CWEL elective credits.

## JOINT PROGRAMS

### JOINT MSW/HOME AND SCHOOL VISITOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Students interested in becoming school social workers in Pennsylvania can complete their MSW degree in clinical social work while pursuing the Pennsylvania Department of Education Home and School Visitor Certification (HSVC). Students planning to pursue employment in school social work in other states should research the specific requirements of the state.

In addition to course requirements, students pursuing a HSVC must have one year of field instruction within a school setting under the supervision of a MSW social worker certified as a home and school visitor with at least three years of experience. This field instruction requirement is typically completed in conjunction with the second year of field instruction (SW 657 and 658). Regulations governing HSVC by the Pennsylvania Department of Education are subject to change and may result in changes in the requirements described here.

*Because of limited availability of field placement settings that meet the Pennsylvania Department of Education's requirements, the Joint MSW/HSVC program limits the number of students admitted each year. Currently, six students are admitted annually. When additional appropriate field placements are available, the number may increase.*

Criteria used for selecting students for the joint degree/certification program include current graduate GPA, performance in first-year field instruction courses (SW 550 and 551), and career goals. Students must be currently enrolled in the MSW program and must apply to the coordinator of the Joint MSW/HSVC program. If admitted and accepted by an approved school placement site, the student then applies for admission to the Center for Education in the spring semester, prior to the student's second year of field instruction.

### PENNSYLVANIA HOME AND SCHOOL VISITOR CERTIFICATION: EDUCATION COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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- ED 516 Social Work in the Schools, An Integrative  
Approach (fall only)  
ED 551 Introduction to Special Education  
ED 553 Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment  
(spring only)  
ED 623 Literacy Intervention in the Content Areas for  
Learners with Disabilities  
ED 624 Teaching English Language Learners  
ED 667 Effective Collaboration & Team Building

Students may take any of the courses listed above as the three electives required for completion of the MSW course requirements. The remaining electives can be taken either during summers while enrolled in the MSW program or after the student has completed the MSW program. Students who plan to take courses listed above during summer sessions should inquire at the Center for Education about the availability of the course selections during the summer session when developing a curriculum plan with an advisor. In addition to satisfying the Pennsylvania HSVC course requirements, students must complete their second year of field instruction in a school setting under the supervision of an MSW/HSVC field instructor.

## Home and School Visitor Certification Procedures

Students seeking the approval of the Center for Education for a HSVC by the Pennsylvania Department of Education must have:

- completed the requirements for the MSW degree and the education course requirements described above, achieving satisfactory grades (B or better) in all required courses.
- received a formal recommendation to be certified by the Certificate Committee of the Center for Education.
- completed the official PDE 3386 form signed by the certification officer of the Center for Education.
- remitted a nonrefundable fee of \$100 in the form of a money order payable to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- achieved acceptable standards of written fluency in English (the equivalent of a score of 5 on a holistic scale of writing assessment, or written discourse that is relatively free of syntactical and mechanical errors in English).

Upon successfully completing the MSW/HSVC program, students are encouraged to obtain a Pennsylvania LSW license. MSW/HSVC students who hold this professional social work license are not required to take the Praxis test for HSV certification.

## JOINT MSW/PhD AND MSW/MEd IN HUMAN SEXUALITY

The Center for Social Work Education and the Center for Education offer programs for students wishing either to pursue a joint MSW and PhD or a joint MSW and MEd in human sexuality. The joint programs prepare professional social workers to teach, consult, conduct research, and give counsel and therapy in a variety of settings on complex issues of human sexuality. Students pursuing the joint degrees take courses in both programs concurrently.

The joint MSW and PhD is a six-year full-time program. Students earn the MSW after three years of course work and field internships. Two years of post-MSW course work in human sexuality and one year of dissertation preparation are required for completion of the joint program.

The joint MSW and MEd is a three-year program. Students earn both the MSW and the MEd after three years of full-time course work and internships. See the Center for Social Work Education website for curriculum ladders.

For more information, contact Dr. Brent Satterly, phone: 610-499-1298, e-mail: [basatterly@mail.widener.edu](mailto:basatterly@mail.widener.edu).

## MASTER'S PROGRAM COURSES

### REQUIRED CORE CURRICULUM COURSES

#### SW 501 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR IN SOCIAL CONTEXT I

This course emphasizes the essential knowledge and conceptual frameworks used in social work to understand and assess human development and behavior in multiple social contexts. The focus is on a normative strengths and resilience perspective. Students are expected to become critical consumers of this knowledge, using it to inform assessment, intervention, and evaluation in their social work practice. Basic concepts of human development and behavior in context are introduced using multidimensional, multitheoretical, and multisystemic frameworks. Elements of diversity and difference such as ethnicity, age, culture, race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, spirituality, genetics, and the social environment are examined to promote the appreciation, understanding, and respect for human difference. This course also looks at how social and economic justice issues

impact the development and interaction of the person-in-context. Core competencies and related practice behaviors associated with this course are developed through didactic presentations, experiential activities, class discussions, films, speakers, field trips, and online activities. 3 semester hours

#### SW 502 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR IN SOCIAL CONTEXT II

This course builds on conceptual frameworks of human development, with emphasis on the biological, psychological, and environmental influences on social and emotional disturbances. Community and family factors that contribute to emotional and behavioral functioning are also examined. The course includes diagnosis and assessment within the framework of culture and life cycle changes. Students acquire a working knowledge of the DSM-IV and its uses in identifying and classifying mental disorders. Students are also encouraged to view such disorders through other conceptual lenses: a strengths-based developmental-adaptive lens, a political-economic lens, a socio-cultural lens, a neurobiological lens, and a situational-environmental lens. Some attention may be given to both psychosocial and pharmacological approaches to the treatment of some emotional and behavioral dysfunction. This course provides students with the core competencies and associated practice behaviors for conducting assessment of human psychosocial functioning to inform culturally and socially sensitive social work interventions. Prerequisite: SW 501. 3 semester hours

#### SW 503 INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

This course welcomes new MSW students to the profession of social work. It addresses both the educational needs of the students while providing a vehicle for community building to support the center's learning environment. Students develop the interpersonal and communication skills necessary to communicate comfortably with clients, in classrooms, on teams, with work groups, and in client groups. The course focuses on the skills for building collegial relationships, increasing comfort with diversity, handling challenging conversations, and managing conflicts. This course provides the core competencies and associated practice behaviors to support field internships, beginning work with individuals and small groups, and navigating agency cultures. This course has a rich experiential component and utilizes individual interactions between students, large and small group work, as well as opportunities for self-reflection. It is within the context of these small groups that students are able to learn and practice effective communication skills, including empathic listening. In addition, students are supported and guided in their experience and observation of group dynamics as they pass through the stages in their own groups. Students have the opportunity to develop insight into their own style of interaction and the roles they play within groups. 3 semester hours

#### SW 505 GENERALIST SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

This course is the first of two core social work practice courses. It provides students with an overview of generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The course focuses on the values, concepts, and skills necessary to conduct social work practice from a generalist perspective in the context of a social service agency or program. Students are introduced to the conceptual framework and techniques of the strengths-based approach to assessing client systems and developing appropriate social work interventions. Critical thinking and experiential learning are emphasized throughout the course. Class discussions, readings, exercises,

and assignments are directed at developing core competencies and associated practice behaviors, including (1) analyzing and resolving ethical dilemmas; (2) developing and sustaining helping relationships with client systems; (3) conducting assessments of various sized client systems; (4) selecting and implementing appropriate intervention strategies with individual, family, small group, organizational, and community client systems; (5) working with diverse populations; and (6) monitoring and evaluating social work practice interventions. The course is a corequisite of SW 550 Field Instruction. 3 semester hours

**SW 506 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, AND SMALL GROUPS**

This course is the second of the two core social work practice courses. It builds upon the generalist social work practice perspective provided in SW 505 Generalist Social Work Practice. This course focuses on the core competencies and associated practice behaviors for direct social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups. Students explore and develop strategies for engaging, assessing, conducting, and evaluating social work interventions with individual, family, and group client systems and with ethnically and culturally diverse populations. Solution-focused, cognitive-behavioral, relational, and psychodynamic interventions are highlighted. Various service systems are also explored to give students exposure to a wide variety of practice areas. Critical thinking and experiential learning are emphasized throughout the course. Class discussions, readings, small group exercises, role plays, and assignments are directed at developing core competencies and associated practice behaviors. The course provides students with the foundational knowledge base and skills underpinning the advanced clinical concentration practice courses (SW 630 Clinical Social Work with Individuals, SW 633 Clinical Social Work with Families, and SW 635 Clinical Social Work with Groups). SW 505 and SW 506 are cohort courses, and students remain together as a group for both courses. This course is a corequisite of SW 551 Field Instruction II. Prerequisite: SW 505. 3 semester hours

**SW 520 METHODS OF SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH**

This course is the first of a two research course series. This course focuses on general research methods and their application to social work. The course introduces students to the scientific method; culturally competent research; protection of human subjects; surveys; experimental, quasi-experimental, and qualitative research designs; evidenced-based research; measurement; sampling; questionnaire construction; and qualitative data collection methods. Specifically, the course provides students with the core competencies and associated practice behaviors to (1) design social work research related to needs assessment, program evaluation, and practice evaluation; (2) appreciate and understand the benefits of evidenced-based practice and evidence-informed practice; and (3) evaluate and conduct social work research. These areas of social work research are fundamental components of social work practice with individuals, families, groups, and communities. 3 semester hours

**SW 522 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS**

This course is the second of a two research course series. This course focuses on the core competencies and associated practice behaviors to support data analysis and presentation of findings in written and oral forms. The course introduces students to qualitative and quantitative data analysis. It also prepares students to

report research findings and critique existing research. Specifically, the course prepares students to (1) code, analyze, and report qualitative research data; (2) use SPSS to manipulate and analyze quantitative data; (3) conduct and report descriptive and inferential statistics; and (4) prepare a quantitative journal article and poster presentation. Prerequisite: SW 520. 3 semester hours

**SW 540 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE I**

This is the first of two core courses addressing the core competencies and associated practice behaviors related to social and economic justice. The course provides students with the opportunity to examine and analyze the historical, philosophical, and value base of social welfare and social welfare policy. The course helps students to understand and define the concepts of social and economic justice, examine the application/manifestation of these concepts (as well as related concepts such as power, class, oppression, and poverty) in American and world history, and to develop generalist skills and core competencies necessary to analyze, influence, and change policy. 3 semester hours

**SW 541 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE II**

This is the second of two core courses addressing the competencies and associated practice behaviors related to social and economic justice and builds on the conceptual areas of social and economic justice. The course addresses core competencies and associated practice behaviors of advocacy, policy change, and community and organizational practice. The course provides students with conceptual approaches to understanding communities, analyzing community problems, formulating community level interventions, and developing advocacy strategies. Prerequisite: SW 540. 3 semester hours

**FIELD INSTRUCTION**

**SW 550/551 FIELD INSTRUCTION I & II**

These courses comprise the two-semester core-level field placement. Students work in a supervised social work setting for two days (16 hours) per week for a total of 480 hours for the year. Field Instruction I and II provide students with the opportunity to apply basic knowledge and skills of agency-based social work practice from a generalist perspective. Students will apply knowledge gained in the curricula to social work practice with individuals, families, small groups, organizations, and communities within an agency setting. Corequisites: SW 505 and SW 506. 3 semester hours each

**SW 657/658 FIELD INSTRUCTION III & IV**

These courses comprise the two-semester concentration-level field placement. Students work in a supervised social work setting for three days (24 hours) per week for a total of 720 hours for the year. Field Instruction III and IV provide students with the opportunity to further examine and integrate the theories and skills of agency-based clinical social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups; develop and refine clinical assessment, intervention and evaluation skills; and to consolidate their own identity as a professionally disciplined and self-aware professional social worker. Field Instruction III and IV build upon the generalist social work practice perspective introduced in the prerequisite courses. Prerequisites: SW 505, SW 506, SW 535, SW 550, and SW 551. Corequisites: SW 630 and SW 639. 4 semester hours each

## **REQUIRED ADVANCED CLINICAL CURRICULUM COURSES**

### **SW 600 CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

This advanced standing bridge course is designed to provide advanced standing students with the knowledge base and skills needed for the advanced clinical curriculum courses: SW 630 Clinical Social Work with Individuals, SW 633 Clinical Social Work with Families, and SW 650 Field Practicum III. It builds on the generalist social work practice perspective and focuses on the theoretical basis and skills needed to work effectively with individuals and families. Students explore the beginning, middle, and ending stages and the skills needed for creative and effective use of self with individuals and families. Attention is given to ethnicity, race, gender, and sexual orientation. Students also develop knowledge of theory, including ecological, systems, individual and family life cycle, ego psychology, learning, and cognitive theories. Students are introduced to evidence-based practice and qualitative and quantitative methods of research and begin to critically analyze research to inform practice. Class discussions, experiential exercises, role-plays, audio/video recording, assigned readings, and written assignments are directed at integrating the theoretical generalist foundation and developing a range of skills. This course is only required for students admitted into the advanced standing program. 3 semester hours

### **SW 630 CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK WITH INDIVIDUALS**

This course helps students master the advanced clinical competencies and associated practice behaviors by refining and deepening their conceptual and technical knowledge for clinical social work practice with individuals. Students continue to consider principles and assumptions learned in core curriculum practice courses with the goal of achieving synthesis on a more advanced level of knowledge, attitude, skill, and method. The clinical processes of engagement, biopsychosocial assessment, worker-client relationship, intervention, evaluations of practice effectiveness, and termination are considered with an aim toward greater precision of application. A variety of more complex case situations is utilized with heavy emphasis on use of the student's own field experience. Throughout the semester, attention is given to issues of gender; sexual orientation; and ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity. SW 630 and SW 639 are cohort courses. Students remain together as a group for both courses. This course is a corequisite of SW 657 Field Instruction III. Prerequisite: SW 506. 3 semester hours

### **SW 633 CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK WITH FAMILIES**

Focusing on social work practice with families, this clinical course expands systemic thinking by introducing multiple models for family work, including psychodynamic, Bowenian, narrative, communication, contextual, structural, and solution-focused, as well as newer models of family work, such as multidimensional family therapy. Using these models and their related theories, students master the clinical concentration competencies and associated practice behaviors for assessment and intervention with families, knowledge of the family life cycle, and the impact of wider systems on a family's structure and functioning. The definition of family is inclusive of many different family forms. Students examine how cultural issues such as class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation must be considered while assessing a family's presenting issues, unique strengths, and vulnerabilities. Students learn to think critically about the relevance of particular concepts and interventions for each family system, including

whether certain "Western" concepts apply to all families. Students integrate theory into practice through two significant papers, videotapes, role-plays, and case discussions. Prerequisite: SW 506. 3 semester hours

### **SW 635 CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK WITH GROUPS**

This clinical course exposes students to an array of the major concepts, techniques, and skills underlying social work practice with groups. The primary goal is to provide students with the clinical competencies and associated practice behaviors to lead groups with children, adolescents, and adults in an agency-based practice setting. Readings, lectures, videos, small group experiences, and assignments are directed at an advanced understanding of group dynamics and group process, techniques of group formation, and leadership. Multiple models for group practice are taught, including psychoanalytically based groups, cognitive-behavioral groups, developmental group counseling, experiential models, psychoeducational groups, and support groups. Finally, the course examines the impact of diversity on group interaction and the relevance of group work theory to organizational and community contexts. Prerequisite: SW 506. 3 semester hours

### **SW 636 ADVANCED POLICY AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

This clinical course builds upon the core competencies and associated practice behaviors addressed in foundational social and economic justice courses. The course presents theoretical and practical materials necessary for all aspects of practice affecting the social service agency. Viewing human service agencies as the organizational context for most services, this course prepares students to work effectively within the organizational context, including developing new programs, to enhance organizational capacity, treating the agency as a "client" when necessary. Course topics include organizational theory and assessment, management, the budgetary process, fundraising, program development, proposal writing, technology, and evaluation. 3 semester hours

### **SW 639 CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK SEMINAR**

This seminar is designed to build upon the clinical competencies and associated practice behaviors of SW 630 Clinical Social Work with Individuals by helping refine and deepen conceptual and technical knowledge of the clinical process in the context of agency-based social work practice. The seminar focuses on issues related to the agency-based social work practice context, considering the dimension of time in terms of how it can be exploited to promote change (short-term treatment), and examining how principles of change are operationalized by social work practitioners applying psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, narrative, gestalt, and family systems theoretical orientations to various client populations within different settings. Whenever relevant, students are invited to examine how policy issues, particularly those related to managed care, affect clinical practice. As students become more familiar with alternative applications of the clinical process, they are expected to develop greater clarity about their own clinical skills, strengths, limitations, and interests. This increased professional self-awareness is intended to facilitate students' autonomy and creative use of the self with diverse clinical populations. Throughout the semester attention is given to issues of gender; sexual orientation; ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity, as well as to effects of oppression and discrimination upon clients. Through reading and written assignments, students use research knowledge to understand



issues confronting them in their clinical work with clients and to examine and evaluate various intervention strategies with clients. SW 630 and SW 639 are cohort courses. Students remain together as a group for both courses. This course is a corequisite of SW 651 Field Instruction IV. Prerequisite: SW 630. 3 semester hours

## **FREE ELECTIVES**

### **SW 622 SOCIAL WORK AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

This course prepares students for assessment and intervention in the increasingly important area of environmental health and safety. As an elective, the course provides readings, lectures, and exercises that emphasize the importance of sound research into the complex biopsychosocial effects of environmental decay. The class investigates the global, national, and local causes and consequences of environmental problems, as well as ways that these issues impact upon clients. Topics include environmental problems, policy, epidemiology, lead poisoning, and the environmental justice movement. The capstone assignment for the course involves a semester-long project. Prerequisites: SW 510 and SW 520. 3 semester hours

### **SW 623 HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES**

This course introduces students to qualitative methodologies for asking and answering "why" and "how" questions—particularly as they relate to health and mental health care services. Although social workers often feel intimidated by biological/medical material and by research, this class is designed to demystify both. The course begins by examining the different ways of knowing, from positivistic through intuitive through qualitatively empirical perspectives. The similarities and interfaces of quantitative and qualitative methods for social work research are discussed. Students examine how research questions are formulated and the various qualitative methodologies that surround those questions. Assignments enable students to focus on the development of a qualitative research project or on available research in a health or mental health care population. Ethical issues in qualitative research are highlighted as well, particularly in regard to working with marginalized populations. At the end of this course, students will understand the benefits and limitations of qualitative research methods in health and mental health care and have practiced skills associated with the method. Prerequisite: SW 520. 3 semester hours

### **SW 625 PROGRAM EVALUATION**

This course provides students with a variety of tools used to evaluate social work programs and organizations. The course, as a research elective, builds on information learned in the first year foundation research course, including the scientific method, ethical issues, research designs, and statistical analyses. The course trains students in how to apply research elements to program evaluation. To do this, the range of evaluation models and purposes are examined, and students are guided in the process of choosing both the appropriate model and research tools given the selected purpose. Evaluation purposes include process, outcome, impact, and benefit-cost. The units of evaluation targeted are service programs and entire agencies. The course pays particular attention to emphasizing culturally sensitive approaches to social work research and integrating research with other areas in the Widener MSW curriculum. Prerequisite: SW 520. 3 semester hours

### **SW 648 CURRENT ISSUES IN CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE AND POLICY**

This course examines current issues in public and private child welfare practice and policy. Students review a variety of innovative policy and practice approaches to working with children and families that are served by the child welfare system. The challenges inherent in practicing clinical social work with mandated clients and from within bureaucratic settings are explored. Models for strengths-based approaches to providing clinical case management and supervision are also examined. This course is designed to extend the knowledge base and skills of students who have worked in public and private child welfare. 3 semester hours

### **SW 654 SOCIAL WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE HIV/AIDS AND OTHER SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES**

While providing opportunities for students to strengthen skills designing and conducting program evaluation, this course examines the clinical implications of the AIDS epidemic. Specifically designed to prepare clinicians to work effectively and confidently with persons living with HIV/AIDS, this course addresses HIV infection, treatment, and intervention; at-risk populations; cultural factors; and ethical and societal issues. Students also review the literature regarding efficacy of intervention models for working with people who have HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, identify an intervention model, and design a program evaluation approach to evaluate the efficacy of the intervention model. 3 semester hours

### **SW 655 SOCIAL WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

This course is intended to increase social workers' capacities to work effectively with individuals who have developmental disabilities (DD). The course increases participants' understanding of many of the issues relating to people who have developmental disabilities and who exhibit challenging behaviors. Students examine these issues through the lenses of positive approaches and explore person-centered planning, autism spectrum disorders, understanding the impact of trauma on individuals with DD, and working effectively with psychiatric needs. Prerequisite: SW 501. 3 semester hours

### **SW671 HUMAN SEXUALITY FOR THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONAL**

Human sexuality is one of the basic foundations for life. From before birth, individuals are sexed, gendered, and bombarded with messages about who they are, who they should be, and how they are expected to behave. In adult life, whether individuals choose to date, to partner, or to remain single; to have children, adopt, or create other forms of family; sexuality is one of the central and organizing components of the human experience. Human sexuality is explored using the weekend course format in three separate sections from a biopsychosocial perspective. The first of these units addresses an overview of sexuality information and functioning. The second examines psychosocial issues as they exist within sexuality. Lastly, the manifestations of human sexuality as they occur within the social work context and subsequent practice issues are investigated. 3 semester hours

### **SW 674 SPIRITUALITY AND SOCIAL WORK**

This course provides students with an opportunity to think through and emotionally experience the place of spirituality in social work practice, to come to an understanding of the meaning and application of spirituality in each student's own social work practice, and to explore the impact of religion and spirituality on

social policy. This course is premised on the view that spirituality is a basic human need whether it is expressed in a formal institutional setting or takes a myriad of other forms. As social workers more and more encounter diverse belief systems, it is important that practitioners at all levels of practice have some understanding of how the adherence to different beliefs affects people's functioning. The course addresses the knowledge and skills needed to work within the spiritual and religious contexts of the "lived" world of clients. The course explores spirituality as a core dimension of human experience and addresses the need for social workers to understand their own beliefs and biases about spirituality and religion and have regard for their own spiritual growth. Prerequisite: SW 501. 3 semester hours

**SW 680 COMPARATIVE SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL WELFARE: INTERNATIONAL STUDY**

This course is designed to accompany the Widener Center for Social Work Education Travel Abroad expeditions. Faculty lead students in an international study tour to compare domestic and international approaches to social work practice, social welfare, and social service systems. The class visits a variety of service sites and meets with social work practitioners and educators. Discussions, readings, and assignments guide students in comparing domestic and international policies and systems. Prerequisite: SW 501. 3 semester hours

**CLINICAL ELECTIVES**

**SW 624 SOCIAL WORK AND AGING**

Social work with older adults is one of the fastest growing areas of practice in the 21st century. This course provides students with a comprehensive overview of the field of gerontological social work practice from a research, clinical, and biopsychosocial perspective. Students completing this course are prepared to work with older adults and their informal/formal support systems. They are also prepared to use qualitative methods for the purpose of evaluating efficacy of practice interventions and building knowledge. The content includes theories of aging; biological, physical, and social changes; psychosocial adjustments to later life; conducting a biopsychosocial/research assessment; differential assessment and diagnosis; social work interventions and evaluation of their effectiveness; use of evidence-based practice; addictive disorders; suicide prevention; group work; spirituality; ethics; dying; bereavement; and advanced directives. Research instruction in qualitative methods and single-system design are interwoven throughout the course. Prerequisite: SW 520. 3 semester hours

**SW 626 BIOGRAPHICAL TIMELINE**

This course prepares students to use and integrate the biographical timeline as a multipurpose tool in their clinical social work practice. The tool can be used to understand how to better support a person with challenging behaviors holistically. As a therapeutic modality, it also functions as a team builder, an empathy builder for caregivers, and a systems change tool, as well as a data source for research. While the tool is highly applicable for all client populations, students focus on applying the timeline in their work with children in care and people who have developmental disabilities or other vulnerabilities who might be less able to advocate for themselves. Research is a vital component of this course. Students develop their own research questions and design their approach to the timeline and analysis of the results in response to their questions. The class explores ways to

develop evidence to support the efficacy of the biographical timeline as a tool to augment individual work as well as for social research. Qualitative and mixed research methods are highlighted. Prerequisite: SW 520. 3 semester hours

**SW 642 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS**

This course applies clinical social work practice to the treatment of children and adolescents. A review of developmental theory provides the foundation for assessment and intervention with this population. Psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, systems, and other theoretical models of practice are analyzed as they apply to work with children and adolescents. A variety of treatment modalities including individual, play, family, and group are presented. Students also learn to integrate theoretical orientations and social work interventions with a variety of special needs children. Prerequisite: SW 506. 3 semester hours

**SW 649 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN MENTAL HEALTH**

This course focuses on social work practice in mental health, including policy analysis and practice implications. A historical overview is presented from which current policies and trends in the delivery of services to those with serious and persistent mental illnesses are analyzed. The hospital and community-based service systems are examined, as are best practice standards. Social work interventions are then explored for the mentally ill, including special populations such as those with substance abuse, mental retardation, children, and the elderly. Prerequisite: SW 506. 3 semester hours

**SW 653 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH COUPLES**

This course introduces various theories and techniques of clinical social work with couples. Using concepts from systemic and psychodynamic theories, the seminar emphasizes practitioner decision-making in couple treatment. Theoretical approaches are examined in terms of their strengths and weaknesses, and means are considered for the evaluation of clinical effectiveness. The seminar examines the ways certain variables such as gender, race, ethnicity, social class, and clinical orientation shape the mindset for the construction of partnering. Prerequisites: SW 506 and SW 633. 3 semester hours

**SW 655 SOCIAL WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

This course is intended to increase social workers' capacities to work effectively with individuals who have developmental disabilities (DD). The course increases participants' understanding of many of the issues relating to people who have developmental disabilities and who exhibit challenging behaviors. Students examine these issues through the lenses of positive approaches and explore person-centered planning and autism spectrum disorders, understanding the impact of trauma on individuals with DD, and working effectively with psychiatric needs. Prerequisite: SW 501. 3 semester hours

**SW 656 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE, PROCESS, AND RESEARCH ON MEN'S LIVES**

This course is organized around specific issues related to men's lives and social work. The course is designed to introduce students to the "masculine mystique" and various dimensions of human behavior, as well as practice and research related to the field of social work, examining issues that males face at different stages of their lives, including boyhood, adolescence, identity development, work, relationships, marriage, fatherhood, mid-life crises, grandparenthood, retirement, and aging. Issues such as

domestic violence, addictions, sexual orientation, employment/poverty, mid-life crises, cultural/ethnic diversity, communication, parenting, sexuality, health, and working with fathers and grandfathers in a range of social service systems is explored. The overall goal for this course is to provide students with contemporary information about men that is often overlooked throughout social work curriculums. Students are introduced to methods of qualitative research and are required to carry out a qualitative research project on a topic related to themes listed above. 3 semester hours

**SW 660      ADVANCED SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE  
                 WITH FAMILIES**

This course explores family development intergenerationally and over the family life cycle. Content is directed toward helping students understand and evaluate family structure and track families' interactional patterns. Comparative approaches and special techniques are suggested and demonstrated to enable students to assess a family's operation, make purposeful interventions, and work toward appropriate change. Students are expected to present case material in which they describe their work with a family, showing how they assessed the system, engaged the family, formulated goals, and used treatment interventions. Emphasis is on helping students evolve their own styles for practice with families. Prerequisite: SW 506 and SW 633. 3 semester hours

**SW 663      SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH ADDICTED  
                 PERSONS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

This course introduces students to a broad range of theories about heavy drinking and substance abuse, provides an overview of commonly abused substances, and evaluates assessment and treatment strategies employed in work with individuals and families. The class examines psychosocial factors affecting both the identification and treatment of substance abusers. 3 semester hours

**SW 670      GRIEF AND LOSS ACROSS THE LIFE CYCLE**

This course is taught in seminar style and focuses upon understanding losses and appropriate interventions for clients who endure loss across the life cycle. These losses include death, community disaster, and chronic illness. The following are addressed: perinatal loss (including SIDS), loss of a child and a child's reaction to loss, loss of an adolescent and an adolescent's reaction to loss (sibling, friend, parent), losses in early and middle adulthood (parental loss, spousal/partner loss, and loss of an adult child), loss in later life (including chronic illness and its affect on the individual and family), disenfranchised loss (domestic partners, gay and lesbian partners), the dying patient, end of life issues, community resources (including hospice), and support networks. Theoretical perspectives are drawn from both traditional and postmodern approaches to grief and loss. Issues of cultural diversity are addressed throughout the course. 3 semester hours

**SW 664      TREATING TRAUMA**

This course concentrates on the etiology and treatment of traumatic symptomatology. Students explore conditions that contribute to the development of acute stress disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, borderline personality disorder, dissociative disorders, and other disorders of extreme stress. Co-morbid conditions, including substance abuse and self-mutilation, are considered. The intergenerational, sociocultural, and societal impact of trauma is explored. A strengths-based approach is emphasized.

Readings orient students to the assessment of trauma symptoms, as well as to some generally applicable treatment approaches and to research on the psychobiology of trauma. Prerequisite: SW 506. 3 semester hours

**SW 667      BRIEF TREATMENT**

This course focuses on how to use brief therapy to address client issues. The course addresses treatment issues such as assessment of the client, role of the social worker, and understanding the importance of time in the treatment relationship. A variety of theoretical approaches is discussed. Prerequisite: SW 506. 3 semester hours

**SW 668      CLINICAL SUPERVISION**

This course explores approaches to and skills associated with clinical supervision. Initially, students work in teams on experiential exercises during which they alternately take the role of supervisor and supervisee. These experiences are then examined in relation to assigned course readings and class discussions. The last sessions of the course require the students to again role-play identified supervisory tasks/functions—both as a supervisor and as a supervisee. The class concludes with large group discussion of those experiences. Prerequisite: SW 506. 3 semester hours

**SW 669      COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS**

This course acquaints students with theoretical, conceptual, and skill bases of several cognitive-behavioral approaches to practice. Topics include assessment, use of task and homework, coping skills, cognitive restructuring, and problem-solving approaches to practice. Prerequisite: SW 506. 3 semester hours

**SW 673      RELATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON CLINICAL  
                 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

Clinical social workers try to help clients resolve or manage a variety of problems or barriers that interfere with effective and satisfying social functioning. These include the cumulative effects of trauma, oppression, family conflict, and emotional neglect that have produced patterns of emotional regulation, thinking, and acting that function (on one level) to protect the self but that are dysfunctional (on other levels) in terms of preserving physical health, participating in interpersonal relationships, and maintaining occupational viability. This course applies recent developments in affect theory, attachment theory, interpersonal neurobiology, self-psychology, intersubjectivity theory, narrative theory, and relational (or two-person) psychology to the challenges facing social workers trying to help clients manage themselves and their lives in the wake of emotional neglect, trauma, oppression, domestic violence, and substance abuse. A central concern of the course is on how the worker's participation in the helping relationship facilitates or impedes the client's ability to use that relationship as an opportunity to regain and sustain satisfying social functioning. Prerequisite: SW 506. 3 semester hours

# DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN SOCIAL WORK

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## GOALS

The goal of the doctor of philosophy (PhD) program in social work is to develop academic leaders who have skill and expertise in research, teaching, and advanced social work practice. Specifically, by completion of the program, students will:

- Apply critical thinking and systematic accumulation of data to gain greater understanding of questions related to social work practice.
- Carry out critical conceptual analyses of theories, concepts, and assumptions underlying social work interventions.
- Understand how political, economic, sociocultural, and organizational contexts shape the theories and methods used in social work practice.
- Pursue interdisciplinary perspectives and collaborations.
- Use established quantitative and qualitative methods to support scholarly research.
- Master and apply at least one research method to the investigation of a question pertaining to social work practice.
- Apply, evaluate, and analyze at least one clearly articulated approach to social work practice.
- Acquire the pedagogical skills to teach effectively at all levels of social work education.
- Develop the writing and scholarship skills necessary for professional publication.
- Cultivate the leadership qualities and interpersonal skills to further the development of the social work profession.

## ADMISSION GUIDELINES

Admission guidelines are established by the PhD Program Committee in conjunction with the associate dean and in compliance with university standards for graduate programs. An MSW from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education is the preferred credential; however, a master's degree from a related discipline along with relevant post-master's experience may be considered. Applicants will be evaluated with regard to:

- Potential and ability to complete advanced academic work as evidenced by achievement in both undergraduate and graduate professional education.
- Capacity for critical thinking and professional writing skill.
- Post-MSW or other post-master's related practice experience.
- Motivation for advanced academic study.
- Ability to engage in productive professional collaboration.
- Commitment to the advancement of knowledge for the profession.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants seeking admission to the doctoral program must provide the following:

- A personal statement (5–6 double-spaced, typed pages) describing professional goals and reasons for seeking a PhD in social work.
- Transcripts from undergraduate and graduate courses of study.
- Sample of professional writing that illustrates capacity for critical thinking, writing skill, and appropriate citation of sources. Both electronic and hardcopy versions of the writing sample are required.

- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores obtained within the past two years.
- Four letters of reference—two academic and two professional—addressing applicant's professional and academic performance.
- Completed application form.
- Current résumé.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students should consult the International Student Services web page at [www.widener.edu](http://www.widener.edu) for international graduate student guidelines or contact the Office of International Student Services at Widener University, One University Place, Chester, PA 19013; phone: 610-499-4499.

## TRANSFER CREDIT

The following guidelines have been established by the Center for Social Work Education for acceptance of doctoral level course work taken previously at Widener or at other institutions:

- A maximum of 18 credit hours of doctoral level courses in social work or related-disciplines earned within the five-year period preceding admission may be accepted for transfer credit upon admission to the doctoral program.
- Courses taken prior to admission to the PhD program, either within or outside the university, will be accepted only if the student has earned a grade of A in the course under consideration. Grades of satisfactory or pass may be transferable as elective courses.

The process for transferring graduate credit is as follows:

- An official request for transfer credit is submitted to the director of the doctoral program.
- A syllabus of each course for which transfer credit is being requested is submitted to the director of the doctoral program. This must be done before a disposition will be made regarding the granting of credits.
- Requests for transfer of graduate credit are approved upon recommendation of the associate dean.
- Applicants receive written notification of approved transfer credits along with written notification of admission into the program.

## MATRICULATION

A matriculated student is one who has been officially accepted and registered into the doctoral program. No provision is made for nonmatriculated students in the program.

## ACADEMIC PROGRESS

All students are expected to maintain satisfactory rates of progress toward their degrees, beginning with the first course in which they enroll and in all subsequent courses. A student may be dismissed from the program for failing to meet academic performance requirements, for violations of professional standards of behavior, for violations of the Student Code of Conduct, for academic fraud, or for documented interpersonal problems that interfere with the student's ability to engage in doctoral level study.

Students are expected to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA. Only students with a 3.0 GPA or better will be eligible to graduate. Courses for which a student has received a grade of "C" or lower can be repeated only once. Both grades will be recorded on the transcript, but only the most recent grade will be used in calculating the GPA. However, if a student earns a grade of "F" as a result of academic fraud, that student is prohibited from exercising the repeat-of-course option.

The PhD Program Committee will annually review the academic progress of each student in the program. If a student's academic progress is unsatisfactory, the committee will make a recommendation regarding the student's retention in the program. Recommendations may include dismissal from the program or academic probation with a plan to resolve the student's academic difficulties. Any student who has been identified as having unsatisfactory academic performance or other performance issues will be notified by the director of the doctoral program of the committee's recommendations. Students who have been placed on academic probation as a result of the recommendation of the PhD Program Committee must remediate their academic or interpersonal difficulties within two academic semesters.

If at any time a student violates professional standards of behavior or the Student Code of Conduct, commits academic fraud, or has a documented history of interpersonal problems in interacting with faculty or classmates, the committee will convene and make a recommendation regarding the student's retention in the program.

A student dismissed from the program due to academic failure or any other reason may petition the associate dean of the Center for Social Work Education for readmission after one semester of absence from the program. The associate dean will assess the student's petition for readmission and present a recommendation to the Center for Social Work Education's Committee on Academic Affairs for final disposition. The student may not be absent from Widener for more than two years.

A student may appeal the retention decisions made by the Center for Social Work Education in accordance with the appeal policies described in the *Graduate Studies Handbook*.

## CURRICULUM

YEARS ONE AND TWO		Credits
SW 801	Methods of Inquiry & Analysis . . . . .	3.0
SW 802	Using Qualitative Methods I . . . . .	3.0
SW 803	Using Quantitative Methods I . . . . .	3.0
SW 811	Deconstructing Clinical Theories & Their Application . . . . .	3.0
SW 812	Social Policy . . . . .	3.0
SW 813	Facilitating & Evaluating Change Processes . . .	3.0
SW 814	Historical & Philosophical Foundations of Social Work Practice . . . . .	3.0
SW 815	Using Quantitative Methods II . . . . .	3.0
SW 816	Using Qualitative Methods II . . . . .	3.0
SW 818	Social Theory . . . . .	3.0
SW 957	The Art & Science of Social Work Practice . .	3.0
One elective	. . . . .	3.0

### YEAR THREE

SW 900	Comprehensive Paper Seminar . . . . .	6.0
SW 950	Dissertation Proposal Seminar . . . . .	3.0
SW 958	The Art & Science of Social Work Education . .	3.0
SW 990	Dissertation Seminar . . . . .	6.0

### YEAR FOUR AND UNTIL DEFENSE OF THE DISSERTATION

SW 998*	Dissertation Proposal Preparation . . . . .	3.0
SW 999*	Dissertation Supervision . . . . .	3.0

\*Note—Student enrolls in SW 999 each semester until the dissertation is defended successfully.

## COURSE SEQUENCING

Course offerings for years one and two are interchangeable and will be offered in alternating years, except where noted.

### YEAR ONE OR TWO

Fall	Spring
SW 801	SW 803
SW 814	SW 818

### YEAR ONE ONLY

Summer
SW 815
Elective

### YEAR ONE OR TWO

Fall	Spring
SW 811	SW 802
SW 812	SW 813

### YEAR TWO ONLY

Summer
SW 816
SW 957

### YEAR THREE

Fall	Spring
SW 900	SW 950
	SW 958

Summer
SW 990

### YEAR FOUR, AND UNTIL DISSERTATION DEFENSE

SW 998 (Each semester until defense of the dissertation proposal)  
 SW 999 (Each semester until defense of the dissertation)

## DOCTORAL COURSES

### SW 801 METHODS OF INQUIRY AND ANALYSIS

The course begins with a review of basic concepts pertaining to research methodology and statistical analysis—both descriptive and inferential, including the basic procedures followed for analysis of qualitative data. A computer lab is an integral part of the course so that students receive “hands on” experience with SPSS subroutines and with one or more software programs for use with qualitative data. Overall, this course is intended to humanize and demystify research methods so that students have the foundation necessary for quantitative and qualitative study of social work practice. 3 semester hours

### SW 802 USING QUALITATIVE METHODS I

This course examines the use of ethno-methodologies, case studies, focus groups, content analysis, grounded theory, and participatory action research to illuminate and analyze both the processes and outcomes of social work practice. Like its companion course, SW 803, the course is taught through critical examination of published qualitative studies pertaining to social work practice. The underlying assumptions of the methods used, as well as the trustworthiness and validity of the findings, are discussed. In addition, students are required to develop and submit a written qualitative research proposal. 3 semester hours

### SW 803 USING QUANTITATIVE METHODS I

Like its companion course, SW 802, this course is taught through critical examination of published quantitative studies of

clinical social work practice, including meta-analyses. The course covers regression-based procedures such as multivariate analysis, path analysis, and structural equation modeling, as well as statistical procedures used for instrument development (e.g., tests of reliability and factor analysis). The underlying assumptions of the designs, measures, and statistics used, as well as the validity of the findings, are discussed. 3 semester hours

**SW 811 DECONSTRUCTING CLINICAL THEORIES AND THEIR APPLICATION**

The focus of this course is on the change processes presumed to be at work by various clinical theories or models of intervention. This entails a critical conceptual analysis of the theoretical foundations for clinical practice, including the assumptions regarding human nature, change, and the intervention context, as well as their salience for diverse and historically oppressed client populations. Cognitive-behavioral, emotionally focused, narrative, and psychodynamic approaches are considered, as well as more recently developed eclectic blends such as dialectical behavior therapy, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR), and solution-focused therapy. A combination of case analyses and critical analyses of both empirical studies and theoretical literature is used. 3 semester hours

**SW 812 SOCIAL POLICY**

The goal of this course is to examine the evolution of social welfare policy during the 20th century in order to acquire an understanding of how political, economic, and social forces shape the conception of social work practice in any given era, including our own. Special emphasis is placed on how these forces have affected diverse and historically oppressed populations. Methods of financing social work services and the interaction of influences from within the social work profession with those from the larger sociopolitical context are examined in an effort to discern how they support, impede, or initiate changes in practice. 3 semester hours

**SW 814 HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

This course examines the philosophical foundations for social work practice in the historical context of the development of the profession of social work and of social welfare policy in the United States. Then, contemporary epistemological foundations for knowing in social work are addressed through readings from a political, economic, sociological, and neurobiological perspectives. 3 semester hours

**SW 815 USING QUANTITATIVE METHODS II**

This course is designed to further a student's knowledge and skills with statistics. The course is taught using a combination of mathematical skill development, critical examination of existing quantitative research, and practical application of quantitative methods. The course begins with regression-based procedures such as multivariate analysis, path analysis, and discriminant analysis, and continues with additional tools for analysis including structural equation modeling, factor analysis, and non-parametric methods. 3 semester hours

**SW 816 USING QUALITATIVE METHODS II**

This course is designed to further a student's knowledge and skills in the use of qualitative methods. The course is taught using a combination of critical examination of published qualitative research, practice using qualitative data analysis software, the application of qualitative methods in a project of the student's own design and writing up the results. 3 semester hours

**SW 818 SOCIAL THEORY**

This course provides an overview of theoretical material from the social sciences relevant to social work. Students examine classic and modern social theory and the major paradigms relevant to social science research. Materials from other disciplines, including economics, philosophy, and political science are also incorporated. Students learn how this material can be applied to research questions, methodology, and their own theoretical ideas. 3 semester hours

**SW 900 COMPREHENSIVE PAPER SEMINAR**

This seminar is designed to guide students in their efforts to focus their substantive interests, formulate a research focus, and begin a review of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature in order to complete the required comprehensive paper. 6 semester hours

**SW 957 THE ART AND SCIENCE OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

The purpose of this seminar is to provide students with the opportunity to critically examine their own practice. While taking this seminar, students must be actively engaged in some form of social work practice—either with individuals, families, groups, organizations, or communities. Each student prepares a detailed case presentation and lead a class discussion of both the theoretical and empirical foundations for their interventions. In addition, the question of what constitutes evidence of effectiveness is addressed. The case presentations must be based on the student's own work. 3 semester hours

**SW 998 PROPOSAL PREPARATION**

This course assists the student in completing the dissertation proposal under the direction of the chair of the student's dissertation committee. Students who have successfully completed all program course requirements but do not yet have an approved dissertation proposal must enroll in this course in order to maintain active status in the program. 3 semester hours

**SW 999 DISSERTATION RESEARCH**

This course supports and guides students in the implementation and completion of their dissertation research. Students who have successfully completed all program course requirements and successfully defended their dissertation proposal must enroll in this course in order to maintain active status in the program. 3 semester hours

**ELECTIVES**

Students must take one 3-credit elective course to complete the 54 credit hours required for completion of the doctoral program. Electives offered by the center's faculty address a variety of models of interventions, focusing on the models' theoretical foundations, application, and evaluation of effectiveness. Courses are also offered that address approaches to working with specific clinical populations. Students are encouraged to select courses from other disciplines that provide related content. Students pursuing joint degree options are able to use elective course credits to fulfill the requirements of approved joint degree programs.

**COMPREHENSIVE PAPER**

The comprehensive paper is the basis for assessing whether doctoral students have acquired the knowledge and skills necessary for proceeding with the development of a doctoral dissertation. The comprehensive paper is submitted by the student at the end of the fall semester following the second year of study. The paper should reflect the student's ability to conceptualize a clear and compelling

topic; organize, present, and critique knowledge relevant to that topic; and propose a research focus and discuss possible research methods informed by a review of the relevant literature.

Two faculty members read each paper and make an assessment. In the case of a difference in the two readers' evaluations, a third reader is assigned. Students receive written feedback on their papers prior to the first doctoral class of the spring semester of the third year of study.

If two or more readers of the comprehensive paper assess the paper to be unsatisfactory, the student is given an opportunity to revise the paper. The revised paper is reviewed by the original readers. If the student fails to receive a satisfactory grade for the paper after the second review, the student is advised to withdraw from the program.

## **DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

Upon successful completion of the comprehensive paper, the student requests a faculty member of the Center for Social Work Education to be a dissertation chair. The chair guides that student in developing a dissertation proposal and completing the dissertation once the proposal is approved. Appointment of the chair must be approved by the director of the doctoral program and the associate dean and director of the Center for Social Work Education.

In the course of developing the dissertation proposal, the candidate and the chair, in consultation with the director of the doctoral program, designate a dissertation committee. Typically, the committee consists of the chair, one other faculty member from the Center for Social Work Education, and one faculty member from another department of the university. Faculty from other universities may also be considered. Formal appointment of the committee members is made by the associate dean and director of the Center for Social Work Education.

The dissertation proposal should not exceed 30 typewritten double-spaced pages, exclusive of a bibliography. Formal approval of the proposal by all dissertation committee members must be obtained by the end of the student's third year in the program, be documented by the dissertation chair, and filed with the director of the doctoral program. However, actual work on the dissertation may not begin unless approval has been obtained from the university's Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects, if needed. If such approval is not needed, work on the dissertation may begin immediately after formal approval of the proposal.

If a student has not submitted or obtained formal approval of the dissertation proposal within the specified time frame, the student is required to submit a written plan to the director of the doctoral program indicating the target date for completing this requirement. This plan must be approved by the PhD Program Committee during its annual review of the student's academic progress in the program.

## **DISSERTATION PROPOSAL— DEFENSE AND APPROVAL**

In consultation with the chair of the dissertation committee and the doctoral program director, the director of the Center for Social Work Education will appoint two independent readers of the dissertation proposal and set a date for the oral defense. Independent readers will be selected from Widener University faculty. The same readers will serve as independent readers of the completed dissertation.

The Dissertation Proposal Hearing Committee's responsibilities are to address only two questions regarding the proposal.

1. Is the proposed study manageable? (Does the student have the resources, access for data collection, technical assistance, etc.?)
2. Is the rationale for the study adequate? (Is it clearly stated how the study will add to existing knowledge?)

## **DISSERTATION**

The production of a dissertation and its oral defense are major components in doctoral education. They are the final and most complete demonstration of the student's readiness to receive the doctoral degree. The dissertation is both a process and a product. As a process, the dissertation is an educational endeavor in which the student demonstrates the ability to carry out an independent investigation that examines an aspect of social work theory and practice using sound research methods. As a product, it must address, in a creative and original way, a substantive problem area of concern to social work in an attempt to advance knowledge and contribute to the ongoing development of the knowledge base of the profession in a fashion that is suitable for publication.

When the chair of the dissertation committee is satisfied that the dissertation meets all requirements, the chair shall request review and approval (or recommendations for revisions) from the two other committee members. It is the student's responsibility to provide each member of the committee with a copy of the dissertation following the submission guidelines of the PhD Program Committee. When all dissertation committee members have approved the dissertation, the chair of the dissertation committee provides written notification to the director of the doctoral program.

## **ORAL DEFENSE OF DISSERTATION**

In consultation with the chair of the dissertation committee and the two independent readers, the director of the doctoral program sets a date for the oral defense. Independent readers may be selected from Widener University faculty or another university's faculty. It is the student's responsibility to provide the independent readers with a copy of the dissertation in compliance with the format guidelines provided by the PhD Program Committee. The oral defense is attended by the associate dean, the director of the doctoral program, the dissertation committee, and the two independent readers. The dean of the School of Human Service Professions is also invited to attend the defense. Additional attendees are determined by the director of the doctoral program in consultation with the chair of the dissertation committee.

Following the oral defense of the dissertation, the dissertation committee members, the independent readers, the director of the doctoral program, and the associate dean and director of the Center for Social Work Education vote as to whether the dissertation is "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory." A vote of "Satisfactory" may be qualified by directions for required modifications or stylistic changes. A vote of "Unsatisfactory" must be qualified by a written list of the modifications that must be made to render it "Satisfactory." The vote is recorded and signed by all. In the event of an "Unsatisfactory" decision, the doctoral program director, the chair of the dissertation committee, and the student schedule a second oral defense before the same committee. If the dissertation fails to receive a "Satisfactory" vote in the second oral defense, the student is advised to withdraw from the program.

## PUBLICATION OF THE DISSERTATION

All dissertations receiving a “Satisfactory” vote following the oral defense are published via microfilming at the student’s expense. In addition, three bound copies must be provided to the Center for Social Work Education, one of which will be catalogued at Wolfgram Memorial Library. The student must follow the publication format guidelines provided by the PhD Program Committee.

## FACULTY

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### **Sachi Ando, MSSW, PhD**

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MSSW, PhD, Univ. of Texas–Arlington  
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