Social Work

Social work's special contribution rests on an established body of knowledge, values and skills pertinent to understanding human relationships and the interaction between people as individuals, in families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Undergraduates in the School of Social Work receive a liberal arts education in the social and behavioral sciences and their application to human problems that prepares them to be informed citizens involved in human services or social welfare problems and policies. Students take courses in a variety of social sciences to enable them to view social welfare in its broad social, economic, and political contexts.

Social work courses offer a theoretical understanding of social problems and an introduction to practice methods used by social workers. The curriculum covers such areas as aging, family and child welfare, poverty, mental health, developmental disabilities, alcohol and drug abuse, diversity, race and ethnicity, criminal justice, oppression and social, economic and environmental justice, and at-risk populations.

Mission

The mission of the UW–Madison School of Social Work is to enhance human well-being and promote human rights and social and economic justice for people who are disadvantaged to achieve an equitable, healthy, and productive society. The school aims to:

- Create, advance, strengthen, and integrate interdisciplinary knowledge for students and the profession through research, scholarship, teaching and practice.
- Educate students to become highly skilled, culturally competent and ethical practitioners who will provide effective leadership for the profession of social work within the State of Wisconsin, nationally, and internationally.
- Promote change at levels ranging from the individual to national and international policy, including empowering communities and populations that are disadvantaged and developing humane service delivery systems.
- Create and disseminate knowledge regarding the prevention and amelioration of social problems.

Undergraduate Degree Programs

The School of Social Work offers a bachelor of social work (BSW) degree or a bachelor of arts (B.A.) or bachelor of science (B.S.) degree with a major in social welfare. The BSW and the social welfare major prepare students for further academic study or for employment in selected human service arenas. The BSW prepares students as beginning-level professional social workers. The social welfare major offers an overview of current social problems.

Certificate Programs

BSW students and social welfare majors often choose the following certificate programs: American Indian studies, business, criminal justice, gender and women’s studies, gerontology, global cultures, global health, LGBT studies, and religious studies.