

Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work

These changes to the PhD in Social Work are effective fall 2010.

Admission

Relevant application materials must be submitted to both the Graduate School and the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare and will be accepted for admission in the Fall semester only. All applications must be completed and submitted on or before January 2. Applications received after January 2 will be considered only if space is available after other applications are reviewed. Applicants must meet Graduate School requirements plus the following departmental requirements in order to be considered:

1. Hold or be in the process of completing a master's degree in social work.
2. Identify the following in the Personal Statement section of the Graduate School application:
 - Which of the program's three areas of specialization (Addiction and Behavioral Health, Applied Gerontology, or Family and Child Welfare) they wish to pursue.
 - Their reasons for seeking a doctoral degree in social work.
 - Their goals as future scholars.
 - A topic or issue in the field that they consider to be particularly challenging and worthy of study.
3. Submit a current copy of a professional résumé or curriculum vitae to the Social Work Ph.D. Program. This should contain information on:
 - All post-secondary education, including institutions, degrees and dates of completed programs of study, plus institutions, dates, and types of study that did not lead to a degree.
 - All employment by the applicant in social work and related areas, including dates and employing organizations.
 - Employment unrelated to social work within the past five years.
 - Information on any past or current professional licenses held.
4. Submit scores from within the past five years on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test to the Social Work Ph.D. Program.
5. Submit three letters of recommendation from persons familiar with the applicant's achievements and academic potential, including at least one current or former graduate program instructor to the Social Work Ph.D. Program.
6. Submit a sample of written work to the Social Work Ph.D. Program that demonstrates: the applicant's knowledge of social work theory, practice, and research; ability to think analytically; and writing skills. The sample should be at least 1000 words in length and represent work for which the applicant was the sole author.

Advisement

The department will assign each Ph.D. student a major professor. This assignment is based on congruence between the applicant's interests and the expertise of the major professor. In consultation with the director of the Ph.D. program, the student may change major professors after beginning the program, but no applicant will be admitted unless a doctoral faculty member in social work agrees to serve as major professor.

Financial Assistance

Through a combination of tuition remission, teaching assistantships, research assistantships, fellowships, and other options, the program will attempt to provide financial assistance to all admitted students during their first three years in the program. Applicants needing additional information on other sources of financial assistance, such as student loans, should contact the campus Department of Financial Aid.

Residence

Students must meet minimum Graduate School residency requirements.

Course of Study

A minimum degree of 43 graduate credits beyond the master's degree are required, at least 36 of which must be earned in residence at UWM.

In consultation with the major professor and as soon as possible after admission, each student designs a program of study to gain the knowledge and skills appropriate to his/ her educational goals. All programs of study must include the following:

Knowledge Building (3 credits)

Required Course

SocWrk 901 - Philosophies of Science and Knowledge

Specialization Seminars (9 credits)

The curriculum includes three areas of specialization: Addiction and Behavioral Health, Applied Gerontology, and Family and Child Welfare. Each student must select at least one of these areas in which to concentrate. In consultation with the major professor, a student may also choose to develop expertise that spans more than one area.

Content in these three specialization areas is presented in the form of specialization seminars. All students must take at least three specialization seminars within the department and at least one relevant course external to the department; the external course must be from a list of courses approved for this purpose or a student's unique request approved by the doctoral program

committee. At least two courses, including one internal and one external course, must be in the student's area of specialization, and at least one course internal to the department must be in an area other than the student's primary specialization. All specialization courses outside the department must be approved by the student's major professor prior to enrollment.

Examples of specialization seminars

SocWrk 931 - Theories of Poverty and Social Welfare Policy for Children and Families (Family and Child Welfare specialization)

SocWrk 932 - Research and Processes of Individual Change across the Lifespan (Addiction and Behavioral Health specialization)

SocWrk 945 – Family and Long-Term Care Across the Life Course (Applied Gerontology specialization)

Methods of Inquiry and Analysis (19 credits total)

Content in this area comprises a set of required courses in methods of social/behavioral research and statistics. Students are expected to enter the program with at least a basic background in both methods and statistics and may need to satisfy prerequisites before proceeding to required courses.

Research Methods

Required Courses

SocWrk 951 - Quantitative Research Methods

SocWrk 952 - Qualitative Research Methods

Statistics

Required Courses

SocWrk 961 – Introduction to Statistical Methods

SocWrk 962 – Applied Multiple Regression Analysis

SocWrk 963 – Measurement Methods and Related Multivariate Statistics

SocWrk 964 – Advanced Statistical Methods

In cases where any of the above courses are not available during the student's course of study, students may choose from an approved set of alternatives offered in other departments or campuses. Approval for such an exception must be secured from the major advisor prior to enrolling.

Skills Proseminars and Independent Study (4 credits minimum)

Requirements in this area are designed to provide students with specialized knowledge and skills needed for success in scholarly endeavors and teaching at the post-secondary level. With respect to classroom work, all students must complete the following three one-credit proseminars:

SocWrk 991 - Topics in Social Work: Proseminar in Research Ethics

SocWrk 991 - Topic in Social Work: Proseminar in Grantwriting

GRAD 803 – Teaching and Learning in College

Additionally, all students must complete one semester of work as a teaching assistant and one semester as a project or research assistant, usually in their second year. During the semester in which they serve as a teaching assistant, students must enroll for one credit in:

SocWrk 999 – Independent Study

This independent study credit will be completed under the supervision of the faculty member to whom the student is assigned as an assistant. The product should be a project that will advance the student's skills in teaching, such as preparation of a guest lecture or other such task determined by the supervising faculty member.

Electives (4-6 credits)

These credits provide an opportunity for students to take content of interest within the social work department or in other departments on campus that offer graduate-level courses relevant to the student's educational goals. Elective options within the department include the completion of additional specialization seminars beyond the required total. Students may also complete this requirement by taking additional research methods or statistics courses within or outside the department, or they may take theory or basic-knowledge courses in other departments that are at the graduate level and are approved by their advisor and the social work Ph.D. program coordinator.

Preliminary Examination

All students must pass a preliminary examination subsequent to successfully completing all required course work and prior to being admitted to doctoral candidacy (see <http://graduateschool.uwm.edu/students/current/doctoral/>). The examination assesses students' ability to articulate their research interests, analyze and synthesize empirical knowledge and relevant theoretical concepts, explain how theory may affect the generation of knowledge, and show familiarity with relevant scientific methodologies. In keeping with Graduate School rules, the preliminary examination should be completed within five years of enrollment.

An Application for the Doctoral Preliminary Examination

(<http://www.graduateschool.uwm.edu/students/current/doctoral/>) must be completed by the student and signed and submitted to the Ph.D. Program Committee by the major professor six weeks prior to the first examination. Students who fail the preliminary examination may not proceed to the dissertation. The exam may be retaken only once. Complete policies regarding

forming a preliminary examination committee, writing the proposal, and taking the examination are available in the Social Work Ph.D. program handbook.

Dissertation Proposal Defense

All students must successfully complete an oral defense of their dissertation proposal to determine their preparation for independent research. The defense must be completed successfully within four years of initial enrollment.

Dissertation

Students who have passed the Preliminary Examination and have submitted a one-page preliminary dissertation proposal are formally admitted to doctoral candidacy. In accordance with Graduate School policies, students must then register for three research or thesis/dissertation credits each semester until the dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School. To meet the requirements for the dissertation, the candidate must complete an original independent research project that adds meaningfully to the existing body of knowledge in social work. It should be of a caliber that warrants publication in respected journals in the field.

Dissertation Defense

As the final step toward the degree, the candidate must pass an oral examination before his/her doctoral committee in defense of the dissertation. The examination may also cover general topics relevant to the student's area of study. This requirement may not be completed until all other degree requirements are satisfied.

Time Limit

It is expected that most students will complete all degree requirements within six years of initial enrollment in the doctoral program. All requirements **MUST** be completed within ten years from the date of initial enrollment.