

# Social Work

**Professional social workers help people cope with interpersonal and social problems and assist people in finding resources to improve their lives. . .**

People looking for a career with meaning, action, diversity, satisfaction, and an abundance of options are often drawn to social work. Social workers are highly trained professionals who care about people, want to make things better, and want to relieve suffering. Social workers are committed to making agencies, organizations, and programs more responsive to people's needs. Social work is a changing and challenging profession with a variety of career opportunities for personal job satisfaction. The University of North Dakota offers a Bachelors of Science in Social Work (BSSW).

## What you can do with a degree in Social Work. . .

Social workers practice in a variety of settings, such as gerontology, child welfare, mental health and substance abuse, health and public health, schools, corrections, adoption services, private practice, and the disabilities field.

## Program Options. . .

Students begin their social work courses during their sophomore year and complete their final social work courses (the field instruction component) during their last semester. During the field instruction component, students are placed under the supervision of a BSSW/MSW field instructor in an approved social work agency. Students develop and complete Learning Plans in order to identify a variety of tasks and experiences that will prepare them for a beginning level social work practice. The field experience provides students with an opportunity to integrate and demonstrate the knowledge and skills which have been taught in the academic courses and to participate in a social service agency on a full-time basis. The Department of Social Work has numerous sites throughout North Dakota and Minnesota which are approved field instruction agencies. These include sites in or near indian reservations, hospitals, county welfare services, mental health centers, schools, community action agencies, church-related family services, adolescent treatment programs, substance abuse facilities, nursing homes, correctional facilities, and housing agencies.

The Social Work Department offers interdepartmental minors in Gerontology and Chemical Dependency. The Gerontology minor allows students to take courses in a variety of departments regarding aging and services for older persons. The field of gerontology provides a rapidly growing opportunity for social work practitioners as baby boomers reach retirement. North Dakota has a higher percentage of individuals over the age of 55 than the national average.

## Program Options (continued). . .

The Chemical Dependency minor provides courses that help students to better understand the causes and effects of drug usage. The Department of Social Work is designated as an Addiction Counselor Training Program by the North Dakota Board of Addiction Counseling Examiners. Students who successfully complete the course of study, the clinical training requirements, and the licensure examination are eligible for licensing as addiction counselors in the state of North Dakota. Students are admitted to this training on two levels. The first level includes Social Work majors who also complete the minor in Chemical Dependency (required courses for licensing in addiction counseling, or their equivalent) and the nine-month practicum in a certified addiction facility. Students must meet all requirements for a Social Work major in addition to the minor requirements and the addiction practicum requirement. This generally involves a five-year program of study.

## Unique characteristics of UND's Social Work program. . .

- We offered the first undergraduate social work program at a distance using technology.
- There is a rural focus to the program.
- Students who have a Bachelor's degree in a related field may secure their BSSW in one year on the Fast Track Program by completing the department's admission requirements, all required Social Work classes, a statistics course, a human biology course, and all UND Essential Studies requirements from an accredited institution.

**Information continued on reverse. . .**

## Social Work continued. . .

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### Getting in. . .

Criteria for admission: completion of SWK 255 & 257 with at least a 3.0 GPA, an overall GPA of 2.75, willingness to adhere to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and the UND Code of Student Life, and completion of 45 hours of coursework at the end of the term in which the application is submitted. Students may apply in any term including fall, spring, summer. Deadlines will be published each term on the department's webpage. To apply for admission to the program, students complete the application available on the department's website, in consultation with their advisor.

The application process is competitive. All factors, including GPA, strength of written materials, and volunteer experience will be given consideration in the admission decision. The BSSW Director will notify the student of the decision regarding admission. Following admission, students are required to sign the following statements: 1) that they are aware they will need to pass the required BSSW comprehensive exam prior to graduation, and 2) that they will adhere to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and the UND Code of Student Life.

Provisional admission may be considered when a student: 1) requests such admission; 2) is making steady progress toward meeting the admissions criteria; 3) has a workable plan for success, including a timeline for achievement; and 4) has met with the advisor. The plan must be approved by the student, the advisor, and the BSSW Director.

### It's A Fact. . .

- A computer lab is designated for student use.
- Recipients of the IV-E Child Welfare Stipend are contractually obligated to work for a North Dakota public child welfare agency for a specified period of time after graduation. Bachelor's degree students could receive up to \$9,700.
- The department charges an access fee of \$225/semester to full time undergraduate social work students after admission to the social work program to offset the cost of the field education program.
- Average class size for courses in the major is 20.
- There are 12 full time and 15 part time faculty in the department.
- There are 200 students enrolled in the program.
- Social Work major was first offered at UND in 1939.
- Student Social Work Association and Phi Alpha (honorary) are active campus organizations.
- Fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.
- The Department has an outstanding field education program with over 100 agency choices.
- If you already have a Bachelor's degree in a related field, you can secure your BSSW in one year.

### It's A Fact (continued). . .

- Students complete a full time field placement during their last semester of courses which provides practical experience. As the capstone experience, the field instruction program allows the integration of experience gained in the classroom with actual practice applications.
- Students have the opportunity to intern in North Dakota, Minnesota, and South Dakota. Examples of field sites are located on the Department of Social Work website.
- All field instructors are well-trained and have social work practice experience.
- Faculty prepare students to be at the cutting edge in use of technology for practice and actively use technology in teaching (Blackboard, chat rooms, and clickers).
- According to the 2006 Princeton Review, UND has "a great social work program."
- The Department of Social Work is in the top 25% in the total number of students enrolled in undergraduate programs at UND.
- The University of North Dakota is offering more online courses and degree programs than ever before to provide you with additional flexibility. Please visit <http://onlinecourses.und.edu> for more information or call toll free at 800-342-8230 or 701-777-3044.

### In Addition. . .

Social work's approach is unique among the helping professions because it focuses on people's problems in the context of their social environment. Social workers believe that people are influenced by those around them—their families, communities, workplaces, and organizations.

For sheer variety, few occupations can match social work, which offers a broad range of opportunities and settings. It encompasses several major areas of work: social casework, medical, school, clinical, administration and management, community organization, and social policy and research.

Social workers may specialize in treating specific problems, in working with specific populations, and in developing specialized skills such as conflict resolution and mediation, violence and victim services, and emergency preparedness and disaster relief.

### For more information. . .

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