

# CHILD WELFARE, CERTIFICATE IN (GRADUATE CERTIFICATE)

The Graduate Certificate in Child Welfare will equip students and human service professionals with knowledge and skills in implementing trauma-informed best practices in child welfare. Students will learn to implement evidence-based approaches that improve the quality of life for children and families vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Graduates of the certificate program will be able to facilitate restorative practices, assess and serve the needs of children and families without bias, and implement strategies for minimizing the traumatic experience of placements. Graduates will be able to facilitate attachment workshops that promote stable relationships for children and their families. Graduates will also be able to use screening and assessment tools to develop case plans for children.

## Student learning outcomes

Students who complete this certificate will be able to:

- Conduct child abuse and neglect investigations
- Assess and serve the needs of children and families without bias
- Provide trauma-informed care to children who have experienced abuse, neglect or other traumatic events, with an emphasis on promoting healing and resilience.
- Assess the capacity of communities to facilitate restorative processes and support the well-being of children and families

## VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (<http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/>) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the [academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students.](http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/) (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/>)

## Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the [academic regulations section for additional information on graduation requirements.](http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad-graduation-info/) (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad-graduation-info/>)

## Admission requirements

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
Certificate	Fall, Spring		

The admission requirements outlined will apply to all students. All applicants to the graduate certificate program are required to meet the admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School. Applicants will be required to submit the following materials to the Graduate School Admissions Office:

- Application form and application fee
- Three letters of recommendation, professional and/or academic
- Official undergraduate transcripts from all schools attended
- A personal statement of purpose outlining career goals
- A resume stating relevant work experience

No transfer credit hours are accepted for this certificate program. Credits from a degree already awarded cannot be applied toward the certificate.

For international students, the following is required:

- An official transcript evaluation from a recognized foreign educational credentials evaluation service accredited by the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services or the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
- A Test of English as a Foreign Language minimum composite score of 100 for the Internet-based Test or 600 for the paper-based score; or an International English language Testing System minimum score of 6.5 on the academic exam
- A minimum score of 68 on the VCU English Language Program Compression test (Students who do not achieve a score of 68 will be placed in the appropriate level of English language proficiency courses.)

In addition, the School of Social Work will require applicants to the certificate program to satisfy the following requirements.

- Applicants will be required to respond to three different questions. Each statement should be no more than 500 words. Applicants should demonstrate their understanding of the social work profession, ethics/values and their suitability for VCU's program. Visit the National Association of Social Workers website to learn more about our school's commitment to social and racial justice. The questions include:
  - Identify one value from the NASW code of ethics (e.g., social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relations, etc.) and how it relates to your desire to complete/acquire this certificate. Tip: refer to the NASW Code of Ethics.
  - Please describe your social work career goals.
  - The School of Social Work is committed to social and racial justice and stands against oppression of all groups and acknowledges specifically anti-Black racism and white dominance in perpetrating institutional discrimination. (See the

school's commitment statement). Please comment on what these statements mean to you and your desire to be a child welfare practitioner.

## Curriculum requirements

The curriculum is designed to equip students with a range of skills related to understanding human behavior, working with vulnerable populations, assessing trauma, and applying evidence-based practices in social work settings.

Graduates will be able to identify major social, demographic and economic changes in child welfare services impacting vulnerable children and their families; apply explanatory theories and relevant skill sets for effective service delivery; address the role of development, culture and empirical evidence in trauma-specific interventions; and assess primary caregiving environments and community capacity for restorative processes.

The certificate requires 12 credits for completion as outlined below.

## Program requirements

Course	Title	Hours
<b>Core courses</b>		
SLWK 601	Human Behavior in the Social Environment I	3
SLWK 610	Human Behavior in the Social Environment II	3
SLWK 718	Social Work Practice in Child Welfare	3
SLWK 742	Core Concepts of Child and Adolescent Trauma	3
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>12</b>

**The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this certificate is 12.**

### Contact

School of Social Work admissions team  
 sswinfo@vcu.edu  
 (804) 828-1030

### Additional contact

Stevara Haley Clark, Ed.D., M.S.W.  
 Interim associate dean for academic and student affairs and associate professor in teaching  
 clarksh3@vcu.edu  
 (804) 828-0732

**Program website:** <https://socialwork.vcu.edu/academics/master-of-social-work/certificates-certifications-and-dual-degrees/child-welfare/certificate> (<https://socialwork.vcu.edu/academics/master-of-social-work/certificates-certifications-and-dual-degrees/child-welfare/certificate/>)