The Ph.D. Program administers the curriculum that leads to the Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work.

- Social Work, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/school-social-work/phd-program/social-work-phd)

**SWKD 701. Quantitative Research Methods and Analysis I. 4 Hours.**
Semester course; 4 lecture hours. 4 credits. Prerequisites: master's-level course work in research methods and introduction to statistics; graduate standing in social work or permission of program director. First of a three-semester course sequence focused on concentrated study of principles of the quantitative, scientific method for knowledge building, and practice- and policy-related research. Special emphasis on the different stages of research methods, including problem formulation, sampling, measurement, design and data collection within the context of professional values, ethics and commitment to social justice.

**SWKD 702. Quantitative Research Methods and Analysis II. 3 Hours.**
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: master's-level course work in research methods and introduction to statistics; graduate standing in social work or permission of program director; SWKD 701. Second of a three-semester course sequence focused on concentrated study of principles of quantitative, scientific method for knowledge building, and practice- and policy-related research. Special emphasis on the application of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques within the context of applied social work research.

**SWKD 703. Philosophical Issues in Social Work Knowledge Building. 3 Hours.**
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: admission to Ph.D. program in social work or permission of program director. This seminar focuses on assisting seminar participants to develop and refine their understanding of the logical foundations and the underlying meta-framework for modes of inquiry in science. Of particular focus will be the social sciences including social work. Using a paradigm perspective, the seminar will investigate the epistemological, ontological and methodological implications for knowledge building for social work.

**SWKD 704. Multiparadigmatic Qualitative Methods and Analysis. 4 Hours.**
Semester course; 4 lecture hours. 4 credits. Focuses on assisting participants to develop and refine their understanding of and skills in qualitative research from multiple paradigmatic perspectives. The course will investigate a variety of qualitative strategies that allow for examination, exploration and/or description of phenomena by theory building, theory testing or constructing meaning. Emphasis will be on a range of qualitative methods for collecting empirical material and methods for the analysis of those data, including decisions about the use of computer analysis.

**SWKD 705. Multivariate Analysis in Social Work and Human Services Research. 3 Hours.**
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: master's-level course work in research methods and introduction to statistics, graduate standing in social work or permission of program director, and SWKD 701 and 702. The third of a three-semester course sequence focused on concentrated study of principles of the quantitative, scientific method for knowledge building and practice- and policy-related research. Special emphasis on the application and interpretation of multivariate statistical techniques within the context of applied social work research.

**SWKD 708. Social Science Foundations for Social Work. 3 Hours.**
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: admission to the Ph.D. program in social work or permission of program director. This doctoral seminar focuses on theories and conceptual approaches used as the knowledge base for social work practice. Emphasis will be given to developing the abilities of students to identify the essential elements of theory, determining the knowledge building purposes of theory and articulating the rationale for selection of theories as a basis and guide for scholarly inquiry. In addition, theories are officially evaluated for their implicit assumptions, values, empirical support and potential usefulness for students' own specialized area of study. Classic and contemporary theories covered will be drawn from the social sciences with an emphasis on those appropriate for the social change and social justice concerns of professional and/or an appreciation of diversity.
SWKD 722. Evaluation of Human Service Programs. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: Ph.D. program standing or permission of instructor. Application of social research methods to the planning and development of evaluation research in human service programs. Covers the planning and evaluation cycle, categories of evaluation (evaluability assessment, needs assessment, social indicators, asset mapping, process, performance, outcome and impact), roles of evaluators and stakeholders, development and use of program theory, and dissemination of evaluation results for policy and program improvement.

SWKD 724. Constructivist Inquiry. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: Ph.D. program standing or permission of program director. The purpose of this course is to: 1) contrast interpretive and functionalist (positivist) inquiry paradigms and note the conditions under which each is the paradigm of choice for research; 2) clarify the relationship between constructivist and qualitative methodologies; 3) acquaint the student with some of the more common constructivist methods and to offer opportunities in applying those methods; 4) prepare the student to act as a peer reviewer or auditor in a constructivist inquiry.

SWKD 726. Seminar on Social Work Education and Teaching. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment requires Ph.D. program standing or permission of program director. This doctoral seminar prepares students to become effective and ethical social work educators. The course focuses on teaching and learning approaches in higher education, assessment of educational outcomes, curriculum design and course development, roles and responsibilities of faculty members, and historical and contemporary trends in social work education.

SWKD 791. Topical Seminar. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated once for credit. Prerequisite: permission of instructor. Study of the current state of knowledge and research within a specialized area of concern to social policy and social work.

SWKD 792. Independent Study. 1-3 Hours.
Semester course; 1, 2 or 3 credits. Prerequisite: permission of the program director. Independent reading and study in selected areas under the supervision of a member of the faculty. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits that count toward the 36 required credits. May then be taken for an additional 1-12 credits to accommodate the need for continuous enrollment required of all students between completion of required course work and passage of the comprehensive examinations.

SWKD 797. Directed Research. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 credits. Prerequisite: completion of first-year Ph.D. courses in social work or permission of program director. The course provides doctoral students the opportunity to do hands-on research prior to the dissertation project that is relevant to their substantive area or individual learning needs. The topic and specific project will be initiated by the student and implemented in collaboration with a School of Social Work faculty member. A proposal for a directed research course must be submitted that specifies how the student will gain experience, knowledge and skills in one or more aspects of conducting a research project, including conceptualization of the question; development of a graphic or visual schema; measurement design and/or instrument development; qualitative, quantitative or mixed-methods research design and implementation; data collection or data management; data analysis; and dissemination of findings. Students may create their own project or dovetail with existing student or faculty projects.

SWKD 798. Intergrative Seminar. 1 Hour.
Semester course; 1 seminar hour. 1 credit. This seminar in the final semester of course work is a capstone course designed to highlight and extend the integration of learning, stress the “wholeness” of the doctoral experience and more intentionally embrace the program themes related to integration, critical thinking, and social justice and diversity. The course serves as organizing structure for understanding gaps in one’s own knowledge base, practice peer mentoring and leadership in nurturing an intellectual community, and cooperatively plan final aspects of comprehensive exam study. It is seen as one vehicle for understanding the context of the student’s line of inquiry and for deepening professional development, identity and career preparation as a social work scholar and leader. Graded as S/U/F.

SWKD 898. Dissertation Research. 1-16 Hours.
Semester course; 1-16 credits. Prerequisite: successful completion of comprehensive examinations or permission of program director. Students are required to complete 16 credit hours. May be taken for additional credits until dissertation is formally accepted.