

# SOCIAL WORK, MASTER OF (M.S.W.)/AGING STUDIES, CERTIFICATE IN (GRADUATE CERTIFICATE) [DUAL DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE]

Advanced study in social work and aging studies is available through a dual degree and certificate program co-sponsored by the School of Social Work and the Department of Gerontology in the College of Health Professions.

The program allows students to earn a Master of Social Work and a Certificate in Aging Studies with a minimum of 72 credits rather than the 75 credits necessary if the two degrees were pursued separately. This efficiency lowers the overall cost of tuition while also reducing time to earning both degrees.

## Program goals

The objectives of this dual degree and certificate program are to:

- Prepare graduates to address the complex needs of a diverse aging population using holistic knowledge of the biopsychosocial aging process
- Provide graduates with an understanding of empirically and theoretically based components contributing to optimal aging using evidence-based, best-practice approaches
- Prepare graduates to work with older individuals, family members, communities and organizations that serve older adults
- Prepare graduates to advocate for policy change to promote social justice to improve the lives of older people

Among the many benefits offered by participation in the dual degree and certificate program is the following:

- Prepares graduates to become culturally competent geriatric social workers providing services to an ever-growing older population

The diplomas for this dual degree and certificate program may be awarded simultaneously. However, students must complete a separate graduation check out for each program.

## Student learning outcomes

See the individual program pages for student learning outcomes.

## Other information

### Advising

The student is assigned an adviser from each program to develop a plan of study. Advisers from each program will provide guidance on course requirements for their respective programs.

### Admission requirements

See the individual program pages for admission deadlines and other requirements. Students must meet the admission requirements for each program. Admission into one program does not guarantee admission into the other.

The Certificate in Aging Studies program is open to qualified students who have earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university or the equivalent and who have met all **general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School**.

The admissions requirements for the M.S.W. (<https://www.socialwork.vcu.edu/programs/msw/admission.html>) are posted on the School of Social Work website.

## Application procedure

Applicants may apply at any time after acceptance into the M.S.W. program.

Students may contact VCU Graduate Admissions to have their transcripts and letters of recommendation from the M.S.W. application attached to their certificate application. A new personal statement is required.

## Dual degree and certificate requirements

As standalone programs, the M.S.W. comprises 60 credits while the certificate requires 15 credits. The dual degree and certificate program allows students to share three credits, therefore decreasing total credits to completion from 75 to 63.

Based on the equivalent knowledge acquired by successfully completing one of the concentration courses in social work (SLWK 709, SLWK 793, SLWK 794 or SLWK 795), the elective is satisfied in the certificate curriculum.

## Curriculum requirements

Course	Title	Hours
<b>M.S.W. requirements</b>		
• Generalist courses		
SLWK 601	Human Behavior in the Social Environment I	3
SLWK 602	Policy, Community and Organizational Practice I	3
SLWK 603	Power, Privilege and Oppression	3
SLWK 604	Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups I	3
SLWK 605	Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups II	3
SLWK 606	Policy, Community and Organizational Practice II	3
SLWK 609	Foundations of Research for Social Work Interventions and Services	3
SLWK 610	Human Behavior in the Social Environment II	3
Field instruction (select one option)		6
SLWK 693 & SLWK 694	Generalist Field Instruction I and Generalist Field Instruction II	
SLWK 695	Block Generalist Field Instruction	
• Concentration requirements (select one concentration)		15
Administration, planning and policy practice		
SLWK 709	Specialization Research for Understanding and Assessing Social Work Interventions and Services	
SLWK 710	Concentration Social Policy (satisfied by HCPR 601)	

SLWK 711	Strategies for Social Work Planning and Administrative Practice	
SLWK 712	Social Work Planning and Administrative Practice I	
SLWK 713	Social Work Planning and Administrative Practice II	
Clinical practice concentration		
SLWK 703	Psychopathology	
SLWK 704	Clinical Social Work Practice I	
SLWK 705	Clinical Social Work Practice II	
SLWK 709	Specialization Research for Understanding and Assessing Social Work Interventions and Services	
SLWK 710	Concentration Social Policy	
• Field instruction (required for either concentration; select one option)		6
SLWK 793 & SLWK 794	Specialization Field Instruction I and Specialization Field Instruction II	
SLWK 795	Specialization Block Field Instruction	
SLWK 796 & SLWK 797 & SLWK 798	Specialization Field Instruction Extended Semesters I and Specialization Field Instruction Extended Semesters II and Specialization Field Instruction Extended Semesters III	
• Electives		9
Restricted electives (satisfied by Certificate in Aging Studies requirement)		
<b>Certificate requirements</b>		
GRTY 601	Biological and Physiological Aging	3
GRTY 602	Psychology of Aging	3
GRTY 603	Social Gerontology	3
GRTY 606	Aging and Human Values	3
Restricted elective (satisfied by M.S.W. concentration requirement)		3
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>63</b>

The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this dual program is 63.

### Sample plan of study for regular standing

Year one		Hours
<b>Fall semester</b>		
GRTY 602	Psychology of Aging	3
SLWK 601	Human Behavior in the Social Environment I	3
SLWK 602	Policy, Community and Organizational Practice I	3
SLWK 603	Power, Privilege and Oppression	3
SLWK 604	Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups I	3
SLWK 693	Generalist Field Instruction I	3
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>18</b>

#### Spring semester

SLWK 605	Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups II	3
SLWK 606	Policy, Community and Organizational Practice II	3
SLWK 609	Foundations of Research for Social Work Interventions and Services	3
SLWK 610	Human Behavior in the Social Environment II	3
SLWK 694	Generalist Field Instruction II	3
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>15</b>

#### Year two

##### Fall semester

GRTY 603	Social Gerontology	3
Concentration courses (select SWAPP or clinical practice concentration courses, as appropriate)		12
• Administration, planning and policy practice concentration		
SLWK 709	Specialization Research for Understanding and Assessing Social Work Interventions and Services <sup>1</sup>	3
SLWK 711	Strategies for Social Work Planning and Administrative Practice	3
SLWK 712	Social Work Planning and Administrative Practice I	3
SLWK 793	Specialization Field Instruction I <sup>1</sup>	3
• Clinical practice concentration		
SLWK 703	Psychopathology	3
SLWK 704	Clinical Social Work Practice I	3
SLWK 709	Specialization Research for Understanding and Assessing Social Work Interventions and Services	3
SLWK 793	Specialization Field Instruction I <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>15</b>

##### Spring semester

GRTY 601	Biological and Physiological Aging	3
GRTY 606	Aging and Human Values	3
Concentration courses (select SWAPP or clinical practice concentration courses, as appropriate)		9
• Administration, planning and policy practice concentration		
SLWK 710	Concentration Social Policy	3
SLWK 713	Social Work Planning and Administrative Practice II	3
SLWK 793	Specialization Field Instruction I	3
• Clinical practice concentration		
SLWK 705	Clinical Social Work Practice II	3
SLWK 710	Concentration Social Policy	3
SLWK 794	Specialization Field Instruction II <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>Total Hours:</b>		<b>63</b>

<sup>1</sup>

Any of these courses will satisfy the elective in the certificate curriculum.

**The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this dual program is 63.**

**Contact**

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