

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 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 72.

Based on the equivalent knowledge acquired by successfully completing one of the concentration courses in social work (SLWK 706, SLWK 707, SLWK 714, SLWK 715, SLWK 793, SLWK 794 or SLWK 795), the elective is satisfied in the certificate curriculum.

Curriculum requirements

| Course | Title | Hours |
|---|--|-------|
| M.S.W. requirements | | |
| • 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 in Social Work Practice | 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) | | 18 |
| Administration, planning and policy practice | | |
| 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 | |

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|--|---|---|
| SLWK 713 | Social Work Planning and Administrative Practice II | |
| SLWK 714 | Research for Social Work Administration, Planning and Policy Practice I | |
| SLWK 715 | Research for Social Work Administration, Planning and Policy Practice II | |
| Clinical practice concentration | | |
| SLWK 703 | Mental, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders | |
| SLWK 704 | Clinical Social Work Practice I | |
| SLWK 705 | Clinical Social Work Practice II | |
| SLWK 706 | Research for Clinical Social Work Practice I | |
| SLWK 707 | Research for Clinical Social Work Practice II | |
| SLWK 710 | Concentration Social Policy | |
| • Field instruction (required for either concentration; select one option) | | 6 |
| SLWK 793 & SLWK 794 | Concentration Field Instruction I and Concentration Field Instruction II | |
| SLWK 795 | Concentration Block Field Instruction | |
| SLWK 796 & SLWK 797 & SLWK 798 | Concentration Field Instruction Extended Semesters I and Concentration Field Instruction Extended Semesters II and Concentration Field Instruction Extended Semesters III | |
| • Electives | | 6 |

Complete six additional credit hours of electives chosen from SLWK 717-SLWK 792. Electives from outside the School of Social Work are accepted as part of the combined offerings for dual degrees and certificates. Other electives from outside the school may be accepted with prior approval from the M.S.W. program director.

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|---|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Certificate requirements | | |
| 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 |
| Total Hours | | 72 |

The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this dual program is 72.

Sample plan of study for regular standing

Year one

| Fall semester | | Hours |
|---------------|---|-------|
| 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 |

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|----------|--|---|
| 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 |

Term Hours: 18

Spring semester

| | | |
|----------|---|---|
| GRTY 601 | Biological and Physiological Aging | 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 in Social Work Practice | 3 |
| SLWK 610 | Human Behavior in the Social Environment II | 3 |
| SLWK 694 | Generalist Field Instruction II | 3 |

Term Hours: 18

Year two

Fall semester

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| GRTY 603 | Social Gerontology | 3 |
| Concentration courses (select SWAPP or clinical practice concentration courses, as appropriate) | | 9 |
| • Administration, planning and policy practice concentration | | |
| SLWK 711 | Strategies for Social Work Planning and Administrative Practice | 3 |
| SLWK 712 | Social Work Planning and Administrative Practice I | 3 |
| SLWK 714 | Research for Social Work Administration, Planning and Policy Practice I ¹ | 3 |
| • Clinical practice concentration | | |
| SLWK 703 | Mental, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders | 3 |
| SLWK 704 | Clinical Social Work Practice I | 3 |
| SLWK 706 | Research for Clinical Social Work Practice I ¹ | 3 |
| SLWK 793 | Concentration Field Instruction I ¹ | 3 |
| Elective | | 3 |

Term Hours: 18

Spring semester

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 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 715 | Research for Social Work Administration, Planning and Policy Practice II ¹ | 3 |
| • Clinical practice concentration | | |
| SLWK 705 | Clinical Social Work Practice II | 3 |
| SLWK 707 | Research for Clinical Social Work Practice II ¹ | 3 |
| SLWK 710 | Concentration Social Policy | 3 |

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|---------------------|---|-----------|
| SLWK 794 | Concentration Field Instruction II ¹ | 3 |
| Elective | | 3 |
| Term Hours: | | 18 |
| Total Hours: | | 72 |

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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 71.

Contact

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