

## MSW CURRICULUM: COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

**SSS 528 Human Sexuality (1)** - Examines the range of human sexual expression. Explores sexual issues and provides an overview for the social worker's role in counseling individuals with sex-related concerns.

**SSS 539 Military Culture: Implications for Practice (1)**

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a frame of reference for understanding military culture in order to prepare them to work more effectively with active duty service members, veterans, and their family members. The organization of the military will be examined along with its core values, beliefs, customs, socialization patterns, customs, gender roles, dress, language, and norms of behavior.

**SSS 545 An Introduction to the DSM 5 (1)** - Introduces students to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Although differential diagnosis is not covered, issues for social workers making diagnoses are addressed. *Prerequisite: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 551 Introduction to School Social Work: Policy, Practice, and Research (1)** –

This course provides an introduction to the role of professional social workers in a school setting as it pertains to current policy, practice, and research. It examines the school as a social system, the historic role of school social work services, and the process of integrating social work values and ethics in a school setting. Special emphasis is placed on supporting the mission of education while maintaining one's professional identity in a host setting as well as giving voice to the professional social work viewpoint on multidisciplinary school teams.

**SSS 553 Basic Budgeting and Accounting for Social Workers (1)** - Social workers are often responsible for the budget administration of a project; they also write grants and contracts, and manage agencies or programs. This course provides students with basic information about financial tools. Students have the opportunity to practice interpreting fiscal reports and to prepare a budget.

**SSS 554 Homelessness: Individual and Societal Considerations (1)**- Students study the root causes of homelessness: the shortage of low income housing, deinstitutionalization without mental health treatment and support in the community, the scarcity of healthcare for the poor, and the economic factors which contribute to the feminization of poverty.

**SSS 557 Catholic Social Thought and Contemporary Social Issues (1)** - This course focuses on selected issues in Catholic social thought and its implementation through service and action. Participants focus on contemporary social issues and analyze various positions from the perspective of the Social Encyclicals and the Pastoral Statements of the United States Catholic Bishops.

**SSS 570 Diversity in a Multicultural Society (3)** - Utilizing a strengths perspective, this course examines the resilience of populations-at-risk, particularly people of color, persons with disabilities, and gays and lesbians. It focuses on diversity in a global environment, including issues of discrimination, institutional racism and economic deprivation. It intends to enhance/develop self-awareness and sensitivity for a culturally competent social work practice.

**SSS 571 Human Behavior and the Social Environment (3)** - Utilizing an ecological and systems perspective, this course examines the bio-psycho-social-spiritual human development across the life cycle. Normal development with a framework for the micro, mezzo and macro theories will be examined. Developing theories of strength and resilience, the impact of economic forces at the micro and macro levels will be emphasized.

**SSS 572 Human Development and Psychopathology (3)** – Utilizing a “life course perspective” to focus on human growth and development, this course critically analyzes pathological human behavior. It integrates and compares normal development with pathology and places an emphasis on how multiple dimensions of person and environment are influenced by time to produce unique life journeys. As in SSS 571, strength and resilience, all forms of diversity and oppression, and the impact of social and economic forces are emphasized as salient influences on life course trajectories and pathology. *Pre-requisites: 571.*

**SSS 581 Social Welfare Policy and Services I (3)** – Presents the historical and contemporary context for understanding social work practice. Students learn the values and concepts important to an understanding social policies and services within the context of historical and contemporary perspectives. Students are exposed to international perspectives on social policy and special considerations in child welfare policy.

**SSS 582 Social Welfare Policy and Services II (3)** - Teaches students how to analyze social policy, to understand the legislative and budget processes and to develop and implement advocacy strategies to effect social policy change. The course is focused on effecting policy change with and for vulnerable and stigmatized populations and issues of power and oppression are considered throughout the semester. *Pre-requisites: 581.*

**SSS 590 Social Work Research (3)** - Provides a basic understanding of the research process and methods used by social scientists. Students learn to develop a systematic approach to practice problems, to formulate specific research questions, and to select and interpret appropriate statistical techniques.

**SSS 597 Social Work with Military, Families and Veterans (3)** – Introduces students to the military culture and lifestyle, with a focus on stressors and challenges from a family perspective. Special emphasis is placed on family studies and literature emerging from Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) documenting the impact of sustained, overseas efforts of military family functioning. Students will examine the policies, programs, and services that contribute to military and veterans’

family health and well-being and will be introduced to direct practices interventions that are being used with service members, veterans, and their families.

**SSS 605 Generalist Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, & Groups (3)** - General lecture and class exercises provide the conceptual preparation for application of the generalist perspective to culturally competent social work practice with individuals, families, and treatment groups. Theory based models that follow generic social work processes provide the focus with individuals; models that integrate treatment approaches with family life cycle inform work with families; and generic group dynamics ground work with treatment groups. *Prerequisites or co-requisites: 571, 572, 581; co-requisite: 673*

**SSS 606 Generalist Social Work Practice with Groups, Organizations, and Communities (3)** - General lecture and class exercises emphasize the social work methods of intervening with mezzo groups, organizations, and communities for the purpose of social change. The focus of the course presents theories of groups, organizations and communities and offers skills in how social workers can be effective working with citizens, clients, boards of directors, committees and task forces. A number of “hands-on” problem solving experiences will be part of the course. *Prerequisites or co-requisites: 571, 572, 581, 582, 570, 590, 605; co-requisite: 674*

**SSS 611 Child Welfare Services (3)** - Explores the history of societal and organizational responses to children and families at risk of child abuse and/or neglect. Blends policy and practice perspectives to study legal issues, service options, service continuum, and ethical concerns. Reviews the casework process related to delivery of services through mandated and voluntary child welfare programs. Encourages student awareness of and participation in policy debates in relevant House and Senate committees. *Prerequisite: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 653: Attachment Theory and Neurobiology: Implications for Social Work Practice and Policy (3)** - Provides an overview of attachment theory based on contemporary neurobiological research. Attachment-informed models of practice and the policy implications of attachment research are examined, with emphasis on the prevention of relational and behavioral disorders in individuals, families, and groups. Special focus is given to the role of secure parenting, the consequences of child maltreatment, and pathology shaped by disordered attachments in children, adults, and couples. The course emphasizes the importance of attachment and right brain affect regulatory functioning as basic to healthy development across the lifespan. *Prerequisite: Foundation Year curriculum*

**SSS 655 Social Work Response to Trauma: Policy and Practice Perspectives (3)** – Provides an overview of the experiences of trauma and the current social work interventions on micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Course content covers the range of theoretical, policy and practice issues involving a wide range of traumatic experiences such as war, sexual violence, child abuse and neglect, intimate partner violence, and elder abuse. *Prerequisites: Completion of 570, 571, & 572, concurrently in Foundation FP*

**SSS 662 Death (3)** - Confronting death may cause professionals discomfort in ways that they have not been trained to identify. The purpose of this course is to examine death and grief phenomenologically, and cross-culturally, through knowledge development and self-exploration. It particularly considers the fear of death and the effect of confronting one's mortality as a professional caregiver. *Prerequisite: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 663 Treatment of Chemical Dependency (3)** - Presents different models of therapeutic intervention and modalities of treatment, covering processes from early identification through recovery and relapse prevention. Included are impact on spouse, young children, and adult children. *Pre-requisite: Concurrent enrollment in Foundation Field Placement*

**SSS 665 Theory and Models for Health Care (3)** – This course provides the theoretical orientations and practical models to guide clinical social work interventions in diverse health settings. Through lectures, invited presentations, and course assignments, student will be able to apply effective interventions based on theories and models in the context of an illness prevention and control framework. *Prerequisite: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 669 Policy to Support Practice with Troops, Veterans, and their Families (3)**  
This course will provide students with a framework for advanced policy analysis and strategies for policy change in order to support practice with troops, veterans, and their families. The course will focus on military and veteran programs and systems and will build upon the concepts and themes explored in SSS 593. The course emphasizes military culture and lifestyle and introduces students to historical policies and programs impacting veterans' health care and benefits.

**SSS 673/674 Foundation Field Instruction and Seminar I and II (3,3)** - Students are placed in field agencies under the supervision of qualified field instructors where, consistent with a generalist practice model, they provide services to clients including work with the systems which impact service delivery. Concurrent with the practicum, and drawing from the co-requisite Generalist Practice courses, the seminar provides an opportunity for students to present cases, improve assessment and problem-solving techniques, and apply theory-based concepts to their field experience. *Prerequisites or co-requisites: 570, 571, 572, 581, 582, 590; co-requisite: 605/606.*

**SSS 723 Psychodynamic Theory and Social Functioning (3)** - Provides a theoretical framework for normal personality development, as well as for pathological formation of ego defenses and their influence on social functioning. The course traces the evolution of ego theory from its founding mothers and fathers to the more contemporary theorists. *Prerequisites: 571, 572.*

**SSS 724 Cognitive Behavioral Theory and Social Functioning (3)** - Tracing the historical development of both behavioral and cognitive theories to their convergence into contemporary cognitive-behavioral theory and therapy, the course seeks to integrate concepts from both with the ecological perspective of human behavior and social

functioning. It intends to enhance the repertoire of the beginning social work practitioner with techniques from cognitive and behavioral approaches. *Prerequisites: 570, 571, 572.*

**SSS 725 Transpersonal Theory and Social Functioning (3)** - Transpersonal theory recognizes spirituality and transcendental needs as intrinsic aspects of human nature. It is based on the principle that there are powerful forces within the psyche propelling us towards greater wholeness and integration beyond the ego. The purpose of this course is to introduce transpersonal theory as a means of integrating the spiritual and psychological in explaining and changing social functioning.

*Prerequisites: 570, 571, 572.*

**SSS 731 Social Work with Couples (3)** - Provides clinical theory and practice skills for social work with couples, addressed in terms of life passages and adult development, as well as pathology. Appropriate interventions are taught. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 740 Ethical Issues in Contemporary Social Work (3)** - Drawing from philosophical and professional ethics, helps students develop skill in reflective and critical analysis of ethical dilemmas in social work practice. Considers purposes and limitations of codes of ethics. Presents a model for ethical decision making as a framework to consider issues such as self-determination and social responsibility, confidentiality and social control, life and death issues, societal responsiveness to the poor and disadvantaged and the privatization of welfare, organizational and professional values, and social justice and resource distribution. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 756 Evaluation of Social Work Practice (3)** - Introduces students to the basic theoretical and methodological concepts of practice evaluation. Topics include quantitative and qualitative assessment models, clinical measurement, single subject designs, clinical group designs, case studies, and statistical techniques. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 757 Evaluation of Social Work Programs (3)** - Introduces students to the basic theoretical and methodological concepts of program evaluation. Topics include needs assessment, program monitoring, program effectiveness and efficiency, measurement, survey and group designs, and quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 801 Clinical Social Work with Older Adults (3)** - Presents the diversities of the aging experience and its historical, and bio-psycho-social-spiritual aspects. It emphasizes primary, secondary, and tertiary levels for effective practice with elderly clients. Major theories of aging and intervention strategies are examined with special attention to at-risk populations especially older women and older minorities. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 802 Clinical Social Work with Adults (3)** - Building on the first year theoretical framework of ecological systems, the purpose of this course is to prepare the student for advanced clinical practice with individuals in diverse populations. Practice skills are primarily rooted in the explanatory and change concepts of psychodynamic theory as applicable within a multicultural context. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 803 Clinical Social Work with Adolescents & Young Adults (3)** - Prepares students for practice with the individual as she or he moves through the developmental stages of adolescence to young adulthood. Focusing on issues of identity formation and establishment of independence, the course presents psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, and systemic approaches appropriate to a diverse population of young people. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 804 Clinical Social Work with Children (3)** - Prepares students for practice with the young child as the primary unit of attention for therapeutic intervention. Against the backdrop of developmental and family systems theories, psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioral practice models incorporate techniques of play, drawing, storytelling and activity. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 821 Clinical Social Work with Families: Traditional Models (3)** - Beginning with the major schools of family therapy (structural, strategic, solution-focused, multigenerational, object relations), the course contrasts traditional with contemporary family theories and then integrates theory with practice by use of an eclectic text and tapes of master therapists. Family therapy is provided to troubled families from literary works through role-play. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 822 Clinical Social Work with Families: Strengths-Based Model (3)** - Grounded in the strengths perspective, this course prepares students to empower the families of children-at-risk to prevent placement in foster care, residential or inpatient psychiatric treatment, and juvenile detention. The course reflects both traditional social work in its emphasis on natural helping networks and work in the home and community, and contemporary solution-focused brief family therapy methods. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 831 Advanced Policy Analysis (3)** - Builds on first-year course content on the values and roots of the social work profession; the history of social welfare; contemporary social welfare policy; policy analysis; and policy advocacy. The course is designed to enable students to integrate and apply political and economic concepts to social welfare policy analysis and in making advanced arguments to influence the policy-making process. Student will learn how to obtain, organize and use relevant information to promote beneficial social change. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum*

**SSS 832 Management of Non-profit Organizations: A case study approach (3)** - Presents management theories and the various functions of management. Emphasis is placed on management as a social work method and on the conceptual, human, and

technical skills needed to manage agencies in a manner consistent with social work values and ethics. *Prerequisite: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 835 Community Organizing for Equitable Development (3)** - This course is offered to advanced curriculum students and builds on knowledge and skills gained in the foundation year in the following areas: the values and roots of the social work profession; the history of social welfare; micro and macro theory and social work practice courses, particularly the areas of group and community practice. In addition, it is intended to complement course work in social planning, research, ethics, evaluation, and nonprofit management. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 871/872 Advanced Field Instruction/Integrative Seminar, Clinical I & II (3,3)**

**SSS 873/874 Adv. Field Instruction/Seminar, Combined/Social Change I & II (3,3)**

**SSS 877/878 Adv. Field Instruction/Seminar, Health Care/Military I & II (3,3)**

Students are placed in field agencies which provide them with supervised practice experience consistent with their chosen concentration. Concurrent with the practicum, the seminar, sectioned by concentration, prepares students to integrate skills learned in academic courses with practice in the field. It provides opportunities for the sharing of student cases and/or projects. The seminar instructor directs the graduation assignment in which students implement the principles of practice or program evaluation. *Prerequisites: Foundation year curriculum; prerequisite or co-requisite: 756 or 757, and advanced year theory and practice courses.*

**The following courses offered in the doctoral program may be taken by Masters students, in the advanced year, with the permission of the instructor and MSW Program Chair.**

**SSS 880 Organizational Theory & Change (3)** An examination of organizational theories, their purposes and applications to human service systems, structures, and processes as well as theories of organizational change. Included for analysis are classic bureaucratic theory, scientific management, public organization theory, communication theory, behaviorism, and organizational development theories. Explores themes, questions, and explanatory bases of organizational theories as they relate to specific attributes of human service organizations. *Prerequisite: Foundation year curriculum.*

**SSS 886 Issues in International Social Development (3)** Lecture. Focuses on such international concerns as migration, refugees, disaster assistance, and adoption. Considers policies and programs to positively influence these problems. *Prerequisite: Foundation year curriculum*

**SSS 946 Theories of Social Justice (3)** Lecture. Examines and compares several theories of social justice, including utilitarian, egalitarian, libertarian, communitarian, and feminist approaches. Principles of equality, equity, utility, and natural rights considered from both micro and macro perspectives. Illustrations from health care; child, family, and intergenerational justice; juvenile and adult corrections; racism; gender justice; and global issues. *Prerequisite: Foundation year curriculum*