

# WELCOME TO THE HELEN BADER SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM!

This document will provide information for completing the school social work (SSW) licensure program through the MSW Program in the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare (HBSSW) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM).

All School Social Workers in Wisconsin are required to have a School Social Work License (SSW License) through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). According to Wisconsin DPI, "Each educator profession, including school social work, has established program licensure guidelines that further delineate knowledge, skills, and dispositions that must be demonstrated in order to be certified to work in Wisconsin public schools."

## WHAT IS SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK?

School social work is a specialized area of social work practice requiring training and experience that is uniquely designed to assist students in being successful and productive. School social workers in Wisconsin have a Master's Degree in Social Work (MSW), and a school social work license through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The roles and job responsibilities of school social workers vary according to the specific needs of the students and the school. School social workers work with all students, regular and special education. School social workers' practice includes assessment, crisis intervention, individual and group counseling, home visits, consultation, program development, and coordination of school and community services. School social workers provide a vital link between home-school-and community, strengthening partnerships to address barriers within the child and his/her environment that interfere with achievement. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) provides a helpful school social work practice guide which further delineates the roles and responsibilities of school social workers. See <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/pupil-services/school-social-work/contents>



The Wisconsin School Social Workers Association (WSSWA) website also provides helpful information. Students who are enrolled in a university program to obtain a school social work license in Wisconsin may obtain a one-year membership in WSSWA at no charge. See <http://wsswa.org>.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR OBTAINING A WISCONSIN SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK LICENSE?

HBSSW is an approved Wisconsin program that provide the state required “institutional endorsement” for obtaining a Wisconsin SSW license.

The following are the main requirements for obtaining this license:

1. Hold a Master’s Degree in Social Work from a CSWE Accredited Program
2. Completion of specific MSW course requirements
3. Completion of a required field practicum in a school setting
4. Completion and passing (80% or better) of the School Social Work Praxis exam, which demonstrates proficiency in the knowledge, skills and disposition required for an initial SSW educator license.

Those who complete the School Social Work Program at HBSSW will meet all of the requirements for DPI licensure.

### WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK LICENSE?

The following are the course requirements for completing the licensure program at HBSSW:

- ✓ SOC WRK 562 Child Welfare and Family Services (2 credits)
- ✓ SOC WRK 754 Child Psychopathology (2 credits) **or** SOC WRK 753 Adult Psychopathology (3 credits)
- ✓ SOC WRK 851 School Social Work Policy (3 credits)
- ✓ SOC WRK 791 School Social Work Practice (3 credits)
- ✓ SOC WRK 791 Explore Institutional Racism: School Social Work -*offered only in fall semester* (3 credits)
- ✓ Native Americans in Wisconsin – varied options for completion (1-3 credits)

- HIST 473 History of Wisconsin Native American Indians (3 credits)
- ANTHRO 213 American Indian Peoples of Wisconsin (3 credits)
- ACT 31 Workshop—Education Outreach 229-4728 (receive certificate for DPI) <https://uwm.edu/sce/courses/act-31-history-culture-and-sovereignty-rights-of-wisconsin-indians/>

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### Exceptional Education

- SOC WRK 791 Exceptional Individual: School Social Work 2 cr

Students who believe that they have completed, or are completing, any of the above coursework at another university should submit an official transcript of the courses being considered, as well as syllabi from these courses for review and approval.

### **Completion of the required field-education (500-900 hours):**

- Two semesters of graduate field work must be completed in an elementary, middle or secondary school setting under the supervision of a licensed school social worker, who will serve as the field instructor; **and**
- Two semesters of graduate field work must be completed in an agency whose major responsibility is to service children and youth. (Exceptions *may* be made for individuals who have professional experience with children and youth. This one semester *possible* exemption is determined on an individual basis.)

### Exceptions for individuals who completed an undergraduate school placement:

The following can be substituted for **one of the two** required semesters in a school setting for a graduate placement provided that the student is able to provide evidence of the required knowledge and skills required of PI 34.02, 34.04, 34.15, and the Content Guidelines for School Social Workers.

- completed an undergraduate field placement in an elementary, middle, or secondary school **and**
- were supervised by a licensed school social worker (*field instructor*), **and**

- have two final field evaluations documenting their performance by the field instructor as well as at least two written evaluations by the SCD supervisor (*field liaison*) as required by (PI 34.15 (5) (c) 3a.).

**Note:** Instructions for submitting applications for a school social work field placement can be found at [http://www4.uwm.edu/hbssw/social\\_work/field\\_work/msw\\_program.cfm](http://www4.uwm.edu/hbssw/social_work/field_work/msw_program.cfm)  
**The deadline is February 15<sup>th</sup> for a Fall semester school practicum, and September 15<sup>th</sup> for a one-semester spring semester practicum. We cannot guarantee a field placement for late applications.**

#### WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETING THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK PRAXIS EXAM?

The completion and approval of the school social work praxis exam is required by DPI for both **current and post-MSW** school social work students.

Students must pass, at 80% higher, the praxis exam, which demonstrates proficiency in school social work competencies as required for an initial educator license:

- Current MSW and Non-degree school social work students can register for the praxis exam for free, up to 2 times, within 6 months of completing their respective program (MSW or Non-degree).
- Registrations for the praxis exam beyond the 2nd attempt or after 6 months of completing the program will be charged a nominal fee of \$100.
- Post-MSW professionals looking for school social work licensure can register and take the exam for a nominal fee of \$100, each attempt.
- Once the school social work praxis exam is passed, and all other requirements are completed, UWM will provide institutional endorsement for obtaining a Wisconsin School Social Work License.
- *Please know that licensure requirements are altered or changed periodically. Individuals who return to UWM following extended delays in completing the licensure requirements will be required to meet the then-current requirements, which may include having to take additional coursework.*

#### WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR OBTAINING A WISCONSIN SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK LICENSE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AN MSW DEGREE?

If you currently have an MSW from an accredited university, but did not complete the School Social Work requirements you will need to:

- Contact Ke'Andra Hagans at [klhagans@uwm.edu](mailto:klhagans@uwm.edu) to discuss your specific situation and procedures for meeting the DPI requirements for school social work.
- Post-graduates must provide evidence (official transcript and copy of diploma) of having obtained an MSW or MSSW degree through an accredited program, and apply for admission to UWM as a Non-Degree Student. Here is the link to apply for non-degree status:  
<http://www.graduateschool.uwm.edu/students/prospective/admission/non-degree/>

### **Completion of academic course requirements:**

Please refer to a listing of the required courses on page 2 and 3 of this document. If you believe that you may have met any of these course requirements, please submit the syllabi for all courses that you would like reviewed along with a copy of your transcripts (unofficial copy is okay for this inquiry). Please mail, or email these documents to Ke'Andra Hagans at address at bottom of this document.

### **Completion of Field Education requirements:**

- Individuals with an MSW degree who did not complete a graduate field placement in a public school, a one semester (250 hour) graduate field course (SOC WRK 921) must be completed in an elementary, middle or secondary school setting under the supervision of a certified school social worker. In addition, the student must be able to provide evidence of the required knowledge and skills required of PI 34.02, 34.04, 34.15, and the Content Guidelines for School Social Workers.
- For individuals who completed MSW field work in agencies that did not provide services to children, 5 months of full-time employment as a social worker (post MSW) in a child and youth agency, or as a licensed teacher in a public or private school, can be substituted for each semester in a child and youth agency.

**Note:** Instructions for submitting applications for a school social work field placement can be found at [http://www4.uwm.edu/hbssw/social\\_work/field\\_work/msw\\_program.cfm](http://www4.uwm.edu/hbssw/social_work/field_work/msw_program.cfm)  
**The deadline is February 15<sup>th</sup> for a Fall semester school practicum, and September 15<sup>th</sup> for a one-semester spring semester practicum. We cannot guarantee a field placement for late applications.**

**WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR OUT-OF-STATE LICENSED SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS?**

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction requires that individuals who have been practicing as a school social worker in another state must obtain a school social work license in Wisconsin to meet the state requirements for this position. To discuss the specific requirements that you will need to complete, contact Ke'Andra Hagans.

- Out-of-state School Social Work License holders must provide evidence (official transcript and copy of diploma) of having obtained an MSW or MSSW degree through an accredited program, and apply for admission to UWM's program as a Non-Degree Student. Here is the link to apply for non-degree status: <http://www.graduateschool.uwm.edu/students/prospective/admission/non-degree/>
- ☐ Applicants will need to submit university transcripts, syllabi for any prior courses that may exempt the applicant from HBSSW required courses, a resume detailing prior employment, and copies of applicable field evaluations and/or employee performance evaluations.

Following the review of the submitted documents, the HBSSW School Social Work Liaison will notify the applicant of licensure requirements that still need to be completed.

#### WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS WITH A WISCONSIN DPI EMERGENCY LICENSE OR PERMIT?

Individuals who have been granted an emergency SSW license through Wisconsin DPI will be required to complete all the licensure requirements in order to obtain a regular SSW license. Wisconsin DPI regulations include specific deadlines for emergency license holders to complete all the necessary coursework and other licensing requirements. **HBSSW cannot provide institutional endorsement for any individuals who have not adhered to these requirements.** HBSSW encourages students who are completing their MSW degree to simultaneously complete all requirements for SSW licensure and to obtain a regular license rather than an emergency license.

According to DPI regulations, those who hold an emergency license and wish to complete the licensure requirements through HBSSW at UWM will be required to:

1. Enroll as a non-degree student; and
2. Take a minimum of 6 credits each year of the emergency license until all requirements for licensure are completed;
3. Pass the school social work praxis exam as explained above.

**Note:** Information about emergency licenses can be found on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website at <http://dpi.wi.gov/support/contact-educator-licensing>

**Note:** UWM's program meets the state licensing requirements, as delineated in PI 34. For additional information about the licensing requirements for Wisconsin school social workers, visit the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website at <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/pupil-services/school-social-work>.

**For further information, contact:**

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