

XIII. National Catholic School of Social Service

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History of the National Catholic School of Social Service

In 1918 the National Catholic Welfare Conference, seeking to enhance the education of relief and rehabilitation workers in Catholic social service agencies, established a service school. Graduates of the school proved to be valued employees in the burgeoning diocesan social service programs in the United States and abroad. This convinced the American bishops to call upon the National Council of Catholic Women to develop the program into a professional school of social work for women. In 1919 they formed the two-year graduate school and named it the National Catholic School of Social Service, NCSSS.

NCSSS functioned as an autonomous educational institution during its formative years, but in 1923 its independent status changed. In that year it became affiliated with The Catholic University of America, and its graduates henceforth received their master's degrees in social work from the university. In the same year, NCSSS was admitted to the organization later known as the American Association of Schools of Social Work.

The Catholic University of America, in response to requests by the diocesan director of Catholic Charities for the social work education of priests, religious and laymen, decided to establish an additional school of social work in 1934. Because NCSSS limited its enrollment to women, the new Catholic University School of Social Work was a professional school for male social workers. This school became affiliated with the American Association of Schools of Social Work in 1937.

Almost immediately the two schools began exchanging faculty, students, courses and resources, and by 1939 there was an

academic fusion. In 1947 the schools were formally merged as the National Catholic School of Social Service of The Catholic University of America.

Education toward the master's degree, MSW, was the primary mission of NCSSS at its inception, but additional degree programs have been subsequently established. The doctoral program was established in 1934 and is the third oldest in the world. Through the university's School of Arts and Sciences, an undergraduate degree program in social work was established in 1969. In 1983, NCSSS developed a graduate training program for Third World social work educators in Santiago, Chile, and graduates of the program have received The Catholic University of America degree, Master of Teaching in Social Work, MTSW. In 2007, the Master of Teaching in Social Work was initiated in the Philippines with the first 32 students awarded the MTSW in February 2009.

NCSSS began to award the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree in 2010. Beginning in the 2010-2011 academic year, all undergraduate Social Work majors have matriculated for the BSW degree in the National Catholic School of Social Service.

Program Chair: Laura G. Daugherty, Associate Professor, National Catholic School of Social Service

Mission

Derived from the mission of The Catholic University of America and that of the social work profession, the mission of the National Catholic School of Social Service is to educate students from diverse faiths and cultures who in their professional endeavors will embody the values of social justice, service, and scholarship. This mission is grounded in the justice and charity foundation of Catholic social teachings and the tradition of a modern university that welcomes all forms of human inquiry.

In support of its mission, NCSSS has established the following goals:

1. To advance knowledge, values, and competencies through the development, application, and dissemination of theory and research relevant to the social work profession.
2. To serve and empower vulnerable, oppressed, and impoverished people and communities.
3. To promote social and economic justice and individual and societal well-being in the context of The Catholic University of America, the social work profession, and the needs of the local, national, and global communities.

Goals of the BSW Program

Derived from both the mission of NCSSS and the university, the baccalaureate program has established eight goals:

1. Integrate a broad liberal arts perspective with social work education and field education.
2. Prepare beginning level social workers for generalist social work practice in a variety of settings and with diverse client populations.
3. Develop competent social work practitioners who are steeped in respect for human diversity and in the values and ethics of the social work profession.
4. Provide content that prepares students to become critical consumers of social work research and active participants in research efforts applicable to generalist social work practice.
5. Provide content that enables students to recognize the dynamics of oppression and discrimination on all populations, with a special emphasis on populations-at-risk.
6. Prepare generalist practitioners to use theories of human behavior and theories of human growth and development in order to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
7. Challenge students to develop a deep commitment to the promotion of social and economic justice: the elimination of poverty, discrimination, and oppression in the context of the tradition of Catholic social teachings and the mission of The Catholic University of America.
8. Prepare social work practitioners to analyze current social policy, critique federal, state, and local agency social programs; and examine them in the context of American social welfare history and contemporary society.

Program in Social Work

The undergraduate program in social work prepares students for beginning professional practice in the field of social work and prepares them for graduate school. The required social work courses are taught by faculty of the NCSSS. The baccalaureate program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

Admission

Students may enter the undergraduate social work program as first year students and as sophomores. For students wishing to transfer to NCSSS from within CUA, students must:

1. Have at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (after admission into the social work program, students are required to

maintain a 2.7 average in the major).

2. Have earned at least a C grade in each social work course previously taken.
3. Have taken the following required courses: (a) a course in public speaking (DR 102, 403 or 205), (b) an introductory level course in biology (BIOL 103), and (c) a statistics course.

Student Transfer Policy

All students transferring from other accredited social work programs must meet the distribution requirements and work with the university's transfer credit coordinator to determine which credits can be transferred. After acceptance into the university and careful assessment by NCSSS, students majoring in social work may transfer up to 21 social work credits from a CSWE-accredited undergraduate social work program. These credits may include content from Introductory Social Work, Human Behavior, Social Work Policy, Research Methods, and one three-credit elective. All course syllabi submitted for transfer consideration will be reviewed before a final decision is made by the BSW program chair. All theory and practice coursework, field practicum/internships and comprehensive seminar coursework must be completed at the National Catholic School of Social Service. Courses to be transferred into CUA toward the social work major must have been completed within the past seven years.

Advanced Standing

Graduates of social work baccalaureate programs accredited by CSWE may apply for consideration for "advanced standing" status. Individualized education contracts are developed with the applicant, indicating the number of semester hours to be waived (not to exceed thirty semester hours). Additional courses beyond thirty semester hours may be required.

Qualified social work majors may apply for advanced standing within NCSSS and should consult with the Director of Admissions on admission policy during their senior year.

The criteria for advanced standing status at NCSSS include:

1. A bachelor's degree in social work from a CSWE accredited program (received within five years of enrollment in the MSW Program); course descriptions submitted as part of the admissions packet;
2. A cumulative average of at least 3.5 in the social work courses of the undergraduate program;
3. A cumulative average of at least 3.2 in all courses applied toward the bachelor's degree;
4. A minimum of B in each social work course to be considered for waiving of credit;
5. A recommendation from the chair of the undergraduate program, explicitly supporting admission directly to the advanced year of the MSW program, as one of the three reference letters;
6. An undergraduate practicum experience that is comparable to that expected in NCSSS foundation practicum, as evidenced in the final field evaluation. Applicants should submit their first semester field evaluation with their application prior to receipt of their final field evaluation.

Academic Requirements

The National Catholic School of Social Service affirms its right to require its students to meet accepted academic requirements that consist of scholastic and behavioral components. Consistent with Catholic social teaching and social work values, NCSSS respects the worth and value of all persons regardless of age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin, handicapping conditions, or diversity of opinion. Students' behavior should reflect the core values of the social work profession: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. Standards for professional performance require that students adhere to ethical standards as outlined in the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics. Please refer to NCSSS Bachelor of Arts in Social Work Student Handbook for specific scholastic and behavioral requirements and for information on review committees.

Curriculum

The curriculum is designed to prepare students for (1) direct entry into social work practice, under supervision, in public welfare agencies, general and mental health hospitals, courts and probation departments, family and children's services agencies, neighborhood and community agencies, and other settings; (2) graduate social work education; and (3) participation and leadership in the community to benefit the most disadvantaged.

Students begin learning about social welfare and social work in the introductory courses through reading, research projects, and field observation. They are encouraged to seek opportunities in the community to explore their interests in social work through volunteer and service learning opportunities. During the second semester of the junior year, students spend four hours each week observing in community social welfare agencies in a supervised field education practicum. During the senior year, all students spend two days each week in community social welfare agencies in a supervised field education practicum. This practicum enables students to test theories and develop beginning skills in the practice of social work.

Distribution requirements for the baccalaureate degree must be fulfilled. Students should consult their adviser for specific courses that are recommended within the distribution requirements. The requirements are as follows:

1. Philosophy. Four courses, including PHIL 201 and 202 and one additional course in each of these two areas: Logic, Morality, and Action; and Nature Knowledge, and God. (For courses within each area, consult the Program in Philosophy section of these Announcements.)
2. Theology and Religious Studies. Three courses, including TRS 201. For specific information, including courses in designated areas, consult the TRS Undergraduate Program website.
3. English Composition. ENG 101 (or 103 for non-native speakers), with grade of C- or higher.
4. Humanities. Three courses, including English 326 and DR 205.
5. Language and Literature. Four courses: two courses at the intermediate level (103-104) in an ancient or modern foreign language; and two courses in ancient or modern literature (including literature in English).
6. Mathematics and Natural Science. Four courses, including an approved statistics class and BIO 103; at least two of the four must be in the same department.
7. Social and Behavioral Sciences. Four courses, at least two of which must be in the same department.

Students majoring in social work are required to take the major and support courses diagrammed in the *NCSSS Baccalaureate Student Handbook*. Some courses may be substituted or added with the permission of the program chair. However, no credit is given for life or previous work experience, in whole or part, in lieu of the field practicum or of the courses in the professional foundation specified by the Curriculum Policy Statement of the Council on Social Work Education.

Distribution electives are to be taken during the freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior years. These electives should be chosen from the areas of sociology, psychology, anthropology, history, politics, and economics. The student and adviser may determine other electives that are appropriate.

Students should choose a social work elective and distribution electives that complement their area of interest, because social workers holding the baccalaureate degree have a variety of employment opportunities open to them. They work with children in foster and adoptive homes and shelters and day care centers; with teenagers and young adults; with community leaders, groups, and self-help organizations; with the physically disabled as part of a health and rehabilitation team; with families experiencing difficulties; and with the aged in recreational and care centers and in their homes and communities.

Field Education

Undergraduate field education enables students to apply theories learned in the classroom and develop the generalist skills in the practice of social work. Field education provides an opportunity for students to put into practice the knowledge, principles, values and skills that are essential as the foundation for social work. This learning experience is planned to be a generalist one in order to prepare graduates either to work under supervision in a variety of social work settings or to continue on to graduate social work education.

Each student will have the opportunity for an introductory social work field experience in the second semester of the junior year and a supervised field internship experience in both semesters of the senior year. All field education is taken concurrently with social work practice courses (SSS 352 in the junior year and SSS 453 and SSS 454 in the senior year.)

The junior year field practicum consists of an eight-hour-per-week supervised observational experience in a social service agency in the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area. Discussion about the experience occurs in the first practice course. Students earn four credit hours for the practice course (SSS 352).

In the senior year, the student is assigned a field placement in one of the approved field placement agencies in the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area. During the 16 hours/week supervised internship experience, students gain practice experience with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations using a range of intervention modalities. Students are required to complete a minimum of 480 hours over the course of the academic year. While in the field, students are enrolled in SSS 465 and SSS 466, Undergraduate Concurrent Field Education Seminar I and II, which serves as a yearlong Integrative Seminar. Students earn four credit hours each semester for the senior practicum and integrative seminar combined. In addition, they earn three credit hours each semester for the senior year practice courses SSS 453 and SSS 454, which are taken concurrently.

Grades for field education are based on the recommendations of the field instructor with the final grade assigned by the Seminar Instructor. Agencies and students are expected to arrange field learning experiences so they are in harmony with the academic calendar. Students in junior and senior year field placements are required to pay an additional fee for malpractice insurance.

Senior Comprehensive Assessment

In the Program in Social Work, the senior comprehensive assessment required by the university takes the form of a senior comprehensive paper. By university regulations, students receive pass, fail, or pass with honors on the comprehensive. The comprehensive is designed to allow students to integrate content from their social work courses as well as their liberal arts education. A student who fails to pass the senior comprehensive assessment must repeat the assessment, no earlier than 60 days

following the most recent failure, until it is passed. No student may receive an undergraduate degree from the School of Arts and Sciences until the senior comprehensive assessment is satisfactorily completed.

Courses Offered

A full listing of undergraduate courses offered by the National Catholic School of Social Service can be found below. Consult [Cardinal Station](#) for additional information about courses and to determine course offerings by semester.

SSS	101	Introduction to Social Work
SSS	150DTR	Transfer Credit Distribution
SSS	150MTR	Transfer Credit Concentration
SSS	151DTR	Transfer Credit Distribution
SSS	151MTR	Transfer Credit Concentration
SSS	152DTR	Transfer Credit Distribution
SSS	152MTR	Transfer Credit Concentration
SSS	153DTR	Transfer Credit Distribution
SSS	223	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I
SSS	225	Human Behavior and the Social Environment II
SSS	301	Soc Welfare Policy & Progr
SSS	302	Social Welfare Policy I
SSS	303	Social Welfare Policy II
SSS	326	Diversity in a Multicultural Society
SSS	340	Social Work Research and Statistics I
SSS	341	Social Work Research & Statistics II
SSS	352	Social Work Practice I
SSS	453	Social Work Practice II
SSS	454	Social Work Practice III
SSS	465	Undergraduate Concurrent Field Instruction I
SSS	466	Undergraduate Concurrent Field Instruction II
SSS	490	Coordinating Seminar
SSS	493A	Reading and Research in Social Work
SSS	493B	Reading and Research in Social Work
SSS	493C	Reading and Research in Social Work
SSS	498	Undergraduate Comprehensive Examination