

SW-Social Work Courses

Courses

SW 100. Introduction to Social Work. 3 Hours.

This course introduces students to the value-based profession of social work. Students will have the opportunity to learn about social work's history, mission, professional values and theoretical frameworks (e.g., the systems/ecological perspective). Furthermore, students will explore areas in anti-racist, diverse, equitable, and inclusive generalist practice and the varied roles and responsibilities of the social work profession. Students will be afforded the opportunity to examine their own personal values and how those values influence their views on social welfare problems and issues. This course satisfies the Blazer Core Humans and Their Societies requirement and Justice flag.

SW 200. Communication for Professional Helping. 3 Hours.

This course introduces professional writing techniques for social work and other helping practitioners. The course is designed to enhance professional and academic writing skills. Students will study how to craft narratives for case notes, assessments, advocacy materials and funding proposals focused on creating social change and promoting equity and justice for marginalized communities. Students will also gain proficiency in APA style and develop digital communication skills, learning to navigate technology platforms essential for professional practice, such as word processing, presentation tools, and social media for outreach and client engagement. This is a writing-intensive course.

SW 207. Racism, Sexism and Other Isms. 3 Hours.

The content of this course is intended to help students understand from the perspective of social justice, inclusion, and human rights that the dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors, including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Students will examine both the biases in society and their own biases in relating to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups such as minorities, aged, women, LGTBQ+, and disabled persons.

SW 208. Disaster Preparedness. 3 Hours.

This course provides a multi-disciplinary perspective on aspects of disaster preparedness and response utilizing an all-hazards approach. Content covers natural and man-made disasters, current thoughts on disaster preparedness and planning, and local, state and federal response networks and organizations. Students acquire fundamental knowledge of responding to disaster victims, including sheltering, mass care, case management, basic crisis intervention and psychological first aid. This course does not cover international issues.

SW 222. Skills and Values for Professional Helping. 3 Hours.

This course offers an introduction to the helping profession of social work, emphasizing core values and ethics that guide professional helping practice. Through classroom learning and service learning opportunities, students explore principles of self-awareness, professionalism, and ethical practice decision-making. The course fosters critical reflection on professional values that advance social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. As a foundational course, it is required for students seeking admission to the professional social work program.

SW 244. Trauma-Informed Care. 3 Hours.

This course provides an introduction to and overview of working with individuals and communities who have experienced trauma. Throughout this course, students will learn to recognize the presence of trauma symptoms, acknowledge the role trauma may play in an individual's life, and learn how to provide professional trauma-informed care. In addition, students will be introduced to the use of motivational interviewing as a method of supporting and treating trauma survivors.

SW 277. Social Justice in the City. 3 Hours.

This course examines the intersecting factors of oppression, marginalization, and inequality as they manifest in cities, focusing on how these issues impact vulnerable populations, including children, immigrants, the homeless, elders, and racial/ethnic/sexual minority groups. Emphasis is on exploring the complexities of urban life, the structural roots of inequality, and the role of social policies, planning, and community strategies in promoting equity and justice. Students will analyze current and historical data, evaluate the effectiveness of different social justice strategies, and propose innovative solutions to reduce disparities and enhance community well-being. This course emphasizes the practical application of social justice principles in urban settings, preparing students to become effective advocates for change.

SW 278. Special Topics in Social Work. 3 Hours.

Issues of current interest in social work practice, policy, and research, emphasizing human rights for at-risk populations. Irregularly offered course. Varies in content. May be repeated for credit but the topic may not be repeated.

SW 302. Social Welfare Policy Analysis. 3 Hours.

This course introduces analytical frameworks with which to evaluate contemporary U.S. social welfare policy. It is designed for students with basic knowledge of the history of social welfare and how it has evolved over time. The course also examines the relationship between current policy and the practice of social work today. Additionally explored is the real-world impact of current policy on the well-being of individuals and communities within a social justice, inclusion, human rights, and anti-oppression context.

SW 315. Human Behavior and Social Environment. 3 Hours.

This course examines the interrelationships between the individual, family, small groups, organizations and the community. Special attention is given to diversity, cultural sensitivity, oppression and discrimination.

SW 320. Social Work Research I. 3 Hours.

This course introduces students to research theory, methods and tools through the standpoint of social justice, human rights, inclusion, and diversity. Qualitative and Quantitative research methodologies, sampling, data collection, and data analysis, as well as skills in critiquing research studies, will be taught in the context of ethical standards governing evaluation and research as set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics.

SW 321. Social Work Research II. 3 Hours.

This course advances students to research theory, methods and tools through the standpoint of social justice, human rights, inclusion, and diversity. This course provides the context for understanding the analysis and interpretation of quantitative data as well as the application of findings from research. Specific research methodology concepts will be covered. Students will have an opportunity to develop a project that will apply these concepts and practice.

Prerequisites: SW 320 [Min Grade: C]

SW 322. Social Work Practice I. 3 Hours.

This course focuses on generalist social work practice with individuals and families, providing students with the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills, values, and competence needed for intervention and prevention at the beginning professional level. Students will learn how to engage, assess, intervene and evaluate client systems and constituents using anti-racist, equitable, and inclusive generalist practice. This course must be taken at UAB and admission to the BSSW Professional Program is required. Transfer credits will not be accepted for this course. Must be concurrently taken with SW 322L Social Work Service Learning Lab I.

Prerequisites: SW 222 [Min Grade: C]

SW 322L. Social Work Service-Learning Lab I. 1 Hour.

This lab course introduces students to working with individual and family client systems through service learning experiences and simulation opportunities. The lab integrates volunteering and observation with critical reflection, professionalism, and ethical practice, focusing on raising awareness about social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. Must be concurrently taken with SW 322 Social Work Practice I. This course must be taken at UAB. Transfer credits will not be accepted for this course.

SW 339. Practice in Child Welfare Settings. 3 Hours.

This course addresses perpetuating issues that children face in today's interconnected and complex society and identifies possible intervention strategies. This course will also identify contemporary trends in service delivery and relevant policy issues concerning the health and well-being of diverse and vulnerable children. Students will have the opportunity to examine inequality in the child welfare system.

SW 340. Practice with Maternal and Child Health Populations. 3 Hours.

This course provides students with a working knowledge of the maternal and child health (MCH) population in the United States, emerging health issues, and social determinants that can affect individual and family long-term outcomes. Topics covered include the history of maternal and child health and emerging health issues across women, perinatal/infant health, child health, adolescent health, and children and youth with special health care needs, with special attention given to application in social work practice. Students will learn about the concept of health disparities and social determinants of health, and how health disparities and social determinants of health can affect women and families across the lifespan.

SW 378. Special Topics in Social Work. 3 Hours.

Issues of current interest in social work practice, policy, and research, emphasizing human rights for at-risk populations. Irregularly offered course. Varies in content. May be repeated for credit but topic may not be repeated.

SW 422. Social Work Practice II. 3 Hours.

This course focuses on the generalist social work practice with groups, communities and organizations, providing students with the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills, values and competence needed for intervention and prevention at the beginning professional level. Students will learn how to engage, assess, intervene and evaluate client systems and constituents using anti-racist, equitable, and inclusive generalist practice. This course must be taken at UAB. Transfer credits will not be accepted for this course. Must be taken concurrently with SW 422L Social Work Service Learning Lab II.

Prerequisites: SW 322 [Min Grade: C] or (SW 322 [Min Grade: C] and SW 322L [Min Grade: C])

SW 422L. Social Work Service-Learning Lab II. 1 Hour.

This lab course offers an introduction to working with groups, communities and organizations through service learning experiences and/or simulation opportunities. The lab integrates volunteering and observation with critical reflection, professionalism, and ethical practice, focusing on raising awareness about social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. Must be concurrently taken with SW 422 Social Work Practice II. This course must be taken at UAB. Transfer credits will not be accepted for this course.

SW 426. Practice in Medical & Health-Based Settings. 3 Hours.

This course provides an introduction to and overview of working with people called "patients" in medical and health-based settings. Through this course, students will obtain a basic understanding of how to effectively assist individuals, groups, families, and communities impacted by various illnesses. The role of the social worker on the care team in various settings will be examined. The course also examines special population groups, resource allocation, service delivery, and legal and ethical considerations.

SW 427. Mental Health & Patient Advocacy. 3 Hours.

This course teaches students the criteria used in assessing mental disorders in children and adults. Students become familiar with selected theories and research regarding the etiology of mental disorders. The impact of these disorders on the client, the client's family, and the community are then discussed, and opportunities for patient advocacy are covered. Students also learn the potential for bias that can result when one applies assessment tools across cultural, ethnic, racial and other groups.

SW 428. Medical and Mental Health Social Work. 3 Hours.

This course provides an introduction to and overview of working with people called "patients" in medical and mental health settings, utilizing culturally relevant perspectives and anti-oppressive practices. Through this course, students will obtain a basic understanding of how to effectively assist vulnerable individuals, groups, families, and communities impacted by various illnesses. The role of the social worker on the care team in various settings will be examined, including collaboration, case management, advocacy and leadership. The course also examines special population groups, resource allocation, service delivery, and legal and ethical considerations.

SW 452. Birmingham Neighborhood Studies. 3 Hours.

This course explores the culture, history, and urban development of four Birmingham neighborhoods in transition. It emphasizes community engagement through active study of Birmingham's historic neighborhoods. Students will study and learn about the history of select Birmingham neighborhoods from different theoretical lens and a social justice perspective; examine artifacts and documents, and engage and collaborate with community members to develop written and creative projects. This course requires significant time spent off-campus in the Birmingham community, and field trips during class time. Field trip permissions must be completed.

SW 453. Practice with Aging Populations. 3 Hours.

The purpose of this course is to educate the student to work effectively with diverse older adults in a variety of settings. The course will blend lecture and experiential learning to prepare social workers for clinic work and collaboration with older adults. Students will explore biases about aging, how health and behavior health circumstances change of the lifespan, end of life issues, cultural competency, and how to effectively advocate in partnership with or on behalf of older adults. The course will allow students to explore the concerns of older adults from both a micro and macro perspective and will address cultural factors regarding aging. There will be opportunities to explore community resources and improve interview skills. Students will be encouraged to work as a team to explore resources as a way of improving their collaborative skills.

SW 454. Working in Addiction and Recovery. 3 Hours.

This course examines the impact of substance use disorder on individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities from a holistic, anti-oppressive orientation, considering the client in relation to the environment and the structural factors that contribute to the use, misuse and abuse of psychoactive drugs. This course is recommended for students who want to expand their knowledge and sensitivity to understanding the special problems that substance use disorder brings to society. Course content includes identification of the various drugs of abuse, major theories of addiction, and examination of the psychological and physiological consequences of substance use disorder.

SW 478. Special Topics in Social Work. 3 Hours.

Issues of current interest in social work practice, policy, and research. Irregularly offered course, emphasizing human rights for at-risk populations. Varies in content. May be repeated for credit but topic may not be repeated.

SW 490. Practicum in Social Work. 9 Hours.

This course will prepare students for generalist social work practice by integrating social work knowledge and values with the application of professional helping skills. Students will complete a 400-hour field practicum placement at an approved social service agency under the supervision of a practicing social worker. Students will have the opportunity to work in agencies that provide services to diverse and vulnerable populations and apply evidence-informed interventions with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. This is taken concurrently with SW 494. This course must be taken at UAB. Transfer credits will not be accepted for this course.

Prerequisites: (SW 422 [Min Grade: C]) or (SW 422 [Min Grade: C] and SW 422L [Min Grade: C])

SW 494. Practicum Seminar. 3 Hours.

This capstone course is an integrative seminar that must be taken concurrently with SW 490 (Practicum in Social Work). Seminar provides opportunities for students to process their field experiences and reinforce their practice skills and values, connecting the competency-based knowledge gained in the classroom with the application in the field. The seminar also serves as an open forum for students to self-assess, discuss, and reflect on anti-racist, diverse, equitable, and inclusive generalist practice for all client systems. This course must be taken at UAB. Transfer credits will not be accepted for this course.

SW 496. Social Work Honors Seminar. 3 Hours.

Special seminar for social work honors students. Prerequisite: Admission to the Social Work Honors Program and permission of the Social Work Honors Program Director.

SW 498. Honors Independent Study I. 1-3 Hour.

This course provides opportunities for Honors students to initiate their research project and receive one-on-one mentorship. This independent study is required for all Social Work Honors students. Instructor's permission is required. Course may be repeated.

SW 499. Independent Study II. 1-3 Hour.

This course provides opportunities for student to pursue their specific interests in social issues and topics. Students will work closely with a faculty member to design readings, assignments, and/or activities to meet their learning goals. Instructor's permission is required.