SOCIAL WORK, M.S.W.

Millersville and Shippensburg universities are jointly offering a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree program to prepare students to work in a variety of human service programs and agencies in an advanced clinical and/or administrative capacity. The flexibility of the social work degree provides graduates with many options as they pursue their careers in helping fields.

All required courses are offered in the late afternoon or evening. Elective courses will primarily be offered in the evening and occasionally on Saturdays.

Dual Degrees

MSW + MSEM

A dual-degree option is available for students in the MSW program who wish to also obtain a Master of Social Work and Master of Science in Emergency Management. Students seeking a dual degree in MSW/MSEM will need to complete the full curriculum in the MSW program (which is 36 or 60 credits). Students will learn emerging trends in emergency prevention, response and recovery; gain knowledge and skills related to emergency-management response; and develop ways to address secondary trauma individuals may experience after emergencies.

Learning Objectives

- Provide an understanding of the social nature of natural hazards and disasters.
- Give students knowledge of the social factors affecting disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, and 24 additional unique credits within the MSEM program.
- Reveal unfounded myths about human behavior in disasters.
- Increase awareness of hazards and disasters around the world and the unequal social consequences stemming from disasters.
- Provide an awareness of opportunities for policy adjustments and applications of research findings.
- Highlight social work values and ethics in examining the consequences of disasters as they relate to race, ethnicity, national origin, class, gender, physical or mental disability, mental illness and age.

MSW + MEd in Sports Management

A dual-degree option in MSW/M.Ed. in sport management will need to complete the full curriculum in the MSW program (which is 36 or 60 credits). Students will learn emerging trends in working with athletes of all levels, in clinical and counseling settings; gain knowledge and skills related to athletic program and/or venue management; and develop methodologies to work with athletes in a number of areas – for example, career counseling, life skills development, substance-abuse prevention, advocacy, recruitment and transitioning to a post-athletic career.

Learning Objectives

- Provide an understanding of the need for social workers in athletic settings.
- Give students knowledge of the social factors affecting athletes of all levels, develop skills to administer and develop athletic programs or facilities, and 24 additional unique credits within the M.Ed. in sport management program.
- Discuss current perceptions of student-athletes.
- Increase awareness of the issues regarding athletes and sport management.
- Provide an awareness of opportunities for policy adjustments and applications of research findings.
- Highlight social work values and ethics in examining the issues of professional and amateur athletes as they relate to race, ethnicity, national origin, class, gender, physical or mental disability, mental illness and age. Students will have the opportunity to complete three internships while in the program, two with a social work focus and one with a sport management focus.

Mission

The mission of the joint Millersville-Shippensburg MSW program is to provide accessible social work graduate education in the South Central region of Pennsylvania. We prepare students to be effective advanced generalist practitioners committed to the purpose and values of the social work profession.

Goals

1. Prepare students for competent advanced generalist practice through the acquisition and demonstration of social work practice behaviors consistent with the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) educational policy and accreditation standards.
2. Prepare students with the specialized knowledge and skills for social work practice with client systems to resolve problems and facilitate change within the boundaries of ethical practice, and with attention to the profession’s commitment to social justice and human rights.
3. Encourage students’ commitment to continued professional development and lifelong learning by providing opportunities for community engagement and real-life learning experiences.

Accreditation

The Millersville-Shippensburg MSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). In February 2014, the CSWE reaffirmed and extended the program’s accreditation until February 2022. The accreditation validates that the program meets national standards for social work education as determined by experts in the field. Practitioners must have graduated from a CSWE-accredited social work MSW program to be eligible to apply for licensure in Pennsylvania.

Admission Classifications

The program is designed both for students who have no previous social work education and for those who want to build upon their baccalaureate social work education. Students will be admitted full- or part-time.

Applicants may apply for regular-standing admission or for advanced-standing admission. Regular-standing admission is for students who completed a baccalaureate degree with a major from other than a CSWE-accredited social work program, and for students who graduated from a CSWE-accredited social work program but do not meet the GPA requirements for advanced standing. Applicants may apply for advanced standing admission if they have graduated from a CSWE-accredited social work program and meet the GPA requirements as described in the admission guidelines.

Admission Guidelines

Candidates may choose to apply through either Millersville or Shippensburg University. Applicants for regular-standing admission must have a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 2.8 on a 4.0 scale from a regionally accredited undergraduate institution. In exceptional
cases, applicants who lack the required grade-point average but whose other qualifications are outstanding may be admitted on a probational basis. Applicants admitted on probation must earn grades of B or higher in the first 12 credits.

Applicants for advanced-standing admission must have earned a baccalaureate degree within the last eight years from a CSWE-accredited social work program with an overall GPA of 3.0 and a major GPA of 3.25 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

Students who graduated with a baccalaureate degree from a CSWE-accredited social work program who are not eligible for advanced standing may be eligible for exemptions from first-year foundation courses other than practice and field instruction in which they have earned a grade of B or higher within the past eight years. Exemptions will reduce the total number of credits a student must earn to graduate. The Admissions Committee will send a letter notifying the applicant of the exemptions.

Students who do not otherwise qualify for advanced-standing status may be exempted from certain foundation courses under strict guidelines as outlined in this section. Students may not be exempt from practice or field placement coursework. With the exception of practice and field instruction courses, students who earned a grade of B or higher within the past eight years in courses that were part of a CSWE-accredited social work program are eligible for exemptions from first-year foundation courses with similar content.

All applicants with less than a 2.8 GPA must submit an official Miller Analogies Test (MAT) or general Graduate Record Exam (GRE) score report completed within the past five years as part of the admissions process.

Applicants must evidence a combination of professional and personal experiences, qualities and values that are considered essential for the practice of social work. A current résumé is required. Three professional references are required, with a minimum of one from faculty and one from a current or recent agency employer or supervisor. Applicants for advanced standing are required to submit an additional reference from the department chair of their undergraduate program. Applicants will complete a written personal statement. Application forms are available on the graduate studies website, www.millersville.edu/apply/graduate (http://www.millersville.edu/apply/graduate/). The program may request a personal interview or additional information about an applicant when necessary to make a fully informed admissions decision.

Persons who have a criminal record are not eligible to work in some human service fields. Applicants with criminal records should contact the MSW program director for additional information.

Students must demonstrate that they have successfully completed coursework with significant content in human biology, economics, U.S. federal or state and local government, psychology, sociology/anthropology and statistics. Applicants can be admitted with up to two course deficiencies. These course deficiencies must be completed by the end of the foundation year (30 credits) of the MSW program for regular admission, or before SOWK 630 Advanced Field Practicum 1 for advanced-standing admission.

Students may receive or transfer credit for up to nine credit hours earned at other regionally accredited institutions prior to admission. Graduate credits earned more than five years prior to admission do not qualify for transfer. Students may only transfer credits if they are in good standing in those schools. Courses must be listed on an official transcript with a B or higher. Condensed one-week graduate courses do not qualify for transfer.

With advance permission of the faculty advisor, program co-coordinator and dean of graduate studies and research, and as part of a planned program, a student may transfer credits from other graduate programs at Millersville University or Shippensburg University. Forms for the approval process of transfer of credits are available at www.millersville.edu/gps/studentlife (http://www.millersville.edu/gps/studentlife/). The program does not grant academic credit for life or work experience.

Degree Requirements

Students with regular-standing admission must complete 60 credits of graduate study, including 42 credit hours of required coursework, 12 credit hours of field practicum and 6 credit hours of electives. BSW graduates with regular admission status may receive exemption for some coursework, as per admission guidelines.

Students with advanced-standing admission must complete 36 credits of graduate study, including 18 credit hours of required coursework, including a summer “bridge” course, nine credit hours of field practicum and nine credit hours of electives.

All courses must be taken in sequence. The 60-credit program can be completed in two years full-time (four courses a semester) or four years part-time (two courses a semester). The 36-credit program can be completed in one year full-time or two years part-time. Both programs are year-round, with each new cohort starting in the summer term.

Degree Candidacy

A formal admission to the degree candidacy process takes place after a minimum of 12 credits have been completed. Millersville-Shippensburg MSW faculty members evaluate students to determine if they have the potential for completing the requirements of the social work program. Qualifications are based on academic performance in line with University standards and demonstrated ethical behavior, values and commitment to social work as a career. The social work faculty has the right to dismiss from the program at any time students found not qualified for social work practice.