Social Work | Major

“The Social Work Department at Alvernia has prepared me to work in various aspects of social work. My fellow students and I have learned and participated in classes and activities that will follow us through our professional lives. We have helped people in the local community and we have advocated for change. We have values, beliefs, and experiences that are all different, but together we have one commonality—Alvernia University is where we began to grow in capacities we could never fathom.” —Meghan McGlone ’09, Reading, PA

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS IN BRIEF

The Social Work program, which is accredited by The Council on Social Work Education, provides educational courses and experiences to assist students in their exploration of this discipline. This major prepares students for entry-level positions in the generalist social work profession and for graduate studies. In addition, the Social Work program’s accreditation allows students to pursue an expedited curriculum to earn their master’s degree. Courses in social welfare, policy, practice, human behavior, children services and older adult services, combined with research and field practicums in social work agencies, provide students with the opportunity to integrate classroom and work experiences focusing on helping individuals, families, communities, organizations and institutions.

Junior Social Work students intern 8 hours per week at social service agencies. This hands-on experience offers the student classroom credit. Senior field placement calls for the student to complete 16 hours per week at another social service agency. The student will receive classroom credit and valuable field experience. The field placement program provides students with three semesters of professional experience under the supervision of a social work professional. The Social Work Department tailors the student’s field placement to the student’s interests.

Sophomores who are in good academic standing may apply for a block field placement in Washington, DC. In the last semester of the senior year the student lives and works with students from all over the country. These students are placed in agencies that give varied experiences including and not limited to policy, child welfare, aging and mental health.

Students from other academic disciplines are invited to register for SW 201 - Introduction to Social Work. This is a basic course that is advantageous to those pursuing teaching, nursing, occupational therapy, addiction studies, criminal justice, psychology and other disciplines whereby the students will be working closely with people and the problems they encounter.

STUDENT CLUB & ORGANIZATIONS

Social Work Club: The purpose of the Social Work Club is to enhance professional growth in the human service field and to promote a greater understanding of the social work profession throughout the college community. Social Work majors are encouraged to participate in the club activities; however, membership is open to all students of the university.

Phi Alpha Honor Society: The Social Work Department of Alvernia University was granted a chapter charter in the Phi Alpha National Honor Society under the name of Zeta Upsilon. The purpose of this organization is to provide closer bond among students of social work, and to enter into a more intimate fellowship with those dedicated to the promotion of humanitarian goals and ideals by a professional group for which quality educational preparation is deemed imperative. Students and faculty involved in social work at Alvernia University resolve to sponsor a Chapter of Phi Alpha National Honor Society, thereby to foster high standards of education for social work and to invite into membership those who have attained academic excellence of a 3.0 (4.0 scale) overall grade point average.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW): The Social Work Department of Alvernia University has a strong affiliation with NASW. The NASW is the largest membership association for professional social workers. They work to enhance the professional growth and development of social workers, to create and maintain social work standards and to advance sound social policies.

CAREER SUCCESS

The employment of social workers is expected to increase by 22% during the 2006-2016 decade, which is faster than the average for all occupations. Social work graduates readily find positions; our current employment rate is approximately 99%. Many times students find employment within the agency where they completed...
undergraduate practicums. Areas of social work employment include child welfare, geriatrics, the medical field, mental health and individuals with intellectual disabilities, housing, criminal justice, rehabilitation and other institutions that focus on the well-being of those within our society. Alvernia University’s Career Services staff provides assistance with resume preparation, interview skills and job and graduate school searches.

**CAREER OPPORTUNITIES**

Addiction Prevention/Rehabilitation Counselor  
Government Human Service  
Agency Director  
Home Health Care Agencies  
Case Worker  
Hospice  
Child/Family Counseling  
Intellectually Challenged  
Child Welfare Worker  
Mental Health Rehabilitation  
Criminal Justice Prevention/Rehabilitation  
Nursing Home Social Work  
Crisis Intervention Worker  
Religious and Ethnic Work  
Department of Public Welfare  
Therapeutic Support Staff  
Foster Care and Adoption

**CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

*(Additional education beyond a bachelor’s may be required.)*

**Bachelor Degree Requirements (65 credits)**

- **SW 201** Introduction to Social Work
- **SW 301** Social Welfare
- **SW 302** Social Policy
- **SW 303** Human Behavior/Social Environment I
- **SW 304** Human Behavior/Social Environment II
- **SW 305** Social Work Practice I
- **SW 306** Social Work Practice II
- **SW 316** Introduction to Field Education
- **SW 401** Social Work Practice III
- **SW 402** Social Work Practice IV - Capstone
- **SW 403** Senior Field Education I
- **SW 404** Senior Field Education II
- **SW 405** Methods of Social Research
- **SW 407** Senior Field Education I Seminar
- **SW 408** Senior Field Education II Seminar

**Choose nine elective credits from:**

- **SW 202** Social Services to Children
- **SW 203** The Process of Aging
- **SW 207** Intervention Strategies for Families
- **SW 209** Death, Dying and Bereavement
- **SW 220** Mental Health Across the Life Span
- **SW 231** Culturally Sensitive Human Service Practice
- **SW 318** Child Advocacy I: Perspectives on Child Maltreatment and Advocacy
- **SW 319** Child Advocacy II: Professional & System Responses to Child Maltreatment
- **SW 320** Child Advocacy III: Responding to the Survivor of Child Abuse & Survivor Responses
- **SW 322** Healthcare, Chronic Illness, and the Social Work Profession

**Required Courses in Related Areas:**

- **BIO 109** Human Biology
- **MAT 208** Introductory Statistics -OR-
- **MAT 209** Probability and Statistics
- Psychology course (3 credits)
- Sociology course (3 credits)

Program requirements are subject to change. Contact your admissions counselor for the most up to date information.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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