

# MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK (MSW)

The Master of Social Work (MSW) program is designed to prepare graduates to be Advanced Generalists who will possess the skills to help clients, advocate for community change and design programs, among other professional and managerial roles. MSW students will be trained to view social work from the micro and macro levels, thus understanding the root causes of client issues. MSW-trained advanced generalists can oversee teams, conduct research, provide clinical counseling, in addition to managing cases/programs. The curriculum can lead to Clinical Social Work licensure in every state and even Canada. There are multiple concentrations that students may choose from to give the option to pursue specific areas of social work: Clinical Practice, Medical Social Work, Child Welfare, and Community Advocacy and Program Administration.

## Accreditation

Point Loma Nazarene University's Master of Social Work has applied for accreditation with the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The application is scheduled to be reviewed on June 1, 2025, and then placed on the February 2026 Board of Accreditation (BOA) Agenda for candidacy review with a retroactive accreditation date of Fall 2025.

## Program Learning Outcomes

*The Point Loma Nazarene University Master of Social Work Program Graduate will be able to:*

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice
3. Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Assess and Plan with Individuals, Families, Groups, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
10. Service as an Expression of Faith

## Admission Requirements

See <https://www.pointloma.edu/graduate-studies/programs/master-social-work> (<https://www.pointloma.edu/graduate-studies/programs/master-social-work/>)

## Application Process

Acceptance will be on a rolling basis throughout the year until the cohort is filled.

## Admission Criteria

To be admitted into the Master of Social Work program, an applicant must meet these requirements:

- Completion of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university. College seniors are eligible to apply providing they will receive their degree prior to the semester the MSW program is started.
- Applicants must meet a minimum GPA of 3.000 in the qualifying degree.
  - GPAs as low as 2.50 may be considered. If accepted, the student will be put on provisional status expected to receive at least a 3.000 GPA the first nine units of the MSW program.

## Prerequisite Courses

Completion of the following prerequisite courses:

- One semester of each of the following with a grade of C- or better:
  - Human Biology (3 units) or Anatomy & Physiology I & II
  - Introductory Statistics (in behavioral or social sciences, 3 units)

These courses must be taken at any accredited community, public, or private college or university. Online courses at accredited colleges are also acceptable.

If these courses were not completed before being accepted into the MSW program, a non-credit, free, self-paced course equivalent option will be provided by the PLNU MSW program for both prerequisite courses. They must be completed by the end of the first semester of the MSW program.

## Work/Volunteer Experience

- Preference is given to applicants who have prior work and/or volunteer experience in social service-related settings, but is not required. You will submit a resume as part of the application.

## Preferences

- Point Loma Nazarene University graduates.

## Personal Essay

Please answer the following essay questions with a minimum of 300 words:

1. What formative experiences have helped clarify your desire to go into social work?
2. What qualities and characteristics do you possess that would make you an effective social worker?
3. Why have you chosen to pursue a degree in social work at this time in your life?
4. Why are you interested in PLNU?
5. What are your career goals?

## International Students

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOFEL (<https://www.ets.org/toefl/>)), taken within the last 2 years, is required for any applicants for whom English is not their native language. The TOFEL requirement may be waived for applicants with a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited US institution. To review your application, we must receive official scores from ETS for the TOFEL. Only the IBT (Internet Based Test)

form of the TOEFL will be accepted. We require a total score of 80 and a speaking score of 26 for entry into our program.

## Advanced Standing/Transfer Credit

Those who have completed a Bachelor's degree in Social Work within the last five years, from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited program, are eligible to apply for the Advanced Standing 1 year 33 credit program. If the degree was completed more than five years ago, a resume must show social work related experience for every year beyond that time frame. If the degree was completed outside of the U.S., it must be approved to be equivalent to a degree from the U.S. by CSWE by going to this website to begin the application process <https://www.cswe.org/centers-initiatives/international-degree-review/> before beginning the MSW program.

Up to 25% of required units can be transferred from another accredited graduate program as long as they are social work related as determined by the MSW program director.

## Master of Social Work Student Handbook

Click here (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pCY4dYM3tOFGLIqOV9HR2iIHw0sla42H/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=115974201386898004419&rtfpof=true&sd=true>) to view the MSW Student Handbook.

- Students with Advanced Standing (p. 2)

Code	Title	Units
<b>Generalist Year</b>		
SWK 6006	Social Research Basics	3
SWK 6030	Social Welfare Policy	3
SWK 6050	Race and Ethnicity	3
SWK 6065	Human Behavior and the Social Environment	3
SWK 6070	Social Work Practice I	3
SWK 6071	Social Work Practice II	3
SWK 6170	Foundation of Social Work Practicum I	2
SWK 6171	Foundation of Social Work Practicum II	2
SWK 6172	Seminar in Social Work I	1
SWK 6173	Seminar in Social Work II	1
<b>Advanced Generalist Year</b>		
SWK 6501	Advanced Social Work Practice I	3
SWK 6502	Advanced Social Work Practice II	3
SWK 6505	Advanced Clinical Assessment	3
SWK 6506	Advanced Social Research/Evaluation of Practice	3
SWK 6530	Advanced Social Welfare Policy	3
SWK 6550	Justice, Equity, and Inclusion	3
SWK 6570	Advanced Social Work Practicum I	2
SWK 6571	Advanced Social Work Practicum II	2
SWK 6572	Advanced Seminar in Social Work I	1
SWK 6573	Advanced Seminar in Social Work II	1
<b>Elective/Concentration Courses</b> <sup>1</sup>		
Choose a concentration below or any combination of courses from the following:		12
<i>Child Welfare</i>		
SWK 6015	Understanding Trauma	
SWK 6040	Child Welfare	

SWK 6533	Mental Health Treatment
<i>Clinical Practice</i>	
SWK 6015	Understanding Trauma
SWK 6524	Evidence-Based Therapy
SWK 6533	Mental Health Treatment
<i>Community Advocacy and Leadership</i>	
SWK 6558	Community Organization and Problem Solving
Two (2) courses from other graduate programs related to the topic <sup>2</sup>	
<i>Medical Social Work</i>	
SWK 6015	Understanding Trauma
SWK 6016	Sociology of Aging
SWK 6525	Medical Social Work
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>60</b>

<sup>1</sup> Courses that apply to multiple concentrations may be taken only once for unit credit.

<sup>2</sup> Courses will be approved by the MSW Program Director.

## Advanced Standing<sup>1</sup>

Code	Title	Units
<b>Advanced Generalist Year</b>		
SWK 6501	Advanced Social Work Practice I	3
SWK 6502	Advanced Social Work Practice II	3
SWK 6505	Advanced Clinical Assessment	3
SWK 6506	Advanced Social Research/Evaluation of Practice	3
SWK 6530	Advanced Social Welfare Policy	3
SWK 6550	Justice, Equity, and Inclusion	3
SWK 6570	Advanced Social Work Practicum I	2
SWK 6571	Advanced Social Work Practicum II	2
SWK 6572	Advanced Seminar in Social Work I	1
SWK 6573	Advanced Seminar in Social Work II	1
<b>Elective/Concentration Courses</b> <sup>2</sup>		
Choose a concentration below or any combination of courses from the following:		9
<i>Child Welfare</i>		
SWK 6015	Understanding Trauma	
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SWK 6533	Mental Health Treatment	
<i>Community Advocacy and Leadership</i>		
SWK 6558	Community Organization and Problem Solving	
Two (2) courses from other graduate programs related to the topic <sup>3</sup>		
<i>Medical Social Work</i>		
SWK 6015	Understanding Trauma	
SWK 6016	Sociology of Aging	
SWK 6525	Medical Social Work	
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>33</b>

<sup>1</sup> Students eligible for Advanced Standing will begin Advanced Generalist Year courses in Fall 2026.

<sup>2</sup> Courses that apply to multiple concentrations may be taken only once for unit credit.

<sup>3</sup> Courses will be approved by the MSW Program Director.

To earn and receive a Master of Social Work degree, a student must satisfy all of the following:

- Successful completion of all educational requirements.
- Successful completion of one (for Advanced standing students) or two (for Regular standing students) Practicum experiences by the end of the MSW program.
- A completed application for degree candidacy conveyed to the Office of Records. *Note: Students may participate in Commencement convocations with an approved plan of six (nine units for Adv. standing students) or fewer units remaining to complete their degree in the following semester.*
- A minimum 3.000 GPA
- Payment in full of all tuition, fees, and other financial obligations owed to the university, including a degree processing fee, and
- All requirements completed within six (6) years from the time of initial enrollment.