

FOCUSED AREAS OF STUDY

HEALTH AND WELLNESS THROUGH THE LIFESPAN

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES IN SOCIAL WORK

INTERSECTIONALITY, HUMAN AGENCY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

URBAN ISSUES IN SOCIAL WORK

VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

2021-2022

Focused Areas of Study

A Focused Area of Study (FAS) provides an opportunity for students to organize six of their elective credits around a population or social problem area as a complement to their concentration. Students completing the requirements within an area of study will receive a letter of recognition. Focused area offerings are based on faculty expertise and student interest as well as being reflective of the School's mission. Students should contact the Focused Area Chair with questions or if additional information is needed.

Students may choose to organize six elective credits in one of the five focused areas of study:

- Health and Wellness through the Lifespan
- International Issues in Social Work
- Intersectionality, Human Agency, and Social Justice
- Urban Issues in Social Work
- Violence Prevention in Families and Communities

Requirements

All FAS in the curriculum consist of the following components:

- Successful completion of six elective credits. Of these six credits, students must take one 3-credit required course that contains the core knowledge deemed to be essential by the Focused Area Study faculty. Requirements for the *Violence Prevention in Families and Communities* Focused Area of Study differ slightly, as there is no dedicated required course.
- A year-long field placement in a field or practice relevant for the Focused Area of Study (required).

The second course necessary to complete a Focused Area of Study may be taken as follows:

- An elective from a carefully selected list of Focused Area of Study electives offered at the School;
- An elective from other graduate units of the University (only with prior approval from the FAS Chair);
- An independent study or special topics course of no more than three credits (only with prior approval from the FAS Chair).

Please note: some required FAS courses are not necessarily offered each semester, so plans must be made with your advisor and the FAS Chair with this in mind.

Health and Wellness through the Lifespan

This focused area of study is designed to provide students the chance to enhance their knowledge and skills related to working with people across the lifespan (from early life to older adults), relevant to social work practice in mental health and/or substance disorders. This focused area prepares students with the theory and practice needed to address a range of needs related to children, adolescents, adults with mental health or substance abuse disorders, or practice with older adults.

Students are required to take a Core Elective chosen from below:

- HBEL 5357: Social Gerontology
- HBEL 5393: Emerging Issues in Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Students will take an additional elective from those listed below:

- HBEL 5300: Substance Abuse I
- HBEL 5301: Substance Abuse II: Treatment and Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drugs
- HBEL 5344: Aging and Mental Health
- HBEL 5352: Death and Dying
- HBEL 5367: Culture and Mental Health/Mental Health Disparities
- IGFP 5345: Clinical Conditions with Children and Adolescents
- IGFP 5346: Clinical Conditions with Adults and Older Adults
- DSEL 5320: Direct Practice in Schools for Children with Educational Disabilities and their Families.
- GRWK 5342: Group Work Practice in Therapeutic Settings
- SWEL 5318: Child and Adolescent Trauma
- SWEL 5351: Policy Issues in Aging
- SWEL 5386: Transitioning Youth at Risk
- SPTP 5318: Behavioral & Integrated Healthcare
- IS 5394: Independent Study for a maximum of 3 credits (Requires advanced approval by the Focused Area of Study Chair).

Students in IGF who are required to take either

- IGFP 5345: Clinical Conditions with Children and Adolescents,
- IGFP 5346: Clinical Conditions with Adults and Older Adults or
- IGFP 5342: Group Work Practice in Therapeutic Settings

to fulfill their requirement for the IGF Concentration CANNOT also use either of these courses to satisfy the requirements for this Focused Area of Study. However, IGF concentration students may take another elective course from the listed course, IN ADDITION to the required elective course toward completing this Focused Area of Study.

Relevant graduate electives from other departments or professional schools of the University may be used toward the focused area of study with permission of the Chair.

Students will take a year-long field placement in a field or practice relevant to the Focused Area of Study, required.

The field placement can include public and private agencies, schools, inpatient, residential, or outpatient settings.

Committee Members: TBA

International Issues in Social Work

The Focused Area in International Issues is designed for students who want to include a global perspective in their social work program. International issues specialization is useful for students considering careers in international development; work with immigrants, refugees, or inter-country adoption; advocacy work on global policy issues; and those who wish to broaden their domestic practice competence through understanding social issues internationally.

Students are required to take

- A Core Elective: SWEL 5348: International Social Work: Global Social Issues and the Profession (offered in the Spring semester this year)
- A one year-long field placement in an organization emphasizing international practice, issues or populations (required).
- And an additional three credits are required (please see below)

Students must take an additional elective from those listed below:

- HBEL 5328: Ethnic Minorities and the Social Work Profession: The Puerto Rican/Latin@ Experience
- SWEL 5310: Services to Immigrants and Refugees and Cross-Cultural Helping
- SWEL 5333: Travel Study for Social Work in Puerto Rico
- SWEL 5345: International Development Theory and Practice
 - *Please note: As part of this course, a one day trip to New York City or Washington DC to meet with bilateral and multilateral organizations and NGOs doing international work is required. Students will be responsible for all expenses incurred.*
- SWEL 5350: Comparative Social Welfare Policy between the United States and the Second World
- SWEL 5377: Urban Policy Issues
- SWEL 5385: Human Rights and Social Work
- IS 5394: Independent Study for a maximum of 3 credits (Requires advanced approval by the Focused Area of Study Chair).

Relevant graduate electives from other departments or professional schools of the University may be used toward the focused area of study with permission of the Focused Area Chair.

Students will take a year-long field placement in a field or practice relevant to the Focused Area of Study, required.

A field placement in an organization emphasizing international practice, issues, or populations. Options include: Save the Children; the United Nations; the Center for International Social Work Students at the School of Social Work; the Immigrant and Refugee Coalition, refugee resettlement and service programs; new arrivals programs in school systems; inter-country adoption programs, and more.

Placements may be completed in other countries, depending upon language requirements, availability of appropriate supervision, and planning with the concentration for completion of course requirements. Early planning is advised, as there is a special application process for an international placement.

Committee Members: *Dr. Rebecca Thomas, Chair*, (Rlthomas@uconn.edu)

Dr. Diane Drachman, Dr. Kathryn Libal, Dr. Louise Simmons & Marilyn Cardone

Intersectionality, Human Agency and Social Justice

This Focus Area of Study gives students an opportunity to examine the intersection of various social identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, citizenship status and social class. While this focus area forefronts race and ethnicity because of its unique role in US society, through the frameworks of intersectionality and social justice students examine how different power structures interact in the lived experiences of Latin@s, Blacks, LGBTQ and immigrant populations. Students advance their understanding of multiple dimensions of social relationships and the development of human agency and identities in these communities. They will enhance their critical consciousness around advocacy, empowerment, and the dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion. By analyzing these intersections within the context of various structural forces and arrangements that exist and how they maintain and perpetuate systems of inequity and oppression, students will enhance their ability to advocate for social change.

Students are required to take one of the following courses as a Core Elective:

- HBEL 5328: Puerto Rican/Latino Experience
- HBEL 5376: Puerto Rican/Latina Women and their realities
- HBEL 5327: Ethnic Minorities and the Social Work Profession: The Black Experience

Students will take an additional elective from those listed below:

- HBEL 5367: Culture and Health/Mental Health Disparities: Micro and Macro Perspectives
- HBEL 5370: The LGBT Experience: Sexual and Gender Diversities
- HBEL 5386: Studies in the Holocaust: Implications for Social Work
- SWEL 5310: Services to Immigrants and refugees
- SWEL 5333: Puerto Rican Travel Study
- SPTP 5318: Poverty and Inequality
- IS 5394: Independent Study for a maximum of 3 credits (Requires advanced approval by the Focused Area of Study Chair).

Relevant graduate electives from other departments or professional schools of the University may be used toward the focused area of study with permission of the Focused Area Chair.

Students will take a year-long field placement in a field or practice relevant to the Focused Area of Study, required.

The field placement is working with Latin@s, Blacks, LGBTQ and/or immigrants

Committee Members: TBA

Urban Issues in Social Work

This focused area examines issues that affect the context for urban social work practice areas across concentrations and diverse populations. The content in this focused area of study combines and expands interest in specific populations with a broader understanding of urban political economy, the impact of globalization on cities, and the problems that affect all urban communities, across race and ethnicity, and those that impact disenfranchised populations. Courses to complete the focused area of study requirements cover content relevant to: a) urban issues and populations; and b) issues pertinent to social work practice in urban areas.

Students are required to take a Core Elective:

- SWEL 5377: Urban Policy Issues

Students will take an additional elective from those listed below:

An additional three credits are required and may be selected from the following list of elective course offerings.

Elective courses address social, political and economic issues relevant to urban social work concerns, and organizing techniques relevant in urban settings:

- CORG 5370: Grassroots Neighborhood Organizing
- SWEL 5348: International Social Work: Global Social Issues and the Profession
- SWEL 5360: Economic Justice, Labor and Social Work
- SWEL 5380: Political Social Work Practice

Elective courses which address urban populations:

- HBEL 5327*: The Black Experience and Its Consequences for Practice
- HBEL 5328*: Ethnic Minorities and the Social Work Profession: Puerto Rican/Latin@ Experience
- HBEL 5347*: Black Family Life
- HBEL 5376*: Puerto Rican and Latina Women and Their Reality
- IS 5394: Independent Study for a maximum of 3 credits (Requires advanced approval by the Focused Area of Study Chair)

*These above courses all focus on populations found in large measure in urban areas and the issues that confront social workers engaging in practice in urban areas. Issues of racism and social and economic justice are covered in the required course (SWEL 5377) and these courses reinforce the themes of that course.

Relevant graduate electives from other departments or professional schools of the University may be used toward the focused area of study with permission of the Chair, as well as new courses developed in the School of Social Work that are relevant to urban areas.

Students will take a year-long field placement in a field or practice relevant to the Focused Area of Study, required.

Committee Members: Dr. Louise Simmons, Chair, (Louise.Simmons@uconn.edu)

Dr. Diane Drachman, Dr. Robert Fisher, & Dr. Rebecca Thomas

Violence Prevention in Families and Communities

This focused area of study offers MSW students an opportunity to concentrate their electives and field education on policies, programs, and practices to prevent and address the effects of violence in varied settings. The Violence Prevention in Families and Communities focused area of study pays special attention to developing skills of micro and macro practitioners working in families, schools, prisons or other involuntary institutional settings, elder care facilities, other community settings, or in policy-making arenas.

Students are required to take two of the following courses:

- SWEL 5317: Women, Children, and Families: Social Policies & Programs
- SWEL 5318: Child and Adolescent Trauma and Mental Health
- SWEL 5385: Human Rights and Social Work
- HBEL 5373: Leadership Development in Anti-Violence Work: The Susan Schechter Social Action
- HBEL 5381: Child Maltreatment: History, Theory, Prevention, and Intervention
- IS 5394: Independent Study for a maximum of 3 credits (Requires advanced approval by the Focused Area of Study Chair)

Relevant graduate electives from other departments or professional schools of the University may be used toward the focused area of study with permission of the Chair.

Students must also take a year-long field placement in a field or practice setting addressing violence prevention, including either clinical and/or macro approaches, required.

Committee Members: Dr. Kathryn Libal, Chair, (Kathryn.Libal@uconn.edu)
Dr. Megan Berthold, Dr. Caitlin Elsaesser, & Dr. Megan Feely