

DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Doctor of Philosophy in Social Welfare

The purpose of the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Social Welfare degree program is the preparation of scholars, teachers, and leaders to generate new knowledge on the policies and programs of social welfare and the practice of social work. Accordingly, we emphasize the creative and evaluative skills necessary for independent inquiry. The program prepares students to be knowledgeable in the following:

- Relevant areas of the social and behavioral sciences
- Research design, statistics, qualitative methods, mixed methods, and the philosophy of science
- Theory-building and theories of social welfare
- Methods for the application and transmission of knowledge in the human services

In addition to this foundation knowledge, students develop specialized expertise in policy analysis and program planning or social work practice theory and in one or more substantive areas of social welfare. Effort is made to provide an educational climate in which critical analysis and creative thinking flourish. The program core emphasizes philosophical and scientific approaches to theory development, the content and boundaries of theoretical social welfare, statistics, and advanced research methodologies, and the social and behavioral science foundations underpinning social welfare programs and social work practice.

The area of specialization enables the student to apply social science theory, analytical approaches, and research tools to a social problem or issue in either social welfare policy or social work practice. Students are encouraged to focus on a substantive policy or practice area during the period of specialization. This facilitates the development of a dissertation proposal. Permeating the content of the entire program is a focus on the development and transmission of knowledge as a part of an educational process.

To prepare students for academic careers in social work education is an integral part of the educational plan. Teaching mentorships are available.

Students can pursue special interests through individual reading and research projects. In addition, regular course offerings in other departments of the university are available to students. Practical experiences on faculty-conducted research projects are made available to doctoral students.

A total of 36 credit hours of course work is required, plus 18 hours of dissertation credit. A qualifying examination, given after completion of course work, determines each student’s eligibility for degree candidacy. The degree is awarded following successful completion of the dissertation.

The school reserves the right to require additional courses, which may not be credited toward the doctoral requirements, if the faculty believes the student has insufficient knowledge in core areas of the curriculum, or to assist students in their intellectual and professional development.

In response to the different needs and interests of potential PhD students, the Mandel School offers two formats for meeting course and degree requirements. Program requirements under both formats

include taking 12 courses (36 credit hours), passing a qualifying exam, and completing a dissertation. The Alternative Program Structures are:

Full-Time Program

Under this format, full-time students can complete course requirements and individualized research fellowships over two academic years.

Plan of Study: Full-Time Doctoral Program

First Year	Units	
	Fall	Spring
Philosophy of Science and Theory Building (SASS 608)	3	
Theories of Human Behavior: Macro and Micro Dimensions (SASS 610)	3	
Advanced Research Design (SASS 613)	3	
Theories of Social Welfare and Social Justice (SASS 609)		3
Models of Qualitative Research (SASS 614)		3
Social Statistics and Data Analysis (SASS 615)		3
Year Total:	9	9

Second Year	Units	
	Fall	Spring
Applied Regression and the Linear Model (SASS 616)	3	
Individual Reading (SASS 637) (or course outside of MSASS) or Research Project (SASS 632)	3	
Seminar on Social Work Education (SASS 630)	3	
Measurement Issues in Quantitative Research (SASS 618)		3
Choose one of the following:		3
Specialization Seminar (SASS 617)		
Designing Mixed Methods Research (SASS 622)		
Individual Reading (SASS 637)		
Research Project (SASS 632)		
Intervention Research for Social Work Practice (SASS 620)		3
Year Total:	9	9

Third Year	Units	
	Fall	Spring
Dissertation Ph.D. (SASS 701)	1 - 9	
Dissertation Ph.D. (SASS 701)		1 - 9
Year Total:	1-9	1-9

Total Units in Sequence:	38-54
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Students must register each semester until the dissertation is complete. SASS 701 Dissertation Ph.D. hours are not required during the summer semester.

Part-Time Program

The part-time format accommodates social work professionals who must maintain their employment commitments but wish to pursue PhD study through the completion of a minimum of four courses per year.

Faculty Advisors

Each doctoral student is assigned a faculty advisor to assist in the planning of his or her educational experience. At the appropriate time, a dissertation advisor is appointed after consultation with the student.

Qualifying Examination

The qualifying examination for doctoral candidates is taken after completion of coursework. The exam is intended to test the student's ability to critically analyze and integrate knowledge.

Admission to Candidacy

Students are admitted to candidacy for the PhD degree upon the successful completion of the qualifying examination. To be admitted to candidacy, the candidate also must have maintained a grade point average of 3.0 and received not more than one course grade of C or lower. To remain in the program, students must maintain a minimum of a cumulative 3.0 average and receive no more than one grade of C or lower.

Dissertation Requirements

Each candidate for the PhD degree must submit a written dissertation as evidence of his or her ability to conduct independent research at an advanced level. The dissertation must present a significant contribution to knowledge in the student's field, and at least a portion of the content must be suitable for publication in a reputable professional journal or as a book or monograph.

The dissertation prospectus must be completed and accepted within two calendar years after the student has been admitted to candidacy, and the dissertation must be completed and accepted within five calendar years after admission to candidacy. It is to the student's advantage to make steady progress in his or her research and aim for early completion of the dissertation.

Once a student registers for SASS 701 Dissertation Ph.D., he or she must continue to register each succeeding regular semester (fall and spring) until the dissertation is complete unless granted a leave of absence. The minimum requirement for the dissertation is 18 hours.

All requirements for the PhD degree must be completed within a period of five consecutive calendar years after a student is admitted to candidacy, including periods of leaves of absence.

Admission and Financial Aid

Information about admission and financial aid for the PhD in Social Welfare (<http://msass.case.edu/doctorate>) can be found on the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences website.