

## HOW DO I STUDY SOCIAL WORK AT WCU?

### BSW—Bachelor of Social Work (undergraduate students)

You will initially declare pre-Social Work as your major. You are eligible to formally apply to the Social Work major when you:

- Have attained a 2.8 or better GPA
- Have completed 35 credits hours and are enrolled in SOCW 253: Interviewing
- Have completed the required application and submitted it to the Department of Social Work
- Demonstrate the ability to meet Social Work professional and technical standards

### MSW—Master of Social Work (graduate students)

You will apply online through the WCU Graduate School. Criteria for acceptance into the MSW program include:

- A 3.0 overall GPA is preferred
- A satisfactory score on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE)
- A minimum of three academic and/or professional references
- An essay: a brief statement is required for the Graduate School application, and a longer more comprehensive statement is required for the MSW program application
- Volunteer or work experience is not required but valued. An application will not be reviewed until all required materials have been received

An advanced standing (accelerated) MSW program is available to:

- Students who have completed a BSW from an accredited program within the past five years

The following specialty certifications are available to MSW students:

- Substance Abuse
- School Social Work
- Child Welfare
- Culturally-based Native Health

*“The Social Work Department at WCU provided me with the skills, knowledge, and support to not only be successful in the classroom and in my internships, but in my career. The faculty and staff are passionate about their subject material and their students. I am a better person and professional because of my time with the Social Work Department at WCU.”*

*Sarah Dillow, MSW, Spring 2015*

## COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES

The College of Health and Human Sciences is committed to providing high quality educational programs for talented and motivated students. Our graduates are prepared in a dynamic learning environment that promotes inter-professional collaboration, evidence-based practice, scholarship and community engagement. Our expert faculty are passionate about their professions and facilitating a student-centered focus in the classroom. Great faculty, state-of-the-art resources and a beautiful mountain setting combine to provide an exceptional educational experience. We look forward to meeting you to talk about your future at Western Carolina University!

For more information about the College of Health and Human Sciences visit our website at: [chhs.wcu.edu](http://chhs.wcu.edu)



828.227.7112  
**SOCIALWORK.WCU.EDU**

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# SOCIAL WORK



**Western  
Carolina**  
UNIVERSITY

## What Is Social Work?

Social work is a profession that assists individuals, families, and groups in restoring or enhancing their capacity for social functioning. Social workers support populations and communities in need.

Social workers are highly trained experienced professionals. They help people of all backgrounds address their needs through clinical, psychosocial and advocacy services.

Only those who have earned social work degrees at the bachelor's, master's or doctoral levels—and completed a minimum number of hours in supervised practice—are professional social workers.



## WHAT DO SOCIAL WORKERS DO?

Social workers help people overcome life challenges: poverty, discrimination, abuse, addiction, physical illness, divorce, loss, unemployment, educational problems, disability, and mental illness. They counsel individuals, families, and communities to cope effectively.

Professional social workers are found in every facet of community life—in schools, hospitals, mental health clinics, senior centers, elected office, private practices, prisons, military, corporations, and in numerous public and private agencies that serve individuals and families in need.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), professional social workers are the nation's largest group of mental health services providers. There are more clinically trained social workers—over 200,000—than psychiatrists, psychologists, and psychiatric nurses combined. Federal law and the National Institutes of Health recognize social work as one of five core mental health professions.

## WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT SOCIAL WORK AT WCU?

The mission of the Department of Social Work at Western Carolina University is to provide the knowledge and skills necessary to practice at the generalist (BSW) and advanced (MSW) levels of Social Work practice. Congruent with the university's mission to improve individual lives and enhance community development in the predominantly rural Western North Carolina region, the department seeks to prepare professionals who are committed to the core Social Work values of respect for all people and advancement of social and economic justice.

*"I am confident that I have the knowledge and skills needed to truly make a difference in the world. I am proud to call myself a graduate of this program."*

*Virginia Spencer, BSW, Spring 2016*

- Social Work students at WCU enjoy a personalized learning environment.
- Our dedicated faculty work with students in the classroom and in field internships to help them gain the knowledge and skills needed to succeed academically and throughout their professional careers.
- WCU Social Work graduates can find employment in a wide variety of fields, including health and mental health, child and family welfare, school social work, gerontology, corrections, disaster relief, advocacy, and human services policy.
- Our BSW and MSW programs are nationally accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

**Dr. Pat Morse, Department Head**  
828.227.7112 / [pmorse@wcu.edu](mailto:pmorse@wcu.edu)