

# KENT SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



**Kent School of Social Work**  
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## About the School

The Kent School of Social Work seeks to prepare well-qualified social workers who practice from a strong professional value base to serve the metropolitan mission of the university. Our graduates promote social justice through their practices with diverse client systems. In the context of a research institution, Kent School is committed to knowledge development that informs social work practice, recognizing the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration to solve complex social problems.

Social work is a profession concerned with the prevention and amelioration of social problems and the enhancement of the quality of human life. Social workers achieve these goals through direct practice with individuals, families, groups, and community organizations; advocacy; social planning; social policy analysis and formulation; research; and administration. Social work practice helps people mobilize their resources to deal with present circumstances and to enlarge their prospects for the future. Since problems of meaningful way in isolation from the broad social and community context in which they occur, social work also takes a leadership role in bringing about institutional and social change.

## Structure

The School provides a broad-based education for college or university graduates wishing to continue their studies and for professionals returning to school to enhance their skills. The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree program is designed to prepare students for entry into the profession as generalist practitioners. The Master of Science in Social Work (MSSW) degree program is designed to help students achieve their maximum potential through a carefully structured curriculum of foundation and advanced course work. Preparation for leadership in advanced professional practice is a vital part of the School's curriculum.

Bachelors of social work programs, under the accreditation banner of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), are directed in matters of curriculum to promote the knowledge, values and skills of the profession. At the baccalaureate level, students are prepared for entry into the profession as generalist practitioners. Guided by program mission and goals, the generalist model is built upon a conceptual framework that includes relevant theories and knowledge to build practice skills. The professional level courses at the junior and senior year level are grounded in the liberal arts and carefully integrate that knowledge into the learning of professional content. The Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards of CSWE establish the base of program learning expectations.

## Goal I (Curriculum)

To ensure that graduates will be prepared at the foundation level to practice social work that is framed by a generalist practice base, and an ability to understand social problems at multiple levels.

The program objectives derive directly from the Educational Policy (3.0) of CSWE in preparing students for practice at the generalist level and also for providing a firm foundation for those who seek graduate educational opportunities in social work. To meet those requirements, the Kent School has established the following program objectives that will frame the assessment of learning that obtains to the BSW Program.

Students who graduate from the BSW Program will demonstrate the ability to:

- Objective 1: Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
- Objective 2: Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.
- Objective 3: Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
- Objective 4: Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
- Objective 5: Understand and interpret the history of the social work profession and its contemporary structures and issues.
- Objective 6: Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work practice with systems of all sizes.
- Objective 7: Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Objective 8: Analyze, formulate, and influence social policies.
- Objective 9: Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions.
- Objective 10: Use communication skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities.
- Objective 11: Use supervision and consultation appropriate to social work practice.
- Objective 12: Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.

## Goal II (Curriculum)

To prepare students for advanced graduate work in social work.

- Objective: The Kent School will prepare students with a quality education that will support their admission to and successful completion of graduate social work degrees.

### **Goal III (School's relationship with the community)**

To build collaboration and partnerships for community building and problem solving:

- Objective: The Kent School will provide professional expertise in the community in partnership with agencies and institutions to build a stronger community in the metropolitan region of Louisville.

### **Goal IV (Overall program goal)**

To contribute to the development of new social work knowledge through scholarship and research.

- Objective: The Kent School will develop research and scholarship that adds to the knowledge base of the social work profession.

## **About the Programs**

The Kent School Curriculum is designed to enhance students' ability to help them and the diverse client systems they work with to make decisions that contribute to the quality and health of these client systems and that will promote social justice. It is designed to graduate social workers who think critically about what they do, why they do it, and what outcomes they hope will result from the social work practice they do.

Critical thinking is defined as "the intellectual disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief or action" (Scriven & Paul, 2004). Critical thinking includes specific skills such as problem-solving and the ability to integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines and theories of human behavior. Throughout the curriculum, there is an emphasis on critical reflection, or appraisal of various points of view no matter what the source. The curriculum draws heavily on social science knowledge and integrates this with problem-solving phases such as assessment, intervention, and evaluation. In this respect, the curriculum is designed to teach students to access, integrate, and assess practice and policy related research to solve social problems and to work towards social justice. When critical thinking skills are used effectively, it leads to transparency and promotes social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people.

In the foundation curriculum, students are introduced to critical thinking. They are guided by faculty to develop critical thinking skills throughout all the foundation level courses. The BSW curriculum promotes a generalist perspective in which the simultaneous impact of many systemic levels (individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities) on clients' lives is critically analyzed and recognized. The curriculum builds upon a liberal arts base that fosters an understanding of society as a complex organization of diverse people and ideas. Social problems are understood as occurring within the nexus of culture, conflict, development, ecology, and systems and as such, efforts to help or intervene must include consideration of these forces. Students will be able to critically identify and assess social problems, specifically attending to 1) how such problems are maintained, 2) how they impact the quality of people's life, 3) cultural sensitivity and appreciation of marginalized people, and 4) how to actively promote social and economic justice. In the foundation year, the focus is on the development of critical thinking skills in all the areas mentioned. The BSW curriculum is to prepare students for

generalist practice; that is to develop knowledge and skills for entry level professional social work practice that recognizes the importance of multi-level systemic intervention.

### **Academic Misconduct**

It is expected that a student in the Kent School of Social Work will refrain from plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct and may result in permanent dismissal. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty.

### **Multiple Submission**

The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work, including oral reports, for credit more than once may be considered plagiarism without prior authorization by the teacher.

### **Student Conduct Policies**

Students entering the Kent School of Social Work, by their formal acceptance into the School, agree to abide by The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>) and the Code of Student Conduct of the University of Louisville.

The NASW Code of Ethics provides guidelines for the professional conduct of social workers. Since the profession is directed by a commitment to core values, the Code provides for conduct related to principles of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the individual, the importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These values and the standards inherent in them provide a context for expected behavior during the period of enrollment in the educational programs of the Kent School of Social Work, and for the development of lifelong professional standards. Issues of concern related to this area are referred to the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee.

### **Dismissed Students**

If the Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee decide to dismiss a student from Kent School and if this dismissal is approved by the Dean, students will only be allowed to return to Kent School in rare cases. Students who wish to return must write an appeal letter to the BSW Director, stating their reasons why they think they can return to Kent School to complete their studies.

### **Advising Services**

The Kent School of Social Work Advising and Student Services strives to provide students with excellent academic advising, consistent and accurate program information, and services related to registration, financial aid, and admissions.

Our office is located in Oppenheimer Hall. Please call for an undergraduate advising appointment, questions concerning enrollment and student services, or information regarding application to the BSW program. You can reach us by calling (502) 852-5872 or email us at [bswkent@louisville.edu](mailto:bswkent@louisville.edu).

### **Kent School Administration**

The complete and up-to-date list of Kent School leadership (<http://louisville.edu/kent>) is located on the Kent School website.

## **Faculty and Departmental Information**

The complete and up-to-date list of Kent School faculty (<http://louisville.edu/kent/about/faculty-1>) is located on the Kent School website.

## **Undergraduate Programs**

- Social Work (BSW) (<http://catalog.louisville.edu/undergraduate/majors/social-work-bsw>)