

Online Social Work at CWRU Course Descriptions

The online Master of Science in Social Administration curriculum is comprised of 24 general credit hours and 36 specialized credits hours in **Children, Youth and Families**; **Mental Health with Adults**; and **Community Practice for Social Change**.

Field Education is included in the total credit hours.

General Courses

The following foundational courses (24 credits) are required for all traditional track MSSA students. Advanced Standing students receive credit for some or all of the required 24 credits.

SASS 426 Research Methods in Social Work, 3 Credits

This course is an introduction to research methods and tools used in social work. It includes qualitative and quantitative research content that provides an understanding of scientific, analytic and ethical approaches to building knowledge for practice. The content prepares students to develop, use and effectively communicate empirically based knowledge, including evidence-based interventions. Research knowledge is used by students to provide high-quality services; to initiate change; to improve practice, policy and social service delivery; and to evaluate their own practice. The class employs a critical perspective with the goal that students will be able to judge the strengths and weaknesses of research designs and the degree to which ethical standards have been met. Students are introduced to the formulation of scientifically testable research questions and two hypotheses of importance in social work. They learn how to design studies so they can be effective in addressing social work research questions. The concept of validity is introduced, and the course examines measurement, sampling and research design from the point of view of the degree of confidence that can be placed in research findings that are produced by these methods. The importance of conducting research in ways that respect cultural diversity and are valid across diverse populations is emphasized. The course includes qualitative and quantitative methods.

SASS 440 Human Development I: Child & Adolescent, 3 Credits

This foundation course examines theories and research on the biological, social, cultural and spiritual development from infancy through adolescence. Particular consideration is given to biological, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and environmental influences and their contributions to child and adolescent development. Social and economic influences like poverty, discrimination and parenting styles are also considered. The course considers how social work values, the impact and role of spirituality and the perspective of empowerment relate to development. Equal consideration is given to factors supporting individual development, such as the strength of sociocultural belief systems, health and capacity for resilience. The course stresses interactions between the individual and his/her environment (including family, peers, school and community) and the reciprocal relationship between the child/adolescent and their environments. It examines concepts of life, course tasks, conflicts, attachment and loss and self-regulation. The roles of culture, class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender and family structure as they relate to development are presented during this course. The etiology of symptom formation in major developmental deficits during childhood and adolescence are addressed. However, the primary focus of this course is on the developmental achievements that are based on the completion of tasks through the child/adolescent's strengths and ability to adapt to physical, biological and emotional events and change, as well as one's ability to deal with conflict.

SASS 441 Human Development II: Adult, 3 Credits

This course builds on SASS 440 Human Development I (Child and Adolescent) by comparing the general themes of feeling (emotion), thinking (cognition) and acting (behavior) with adult emotional, cognitive and behavioral development. Students will understand the differences and

similarities between earlier (child and adolescent) and later (adult, including older adult) emotional, cognitive and behavioral development by examining, across the life-span, the idea/concept of: (1) adult development as gains/losses, (2) adult development as plasticity and variation (i.e., development can take many forms and can change), (3) adult development as risks, conflicts, protective factors and resilience and (4) adult development as context (e.g., family, society, gender, culture, ethnicity, social class, discrimination, sexual orientation and socio-historical [i.e., cohort] contexts). This course adds new content and perspectives to Human Development I by beginning with the debates about the transition from adolescence to adulthood, what some scholars have called “late adolescence,” “emerging adulthood,” or “young adulthood” (ages 18–24) and ending with death. The course is not organized by assuming that a person’s chronological age is a predictor of developmental achievements — for example, training and education (ages 18–24), work/career (ages 24–35), intimacy/marriage/domestic partnership (ages 24–35), family/parenting (ages 35–55), retirement (age 65–85) and death (age 85+). Instead, it assumes that gains/losses, plasticity, resilience and context matter throughout adult life, regardless of age or developmental task. Emphasis is placed on variation in developmental task challenges, conflict and change, not prescriptive, normative or linear progressions from one developmental task to another, leading up to, for example, the “good” or “perfect” death. Overall, the course is designed to provide students a model for thinking about and assessing adult lifespan development so that an adult client’s dysfunction, disorder, disease or problems (social and/or psychological) can be situated in the context of a person’s developmental achievements, conflicts and strengths. Prereq: SASS 440

SASS 470 Social Policy, 3 Credits

This first semester foundation policy course examines the American social welfare system in a global context. It examines the philosophical, historical and socio/economic foundations of social welfare and the evolution of social policy and the social work profession in the United States. It then focuses on the problems of poverty and discrimination and analyzes the adequacy and effectiveness of policies and resulting programs designed to address those problems. Consideration is given to the principles of economic and social justice along with other values of the social work profession in this analysis. The connections between social policy and social work practices are also emphasized. The course then addresses social policy in an interdependent world. Attention is given to cross-national comparisons of social policies designed to prevent and alleviate poverty and social exclusion. Human rights issues and the programs of international organizations designed to promote and protect human rights are discussed. Finally, social work’s roles in the field of human rights, both at home and abroad, are considered.

SASS 477 Direct Practice Foundation Methods and Skills, 3 Credits

The overarching goal of this course is to develop culturally competent social work generalist practitioners who are armed with the knowledge and skills necessary to practice ethically with individuals and families in diverse social work practice settings. This course is structured to include lecture and discussion (1.5 hours) and experiential laboratory (1.5 hours) learning. The lab portion provides the opportunity for students to practice skills and receive constructive feedback from the instructor and peers. A historical view of social work practice will be presented, as well as an overview of social work values and ethics. Also, the opportunity to apply the NASW Code of Ethics to direct practice cases will be provided in lab. Major social work theories/approaches to practice, such as systems-ecological theory, empowerment and strengths based approaches and evidence-based practice will be introduced to frame students’ learning in micro social work practice. Students are introduced to systems-based, cognitive-behavioral and relationship-based intervention approaches utilized in social work practice with individuals and families. Interviewing skills for beginning practitioners relevant to work with individuals and families will be a major focus of work, both in lectures and during the skills lab. The introduction and application of skills will focus on the skills needed to carry out generalist practice, namely engagement, assessment, goal-setting/treatment planning, intervention and evaluation, termination and follow-up. The skills taught in the lab are intended to build a foundation, or core base, that students can build on in field placements and further in advanced methods courses. The role of race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical and mental disability or illness, age and national origin in social work practice are highlighted throughout the course. Also, the transactions between individuals and families with community, organizational, economic and political environments are integrated to give attention to the importance of social and economic justice in micro practice. The development of reasoning and critical thinking skills will be discussed and developed including factors that influence decision-making processes and the need for ongoing self-evaluation.

SASS 478 Macro and Policy Practice Skills, 3 Credits

The overarching goal of this course is to develop culturally competent social work generalist practitioners who are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to practice ethically with task groups, organizations and communities in diverse social work practice and

policy settings. Additionally, as a second semester course, it will be built on first semester learning in the areas of social policy, diversity, discrimination and oppression. The skill development of the practitioner complements and reinforces that from the direct practice methods course and from the field practicum. The community assessment and change strategies are situated within the 4 contexts of social policy and include policy analysis and the necessary skills for affecting policy. This course is structured to have a strong emphasis on skill development and includes a significant experiential learning laboratory component. The lab portion provides the opportunity for students to practice skills and receive constructive feedback from the instructor and peers. The course is intended to integrate the experiential laboratory learning with readings and discussion of the relevant practice concepts. Accordingly, class time often includes a mix of experiential work, instructor input, discussion and work in task groups. Students are introduced to task groups, community organizing, and advocacy/policy practice approaches utilized in social work practice. Major social work theories/approaches to practice, such as group dynamics, community assessment, conflict and consensus organizing, power relations and community building approaches are introduced to frame students' learning in macro social work practice. Special attention is given to working with task groups and communities made up of varying race, ethnicity, social class, immigration status, gender and to advocating with and on behalf of disadvantaged groups. Students gain lab experience with the following social work practice skills: community and group assessment, recruitment, engagement and participation, leadership development, issue identification and analysis, group process, effective meetings, organizational development, the development and enactment of social policies, strategies to influence different types of policy and evaluation. The skills taught in the lab are intended to build a foundation, or core base, that students can build on in field placements and further develop in advanced methods courses. Prereq: SASS 477

SASS 484 Theories of Oppression and Social Justice, 3 Credits

This course provides students with a theoretical understanding of how oppression operates to restrict the life chances of members of minority and disenfranchised groups. Increasing knowledge is one component of valuing a diverse world; internalizing knowledge about the nature and dynamics of oppression is a fundamental dimension of the ability to value a diverse world and requires self-assessment and reflection on discrimination, oppression and privilege as components of individual insight. Such insight will help students become better practitioners so they can work with clients without discrimination and with respect, knowledge and skills related to age, class, color, culture, ability, ethnicity, family origins, gender, relationship status, national origin, race, sex, religion or sexual orientation. The emphasis is on how oppression manifests at the individual, institutional and societal/cultural levels. It highlights the pervasive nature of inequality and bias woven throughout social, cultural, political, economic, institutional and interpersonal systems. Multiple theories are presented to explicate how structures of dominance, privilege and subordination are manifested, paralleled and interconnected. Major consideration is given to the structures of oppression and privilege related to racism, sexism, heterosexism/ homophobia, religious bigotry/xenophobia, classism, ableism and ageism. As a foundational course for developing the ability to value a diverse world, this course also provides students with an opportunity to enhance self-awareness and critical thinking through a systematic reflection of their own experiences with oppression and privilege. Students are also challenged to understand and value the worldviews of persons different from themselves and develop the ability to take different perspectives in their work. This course elevates students' skills to interview and participate in dialogue with persons different from themselves. Equally important, this course will expand students' visioning of a "just" society through analyses of distributive justice theories. Students will be equipped with micro and macro level practice strategies to promote a society that is inclusive and affirming of human similarities, differences, abilities and capacities.

Children, Youth and Families Concentration

Help individuals and families through a diverse range of services, including marital therapy, family counseling, parent education and child welfare.

Courses that are required for both traditional and advanced standing MSSA students are denoted with an *.

***SASS 517 Family System Interventions, 3 Credits**

Students learn how to use a family systems framework to intervene with individuals and families experiencing difficulties (e.g., child behavior problem) or facing new challenges (e.g., adoption of a child). A family systems framework looks at individual behavior in the context of the family system, and seeks to understand the purpose the behavior may serve in the family system. Interventions, whether individual or a family group, are designed to help the family system and its members negotiate their current situation more effectively and move to a new and more satisfactory level of functioning. Learning to think and intervene systemically requires mindfulness and practice, because it is a departure from the more dominant individually-focused framework that views complaints as individual problems in need of individually-focused interventions. This course examines multiple approaches to family systems intervention, and the strategies and methods that flow from each. Students are taught a variety of ways to think about and work with families, and begin to develop their own personal approach to family systems intervention. Students practice a variety of intervention methods and techniques, and develop the ability to self-assess and modify their interventions as needed to be useful to the family. The course incorporates a constructivist epistemology that acknowledges the multiple ways of constructing the family's situation, and that alternate constructions have a direct impact on how we assess and intervene with families, and what families believe is possible for themselves. Ethical and cultural issues that arise out of a constructivist worldview are critically addressed. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400-TR

***SASS 547 Problem Identification, Screening & Assessment/Diagnosis, 3 Credits**

This course provides a bio-psycho-social approach to identification, screening, assessment and diagnoses of common psychosocial problems/dysfunctions experienced clients. This course introduces the student to the etiology, recognition and diagnoses of these problems in the context of social work practice. Through use of a competency-based model, students are introduced to techniques used to screen, assess and diagnose problems, such as serious mental illness, suicidality, depression and anxiety, substance abuse, child abuse, elder abuse and exposure trauma. Students become familiar with the use of the DSM IV TR in providing axis I diagnostic formulations. A skills-based approach is used in presenting students with specific screening, assessment and diagnostic protocols. This course is designed to incorporate a range of issues associated with stages across the lifespan from childhood to late life. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400-TR

***SASS 549 Theory/Practice Approaches in Direct Practice Social Work, 3 Credits**

This required course introduces selected theories and practice approaches commonly used in social work with individuals, families and groups. The course is designed to provide students with knowledge of theoretical explanations and practice frameworks commonly used in direct social work practice. The course also encourages students to apply critical thinking skills to theory and its practical applications. Case presentations, class discussions and assignments will require students to apply various theoretical perspectives to common problems and issues in social work practice. The course will highlight the use of professional social work values and attention to human development issues, diversity and cultural perspectives as they apply in each theory or framework.

***SASS 585 Social Work with Groups, 3 Credits**

This course is designed to present social work with group process. The social worker's role in facilitating group functioning through his/her interventions in the group process and/or structure and his/her use of various program media are covered. Attention is given to the significance of group goals, agency environment and social policy. While much of the material covered is vital in the utilization of therapy groups, the course covers the group process in other contexts as well, such as social groups and task groups. This course combines didactic and experiential learning to prepare students for practice with groups. The classroom represents a learning laboratory for students to become more knowledgeable and skillful as group leaders, co-leaders and group participants; this includes developing and practicing group leadership and group facilitation skills. The course is organized around the phases of group development and the appropriate tasks and interventions for each phase. Students will have an opportunity to lead and participate in group exercises. In addition to this experiential component, reading and written assignments will be used. Students are encouraged to lead or co-lead a group during the semester in their field experience to complete the major requirement for this group, or invest in a self-paced clinical training program for group work. Prereq: SASS 400 or instructor permission. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400-TR

***SASS 550 Trauma-Informed Social Work Practice with Children & Families, 3 Credits**

This course builds on foundation direct practice courses and focuses specifically on children, adolescents and families affected by trauma.

It uses both a developmental and an ecological systems perspective, recognizing that in order to successfully treat trauma, it is important to not only focus on the individual, but also on the family and the larger community environment of which the child or adolescent is a part. It is designed to foster an understanding of the neurobiology of trauma as well as to develop specific skills in interviewing children, child assessment including case formulation, selection of appropriate interventions and using specific intervention strategies at different levels of the trauma system. Rather than teaching one specific intervention model, students develop an understanding of the importance of using the empirical literature, critical thinking skills and clinical judgment to determine how to best intervene. The issues of ethically and culturally competent practice are emphasized throughout the course in each content area. Finally, the impact of secondary trauma on the practitioner is acknowledged and students develop plans for self-care.

SASS 579 Cognitive Behavioral Interventions, 3 Credits (Traditional Track only)

This course acquaints students with the theoretical, conceptual and skill bases of several cognitive-behavioral approaches to practice. Topics include assessment, use of tasks and homework, coping skills, cognitive restructuring and problem-solving approaches to practice. The course draws upon students' field and work experiences to illustrate the application of the concepts and skills under discussion. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400-TR

***SASS 529 Child and Family Policy & Service Delivery, 3 Credits**

This course focuses on major federal legislation impacting children, youth and families, examined in the context of community based social work policy/practice. It builds upon the foundation course in social welfare policy and enables students to use an advocacy approach to provide policy-informed services and to participate in policy and implementation and change. Prereq: SASS 470 or SASS 400-TR.

***SASS 530 Practice Evaluation, 3 Credits**

This course prepares students in direct practice concentrations to critically evaluate their practices within an empirical community-based framework using single-system design methods. Students learn to use evidence-based research methodology and findings to inform their social work practice. The course draws from the existing literature on diverse client systems including those populations at risk and socially and economically oppressed. Single system evaluation methods require specifying the intended outcome of worker intervention, systematically collecting and analyzing client system outcome data throughout service delivery and using this information to guide clinical and ethical decision-making. Students learn to evaluate their practices within their field settings. Major topics include goal setting, measurement, assessment of change including the use of computer applications and research designs. In addition, students learn to critically evaluate the empirical evidence-based literature on social work practice and policy based on knowledge of research principles and social work practice. Particular emphasis is placed on issues related to discrimination and ethical concerns related to social work research. Prereq: SASS 426 or SASS 400-TR

***SASS 582 Social Work with Child Abuse & Family Violence, 3 Credits**

This advanced level elective course is directed to students in the mental health and children, youth and families concentrations. This course conducts an in depth assessment of the process and content of the impact and dynamics of physical, emotional and sexual abuse. The impact of abuse on the physical and emotional development of the child and adolescent is explored. This course explores the history of abuse and family violence in our culture and examines strategies employed by the social service and legal communities to address the issues of family victimization. The course includes issues of cultural sensitivity, social justice and advocacy as they specifically relate to abuse perpetrated on children and adults. The impact of physical and/or mental disabilities and diseases resulting from the abuse are explored. Strategic partnerships, roles and responsibilities of community, legal and social services are critically analyzed within the context of family and community. Strategies for victim advocacy will be developed. Prereq: SASS 440 and SASS 477 or SASS 400-TR

SASS 505 Adoption: Practice & Policy, 3 Credits (Advanced Standing only)

This course covers the concepts, knowledge, skills and policies associated with contemporary adoption practice. The practice method reflects a triad perspective, meaning that adoption is examined from the viewpoints of birth parents, adoptees and adoptive parents. For each topic area, social work roles, activities, tasks and skills are explored along with policy issues. Exemplars and case studies are presented for illustration purposes. Consideration of triad needs at different life cycle stages are presented. The issues of ethnically competent adoption practice are emphasized throughout the course in each content area.

Mental Health with Adults

Prepare to meet the growing demand for skilled clinicians in community-based mental health practice, including hospitals, substance abuse treatment programs and mental health centers.

The following specialized courses are required for both advanced standing and traditional track students.

SASS 547 Problem Identification, Screening & Assessment/Diagnosis, 3 Credits

This course provides a bio-psycho-social approach to identification, screening, assessment and diagnoses of common psychosocial problems/dysfunctions experienced clients. This course introduces the student to the etiology, recognition and diagnoses of these problems in the context of social work practice. Through use of a competency-based model, students are introduced to techniques used to screen, assess and diagnose problems, such as serious mental illness, suicidality, depression and anxiety, substance abuse, child abuse, elder abuse and exposure trauma. Students become familiar with the use of the DSM IV TR in providing axis I diagnostic formulations. A skills-based approach is used in presenting students with specific screening, assessment and diagnostic protocols. This course is designed to incorporate a range of issues associated with stages across the lifespan from childhood to late life. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400-TR

SASS 549 Theory/Practice Approaches in Direct Practice Social Work, 3 Credits

This required, three credit course introduces selected theories and practice approaches commonly used in social work with individuals, families and groups. The course is designed to provide students with knowledge of theoretical explanations and practice frameworks commonly used in direct social work practice. The course also encourages students to apply critical thinking skills to theory and its practical applications. Case presentations, class discussions and assignments will require students to apply various theoretical perspectives to common problems and issues in social work practice. The course will highlight the use of professional social work values and attention to human development issues, diversity and cultural perspectives as they apply in each theory or framework. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400-TR

SASS 564 Social Work Practice in Alcohol & Other Drug Abuse, 3 Credits

SASS 564 is an advanced direct practice concentration course focused upon knowledge, skills and values important for social work practice with people who abuse and/or are dependent on alcohol and other drugs. The content of SASS 564 directly builds upon the foundation direct practice course (SASS 477) and the required advanced course in screening and assessment (SASS 576). SASS 564 takes a biopsychosocial approach to prevention, assessment and treatment of alcohol and other drug abuse and dependency (AODA) problems. This course introduces the student to the etiology and treatment of alcohol and other drug abuse in the context of social work practice. The historical background and the development of the evidence base of alcohol and other drug treatment interventions, self-help groups and conceptual models of addiction are presented. Students explore their own attitudes and values toward AODA problems and how these affect treatment outcomes, as well as commonly used prevention and treatment approaches in social work with people who abuse and/or are dependent upon alcohol and other drugs. The course uses case materials to illustrate similarities and differences among various populations, including minority/ethnic identity groups. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400-TR

SASS 583 Social Work Practice in Mental Health: Adults, 3 Credits

This advanced methods course builds on the content from required foundation social work methods, policy and advanced sociobehavioral theory courses including Direct Practice Methods and Skills, Mental Health Policy and Service 11 Delivery, Advanced Child and Adolescent Development and Dysfunction and Adult Psychopathology. This course complements the content of advanced methods courses including Social Work with People Who Have Chronic Mental Illness, Social Work in Child Abuse and Family Violence and Interventions in Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse. This course develops biopsychosocial knowledge and intervention techniques related to professional settings specializing in child and adolescent mental health: hospitals, child guidance agencies, family service agencies, mental health centers and residential treatment centers. Students learn to use development and clinical theory to guide interventions while, maximizing individual strengths, social work

values and ethics and empowerment. Social and economic risk factors, such as poverty, discrimination and oppression, are considered in the intervention process and in the utilization of mental health services. In addition, students learn to think critically about the myriad ways cultural diversity influences parenting, child and adolescent norms and expectations. Students utilize assessment skills, coupled with knowledge of development and clinical theory to explore clinical case studies. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400-TR

SASS 587 Integrative Seminar in Mental Health: Adults, 3 Credits

The Integrative Seminar in Social Work Practice with Adults is an advanced level course, a capstone course in the Mental Health Adult Specialization, which provides opportunities for students to increase their knowledge of assessment, diagnosis and treatment. The seminar is intended to help students integrate theory and practice, especially in the context of public mental health and community-based social service practice. The Integrative Seminar in Social Work Practice with Adults uses a seminar format and provides students the opportunity to interact with professionals from various treatment and practice settings. The seminar format facilitates individual learning and promotes a learning to practice, reflective approach. The seminar assumes there are numerous evidenced-based models and practices and focuses student learning on the role of the professional use of self in the implementation of theory, technique, model, or intervention. Prereq: SASS 583 or SASS 400-TR

SASS 514 Mental Health Policy & Service Delivery, 3 Credits

This course is designed to prepare students for careers as social workers in the mental health field with an understanding of mental health policy and mental health service delivery systems and to improve their advocacy skills at state and local levels. Collectively, through readings, lectures, discussions and written policy analysis assignments, the course aims at the development by students of a broad macro-level perspective of community mental health policies and programs and the major service delivery systems for adults and children and adolescents with mental illness. Student will also gain deeper insights into several major issues in the field. Prereq: SASS 470 or SASS 400-TR

SASS 530 Practice Evaluation, 3 Credits

This course prepares students in direct practice concentrations to critically evaluate their practices within an empirical community-based framework using single-system design methods. Students learn to use evidence-based research methodology and findings to inform their social work practice. The course draws from the existing literature on diverse client systems including those populations at risk and socially and economically oppressed. Single system evaluation methods require specifying the intended outcome of worker intervention, systematically collecting and analyzing client system outcome data throughout service delivery and using this information to guide clinical and ethical decision making. Students learn to evaluate their practices within their field settings. Major topics include goal setting, measurement, assessment of change including the use of computer applications and research designs. In addition, students learn to critically evaluate the empirical evidence-based literature on social work practice and policy based on knowledge of research principles and social work practice. Particular emphasis is placed on issues related to discrimination and ethical concerns related to social work research. Prereq: SASS 426 or SASS 400-TR

SASS 562 Social Work Intervention in Co-occurring Mental & Substance Abuse Disorders, 3 Credits

This advanced methods course provides a basic orientation to substance use disorders in persons with mental illness (SAMI). A biopsychosocial framework is used to explore the etiology, the maintenance and the recovery of both mental and substance use disorders. The historical background of practitioner, programmatic and institutional barriers that impede the development and application of clinical skills to dually diagnosed individuals is explored. Emphasis is placed on strategies for the implementation of services to deal with individuals with co-occurring problems and their families using the evidence-based New Hampshire-Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center Integrated Treatment (IT) Model. Current assessment techniques and treatment of special populations, including, but not limited to women, minorities and adolescents, will be discussed. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400-TR

SASS 579 Cognitive Behavioral Interventions, 3 Credits

This course acquaints students with the theoretical, conceptual and skill bases of several cognitive-behavioral approaches to practice. Topics include assessment, use of tasks and homework, coping skills, cognitive restructuring and problem-solving approaches to practice. The course draws upon students' field and work experiences to illustrate the application of the concepts and skills under discussion. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400-TR

Community Practice for Social Change

Drive systemic change on a broad scale by addressing some of society's biggest social justice issues, such as poverty, human and women's rights, cultural diversity and oppression.

Courses that are required for both traditional and advanced standing MSSA students are denoted with an *.

***SASS 532 Program and Practice Evaluation, 3 Credits**

This course covers research methods and analytic tools that are used in planning, monitoring and evaluating programs and policies. It builds upon the research methods course in the foundation curriculum and deepens and expands this content as applicable at the advanced practice level. The content prepares students to use quantitative and qualitative research methods in carrying out needs assessments, assets mapping, program monitoring, quality improvement, program evaluation and policy impact studies. These research methods and tools are used by students to improve and evaluate practices, policies and programs. The major rationales for this course are: 1) The strong desire for accountability in nonprofit and public programs; 2) The importance of informing organizational and program decision making to promote program improvement; and 3) The need to demonstrate the effectiveness and efficiency of programs, or policies and contribute to the knowledge base on "what works" in specific program areas. Students develop an understanding of and use of skills in the interpretation and conduct of different types of evaluation research, including needs assessment, monitoring/ process evaluations and outcome/impact assessments. This course is especially relevant for students interested in community or program research in the nonprofit and public sector. This course is particularly appropriate for students who anticipate the need to develop practical skills in data driven decision making, program or project planning or managing towards results and accountability. Prereq: SASS 426 or SASS 400-TR

***SASS 534 Theoretical Contexts Shaping Community Practice, 3 Credits**

The aim of the course is to provide students in the Community Practice for Social Change concentration with a thorough overview and analysis of the range of individual, group, organizational and community-level theories that inform our practice with organizations, neighborhoods, communities, social institutions and policies. The course seeks to help students: (1) develop an appreciation of the main traditions, theoretical debates, experiences and research findings in community practice both as a change process and as an interdisciplinary field; (2) identify the key ideological assumptions underlying these theories with attention to the broader historical, economic, social, demographic, institutional and political influences that affect these assumptions as well as resultant practice both in the United States and internationally; (3) identify, articulate and apply theories of change through the practice of theorizing; and (4) understand and apply logic models for community problem solving. The course emphasizes application of theory to practice settings and developing skills and competencies for community work in diverse settings. As such, this course serves as the theoretical, contextual and strategic foundation for the other four courses in the Community Practice for Social Change advanced curriculum. Courses in the rest of the advanced curriculum will provide opportunities to apply and scrutinize the concepts discussed in this course.

***SASS 407 Nonprofit Revenue Planning & Development, 3 Credits**

Revenue strategy and development are critical in advancing the mission and core work of a nonprofit organization and are among the most strategic responsibilities held by an executive director and his/her board. Nonprofits face a myriad of revenue options which could be pursued, but each of these has implications for how the organization advances its mission and its sustainability. The course examines how to assess these revenue sources and evaluate how they can contribute to an organization's overall financial vitality. This course focuses on what executive directors and executive level staff members of nonprofit organizations need to know about the strategic management of an organization's revenue and the development strategy. An overview of all core revenue generation tactics is included in the course, including contributed revenue (fundraising) and earned revenue, but the course's major focus is on strategic evaluation and executive decision-making. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400 TR

***SASS 567 Assessing, Building & Organizing Community, 3 Credits**

This course examines strategies of community and social development, focusing on community as a means of impacting social change and improving the quality of life for individuals and families in low-income urban communities. Students learn the history, frameworks and models of community building and community organizing. The course includes a critical analysis of the goals, strategies, potential and challenges these efforts have faced and the lessons learned to date. Students also learn practice skills in the related social processes in the United State and internationally, such as strategic planning, participatory action research, consciousness-raising and direct action. As community and social development models are presented, students participate in a comparative analysis of the roles played by community organizers, community builders, community-based organizations and community initiatives. Through real world experiences and case studies, students develop skills in neighborhood assessment, civic engagement, empowerment, leadership development, group work, relationship building, social capital formation, conflict resolution, democratic process, social policy analysis and change and other methods.

***SASS 569 Planning & Implementing Social Change, 3 Credits**

This course builds skills for the design, planning and implementation of social change. The focus of this course is on promoting social change through more strategic and impactful planning, positioning and partnerships. The premise of this course is that the impact and sustainability of programs, initiatives and other change efforts can be strengthened through more effective planning, better strategic positioning and organizational adaptation to external 10 circumstances and trends and stronger collaborations and partnerships. Students strengthen their ability to work effectively within organizations, in collaborations and coalitions and within communities and systems. Course content includes the development of theories of change and action, logic, models, strategic planning, organizational assessment, strategic positioning, collaboration and coalition building, systems reform and effective working relationships with funders and local intermediaries. A service learning assignment with a community partner organization is a key skills-building experience in the course. Prereq: SASS 567

***SASS 561 Community Practice Policy: Analyzing & Changing Social Policy, 3 Credits**

This course teaches knowledge, values and skills for analyzing and changing social policy. The course uses a policy practice framework to examine the development and implementation of community and social policy and to prepare students to participate in policy change. A Policy Practice Project provides an opportunity for students to develop skills in planning, advocacy and policy development. Students work in groups to develop and implement a change strategy targeted at the agency or community level. Course content includes policy analysis, logic models and advocacy methods. The course also covers essential social policies relevant to community practice, including place based and population based policies for improving communities such as community development, employment and housing policies.

***SASS 425 Nonprofit Financial Management, 3 Credits**

This course focuses on techniques and principles of financial management including budgeting, finance and investment decision making. Topics include budget formulation, analysis and planning, present value analysis, cost-effectiveness, cash flow analysis, portfolio management and venture planning. Special emphasis will be given to the unique problems of nonprofits in capital formation, generating earned income, managing endowments, gifts and grants and tax planning. Prereq: SASS 477 or SASS 400 TR

SASS 521 Supervision, 3 Credits (Traditional Track only)

This course has two foci. First, the course focuses on the role of strength based supervision in improving outcomes clients served in the various social service systems and on developing the skills necessary for effective supervision and leadership. The course examines the context of contemporary supervision and presents models of supervision grounded in systems theory, developmental theory and social justice theory. Second, the course is also designed to build practical skills for organizational leadership, focusing on adaptive leadership. The examples are geared toward child welfare supervision, but the knowledge and skills are applicable to a variety of human services fields. This course works if you are in a supervisory position. It was created as part of the federally funded Child Welfare Fellows Program.

***SASS 545 Program Design, 3 Credits**

Program design and development are of critical importance in nonprofit organizations. In this course students will gain a practical, hands-on understanding of strategies for designing programs. The course focuses on program development approaches that attempt to maximize a program's relevance to the need being addressed and increase the likelihood that the program will attain its identified outcomes. Emphasis is

placed on learning to understand a community's need/problem, reviewing evidence on potential strategies and identifying promising practices, anticipating potential implementation challenges and addressing them and identifying potential funders. The link between program design and the development of effective program proposals is stressed. Through this course students will have the opportunity to design a program using a specific analytic framework. Students will learn: (1) to address the demands of multiple constituencies and competing values in program development process, (2) skills for developing and implementing programs in the nonprofit sector and (3) to examine issues of diversity as they affect organizations and community efforts and explore personal values and ethics as these influence programs and interventions.

SASS 531 Collaboration & Strategic Partnership, 3 Credits (Advanced Standing only)

The development of strategic alliances is being used increasingly as a key for nonprofit organizations to carry out their missions. This course is designed to provide students with the conceptual and practical resources necessary for leadership in the formation and maintenance of such alliances. Various models and strategies for creating and sustaining local, community-based and national relationships are explored. The course is based on "practical theory," builds on current knowledge about creating multi-organizational partnerships and expands capabilities to participate in these efforts. The overarching goals of this course are that students, as members of this "learning community," will (a) develop a deeper understanding of the core knowledge required for successful collaboration, (b) deepen their appreciation of the values and ethics involved in creating strategic alliances and (c) enhance their ability to apply acquired skills in the area of interorganizational relations. Prereq: SASS 477 and SASS 478 or SASS 400-TR

Field Education

SASS 495V Field Education Seminar, 1 Credit

The Field Education Seminar provides the support and guidance necessary to assist foundation social work students to identify and finalize a field placement location. This course also prepares students for the upcoming field experience through self-assessments, discussions and reflective activities. This is a 14-week course. This field education course is part of the general course curriculum.

SASS 651 Field Education I, 2 Credits

This course is designed to be taken by generalist level social work students without Advanced Standing in the second semester of their master's program. Students enrolled in SASS 651 take SASS 495V, Field Education Seminar concurrently. The overall goal of this course is to provide graduate level social work students with field related opportunities to develop the required generalist level competencies by helping students apply and integrate knowledge of social work theory, skills, knowledge, values, ethics, and cognitive and affective processes acquired in the classroom within an agency setting. These collective experiences provide students with a forum to develop social work skills, integrate and operationalize the values and ethics inherent in professional practice, and confront social injustice as self-reflective, competent developing practitioners. The Field Instructor is based at the field site and provides direct instruction and supervision to the student. The Field Faculty Advisor based at the Mandel School is the liaison between all parties, interprets the requirements and standards of the School, and participates and consults in the design of the student's learning experience. The Field Instructor assigns tasks to the student according to the requirements of the School and the educational and experiential level of the student. Student, Field Instructor, and Field Faculty Advisor participate in the assessment and evaluation of the student's work. The Field Faculty Advisor is the course instructor and assigns all grades. Students complete a total of 147 field hours and 3 hours of professional development in SASS 651.

SASS 652A Field Education II, 1.5 Credits

This course is designed to be taken by entering Advanced Standing students in the first semester of their master's program and by Non-Advanced Standing social work students in the third semester of their master's program. The SASS 652A course is 14 weeks in duration. It consists of a field practicum and participation in professional development opportunities. For students entering the program with advanced standing, there is an additional requirement of four logs and an integrative assignment and periodic meetings with a field faculty advisor in addition to the field conference. The overall goal of this course is to provide graduate level social work students with field related opportunities

to continue to develop foundation level competencies in the eight abilities by helping students apply knowledge of social work theory, skills, values and ethics acquired in the classroom in an agency setting. The periodic meetings with the field faculty advisor are designed to provide students with an opportunity to integrate classroom and field learning. These collective experiences provide students with a forum to develop social work skills, integrate and operationalize the values and ethics inherent in professional practice and confront social injustice as self-reflective, competent, developing practitioners. Students spend 150 hours in field and professional development in SASS 652A. Prereq: SASS 651 or SASS 400-TR

SASS 652B Field Education II, 1.5 Credits

This course is designed to be taken by entering Advanced Standing students in the second semesters of their master's program and by Non-Advanced Standing social work students in the fourth semester of their master's program. The SASS 652B course is 14 weeks in duration. It consists of a field practicum and participation in professional development opportunities. For students entering the program with advanced standing, there is an additional requirement of four logs and an integrative assignment and periodic meetings with a field faculty advisor in addition to the field conference. The overall goal of this course is to provide graduate level social work students with field related opportunities to continue to develop foundation level competencies in the eight abilities by helping students apply knowledge of social work theory, skills, values and ethics acquired in the classroom in an agency setting. The periodic meetings with the field faculty advisor are designed to provide students with an opportunity to integrate classroom and field learning. These collective experiences provide students with a forum to develop social work skills, integrate and operationalize the values and ethics inherent in professional practice and confront social injustice as self-reflective, competent, developing practitioners. Students spend 150 hours in field and professional development in SASS 652B. Prereq: SASS 652A

SASS 653A Field Education III, 1.5 Credits

This course is designed to be taken by students in their advanced course of study. Advanced Standing social work students take this course in the third semester of their master's program. Non-Advanced Standing social work students take it in the fifth semester of their master's program. The SASS 653A course is 14 weeks in duration. It consists of a field practicum and participation in professional development opportunities. The overall goal of this course is to provide graduate level social work students with field related opportunities to continue to develop advanced level competencies in their area of concentration in the eight abilities by helping students apply knowledge of social work theory, skills, values and ethics acquired in the classroom in an agency setting. The periodic meetings with the field faculty advisor are designed to provide students with a forum to develop social work skills, opportunity to integrate classroom and field learning. These collective experiences provide students with a forum to develop social work skills, integrate and operationalize the values and ethics inherent in professional practice and confront social injustice as self-reflective, competent, developing practitioners. Student spend 150 hours in field and professional development in SASS 653A. Prereq: SASS 652A and SASS 652B

SASS 653B Field Education III, 1.5 Credits

This course is designed to be taken by students in their advanced course of study. Advanced Standing social work students take this course in the fourth semester of their master's program. Non-Advanced Standing social work students take it in the sixth semester of their master's program. The SASS 653B course is 14 weeks in duration. It consists of a field practicum and participation in professional development opportunities. The overall goal of this course is to provide graduate level social work students with field related opportunities to continue to develop advanced level competencies in their area of concentration in the eight abilities by helping students apply knowledge of social work theory, skills, values and ethics acquired in the classroom in an agency setting. The periodic meetings with the field faculty advisor are designed to provide students with a forum to develop social work skills, opportunity to integrate classroom and field learning. These collective experiences provide students with a forum to develop social work skills, integrate and operationalize the values and ethics inherent in professional practice and confront social injustice as self-reflective, competent, developing practitioners. Students spend 150 hours in field and professional development in SASS 653B. Prereq: SASS 653A

SASS 654A Field Education IV, 1.5 Credits

This course is designed to be taken by students in their advanced course of study. Advanced Standing social work students take this course in the fifth semester of their master's program. Non-Advanced Standing social work students take it in the seventh semester of their master's program. The SASS 654A course is 14 weeks in duration. It consists of a field practicum and participation in professional development opportunities. The overall goal of this course is to provide graduate level social work students with field related opportunities to continue to develop their advanced level competencies in their area of concentration in the eight abilities by helping students apply ethics acquired in the classroom in an agency setting. The periodic meetings with the field faculty advisor are designed to provide students with an opportunity to integrate classroom and field learning. These collective experiences provide students with a forum to develop social work skills, integrate and operationalize the values and ethics inherent in professional practice and confront social injustice as 14 self-reflective, competent, developing practitioners. Student, field instructor and field faculty advisor all participate in the evaluation of the student's work; the faculty advisor is responsible for assigning the grade. Students spend 150 hours in field and professional development in SASS 654A. Prereq: SASS 653A and SASS 653B

SASS 654B Field Education IV, 1.5 Credits

This course is designed to be taken by students in their advanced course of study. Advanced Standing social work students take this course in the sixth semester of their master's program. Non-Advanced Standing social work students take it in the eighth semester of their master's program. The SASS 654B course is 14 weeks in duration. It consists of a field practicum and participation in professional development opportunities. The overall goal of this course is to provide graduate level social work students with field related opportunities to continue to develop their advanced level competencies in their area of concentration in the eight abilities by helping students apply ethics acquired in the classroom in an agency setting. The periodic meetings with the field faculty advisor are designed to provide students with an opportunity to integrate classroom and field learning. These collective experiences provide students with a forum to develop social work skills, integrate and operationalize the values and ethics inherent in professional practice and confront social injustice as self-reflective, competent, developing practitioners. Student, field instructor and field faculty advisor all participate in the evaluation of the student's work; the faculty advisor is responsible for assigning the grade. Students spend 150 hours in field and professional development in SASS 654B. Prereq: SASS 654A