

Area of Specialized Practice

The specialization in advanced clinical practice with children, adults, and families builds on content in the generalist foundation curriculum to further develop students' abilities to engage, assess, and intervene with client systems. The specialization further expands students' ability to engage in evidence-based practice, critically examine the effectiveness of clinical interventions, and engage in social work research that examines social phenomenon and policy.

Within this Area of Specialized Practice, the nine core competencies are enhanced by building students clinical knowledge and skills, cognitive and affective processes and values in three primary ways. First, students complete specially designed practice courses where they are taught a variety of clinical assessments and interventions commonly used in practice. Many of these high impact practice courses include service learning, where students engage with the community and offer valuable services. This experiential learning fosters reciprocity and helps students develop skills and knowledge essential for success. Second, while completing these clinical practice courses, they are simultaneously completing a specialized field placement in a clinical setting. Finally, through additional specialized clinical electives, students can enhance their knowledge and skill by focusing and expanding these common evidence-based clinical interventions to populations or diagnoses of interest. For example, a student in clinical practice with adults will learn cognitive behavioral strategies; but, when they take the advanced clinical elective in working in corrections, they learn how to apply these strategies with individuals incarcerated for sex offenses.

Area of Specialized Practice (Advanced Clinical Practice with Children, Adults & Families) courses:

- SOWK 630 Clinical Practice with Children & Families
- SOWK 635 Clinical Practice with Adults
- SOWK 710 Qualitative Research
- SOWK 730/1 Practice Skills following Crisis or Practice Skills in Forensic Social Work
- SOWK 750 Field Education (6 credits, 3 taken each semester students in field placement)
- 5 Clinical electives

Specialized Practice Course descriptions:

- The **Clinical Practice with Children and Families (SOWK 630)** course provides a focus on evidence-based social work clinical practice including discussion of the problems and DSM-5 disorders of children, couples, and families. Students are exposed to assessment instruments, demonstrate the implementation of interventions, and evaluate programs of treatment. Topics covered in the course include anxiety and depression in children and adolescents, conduct disorder, ADHD in children and adolescents, distressed couples, child abuse and neglect, eating disorders, substance abuse and co-occurring problems in adolescents and young adults.
- The **Clinical Practice with Adults (SOWK 635)** course provides content on evidence-based social work practice focusing on intervention of the DSM 5 adult disorders of schizophrenia spectrum disorders, depressive and bipolar disorders, substance use

disorders, panic disorder, agoraphobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, antisocial and borderline personality disorders.

- The **Qualitative Research (SOWK 710)** course is designed to provide substantive methodological content for various phases of the qualitative research process accompanied by experiential learning opportunities. The purpose of this course is to prepare students to select and implement qualitative research designs that are appropriate and adequate for answering contemporary social work practice and social welfare policy research questions. This course engages students in a research project which requires integration and demonstration of multiple research skills including identifying problems or interventions amenable to social research methods, creating a research question, completing a review of current literature, engaging in data gathering, analysis, and interpretation, and communication of results. Furthermore, students gain an understanding of evaluation/intervention research and its applicability to social work practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
- The **Practice Skills Following Crisis (SOWK 730)** course prepares students to effectively intervene and resolve crisis situations in social work practice. Students apply crisis intervention models to various simulated crises. This course is an advanced clinical practice course designed to teach second year practice students the theories, techniques, and practice skills of crisis intervention. Students receive content related to historical, theoretical, and clinical information sufficient to work with individuals, couples, families, groups, and organizations.
- The **Practice Skills in Forensic Social Work (SOWK 731)** course provides students with social work knowledge and skills required for working with clients involved in various aspects of the legal system. Students are introduced to practice skills in areas including child welfare, juvenile justice, corrections, addiction, and diversion including treatment with both victims of crime and perpetrators.
- The **Field Education II – Specialized (SOWK 750)** course is designed to provide an educationally supervised advanced clinical practicum within a human services organization. This is a clinical fieldwork experience based on the strengths model of social work practice. This practicum integrates class assignments and assists in the development of a social work perspective and skills in working with a range of client systems: individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, communities and the larger society. The practicum experience provides for the application and integration of theories learned throughout the foundation courses including human behavior and the social environment across the lifespan, social justice/diversity, organizational and community dynamics, policy and research. This course serves as the summative practice experience culminating the application of theories learned across the foundation curriculum.

Clinical Practice Electives:

The SRU MSW Program provides opportunities to further expand student's advanced clinical skills by offering several elective courses focused on crisis intervention, forensic social work,

and animal assisted interventions. These advanced clinical electives enable the students to apply clinical interventions to areas and populations of interest. Students must choose five elective courses from the following offerings:

SOWK 732: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder This course will provide students with an in-depth look at post-traumatic stress disorder, the etiology, symptomology, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment interventions. Students will also explore the impact and challenges for families.

SOWK 733: Disaster Management This course will provide students with an understanding of the roles of disaster managers. Students will apply this knowledge to all phases of disaster management.

SOWK 734: Trauma Informed Care This course will provide students with an understanding of trauma-informed care and how to apply these concepts in their social work practice and effectively assist those impacted by trauma.

SOWK 735: Military Culture In this course students will learn about the uniqueness of military culture which is a dominant influence in the lives of military personnel and their families. This culture is highly structured and regulated by rules and traditions. Different military contexts (i.e., active duty, guard/reserve, veteran) and all branches of service are explored. Ethical issues are considered. Students completing this course will have an in-depth understanding of individuals and military families.

SOWK 736: Social Work with Families Impacted by Trauma This course explores the impact of violence/crime, natural disasters, combat, and other trauma causing events on families. The changing relationship dynamics between adult partners and children and parents from initial events through recovery is given special emphasis. The course content includes an overview of the multiple consequences of trauma from a bio-psycho-social perspective, including resiliency and traumatic growth. Students will be introduced to evidence-based interventions.

SOWK 737: Behavioral Health Services in Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice Students will learn to identify adverse childhood experiences and assess the impact of these experiences on children and adolescents' emotional and behavioral functioning. Students will acquire the ability to identify risks for recurring adverse experiences in the child welfare and the juvenile justice systems. Evidenced-based practices and pathways to recovery will be learned. Students will learn how to identify opportunities for collaboration between systems, understand the barriers to collaboration, develop skills to overcome barriers and maintain collaborative relationships. The course will discuss current evidenced based and promising behavioral health practice approaches currently being use in child welfare and juvenile justice settings.

SOWK 738: Interventions for Sexual Assault & Intimate Partner Violence This course will focus on social forces, prevalence, dynamics, types, effects, assessment and interventions specific to trauma in interpersonal violence. Students will learn about individual and group intervention strategies specific to trauma and violence, including evidence-based models, crisis intervention, and cognitive-behavioral models.

SOWK 739: Forensic Social Work in Corrections Students will gain and demonstrate knowledge and skills to effectively assist those involved in the criminal justice system. This course applies social work processes to clients in correctional settings. Students will learn how to assess and treat various issues common to those who are incarcerated, such as needs of female offenders, substance abuse, mental health, personality disorders and sex offenses.

SOWK 740: Animal Assisted Social Work Practice This course will provide students with a foundation of animal-assisted social work practice. Integration of therapy animals into all aspects of practice will be discussed, to include assessment, intervention, evaluation as well as individual, group, family, and community levels of practice.

SOWK 742: Animal Assisted Social Work with Children & Adolescents This course will provide students with practice skills to implement AASW with children and adolescents. Individual and group intervention applicable to various clinical issues and settings will be explored as well as special considerations when working with this population.

SOWK 743: Animal Assisted Social Work with Seniors This course will provide students with practice skills to implement AASW with the aging population. Individual and group intervention applicable to various clinical issues and settings will be explored as well as special considerations when working with this population.

SOWK 744: Animal Assisted Crisis Response This course will provide students with an understanding of animal-assisted crisis response and how to provide this special intervention to those impacted by crises and disasters.