Welcome to the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver!

In the heart of a vibrant city bordering the Rocky Mountains, our top-ranked graduate program and world-class university offer you personalized educational and professional opportunities you won’t find anywhere else.

- Customize your MSW with 1 of 8 concentrations, a career-enhancing certificate or interdisciplinary dual degree.
- Specialize earlier than in more traditional MSW programs.
- Learn from award-winning educators and scholars who bring years of practice and research experience to the classroom.
- Choose from hundreds of diverse internship opportunities.
- Travel abroad to experience global social work practice firsthand.
- Understand career trends, receive professional mentoring and sharpen your job-seeking skills.
- Join a community of students from around the world to earn your PhD from one of America’s first social work doctoral programs.

It’s all possible at the Graduate School of Social Work, where we’ve been educating social work leaders since 1931.
MISSION

The Graduate School of Social Work aspires to be among the finest graduate schools of social work in the country, a vibrant center for intellectual development, a leader in promoting diverse communities, and an advocate for an integrated and inclusive model of social work, all within a facility that supports the best educational practices.

The Graduate School of Social Work is committed to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and community leadership and service. Our mission is to foster social responsibility regarding social and economic justice, quality of life and multicultural communities, based on equality for all people. As a center for the creation and dissemination of knowledge, the School provides graduate social work education in order to alleviate and prevent social problems of individuals, families and communities.

The guiding philosophy of social work includes values that create a framework for social work education, research and service. These include:

- progressive ideals of equality, social and economic justice, cultural diversity and freedom
- social work's unique focus on person-in-environment as the central concept which shapes our curriculum and practice
- excellence in the development of social work knowledge and its dissemination to students, communities and policy-makers
- responsibility for promoting social change and multiculturalism in the community, and empowerment of the social work profession

Accreditation | Our MSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council on Post-Secondary Accreditation. Our accreditation has been continuous since 1933.

VISION | MISSION | VALUES

FROM THE DEAN

Dear Prospective Student:

Your interest in social work is a clear indication that you have a passion for intellectual exploration, discovery, theories, ideas, experiments and observations. Graduate social work education is one of the most important investments you will ever make. We hope you will take the time to discover why the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver (GSSW) offers you exceptional preparation for this rewarding career.

If you’re interested in our Master of Social Work (MSW) program, you may already have a clear vision of your professional goals—whether that means working with at-risk adolescents, becoming a policy analyst or an advocate for low-income families, treating individuals with mental illness or implementing sustainable interventions through global social work practice. On the other hand, you may be like many of our entering students who bring with them a primary motivation to make a positive impact on the world, but are still deciding how best to make that impact.

In either case, you’ll find that GSSW offers you academic and field internship choices that you will not find anywhere else. An MSW is one of the most dynamic graduate degrees you can earn, preparing you to practice effectively in a wide variety of settings, both here and abroad.

The flexibility of our program, including an innovative MSW curriculum as well as more than 600 field placement options and opportunities to personalize your education with one of our unique certificates or interdisciplinary dual degree programs, allows you to create an almost unlimited number of rewarding career paths. And labor market career trends indicate that employment in the social work profession will continue to increase at a steady rate over the next decade.

If you’ve already earned a Masters degree in social work or another social science discipline, we welcome your interest in our PhD program, which trains human service professionals to become social work researchers, educators and policy experts.

From my own extensive social work experience, I can assure you that this profession offers unparalleled personal satisfaction, with many opportunities to make a positive difference in the world.

Welcome — from our faculty, staff and students — to the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver!

All the best,

James Herbert Williams, PhD, MSW
Dean and Milton Morris Endowed Chair
Choose Your Specialty | GSSW’s innovative MSW curriculum offers more social work specializations than ever before. You’ll select from eight practice concentrations:

- Child Welfare
- Children and Youth: Risks and Healthy Development
- Family Systems
- Aging Services and Policy
- Health and Wellness
- Mental Health
- Organizational Leadership and Policy Practice
- Sustainable Development and Global Practice

And you can combine your chosen concentration with one of three unique certificate programs:

- Animal-Assisted Social Work
- Couples and Family Therapy
- Social Work with Latinos/as

As a GSSW student, you can take up to 30 credits in other University of Denver schools or departments. An increasing number of international courses and the University of Denver’s interdisciplinary dual and cooperative graduate degrees — in law, international studies, theology or another field of your choice — multiply your options still further.

If you’re too busy with professional and family commitments to attend graduate school full-time, we also have some part-time scheduling options that may work for you.

Choose Your Internships | Your required field internships are a highlight of your MSW education, and GSSW offers you an exceptional array of choices. In fact, there are more than 600 internship sites from which to choose. Unlike most MSW programs, GSSW allows you to interview agencies and help choose an internship site that is just right for you. And, if you’re interested in global practice, you’ll find an increasing number of international internships available.

Start your Career | Even in today’s volatile economy, the flexibility of a social work degree gives you an almost unlimited variety of career options, both here and abroad. We even have a Director of Student and Career Development on staff to make sure you have all the resources you need. Today, our graduates are making their mark in every facet of social work practice, many in fields they’d never considered before. The choice is yours with a degree from GSSW.
Colorado | You probably already know that Colorado offers unparalleled natural beauty, a mild climate and an active, healthy lifestyle. With the mountains virtually at your doorstep, you’ll find plenty of ways to enjoy our 300 sunny days each year.

But did you know that Colorado also has a long-standing tradition of progressive human services? It was the second state to grant women the vote and one of the first to legislate financial support for dependent children. This forward thinking paved the way for GSSW’s founding in 1931, at the height of America’s Great Depression, and we’ve been shaping social work from a unique Western perspective ever since.

Denver | With nearly 2.9 million people in its metropolitan area, Denver is one of the country’s most exciting, yet livable, cities. Here you can explore the country’s most extensive urban bike trail system, shop at an Asian market, eat at a Middle Eastern restaurant or hop on light rail for a night on the town.

Denver also offers substantial ethnic and cultural diversity, a microcosm of social issues and more than 600 field internship options from which you can choose. As Colorado’s state capital, Denver is an ideal location for students seeking to understand and influence public policy.

The University of Denver | Our campus – a garden-filled arboretum — is right in the heart of this thriving, dynamic urban community. With 13,600 students, our world-class University’s unique medium size pairs the academic challenges typical of larger research institutions with the quality and personalized attention of smaller private colleges. Graduate student — in law, business, international studies and many other fields besides social work — account for more than half of the University’s student body.

Our GSSW Community | There’s even more to our location than top-notch educational resources, cosmopolitan diversity and beautiful surroundings. At GSSW, you’ll find “community” in every sense of the word — small classes that encourage your active participation, accessible faculty who’ll know you by name, mentors who’ll help you achieve your goals and lifelong friends who share your commitment to social justice and positive change.

To get a real sense of GSSW’s welcoming atmosphere and beautiful setting, please visit us in person. You can meet our faculty, staff and students, tour our campus and state-of-the-art facility, and learn more about the ways our programs can be tailored to meet your interests and goals. We offer regularly scheduled information sessions, and we’re happy to schedule a time to meet with you individually.

We invite you to come and see for yourself what makes GSSW the ideal location to learn, connect and grow.

Colorado communities are consistently ranked among the top places to live in the nation, and the state ranks among the top 10 for recent employment growth.

Denver’s B-cycle bike-sharing program, pioneered first at the University of Denver, is just one example of our commitment to promoting wellness and protecting the environment.

Learn more about living and learning in Denver at www.du.edu/socialwork.
Making History | Founded in 1931, and continuously accredited since 1933, GSSW is the oldest graduate social work program in the Rocky Mountain West. We were among the first in the nation — beginning in 1968 — to offer doctoral education. Our more than 6,000 MSW and PhD alumni are making their mark around the world as clinical and community practitioners, deans, directors, scholars and researchers.

U.S. News & World Report ranks our Master of Social Work (MSW) program in the top 11% of all accredited MSW programs in the nation. And we never stop looking for ways to improve.

Award-Winning Faculty | With MSW classes averaging just 17 students, you’ll find that learning at GSSW is highlighted by lively discussions and frequent collaborations among students and their instructors. Many of our faculty bring years of clinical and community practice experience to the classroom. In fact, at GSSW, you’ll learn from some of the best teachers, committed practitioners and passionate researchers around. GSSW’s current faculty includes recipients of the University’s Distinguished Teaching Award, University Lecturer Award, Outstanding Faculty Award from the Center for Multicultural Excellence and Public Good Faculty of the Year. Many others have received national and international honors for their research, and local and statewide honors for their community service.

Scholars, Researchers & Mentors | GSSW faculty and PhD students are conducting a wide variety of research, training and technical assistance projects affecting individuals, families and communities. GSSW research and scholarship not only promote effective social work practice and guide development of social policy, they also enhance your educational experience, as faculty members share their expertise with you in the classroom. Likewise, your field instructors help you apply that classroom learning to “real world” situations as you complete MSW internships that develop your own practice skills.

Whether you want to become an effective clinician, an influential policy analyst, a successful community organizer or an internationally recognized scholar, you’ll find outstanding teachers and mentors at GSSW.

Ask our students what attracted them to social work, and you’ll get hundreds of different answers: “I want to make a difference.” “I’m committed to social justice.” “I want to help children . . . families . . . veterans . . . at-risk youth . . . communities . . . battered women . . . cancer survivors . . . older adults.”

Ask those same students why they chose GSSW, and you’ll hear two responses time and again: the quality of our innovative academic programs and our readily accessible, outstanding faculty.

GSSW At-a-Glance:
• MSW and PhD Students: 475
• Student/Faculty ratio = 15/1
• Average MSW class size = 17
• MSW internship options = 600+
• Expected national increase in social work jobs by 2022 = 19%
In the Community | GSSW’s Bridge Project is the only direct service program in the nation administered by a graduate school of social work. Designed to break the cycle of poverty by providing educational and career opportunities to children, youth and families in Denver’s public housing developments, Bridge is one of hundreds of internship sites open to our MSW students.

GSSW’s nationally recognized Erna and Brad Butler Institute for Families seeks to enhance the well-being of children, youth and families through research, training and consultation. More than 30 faculty, staff and students work on externally funded projects through the Butler Institute, and it administers federally funded stipends for MSW students planning to work in child welfare after graduation.

Additionally, GSSW and the Butler Institute are among the partners in the University of Denver’s Resource Center for Separating and Divorcing Families (RCSDF). The first center of its kind in the United States, RCSDF provides legal, therapeutic and financial planning services in a warm and inviting environment. MSW students who complete internships at RCSDF receive extensive training and have the opportunity to become certified mediators.

The Institute for Human-Animal Connection addresses the critically important relationships between animals and people through research, training and education, technical assistance and advocacy. Multidisciplinary in focus, the Institute is the first program of its kind in the nation to be housed in a school of social work. GSSW’s Certificate in Animal-Assisted Social Work is one of three certificates open to MSW students.

As America’s population continues to age, GSSW is committed to meeting the rapidly increasing need for social workers specially trained to serve older adults. Our PROGRESS program provides gerontology stipends to MSW students, along with the opportunity to complete their internships at multiple sites serving older adults.

On the World Stage | In today’s global society, a growing number of social workers are choosing to live and learn in cultures very different from their own. GSSW’s MSW curriculum includes an increasing number of international experiential courses and internships, as well as an MSW concentration focused on sustainable development and global practice. In recent years, GSSW’s global practice courses and internships have offered MSW students firsthand experiences in Bosnia, China, Ghana, Kenya, Mexico, South Africa and Switzerland, and more such opportunities are being developed in Latin America and elsewhere.

GSSW is the academic home of International Service Learning Bosnia and Herzegovina (ISL-BiH), the oldest international service learning program at the University of Denver. ISL-BiH enables students to learn about the Balkans region through combined academic study and service-based internships in Sarajevo.

Some MSW students take courses at the University’s Korbel School of International Studies or earn masters degrees simultaneously from both schools, one of several interdisciplinary dual degree options open to our students.

GSSW faculty members have forged research and academic partnerships in Australia, Bosnia, Botswana, Canada, China, Ghana, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Senegal, Switzerland, Taiwan and Thailand. On average, about a third of our doctoral students are international students, many of whom return to their homes countries as high-level administrators in national government, non-governmental organizations and universities.

Creating Change | Whatever career path you choose to follow, GSSW offers you the innovative resources and specialized tools you’ll need to create positive change — in your own community and in communities around the world.

For more information about our institutes, our faculty and research, and our global and community outreach, visit us online at www.du.edu/socialwork.

INNOVATION

Through innovative curriculum options, research and outreach efforts that span the globe, GSSW exemplifies the University of Denver’s vision: to be a great private university dedicated to the public good.
Applying to the MSW Program

- If you have a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution in a field other than social work, you’re eligible to apply for our two-year MSW program that begins in the fall.
- If you have a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree from a CSWE-accredited program, you’re eligible to apply for entry with advanced standing. Advanced standing MSW students enter our program in mid-July and complete their degree in one calendar year (four quarters).
- MSW applications are accepted until classes are full. Apply as early as possible to receive priority consideration for financial aid.

Applying to the PhD Program

Doctoral applicants must have:

- a Masters degree conferred by a school of social work accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), or
- a Masters degree in one of the social sciences and demonstrated evidence of substantial professional experience in the social work field.

For optimal consideration, you should apply to the doctoral program between October and January prior to the year in which you seek admission. Apply as early as possible to receive priority consideration for financial aid.

Making Your Education Affordable

Nearly all GSSW students receive some type of financial aid, and more than 95 percent receive scholarships. Stipends and need-based aid are also available.

We’ll work with you to find the best combination of aid available to you.

GSSW awards more than $5.4 million in student financial aid each year. GSSW provides additional financial assistance and other benefits for Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) and Teach for America alumni pursuing an MSW.

PhD teaching and research assistantships include a full tuition waiver plus a stipend. Fellowships are also available.

Contact Us

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To learn more, visit www.du.edu/socialwork and click on Admission & Financial Aid.
The University of Denver is an Equal Opportunity institution. It is the policy of the University not to discriminate in the admission of students, in the provision of services, or in employment on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or disability. The University complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and Executive Orders. Inquiries concerning allegations of discrimination based on any of the above factors may be referred to the University of Denver, Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity, Mary Reed Building, Room 310, 2199 South University Boulevard, Denver, CO 80208. Phone 303.871.2585, fax 303.871.7982.