

## **MSW SPECIALIZATION**

### **Social Work Specialization Guidelines**

The MSW Specialization is an option designed collaboratively by a student and a supervising faculty member to develop a student's knowledge base more comprehensively in one arena of social work knowledge and practice. The specialization may go more deeply into one of the program's concentrations, or it may span the concentrations, but it does not replace the concentration. Students completing requirements of the specialization receive documentation of completion at the time of the awarding of the MSW degree. This document certifies that the student has demonstrated advanced practice knowledge and skills in a substantive area within at least one of the concentrations. The requirements for the specialization are the same for both Advanced Standing and Standard Degree option students.

### **Specialization Plan**

Students will select a School of Social Work faculty member (supervising faculty) with expertise in the area of interest to assist them in planning, engaging, and evaluating learning related to the specialization. Standard Degree Option students may choose to begin a specialization plan at any point in the foundation year and may develop a beginning plan with a faculty advisor and refine the plan during the foundation year. For both standard and advanced standing students, a plan for completion of the specialization during the concentration course of study, to include the substantive area that will be the focus of the specialization for completion of the specialization, will be electronically submitted for approval to the supervising faculty no later than 4 weeks into the semester the student begins concentration course work. The plan is developed in collaboration with the supervising faculty who will assist the student in determining how the specialization will be integrated into concentration course work. The supervising faculty will notify the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies of the student's intention to pursue a specialization and of the faculty member's willingness to supervise the student's learning. The Associate Dean will be responsible for notifying the Chair of the Curriculum committee. The student may petition the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for a change of advisor to the faculty member supervising the specialization.

Additional learning activities related to the specialization may also be included as the student and supervising faculty contract for meeting the requirements for completion of the specialization. It is possible for students to include learning that occurred as part of a course of study in an accredited baccalaureate or graduate foundation year if the supervising faculty determines that the learning meets or exceeds expectations for preparation for advanced social work practice.

The supervising faculty is responsible for approving the specialization plan and submitting the approved plan to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for review. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies will submit the approved plan to the Chair of the School of Social Work Curriculum Committee for review, posting, and tracking the specialization plan. The Associate Dean and/or the Curriculum committee reserve the right to deny and/or request revision of the plan. In the unlikely event that the request is not approved, the Chair of the Curriculum committee will provide the faculty member submitting the request and the student with a reason for denial or request for revision.

## Requirements

The student will plan and carry out a course of study that focuses in the area of specialization. The student will successfully complete advanced learning in at least the following:

Content Area	Course Work	Assignment Plan
Advanced Human Behavior Theory	SWO 5333, 5334 or 5335 Advanced Theory (3 hrs)	
Advanced Policy	SWO 5323 Administrative Practice in Social Work (3 hrs) or SWO 5333, 5334 or 5335 (3 hrs)	
Advanced Administrative Practice	SWO 5323 Administrative Practice in Social Work (3 hrs)	
Advanced Practice Theory	SWO 5573, 5574 or 5575 Advanced Practice (5 hrs)	
Advanced Practice Skill Demonstration	SWO 5573, 5574, or 5575 Advanced Practice (5 hrs)	
Advanced Research	SWO 5182 Research Seminar (1 hr) and SWO 5383 Research Project (3 hrs)	
Advanced Internship	SWO 5190 (1 hr) and SWO 5790 (7 hrs)	
Elective	A minimum of 2 approved graduate elective hours in the area of specialization	
Continuing Education	The equivalent of 3 CEU equivalents from workshops or conferences	
Other	Student and faculty discretion	

## Portfolio:

Documentation of all of the above requirements (completed projects and papers, field placement evaluations, documentation of CEU equivalents) is placed in an electronic portfolio, which the student submits to the supervising faculty by the last day of graduate capstone seminar. Portfolios are graded by the supervising faculty on a pass/fail basis, since most elements in the portfolio have already been graded. Upon recommendation of the supervising faculty, the completed specialization document is submitted to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for approval. A copy of the completed specialization portfolio will remain in the School of Social Work archives.

Applications for retroactive specialization recognition will not be approved.

## Gerontological Social Work Specialization Guidelines

The Gerontological Social Work Specialization is an option designed collaboratively by a student and a supervising faculty member to develop a student's knowledge base more comprehensively in gerontological social work practice. A template for the specialization was developed in conjunction with the Hartford Foundation and Baylor University School of Social

Work. The specialization will provide specific focus in the area of gerontology and geriatric social work. It is intended to enhance the student's concentration, but does not replace it. Students completing requirements of the gerontological social work specialization receive a certification of completion at the time of the awarding of the MSW degree. This document certifies that the student has demonstrated advanced practice knowledge and skills for work with older adults, within at least one of the concentrations. The requirements for the specialization are the same for both Advanced Standing and Standard Degree option students.

### **Specialization Plan:**

Students will select a School of Social Work faculty member (supervising faculty) with expertise in working with older adults, families in later life, intergenerational relations, and/or organizations and communities that benefit the older population. The faculty member will assist the student in planning, engaging, and evaluating learning related to the specialization. Standard Degree Option students may choose to begin a specialization plan at any point in the foundation year may develop a beginning plan with a faculty advisor and refine the plan during the foundation year. For both standard degree option and advanced standing students, a plan during the concentration course of study, to include the substantive area that will be the focus of the specialization for completion of the specialization, will be electronically submitted for approval to the supervising faculty no later than 2 weeks into the semester the student begins concentration course work. The plan is developed in collaboration with the supervising faculty who will assist the student in determining how the specialization will be integrated into concentration course work. The supervising faculty will notify the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies of the student's intention to pursue a specialization and of the faculty member's willingness to supervise the student's learning. The Associate Dean will be responsible for notifying the Chair of the Curriculum committee. The student may petition the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for a change of advisor to the faculty member supervising the specialization.

Additional learning activities related to the specialization may also be included as the student and supervising faculty contract for meeting the requirements for completion of the specialization. It is possible for students to include learning that occurred as part of a course of study in an accredited baccalaureate or graduate foundation year if the supervising faculty determines that the learning meets or exceeds expectations for preparation for advanced social work practice.

The supervising faculty is responsible for approving the specialization plan and submitting the approved plan to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for review. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies will submit the approved plan to the Chair of the School of Social Work Curriculum Committee for review, posting, and tracking the specialization plan. The Associate Dean and/or the Curriculum committee reserve the right to deny and/or request revision of the plan. In the unlikely event that the request is not approved, the Chair of the Curriculum committee will provide the faculty member submitting the request and the student with a reason for denial or request for revision.

**Requirements:**

The student will plan and carry out a course of study that focuses on older adults, families in later life, intergenerational relations, and community practice that benefits older adults. The student will successfully complete advanced learning in at least the following:

Content Area	Course Work	Assignment Plan
Advanced Human Behavior Theory	SWO 5333, 5334 or 5335 Advanced Theory (3 hrs)	Paper or presentation or project focusing on understanding behavior of older adults, end of life, families in later life, intergenerational relations, and/or community response to the needs of the 55+ population.
Advanced Policy	SWO 5323 Administrative Practice in Social Work (3 hrs) or SWO 5333, 5334 or 5335 (3 hrs)	Policy paper or project focusing on Older Americans Act, Social Security Act, or other public and/or organizational policy impacting older adults.
Advanced Administrative Practice	SWO 5323 Administrative Practice in Social Work (3 hrs)	Paper or project focusing on administrative practice in an organization that addresses policies and/or provides services for older adults.
Advanced Practice Theory	SWO 5573, 5574 or 5575 Advanced Practice (5 hrs)	Paper or project focusing on theoretical framework for practice with evidence for effectiveness with older adults, families in later life, intergenerational relations, and/or community organizations that serve them.
Advanced Practice Skill Demonstration	SWO 5573, 5574, or 5575 Advanced Practice (5 hrs)	Demonstration of gerontological practice competencies through successful completion of gerontological competencies linked to the concentration and demonstrated in the internship
Advanced Research	SWO 5182 Research Seminar (1 hr) and SWO 5383 Research Project (3 hrs)	Research paper that focuses on knowledge development and dissemination around issues related to older adults, families in later life, intergenerational relations, and community practice that benefits them.

Content Area	Course Work	Assignment Plan
Advanced Internship	SWO 5190 (1 hr) and SWO 5790 (7 hrs) Advanced Internship focused on work with older adults.)	Concentration internship working with older adults, families in later life, intergenerational relations, and/or community and/or policy issues that impact older adults.
Elective	A minimum of 1 approved graduate elective hours in the area of specialization. Aging and Mental Health is required.	Aging and Mental Health
Continuing Education	The equivalent of 3 CEUs from workshops or conferences	
Other	Student and faculty discretion	

### **Portfolio:**

Documentation of all of the above requirements (completed projects and papers, field placement evaluations, documentation of CEU equivalents) is placed in an electronic portfolio, which the student submits to the supervising faculty no later than the day of the MSW Practice Colloquium. Portfolios are graded by the supervising faculty on a pass/fail basis, since most elements in the portfolio have already been graded. Upon recommendation of the supervising faculty, the completed specialization document is submitted to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for approval. A copy of the completed specialization portfolio will remain in the School of Social Work archives.

Applications for retroactive specialization recognition will not be approved.

Upon successful completion of the specialization, the student is awarded a Certificate of Completion of the specialization requirements at Convocation.

### **Church Social Work Specialization**

MSW students who are preparing to work in congregations and/or missions and ministry programs of the church are encouraged to pursue a specialization in Church Social Work. Students may elect to do the Church Social Work Specialization in a particular, substantive area of church social work. Examples might include: community development; community ministries; counseling; older adults; youth and children services; etc. Students completing all requirements are awarded the Church Social Work specialization at the School of Social Work Convocation. This document certifies that the student has demonstrated advanced practice knowledge and skills in a substantive area within Church Social Work. The specialization does not replace, but builds on the students' concentration. While it is not required, social work students who intend to practice within congregational settings are also encouraged to prepare for this role by enrolling in degree options such as the Master of Divinity or Master of Theological Studies. The basic requirements for the Church Social Work specialization are the same for both Advanced Standing and Standard Degree option students.

## **Specialization Plan**

Students will select a School of Social Work faculty member (supervising faculty) with expertise in working with congregations to assist them in planning, engaging, and evaluating learning related to the specialization. Standard Degree Option students may choose to begin a specialization plan at any point in the foundation year and may develop a beginning plan with a faculty advisor and refine the plan during the foundation year. For both standard and advanced standing students, a plan during the concentration course of study, to include the substantive area that will be the focus of the specialization for completion of the specialization, will be electronically submitted for approval to the supervising faculty no later than 4 weeks into the semester the student begins concentration course work. The plan is developed in collaboration with the supervising faculty who will assist the student in determining how the specialization will be integrated into concentration course work. The supervising faculty will notify the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies of the student's intention to pursue a specialization and of the faculty member's willingness to supervise the student's learning. The Associate Dean will be responsible for notifying the Chair of the School of Social Work's Curriculum Committee. The student may petition the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for a change of advisor to the faculty member supervising the specialization.

Additional learning activities related to the specialization may also be included as the student and supervising faculty member contract for meeting the requirements for completion of the specialization. It is possible for students to include learning that occurred as part of a course of study in an accredited seminary and/or in an accredited social work baccalaureate program or graduate foundation year if the supervising faculty determines that the learning meets or exceeds expectations for preparation for advanced social work practice.

The supervising faculty member is responsible for approving the specialization plan and submitting the approved plan to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for review. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies will submit the approved plan to the Chair of the School of Social Work's Curriculum Committee for review, posting, and tracking the specialization plan. The Associate Dean and/or the Curriculum Committee reserve the right to deny and/or request revision of the plan. In the unlikely event that the request is not approved, the Chair of the Curriculum committee will provide the faculty member submitting the request and the student with a reason for denial or request for revision.

## **Requirements**

### **1. Scripture, Theology, Church History, and Ministry:**

The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, in consultation with the supervising faculty member and the applicant, determines what preparatory or supportive course work or learning experiences will be required for the Church Social Work Specialization. All applicants may complete the following prerequisite, leveling, and/or degree course(s) requirements:

- a. Twelve (12) graduate or upper level undergraduate credit hours that develop an understanding of Christian traditions; at least one three semester hour course each in scripture, theology, and church history.

- b. SWO 4V80 Church Social Work (1 hour)

Depending on the applicant's degree program, learning needs, and/or previous academic record, applicants may be required to complete 3-6 elective credit hours. If possible, MSSN 7389 Urban Missions Issues (Truett Seminary-3 hrs) should be considered for elective credit.

2. Spiritual/Faith Formation:

Applicants will participate in a spiritual/faith formation learning experience approved by the supervising faculty member.

3. Concentration Internship:

SWO 5190 Introduction to Advanced Internship III (1 hr)

SWO 5790 Advanced Internship III (7 hrs)

The Church Social Work Specialization students must also complete their advanced practice field education internships in a congregational or faith intentional setting working closely with a congregation(s). The Church Social Work Specialization student will include in his or her internship seminar a focus on church social work in all internship seminar assignments. The program may provide a special section of the field education seminar with special emphasis on Church Social Work.

The student will successfully complete an advanced practice internship in a congregation or faith infused setting with congregational connections. Two year students in the Church Social Work Specialization may choose a congregational setting for one field internship experience and a faith intentional/infused setting for the other internship experience.

4. Integration of Specialization with Concentration Course Work:

The student will plan and carry out a course of study that focuses in the area of specialization. The student will successfully complete advanced learning in at least the following:

**Requirements:**

Content Area	Course Work	Assignment Plan
Advanced Human Behavior Theory	SWO 5333, 5334 or 5335 Advanced Theory (3 hrs)	
Advanced Policy	SWO 5323 Administrative Practice in Social Work (3 hrs) or SWO 5333, 5334 or 5335 (3 hrs)	
Advanced Administrative Practice	SWO 5323 Administrative Practice in Social Work (3 hrs)	
Advanced Practice Theory	SWO 5573, 5574 or 5575 Advanced Practice (5 hrs)	
Advanced Practice Skill Demonstration	SWO 5573, 5574, or 5575 Advanced Practice (5 hrs)	
Advanced Research	SWO 5182 Research Seminar (1 hr) and SWO 5383 Research Project (3 hrs)	

Content Area	Course Work	Assignment Plan
Advanced Internship	SWO 5190 (1 hr) and SWO 5790 (7 hrs)	
Elective	A minimum of 2 approved graduate elective hours in the area of specialization	
Continuing Education	The equivalent of 3 CEUs from workshops or conferences	
Other	Student and faculty discretion	

### **Portfolio:**

Documentation of all of the above requirements (completed projects and papers, field placement evaluations, documentation of CEU equivalents) is placed in an electronic portfolio, which the student submits to the supervising faculty member by the last day of the graduate capstone seminar. Portfolios are graded by the supervising faculty member on a pass/fail basis, since most elements in the portfolio have already been graded. Upon recommendation of the supervising faculty, the completed specialization document is submitted to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for approval. A copy of the completed specialization portfolio will remain in the School of Social Work archives.

Applications for retroactive specialization recognition will not be approved. Upon successful completion of the specialization, the student is awarded the Church Social Work Specialization at Convocation.

### **Global Mission Leadership Specialization**

The Global Mission Leadership (GML) specialization is for students interested in developing a specific knowledge base in international social work practice. It is a required specialization for students enrolled in the Global Mission Leadership initiative. The GML specialization provides students the opportunity to create a strategic approach for addressing a specified social issue in a country of concern utilizing accumulated research, government, non-governmental and congregational resources. The Global Mission Leadership specialization will allow students to go deep into one of the MSW program's concentrations, or it may span the concentrations, but it does not replace the concentration. Students completing requirements of the Global Mission Leadership specialization receive a certification of completion at the time of the awarding of the MSW degree. This document certifies that the student has demonstrated advanced practice knowledge and skills for work in international settings, within at least one of the concentrations. The requirements for the specialization are the same for both Advanced Standing and Standard Program students.

### **Specialization Plan**

Interested students will select a School of Social Work faculty member (supervising faculty) with expertise in working in international social work to assist them in planning, engaging, and evaluating learning related to the specialization. Students enrolled in the Global Mission Leadership initiative will work directly with the Director of Global Mission Leadership



to plan, engage and evaluate learning related to the GML specialization. Students will begin the creation of the GML specialization plan the spring of the Foundation year in SWO 5180 International Research and Strategic Planning. In this course, students will:

1. Identify and analyze a global social issue, three primary causes, and models of global best practice in a country of concern.
2. Formulate a plan of intervention for the specified social issue in a country of concern by utilizing accumulated research, governmental, non-governmental and congregational resources.

With this knowledge, students will form a GML specialization plan to implement through the remaining semesters of study. The specialization plan is developed in collaboration with the supervising faculty member who will assist the student in determining how the specialization will be integrated into concentration course work. The supervising faculty will notify the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies of the student's intention to pursue a specialization and of the faculty member's willingness to supervise the student's learning. The Associate Dean will be responsible for notifying the Chair of the Curriculum Committee. The student may petition the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for a change of advisor to the faculty member supervising the specialization

Additional learning activities related to the specialization may also be included as the student and supervising faculty contract for meeting the requirements for completion of the specialization. It is possible for students to include learning that occurred as part of a course of study in an accredited seminary and/or in an accredited social work baccalaureate program or graduate foundation year if the supervising faculty determines that the learning meets or exceeds expectations for preparation for advanced social work practice.

The supervising faculty is responsible for approving the specialization plan and submitting the approved plan to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for review. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies will submit the approved plan to the Chair of the School of Social Work Curriculum Committee for review, posting, and tracking the specialization plan. The Associate Dean and/or the Curriculum Committee reserve the right to deny and/or request revision of the plan. In the unlikely event that the request is not approved, the Chair of the Curriculum committee will provide the faculty member submitting the request and the student with a reason for denial or request for revision.

## **Requirements**

1. Enrollment in and successful completion of SWO 5180 International Research and Strategic Planning
2. (GML scholars only) Enrollment in and successful completion of SWO Cross Cultural Interactive Seminars
3. For students enrolled in the GML initiative, advanced internships will take place in the identified international country of concern. Global Mission Leadership specialization students may also complete their advanced practice field education internships in international settings if arranged with Director of Field Education. The program may provide a special section of the field education seminar with special emphasis on International Social Work Practice.
4. Integration of Specialization with Concentration Course Work:

The student will plan and carry out a course of study that focuses in the area of specialization as identified in SWO 5180. The student will successfully complete advanced learning in at least the following:

**Requirements:**

Content Area	Course Work	Assignment Plan
Advanced Human Behavior Theory	SWO 5333, 5334 or 5335 Advanced Theory (3 hrs)	
Advanced Policy	SWO 5323 Administrative Practice in Social Work (3 hrs) or SWO 5333, 5334 or 5335 (3 hrs)	
Advanced Administrative Practice	SWO 5323 Administrative Practice in Social Work (3 hrs)	
Advanced Practice Theory	SWO 5573, 5574 or 5575 Advanced Practice (5 hrs)	
Advanced Practice Skill Demonstration	SWO 5573, 5574, or 5575 Advanced Practice (5 hrs)	
Advanced Research	SWO 5182 Research Seminar (1 hr) and SWO 5383 Research Project (3 hrs)	
Advanced Internship	SWO 5190 (1 hr) and SWO 5790 (7 hrs)	
Elective	SWO 5180 International Research and Strategic Planning	
Other	Student and faculty discretion	

**Portfolio:**

Documentation of all of the above requirements (completed projects and papers, field placement evaluations, documentation of CEU equivalents) is placed in an electronic portfolio, which the student submits to the supervising faculty by the last day of graduate capstone seminar. Portfolios are graded by the supervising faculty on a pass/fail basis, since most elements in the portfolio have already been graded. Upon recommendation of the supervising faculty, the completed specialization document is submitted to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies for approval. A copy of the completed specialization portfolio will remain in the School of Social Work archives.

Applications for retroactive specialization recognition will not be approved. Upon successful completion of the specialization, the student is awarded the specialization at Convocation.