



NORTHWESTERN STATE

Master of Social Work

Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for your interest in our program. Our MSW faculty are passionate about the profession of social work and are invested in your success! We strive to graduate competent, ethical, advanced generalist social workers who will serve their clients well and contribute to the profession and the world! If your question is not covered here, please contact Dr. Candley at candleym@nsula.edu.

Is the program accredited?

We are in the process of receiving Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accreditation. Our candidacy initial application was approved. We are on a timeline to receive full approval in 2028 with a retroactive accreditation date to August 2025.

Do I have to have a Bachelors in Social Work (BSW) to apply?

No. A BSW is not required to apply for our MSW program. All applicants will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Only BSW students may apply for advanced standing.

How long will it take?

Our traditional MSW program is a 60-credit hour program. In the first year of our accreditation we offer a part-time MSW program. In the second year we will offer a traditional, two-year MSW program. In our final accreditation year we will offer a one year, advanced standing program. The length of the part-time and full-time programs may vary between 45 – 60 credit hours. This variance is based on whether a student earned a BSW from a CSWE accredited school and their undergraduate grades. The length of the advanced standing program is 30 credit hours.

What plans of study do you offer?

Our curriculum is offered as a **part-time, four-year plan of study**, a **full-time, two-year plan of study**, and an **advanced standing** option. Both the part-time and full-time plans of study consist of 60 credit hours. The advanced standing track consists of 30 credit hours. Students graduating from a CSWE accredited BSW program are required to have at least a 3.0 GPA to waive generalist content. If a student earns at least a 3.0 GPA in their CSWE accredited BSW program, then they are only required to complete 45 hours. The following courses may be waived for students who meet this criterion: SOWK 5100, SOWK 5120, SOWK 5300, SOWK 5600 and SOWK 5620.

Will my credits transfer?

Graduates from a CSWE accredited BSW program may receive credit for generalist content courses. We will consider up to 9 hours of transfer credit that will be used to satisfy elective requirements. Students must have earned at least a "B" to receive credit for generalist content or to be transferred.

I have already earned a degree with NSU. Do I need to request official transcripts?

No. Any official transcripts that you have (NSU OR previous institutions) are part of your official student record. Our graduate school will be able to access them on your behalf.

Will advanced standing be offered?

Yes. Advanced standing will be offered upon receipt of full accreditation. We anticipate offering advanced standing August 2027.

Will I ever have to come to campus?

While you will not be required to come to campus as a condition of attendance or graduation, we would love to see you! Our faculty maintain an on-campus presence at our main campus in Natchitoches, LA and provides academic and professional advising. We also host a reception before commencement and enjoy getting to see our students and meet their families.



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What are the admission requirements?

Our admission requirements are included in the [Admissions](#). While you are there, look around and check our program and university out!

Is the GRE required?

No, the GRE is not required for admission. Our application review committee considers multiple factors when evaluating applicants and does not view standardized test scores as an accurate or equitable measure for MSW program admission.

Is an internship required?

Yes. We believe that an internship experience is signature pedagogy. Additionally, the CSWE requires accredited programs to include internships. Students must complete 400 clock hours of internship placement in their first 30 hours. Students must complete 500 clock hours of internship placement in their final 30 hours. Up to 400 internship clock hours may be waived.

Do you give credit for life experiences?

No. While we appreciate diverse perspectives and the wealth of knowledge that our students have gained, these experiences cannot be substituted for course requirements.

Are scholarships available?

Departmental scholarships are offered competitively. Students are also eligible to apply to be a Title IV-E Child Welfare Scholar.

Are graduate assistantships available?

Yes. Graduate assistantships are offered on a competitive basis. To be eligible, individuals must be able to work 20 hours/week. All duties are performed on the Natchitoches main campus.

What is a Title IV-E Child Welfare Scholar?

Information on the Title IV E scholars' program is included in the [Title IV-E Child Welfare Scholars](#) link. Contact [Prof. Lisa Mount](#) for additional information.

I would like more information. Who can I contact?

Contact [Dr. MaryAnne Candley](#). She is Department Head of Social Work and the MSW Program Director and would love to hear from you!