

 COLUMBIA | SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

MASTER'S OF SOCIAL WORK



Social work professionals are an integral part of every community. At Columbia, we understand their importance and work to actively build a community with an unwavering commitment to social justice, human rights, and respect for diversity. We combine a challenging curriculum with hands-on practicum work to give students an evidence-based social work education that has been proven to create anti-oppressive advocates for change.

Since 1898, the Columbia School of Social Work has been at the forefront of social work education, offering students an opportunity to earn a hands-on education that embraces individualized training and evidence-based learning.



The world needs social workers more than ever. Faced with persistent social, racial, and economic injustices, there is so much work ahead. Our programs prepare students to take on these challenges and create change for the better.

Melissa Begg, Dean of the Columbia School of Social Work and Professor of Social Work and Biostatistics



98%
of Columbia students

are employed or pursuing further education within one year of graduation.

2019 MSW Degree Recipients
Career Outcomes



Having the opportunity and space to develop my webcam presence and online communication skills has been a unique asset to my career. Technology is evolving fast and professions should move right alongside it. Communications that take place online on developed platforms are incredibly sophisticated and interactive, which allowed me to build a type of confidence that is exclusive to online interactions.

Ana Quinones, Columbia MSW Graduate, LMSW, and Family-Based Caseworker at the Department of Family Protective Services



The Columbia School of Social Work Difference

The Columbia School of Social Work is one of the oldest and most respected social work institutions in the world. Because of this, students have access to rigorous training that can't be found at other universities.

+ Unparalleled research facilities.

Columbia is home to 16 research centers and programs that garner more than \$1 billion in sponsorships each year for research that is ethical, novel, and relevant. These scholarly hubs provide opportunities for students to collaborate with leading thinkers across Columbia University and beyond.

+ Multiple customization options.

Students can match their degree to their specific goals by choosing from six degree pathways, four method specialization areas, and seven fields of practice.

+ Taught by the best in social work.

Our team of faculty is composed of leading social work clinicians, policy makers, leaders and changemakers dedicated to empowering the next generation of social workers. Their research delves into a myriad of relevant and complex issues our country faces including the opioid epidemic, social media use among gang-involved youth, and the effects of racism on health.

+ Anti-oppressive curriculum.

Our coursework is built upon the PROP framework, which addresses the ways that power, race, oppression, and privilege shape our world and our responses to it. This framework is rooted in helping students understand that anti-Black racism and white supremacy are endemic in our systems and institutions. Students become more mindful, self-aware practitioners with the tools to challenge the status quo and create meaningful change.



Six Pathways Designed for Every Kind of Professional

We understand that each student has a unique set of circumstances and expectations when entering our program, so we offer a variety of pathways to earn your degree:

+ Two-Year Pathway

In our most frequently chosen pathway, students can complete their degree over two years of consecutive fall and spring terms, attending classes two or three days a week and participating in practicum three days a week.

+ Advanced Standing Pathway

Our accelerated pathway is designed for students who have graduated with a bachelor's degree in social work from a Council on Social Work Education-accredited program. In this track, students have the opportunity to earn their MSW in one year with the help of a two-course summer intensive that prepares them to begin the fall term as second-year students.

+ Part-Time to Full-Time (Extended) Pathway

This option allows students to enroll part-time during their first year, before completing the remainder of their course and practicum work full-time. This option can be completed in three to four years.

+ One-Year Residency for Working Professionals (Reduced Residency) Pathway

For social work professionals with over two-years of direct practice experience, we also offer a residency option. In this pathway, students enroll part-time in our program while continuing to work. This is followed by a one-year, full-time enrollment residency. Students can continue to gain work experience while completing their degree and practicum requirements in three years.

+ Transfer Pathway

Already begun your journey toward your MSW? This pathway allows students to apply what they've learned to complete their master's in as little as a year. To qualify for this option, applicants must have completed one year of a CSWE-accredited MSW program including one year of practicum education.

+ Part-Time Pathway

In this pathway, students take fewer credits per term and fewer practicum work hours per week. They complete the same amount of coursework and practicum placements overall as the Full-Time pathway, but they will take more time to fulfill the degree requirements.

Your Curated Online Campus

The Columbia School of Social Work is home to the Institute on Pedagogy and Technology for Online Courses, dedicated to conducting research and training educators in best practices of distance learning. Not only do students have access to hands-on online learning, they also get the opportunity to attend virtual panels, lectures, conferences, arts, entertainment, and social events. We understand the importance of a rigorous, evidence-based social work education, and we ensure students earn the same top-notch training online.

Because of this dedication to digital excellence, the Online Campus consistently receives accolades from organizations such as the International E-Learning Association, Network for Social Work Management, Online Learning Consortium, University Professional and Continuing Education Association, United States Distance Learning Association, and *Workforce* magazine.



My practicum placements exposed me to the complexities of social work practice and reinforced the skills we developed in the classroom. After graduation, I was hired by my second-year practicum placement to advance municipal financial empowerment efforts nationally, and each year I look forward to supporting incoming interns from CSSW.

Paige Diner, Columbia MSW Graduate and Senior Associate, Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund

Hands-On Practicum Education

Understanding how to effectively put social work theory into practice is the essential duty of every change advocate. Practicum education gives students the opportunity to develop, practice, and apply their social work skills and grow into knowledgeable leaders.

Even before practicum placement, students begin to learn the principles of motivational interviewing and how to constructively advise the people they will work with throughout their career. Students enter their direct-practice practicum work ready to establish rapport, build relationships, and ultimately empower people to make their own decisions.

Through practicum placement, students are trained to become a program planner, administrator, policy practitioner, researcher, or counselor as they work to assist diverse populations with complex concerns.



Social workers are critical to technology ecosystems. Social workers should be engaged in technology development, implementation, and policy and should also be trained in ways that prepare them to disrupt and challenge harmful technologies and policies. 'Tech for good' for instance may be engaged really differently if a social worker is at the table.

Courtney D. Cogburn, Associate Professor of Social Work



Curriculum

Columbia's Master of Science in Social Work emphasizes promoting social and economic justice, particularly for populations at risk; practicing with diverse populations; and evaluating practice outcomes.

With the guidance of our expert faculty, students are trained through readings, discussions, group projects, case studies, simulations, and practicum work.



Practicum Experience

The Practicum Education Department collaboratively supports students in identifying and securing placements, regardless of where they live in the United States. They strive to place Online Campus students locally and no placement is more than a 90-minute commute.

Through practicum placement, students prepare for their place in social work whether they are planning to do clinical, programmatic, policy, or administrative work in the future. Practicum Education includes skill building, upholding standards of ethics and practice excellence, and developing competent practice to produce a professionally reflective, self-evaluating social worker.

We place students in a multitude of settings, including schools, behavioral healthcare settings, multi-service agencies, family-based counseling centers, substance-use treatment centers, courthouses, and community-based organizations. Because of this, our partnerships yield approximately 900 practicum education placement sites. Just a few of the agencies partnered with CSSW include:

- + **Animal Assisted Therapy Programs of Colorado**
- + **Boys and Girls Club of Harlem**
- + **Catholic Charities USA**
- + **Congressional Research Institute for Social Work and Policy**
- + **Crisis Text Line**
- + **Garden State Treatment Center**
- + **International Rescue Committee**
- + **New York City Department of Education**
- + **North County LGBTQ Resource Center (San Diego)**
- + **The National Domestic Violence Hotline**



Personalize the Pathway to Your MS in Social Work

To ensure that they get a customized learning experience, students in the Master's in Social Work program choose one method specialization and one field of practice.

- + A **method specialization** focuses on the particular skill set you want to develop related to the people and communities you want to serve.
- + A **field of practice** is the professional domain you would like to work in.

METHOD SPECIALIZATIONS

- + **Advanced Clinical Practice**
Learn state-of-the-art approaches to promote the resilience and well-being of individuals and families through PROP, trauma-informed care.
- + **Integrated Practice and Programming**
Develop skills that span social work practice at individual and community levels, including program planning, advocacy, and evidence-based interventions.
- + **Policy Practice**
Conduct policy analysis, policy advocacy, and research on behalf of a just society.
- + **Leadership, Management, and Entrepreneurship for Social Justice**
Lead organizational management in governmental and non-governmental agencies, as well as for the creation of new ventures that address compelling social problems.

FIELDS OF PRACTICE

- + **Aging**
Providing and advocating for social services for older individuals and their families.
- + **Contemporary Social Issues**
Developing service systems to address emerging social problems such as homelessness, substance use, and issues within the American criminal justice system.
- + **Family, Youth, and Children's Services**
Focuses on the broad range of preventive, protective, and other social services available to these populations, as well as the legislation, funding sources, and structures that affect them.
- + **Health, Mental Health, and Disabilities**
Focuses on the needs of those coping with acute chronic illness or mental health disorders across diverse healthcare settings. Includes the identification of risk factors such as ethnicity, race, and socio-cultural variables, and the application of this knowledge to evaluations, interventions, and programs.
- + **International Social Welfare and Services to Immigrants and Refugees**
Developing and implementing programs and interventions for populations in need abroad or for immigrant and refugee populations at home.
- + **School-Based and School-Linked Services**
Designing, evaluating, and delivering programs that address issues relating to school failure and the need for more effective school-linked child and family services.
- + **World of Work**
Assisting clients within the labor force with issues and conditions that interfere with their employment, including discrimination and unequal opportunity.

For our full course guide, please visit our [curriculum page](#).



Admission

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

At a minimum, candidates for the Online Campus of the Master of Science in Social Work must meet the criteria below.*

- + **A serious commitment to the profession of social work and the capacity to meet the demands of professional training, often demonstrated by internships and life experiences.**
- + **A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.**
For Advanced Standing applicants, the degree must be a bachelor's of social work (BSW); any bachelor's degree from a nationally accredited institution of higher education is accepted for all other pathways.

ADMISSIONS CHECKLIST

Ready to begin the application process? Our requirements vary for each program, but the application materials needed for all MSW applicants include:

- + **[Online application](#)**
- + **Official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended**
- + **Resume**
- + **Two letters of reference**
- + **Essay responses**
- + **Application fee (\$75)**
- + Advanced Standing applicants must also submit a practicum evaluation form and a list of their previous BSW courses
- + Transfer applicants must also submit a practicum evaluation form and a list of their previous MSW courses

***Note:** Transfer, One-Year Residency for Working Professionals (Reduced Residency), and Advanced Standing applicants have additional admission and application requirements. Please see our [admission page](#) to learn more.

Tuition and Fees

Estimated Costs for the MSW Program Pathways for 2021-2022

	Cost Per Credit Hour (some programs flat rate where indicated)	Total Credits	Tuition for 21-22 Academic Year	Books and Supplies (per academic year)	Additional Fees⁴
Two-Year	\$26,036 flat rate per term ¹	60	\$52,072 for academic year	\$1,200	\$7,447
Advanced Standing	\$26,036 flat rate per term ¹ ; \$10,404 for summer intensive	33-39 ³	\$62,476 for academic year (includes summer intensive)	\$1,500 (includes summer intensive)	\$7,742
Part-Time to Full-Time (Extended)	\$1,734 per credit hour	60	\$20,808 for academic year ²	\$600	\$1,771
One-Year Residency for Working Professionals (Reduced Residency)	\$1,734 per credit hour	60	\$20,808 for academic year ²	\$600	\$1,771
Transfer	\$26,036 flat rate per term ¹	30 max	\$52,072 for academic year	\$1,200	\$7,742
Part-Time	\$1,734 per credit hour	60	\$20,808 for academic year ²	\$600	\$1,771

These rates are for the 2021-2022 academic year. Tuition and fee rates are subject to change prior to each year and are set by the University's Board of Trustees.

¹ During the fall and spring terms, Two-Year, Advanced Standing, and Transfer students are charged a flat rate for enrollment. If you are a student in these programs and take fewer than 10.5 credits, you will be charged the per-credit rate for that year instead. If you take more than 19.5 credits, you also will be charged the per-credit rate.

² Part-Time to Full-Time (Extended), One-Year Residency for Working Professionals (Reduced Residency), and Part-Time tuition charges are estimated here for students taking six credits per term.

³ Advanced Standing students who choose the Leadership, Management, and Entrepreneurship for Social Justice method take 36 to 39 credits of coursework, depending on the number of credits transferred from their BSW.

⁴ The fees shown here represent the fees for students in the first year of a typical course of study for each program. Students who begin in the part-time-to-full-time and One-Year Residency for Working Professions programs will be charged full-time fees when they are enrolled in 10.5 credits or more. Two-Year, Advanced Standing, and Transfer student fees include medical insurance. Students with comparable insurance of their own may elect to waive this fee.



Financial Aid

More than 90% of students who file an eligible Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application receive institutional aid from Columbia.

Our Master's in Social Work students are eligible for financial aid when enrolled in the required number of credits. To apply for financial aid, you must complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#). You should file your FAFSA when you submit your MSW application. **The school code is 002707.**

Have financial aid questions? You can contact our financial aid office by emailing csswfinaid@columbia.edu or calling **(212) 851-2293**. You can also learn more about the forms of financial aid offered by visiting our [financial aid page](#).



ABOUT THE COLUMBIA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

The Columbia School of Social Work is renowned for its cutting-edge education, rigorous research, and an abiding dedication to social justice. Our Master of Science in Social Work program is rooted in the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, with a curriculum that uses a power, race, oppression, and privilege (PROP) framework to understand and address racial, social, and health inequities.

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