

# SOCIAL WORK, PH.D.

Program Manual ([https://www.slu.edu/services/registrar/catalog/pdfs/18-19\\_SW-PhD-Program-Handbook.pdf](https://www.slu.edu/services/registrar/catalog/pdfs/18-19_SW-PhD-Program-Handbook.pdf))

Saint Louis University's Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work provides interactive teaching methods that integrate community-based practice with classroom activities and discussions. Small class sizes facilitate an atmosphere of intellectual dialogue that fosters relationships between students and faculty.

## Curriculum Overview

SLU's Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work requires 72 credits and offers rigorous methodological and interdisciplinary training for social workers and related professionals.

There are three phases to the doctoral studies curriculum. The first is the core doctoral curriculum. This is comprised of required coursework built around theory, methods, and data analysis. In the second phase, the core coursework students are to take additional electives and complete a synthesis project in their area of research. The use of these electives is meant to provide considerable flexibility for students to tailor these courses to meet the knowledge and methodological skills needed to achieve their research and professional goals. The synthesis project summarizes the major theoretical and methodological issues including key findings and provides a scholarly platform for the final phase. The third phase consists of written exams, preparation and presentation of the dissertation proposal, and the completion of the dissertation.

## Research Opportunities

Building on the foundations of required coursework, students will develop individualized plans of study that will meet intellectual and professional requirements. These concentrations consist mainly of elected coursework and participation in mentored research. Students will also complete a dissertation project corresponding with educational and professional goals.

## Careers

SLU's social work Ph.D. program provides a solid foundation for an academic career or as a social work research scientist in practice or policy settings. The program has a strong interdisciplinary and methodological orientation.

## Admission Requirements

Applicants must hold a master's degree in social work or closely related field.

## Application Requirements

- Application form and fee \$65
- Transcript(s)
- Three confidential letters of recommendation
- GRE scores
- Résumé
- Interview
- Statement of purpose (two-three pages, single-space) detailing research interests, career goals and fit with current faculty research.

- Writing sample such as a published article, course paper, agency technical report or a grant proposal.

## Requirements for International Students

TOEFL of 92 or higher or PTE Academic score

All admission policies and requirements for domestic students apply to international students along with the following:

- Demonstrate English Language Proficiency (<http://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/office-admission/undergraduate/english-language-proficiency>)
- Proof of financial support must include:
  - A letter of financial support from the person(s) or sponsoring agency funding the time at Saint Louis University
  - A letter from the sponsor's bank verifying that the funds are available and will be so for the duration of study at the University
- Academic records, in English translation, of students who have undertaken postsecondary studies outside the United States must include the courses taken and/or lectures attended, practical laboratory work, the maximum and minimum grades attainable, the grades earned or the results of all end-of-term examinations, and any honors or degrees received. WES and ECE transcripts are accepted.

## Application Deadlines

January 15.

## Review Process

The admissions committee considers several factors to determine eligibility: academic achievement, strength of the undergraduate program, application information, personal statement, work experience, any graduate degrees earned, GRE scores, letters of recommendation, motivation, leadership and service. The undergraduate and graduate GPA is weighted with other criteria in the admissions process.

## Fellowships

Newly accepted students and students in the first year of a program are eligible to apply for the Diversity, Dissertation and Presidential university-funded fellowships. Students must apply to be nominated by the School of Social Work by January 15.

Other university scholarships that do not require nomination by a department/school are also available.

## Graduate Assistantships

Full-time students normally receive a graduate assistantship with the School of Social Work.

Students can apply for a full or partial graduate assistantship with the School of Social Work. Applications are accepted Oct. 1-March 1.

## Scholarships and Financial Aid

The College for Public Health and Social Justice offers several ways to help finance graduate education. Opportunities include a limited number of merit-based scholarships and graduate research assistantships.

Awards are made to applicants with the highest combinations of GPAs and test scores who complete their applications by the priority deadlines.

For more information, visit the student financial services office online at <http://finaid.slu.edu>.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Graduates will be able to critically evaluate and identify gaps in current scientific knowledge and develop alternative explanations and research strategies.
2. Graduates will be able to design, conduct, and defend dissertation research that expands scientific knowledge.
3. Graduates will be able to demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of a specific area of research in your discipline.
4. Graduates will be able to understand and apply scientific methods of study design and measurement to address research questions, including methods to expedite the translation and dissemination of research findings.
5. Graduates will be able to understand, use, and interpret basic and inferential statistics.
6. Graduates will be able to apply basic principles of ethical behavior (e.g., the Social Work Code of Ethics, human rights framework, other moral theories) and be familiar with codes that guide application of these issues in research such as the importance of principles of confidentiality of information and data, and how these are applied within research.
7. Graduates will be able to communicate effectively about scientific information for diverse audiences through scientific publications, lay documents, and grant applications.
8. Graduates will be able to understand and apply pedagogic methods.

## Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required Courses</b>		
SWRK 6000	Foundations of Theory Development in Social Work	3
SWRK 6010	Principles of Statistics & Data Analysis	3
SWRK 6020	Research Design & Measurement	3
SWRK 6030	Multivariate Data Analysis	3
SWRK 6040	Research Area Synthesis	3
PUBH 5030	Methodological Approaches to Understanding Population Health	3
<b>Elective Courses</b>		
Select 42 credits <sup>1</sup>		42
<b>Dissertation</b>		
Select 12 credits		12
Total Credits		72

<sup>1</sup> Students can petition to have up to 24 credits of electives count toward the 72-credit total from an approved M.S.W. or closely-related Master's degree.

## Non-Course Requirements

### Teaching

Students are required to participate in teaching practicums that prepare students to teach their own course in either the B.S.S.W. or M.S.W. program or in the Applied Behavior Analysis and Criminology degree programs. Further, there are required professional development workshops that provide students with the opportunity to build their unique professional skills outside of formal coursework or research.

### Written Exam

As required by Graduate Education, the Doctoral Program administers written examinations following successful completion of the Doctoral Course Series, the Methods Core coursework and the required elective courses. The written examinations are structured to assess the student's knowledge and skills in the foundational, contextual, methodological and analytical skills needed of all social work researchers.

The written examination assesses students' achievement of the doctoral competencies covered within the general and concentration curricula and also reflects their expertise in a specific area of research. The written examinations combine two components:

1. Foundation (theory, methods, statistics) material
2. Research area.

The written exam is conducted by a committee of three (3) faculty who are likely to comprise the dissertation committee. Questions are approved by the Director of the Doctoral Program. The exam takes place across two sequential days and can be arranged anytime during the school year. The written exam should reflect competencies covered in the Doctoral Course Series and reflected topically in the research area synthesis. As such, questions can be generated that focus on a research area but are also tied to theoretical and methodological issues.

### Oral Examination

The oral examination is intended to focus on the proposal of the dissertation. The presentation usually consists of a statement of the problem, literature review, and the research design prepared for the investigation. The exam is structured to assess the student's comprehensive knowledge of prior literature, ability to integrate knowledge across the discipline, and ability to design an appropriate research approach that significantly expands this body of knowledge. This is when the student presents a proposal for what they intend to do prior to actually starting their research.

The oral examination must follow the written exams and is normally scheduled after the student completes all structured academic coursework.

### Defense of the Dissertation

Upon completion of the dissertation, students publicly present and defend their dissertation before their dissertation committee.

### Continuation Standards

Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 in all graduate/professional courses.

## Roadmap

Roadmaps are recommended semester-by-semester plans of study for programs and assume full-time enrollment unless otherwise noted.

Courses and milestones designated as critical (marked with !) must be completed in the semester listed to ensure a timely graduation. Transfer credit may change the roadmap.

This roadmap should not be used in the place of regular academic advising appointments. All students are encouraged to meet with their advisor/mentor each semester. Requirements, course availability and sequencing are subject to change.

Course	Title	Credits
<b>Year One</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
SWRK 6000	Foundations of Theory Development in Social Work	3
SWRK 6010	Principles of Statistics & Data Analysis	3
PUBH 5010	Mission and Practice of Global Public Health	3
Credits		9
<b>Spring</b>		
SWRK 6020	Research Design & Measurement	3
SWRK 6030	Multivariate Data Analysis	3
PUBH 5030	Methodological Approaches to Understanding Population Health	3
Credits		9
<b>Year Two</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
Methods Course <sup>1</sup>		3
Methods Course <sup>1</sup>		3
Elective <sup>2</sup>		3
Credits		9
<b>Spring</b>		
SWRK 6040	Research Area Synthesis	3
Elective <sup>2</sup>		3
Elective <sup>2</sup>		3
Credits		9
<b>Year Three</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
Completion of Written Exam, Teaching Experience, and Workshop from Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning		
SWRK 6990	Dissertation	3
Credits		3
<b>Spring</b>		
Completion of Oral Exam, Teaching Experience, and Workshop from Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning		
SWRK 6990	Dissertation	3
Credits		3
<b>Year Four</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
SWRK 6990	Dissertation	3
Credits		3
<b>Spring</b>		
Completion of Dissertation Defense		
SWRK 6990	Dissertation	3
Credits		3
Total Credits		48

## Program Notes

**Written Examination:** Written exams are based on theory, methods, and research topic knowledge as determined by the research area synthesis committee.

**Teaching Practicum:** A minimum of 2 semesters of course assistance or independent teaching in School of Social Work undergraduate and/or graduate program is required. All students must complete at least one teaching workshop from the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning.

**Dissertation:** Students are permitted to choose a traditional or non-traditional academic dissertation format. The traditional format involves the proposal, the research defense, and an oral defense. The body of the non-traditional format constitutes three thematic studies (3 paper dissertation) where the student must be the first author on three of these papers.

## Contact Us

Apply for Admission (<http://www.slu.edu/admission>)

For additional admission questions please contact,  
 Kristi Richter, MSW, LCSW  
 Director of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions  
 School of Social Work  
 (314) 977-2752

<sup>1</sup> Behavioral Science, Epidemiology, Biostatistics, or Other

<sup>2</sup> To be determined by the student and mentor based on the needs for the overall plan of study. Can be taken in departments inside or outside of the College