Emphasis

Within the Relationship-Based Practice Concentration, all but 8 hours consist of required courses. Students are encouraged to select one of two sets of courses totaling 8 hours that will result in the completion of requirements for an emphasis. As a whole, each emphasis area builds on the competencies from the foundation year courses. Also, each specific emphasis course integrates and applies the foundation knowledge and skills in a more focused manner allowing elaboration of the practice behaviors. The student’s professional self becomes more engrained. In addition, students are placed in a field practicum (4 hours) that is related to the selected emphasis area. A minimum of twelve hours are therefore dedicated to each emphasis area. The two emphasis areas are: Administration and Empowerment and Interpersonal Practice.

Administration and Empowerment. This emphasis area prepares students to be leaders and catalysts for change at organizational and community levels, capable of building functional relationships that empower clients as well as other helping professionals to articulate problems and develop effective solutions to those problems. Students will be able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to: 1) assess problems and solutions from various perspectives; 2) collaborate with and advocate with/for diverse stakeholder groups to define problems and develop cross-systems solutions at mezzo and macro levels; 3) design, implement, and evaluate culturally- and contextually-relevant, evidence-based programming; 4) lead, administer, manage, and supervise helping professionals in nonprofit, private, and public settings; and 5) inform policy practice discussions and decisions.

Students selecting this emphasis will be required to enroll in SWK 633 Social Work Leadership Theory and Practice (2 hours), SWK 663 Consultation and Supervision (3 hours), and SWK 637 Administrative Research and Entrepreneurship (3 hours).

Interpersonal Practice. This emphasis area prepares students to utilize professional, therapeutic relationships to restore, maintain, and enhance the bio-psycho-social functioning of individuals, families, and groups. Students will be able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to: 1) establish a working relationship with a client, attend to the influences of both internal and interpersonal dynamics in an environmental context; 2) conduct and complete differential and multi-dimensional assessments and diagnoses; 3) critically appraise best practices and evidence-based interventions; 4) employ a range of interventions necessary to empower and advocate for clients addressing addictions, dysfunctions, disorders, and disabilities, and 5) evaluate effectiveness of practice in order to inform future practice efforts and contribute to the profession’s knowledge base.

Students selecting this emphasis will be required to enroll in SWK 657 Advanced Social Work Practice and Addictions (2 hours), SWK 677 Advanced Practice with Children and Adolescents (3 hours), and SWK 667 Advanced Social Work Practice with Adults (3 hours).