
Your journey starts with a degree from the Southern Miss School of Social Work.
ADMINISTRATION

Administrators are involved with planning, budgeting, public relations, marketing, supervising, operations management, fundraising, and other crucial responsibilities that keep an organization functioning.

AREAS
- Advocacy
- Budgeting
- Evaluation
- Fundraising
- Grant writing
- Management
- Planning
- Policy development
- Supervision

Employers
- Child welfare departments
- Employee assistance programs (EAP)
- Family service agencies
- Local, state, and federal government
- Probation and parole departments
- Public interest groups
- Public welfare agencies
- Residential and outpatient hospitals/centers
- Social service agencies
- State mental health departments

Educational Strategies
- Obtain a Master of Social Work (MSW) and gain management experience.
- Consider a minor in business during undergraduate education.
- Participate in student organizations and pursue leadership roles to cultivate an understanding of motivational strategies and creative thinking skills.
Child welfare social workers strive to ensure the safety and well-being of children through treatment of the whole family.

**AREAS**
- Advocacy
- Case management
- Intervention
- Supervision

**EMPLOYERS**
- Adoption agencies
- Child daycare centers
- Foster care organizations
- Local, state, and federal government:
  - Department of Children’s Services
  - Public and private welfare agencies

**EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES**
- Volunteer at daycares, child shelters, camps, YMCA, Scouts, or other agencies that aid youth.
- Gain licensure as a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) after graduating from a master’s program in Social Work.
- Acquire knowledge about local/national government procedures in reunification procedures.
- Plan to collaborate with multidisciplinary teams including lawyers, parents, foster care representatives, and other various government employees.
- Become familiar with community resources such as child care, job training, and parenting classes.
Clinical and mental health social workers are found in a variety of settings that provide therapeutic or mental health counseling to clients.

**AREAS**
- Assessment
- Case management
- Counseling/therapy: individual, group, family
- Crisis intervention
- Program planning

**EMPLOYERS**
- Behavioral health systems
- Community mental health centers
- Drug/alcohol rehabilitation centers
- Employee assistance programs (EAP)
- Family service agencies
- Private or group practice
- Psychiatric hospitals
- Residential and day treatment hospitals
- Schools

**EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES**
- Master of Social Work (MSW) is required.
- Obtain licensure as an LCSW since many employers require licensure for clinical practice.
- Develop strong communication, listening, and organizational skills, along with a sense of empathy.
- Volunteer with a local social service or nonprofit organization to test interest in working with different populations or presenting problems.
- Cultivate multicultural competence.
Social workers in this area work with existing organizations to improve conditions for specific groups, enhance quality of living, and involve community members in the political process.

**AREAS**
- Advocacy
- Education
- Planning
- Politics
- Program and community development

**EMPLOYERS**
- Advocacy organizations
- Community centers
- Development corporations
- Local, state, and federal government
- Political associations

**EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES**
- Get involved with grassroots causes and community agencies.
- Participate in local government and gain knowledge about city planning.
- Volunteer with local organizations that work with specific groups such as homeless people, immigrants, or refugees to learn more about advocacy work.
Social workers in corrections focus on rehabilitation of clients.

**AREAS**
- Counseling/therapy
- Drug prevention
- Parole
- Probation
- Rehabilitation
- Victim assistance
- Youth services

**EMPLOYERS**
- Courts
- Police departments
- Prisons and correctional facilities
- Private treatment facilities
- Probation and parole offices
- Victim services organizations
- Youth services organizations

**EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES**
- Obtain experience by volunteering at a corrections facility or victims' program such as a rape crisis center.
- Gain experience as a juvenile probation officer; many states allow reputable citizens to serve as volunteer officers.
- Become familiar with community services that include housing, remediation, job training, addiction treatment, child care, and transportation resources.
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Social workers in this area help people with disabilities to adjust and to lead productive lives.

AREAS
- Advocacy
- Case management
- Policy development
- Program planning and evaluation
- Research

EMPLOYERS
- Colleges and universities
- Community residential homes
- Medical facilities
- Schools
- State and local agencies

EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES
- Volunteer at camps for people with disabilities, daycares, schools, or hospitals to gain experience.
- Become familiar with human development and issues specific to disabilities and accommodations.
- Obtain specialized training in areas such as sign language or assistive technology for additional opportunities.
- Seek knowledge of assessment procedures and therapeutic recreational activities.
GERONTOLOGY

Gerontology involves working with older adults, healthy or ill, and their families.

AREAS
• Advocacy/intervention
• Administration
• Case management
• Counseling
• Programming
• Public policy

EMPLOYERS
• Assisted/independent living centers
• Employee assistance programs (EAP)
• Home healthcare agencies
• Hospice
• Hospitals
• Larger corporations (e.g., banks, investment firms, insurance companies)
• Mental health centers
• Nursing homes
• Senior centers

EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES
• Get involved with programs or organizations designed for senior citizens.
• Gain Social Work credentials oriented toward gerontology.
• Supplement curriculum with coursework in lifespan development and aging.
• Become familiar with community resources ranging from medical to transportation.
HEALTHCARE

Social workers in healthcare facilitate medical and emotional treatment of patients. They may focus on helping clients and their families cope with acute or terminal illnesses by providing psycho-social support.

AREAS
- Administration
- Case management
- Child life specialists
- Counseling
- Hospice care
- Prevention and education
- Program development
- Rehabilitation
- Research
- Wellness promotion

EMPLOYERS
- Community health centers
- Group homes
- Health maintenance organizations (HMOs)
- Home healthcare agencies
- Hospice
- Hospitals
- Nursing homes
- Outpatient clinics
- Public health programs
- Veterans Administration hospitals

EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES
- Choose volunteer settings such as hospitals, the American Red Cross, or AIDS agencies to get experience.
- Be prepared to work with multidisciplinary teams including doctors, nurses, health, and other mental health providers.
- Attend local support groups to begin to understand the impact of illness on the person, family, and other support systems.
Social workers in the international arena identify social problems, make recommendations for social programs and implement change. They work on solutions to problems including educational, environmental, health, human rights injustices, business, and agricultural.

**AREAS**
- Advocacy
- Clinical practice
- Development: economic and community
- Disaster/disease relief
- Education
- Humanitarian services
- Policy development
- Program administration
- Research
- Volunteer coordination
- Wellness promotion

**EMPLOYERS**
- Country-based service agencies
- Federal government agencies with an international focus
- Foundation programs
- Humanitarian organizations
- International aid and relief organizations
- International Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs)
- International Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Multinational corporations
- Nonprofit and not-for-profit organizations
- Private voluntary organizations
- Religious organizations

**EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES**
- Learn one or more foreign languages.
- Plan to study, volunteer, or intern abroad more than one time if possible.
- Seek cultural experiences on campus and get involved with the international student population.
- Join relevant student organizations such as Amnesty International and gain leadership roles.
- Participate in an international service learning experience or go on a mission trip.
- Learn about federal job hiring procedures, and apply for a government internship to increase chances of finding a full-time position.
- Join professional organizations such as National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the specialty practice section of Social and Economic Justice and Peace.
- Research the international organization’s/agency’s structure and function.
- Develop good working knowledge of international humanitarian law.
OCCUPATIONAL

Occupational social workers help employees and employers to be more productive and satisfied.

AREAS
- Assessment
- Counseling
- Education
- Human resources
- Intervention
- Organizational development
- Wellness promotion

EMPLOYERS
- Community agencies
- Employee assistance programs (EAP)
- Local, state, and federal government:
  - Department of Labor
- Labor unions
- Larger corporations

EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES
- Gain experience in a university or community career center while in school.
- Earn a relevant certification such as Certified Employee Assistance Professional or Global Career Development Facilitator.
- Supplement curriculum with course work in areas such as business that focus on efficient, creative, productive business models and management skills.

(C) The University of Tennessee
Public welfare is designed to provide services and support for poor, disabled, ill, elderly, or juvenile clients.

**Areas**
- Administration and planning
- Case management
- Policy development
- Program evaluation
- Research
- Supervision

**Employers**
- Local, state, and federal government:
  - Administrative agencies
  - Department of Education
  - Department of Human Services
  - Head Start
  - Housing Services
  - Indian Health Services
  - Job Corps
  - State legislatures
  - Veterans Administration
- Private social service agencies
- Public welfare agencies

**Educational Strategies**
- Volunteer at homeless shelters, soup kitchens, interpersonal violence shelters, literacy programs, or other social service agencies to get experience.
- Supplement curriculum with course work in areas such as public relations, advertising, accounting, or management. Consider earning a business minor.
- Gain management experience through internships, part-time employment, or leadership in relevant student organizations.
- Complete an internship with a government agency.
- Learn about the government application process and apply early as the process can take at least four to six months.
- Four out of 10 social workers work for the government.

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Research & Education

Research provides data and statistics important in program implementation and policy development.

Areas
- Advocacy
- Grant writing
- Politics
- Program and community development
- Research
- Supervision
- Teaching

Employers
- Advocacy organizations
- Colleges and universities
- Local, state, and federal government
- Research hospitals
- Research institutes

Educational Strategies
- Doctor of Social Work (DSW) or Ph.D. usually required. Some teaching and administration positions may be available to MSWs.
- Gain research experience as an undergraduate by assisting professors with their work.
- Complete an internship or graduate assistantship in a college setting to be competitive for jobs.
- Develop strong communication and writing skills.
- Acquire a solid background in statistics and research for higher education program development and evaluation.
School systems may employ social workers to help students cope with and resolve emotional, developmental, or educational difficulties.

**AREAS**
- Assessment
- Case management
- Counseling
- Instruction
- Pupil personnel services
- Referral
- Student advocacy

**EMPLOYERS**
- Early intervention programs
- Elementary and secondary schools
- Head Start centers
- School districts

**EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES**
- Gain experience with children at daycare centers, camps, Boys and Girls Clubs, and the like.
- Volunteer with organizations like Big Brothers Big Sisters.
- Obtain state certification for work in a school. Research requirements in your state.
- Plan to collaborate with multidisciplinary teams including teachers, school counselor(s), school administrators, therapists, and others.