

**REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK
(MSW)**

(See also General Regulations)

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to the University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

Admission requirements

MSW 1. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Work, candidates

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations;
- (b) shall hold
 - (i) a Bachelor's degree with honours of this University; or
 - (ii) another qualification of equivalent standard from this University or from another University or comparable institution accepted for this purpose; and
- (c) shall satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination if required.

MSW 2. Candidates who do not hold a Bachelor's degree with honours of this University or another qualification of equivalent standard may in exceptional circumstances be permitted to register if they demonstrate adequate preparation for studies at this level and satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination.

Qualifying examination

MSW 3.

- (a) A qualifying examination may be set to test a candidate's formal academic ability or the candidate's ability to follow the courses of study prescribed. It shall consist of one or more written papers or their equivalent.
 - (b) Candidates who are required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination shall not be permitted to register until they have satisfied the examiners in the examination.
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Award of degree

MSW 4. To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Social Work, candidates shall

- (a) comply with the General Regulations; and
 - (b) complete the curriculum as prescribed in the syllabuses and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations as set out below.
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Length of curriculum

MSW 5.

- (a) The curriculum shall extend over
 - (i) two academic years of full-time study; or
 - (ii) three academic years of part-time study
- (b) A candidate with a postgraduate qualification in social work from another university or comparable institution of equivalent standard to this University may, on production of appropriate certification of having satisfactorily completed any of the courses as specified in the syllabuses, be exempted from those courses in the curriculum and permitted to enter the M.S.W. programme at the appropriate point, subject to the approval of the Head of the Department.

Completion of curriculum

MSW 6. To complete the curriculum, candidates shall follow courses of instruction and complete satisfactorily all prescribed assignments and assessments of:

- (a) 5 core courses;
- (b) at least 4 elective courses;
- (c) 900 hours of field practicum; and
- (d) a dissertation in accordance with MSW7 and MSW7.1.

as prescribed in the syllabuses.

Dissertation

MSW 7. Subject to the provision of Regulation MSW6(d), candidates shall submit the title of dissertation for approval by March 31 of the final academic year of study and shall submit the dissertation by not later than August 31 of the final academic year of study. The dissertation should not exceed 25,000 words. Candidates shall submit a statement that the dissertation represents their own work undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.

MSW 7.1. Candidates who prefer not to complete a dissertation shall apply for approval from the Head of Department to complete alternative assignments as prescribed in the syllabuses. The application must be made by a date to be specified for the purpose.

Assessment

MSW 8.

- (a) Where so prescribed in the syllabuses, coursework, a dissertation or other assignments shall constitute part or whole of the examination for one or more courses.
- (b) Assessment of candidates' coursework during their studies may be taken into account in determining their result in each written examination paper; or, where so prescribed in the syllabuses, may constitute the examination of one or more courses.

MSW 9. Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners at their first attempt, whether by means of written examination papers or coursework assessment, may be permitted to present themselves for re-examination in the course or courses of failure.

MSW10. Candidates who have not satisfactorily completed any prescribed field practicum may be permitted to undertake a supplementary period of field practicum to be specified by the Head of the Department. Candidates who are not permitted to undertake the supplementary period of field practicum or have failed to satisfy the examiners at their second attempt may be required to discontinue their studies.

MSW 11. Subject to the provision of Regulation MSW7, candidates who have failed to present a satisfactory dissertation may be permitted to submit a new or revised dissertation within an approved specified period.

MSW 12. Candidates who are unable because of illness to be present for one or more papers in any written examination may apply for permission to present themselves at a supplementary examination to be held before the beginning of the following academic year. Any such application shall be made on a form prescribed within two weeks of the first day of the candidates' absence from the examination.

MSW 13. Candidates who

- (a) have failed in more than half of the number of written papers or courses in any one examination; or

- (b) are not permitted to present themselves for re-examination in any written paper or any course examined by means of coursework assessment in which they have failed to satisfy the examiners under Regulation MSW 9; or
 - (c) have failed to satisfy the examiners in any written paper or any course examined by means of coursework assessment at a second attempt; or
 - (d) are not permitted to submit a new or revised dissertation under the provision of Regulation MSW 11;
- may be required to repeat the year of study or discontinue their studies.

Assessment results

MSW 14. A list of candidates who have successfully completed all the degree requirements and are to be awarded the Master of Social Work shall be published. Candidates who have shown exceptional merit in the whole examination may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidates' degree diplomas.

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

A. PURPOSE

The degree is designed to provide a up-to-date and comprehensive professional training in the theory and practice of social work for those who intend to make this their career or who are already in the profession.

B. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

- (a) The programme is offered in full-time, and/or part-time modes, and extends over two academic years or equivalent.
- (b) The programme covers 5 core courses, at least 4 elective courses, 900 hours of supervised field practicum and a dissertation. For exemption from courses or completing alternative assignments from a dissertation, formal approval shall be obtained from the Department in accordance with the conditions set out in the Degree Regulations.
- (c) The 5 core courses shall include

SOWK6002	Social policy and administration
SOWK6003	Social work research
SOWK6004	Theory and practice of social work
SOWK7001	Human behaviour and the social environment
SOWK7002	Social science theories for social work
- (d) The minimum of 4 elective courses shall include at least one course from each of the following two areas:

Area 1:	Social policy, administration and research
Area 2:	Social work practice
- (e) Field practicum (compulsory)

SOWK6103	Field practicum I
SOWK6104	Field practicum II
- (f) Dissertation

A candidate shall be required to present a satisfactory dissertation or two additional elective courses in accordance with MSW7 and MSW7.1.

C. ASSESSMENT

Ongoing assessment will be conducted to appraise the students' individual performance and will be designed according to learning objectives. They may include essays, portfolios, oral presentations, learning journals or others prepared individually or in groups, as coursework or examinations.

D. SYLLABUSES

Core Courses

SOWK6002. Social policy and administration

This course focuses on the basic concepts of social policy and the evaluation of policy development. The contents of the course includes: the definition, scope and content of social policy; the formation and development of social policy; the evolution of aims and principles in relation to the growth of social welfare, and the role of government in the field of social welfare; concepts of need and social welfare; the assessment of the effects of the social services and social policies on individual and social need; and the contributions made by political, professional and charitable bodies to the development of collective action to promote social welfare.

SOWK6003. Social work research

Emphasis is given to the need for, and practical application of, research in the social welfare field. To illustrate the major concepts, methods and goals of social work research, this course is designed to provide a basic grounding in research methodology. The course syllabus will include: measurement and explanation in social work research; problem definition and the formation of hypotheses; techniques of data collection; observation, interviews, use of service records and documentary materials; data analysis and report presentation. Evaluation of social work methods and social welfare programmes will also be discussed, using selected research studies in the field of social work, social policy and social administration.

SOWK6004. Theory and practice of social work

This course introduces social work values and assumptions, and the basic processes of social work. Current trends and perspectives in theory and practice, and methods of social work are compared and discussed in the local context. Selected models and approaches of each method, and a critical study of social work intervention theories and their application in the local context are examines.

SOWK7001. Human behaviour and the social environment

This course focuses on a life-span development of human beings. Core contents of the course cover: normal patterns of growth and psycho-social development; socio-cultural influences in human behaviour, healthy personality and adjustment; life stresses and coping failures; introduction to concepts of health and disease, and concepts of mental health; perspectives on abnormal behaviour; and the implications for social workers.

SOWK7002. Social science theories for social work

This course starts with an examination of selected behavioural and social science theories relevant to the practice of social work. Emphasis will be on concepts of change, social and individual; social control, formal and informal; personality theories and the socialization process; and an examination of theories of social organization.

Field Practicum

SOWK6103. Field practicum I

Field practicum shall comprise skills training and a placement to provide students with opportunities to apply their practice skills. During such supervised practice students will carry out prescribed work in selected social agencies or institutions. Both full and part-time students are expected to undertake a block placement during this practicum.

SOWK6104. Field practicum II

Field practicum shall comprise advanced skills training and a placement to provide students with opportunities to apply their practice skills and develop their own practice pattern. During such supervised practice students will carry out prescribed work in selected social agencies or institutions.

Dissertation

SOWK6021. Dissertation

Candidates shall present a dissertation on an approved topic which shall be either an account of empirical research or a critical exposition of existing knowledge. The title of the dissertation shall be present for approval by March 31 of the final academic year of study and the dissertation shall be present not later than August 31 of the final academic year of study. Candidates shall submit a statement that the dissertation represents their own work undertaken after registration as a candidate for the degree. The length of their dissertation should not exceed 25,000 words.

Elective Courses

Area 1: Social policy, administration and research

POLI7001. Human resource management

This course examines the policies and practices of HRM in the public sector in Hong Kong from a comparative perspective. Specific topics include: staffing, training and development, performance management, and staff relations in the Hong Kong government. The course also reviews recent HRM developments in the public sector in China and overseas.

POLI8009. Policy design and analysis

This course has two focal points. The first is on policy design and, in particular, on the relevance and application of institutional analysis to the design of policy options. A basic assumption is that policy analysis is largely a matter of problem-solving; therefore, the design of problem-solving mechanisms and procedures affects the extent to which the problems are coped with. The other focus of the course is on various tools and techniques of policy determination and evaluation.

SOWK6016. Comparative social administration

The course is designed to introduce the comparative study of social policy in selected countries in the world, and to examine the provision of social development programmes and social services for analysis and evaluation in cross-country case studies.

SOWK6017. Computer utilization in social work practice

This course is designed to introduce students to the utilization of computers in social work practice and agency settings. The major areas of content are (a) a review of the trends in the social work agencies' use of computerized information; (b) an exploration of software which is mostly used in social work practice; (c) the ethics of computer use in social work.

SOWK6027. Health administration

The theme of this course will be the importance of taking into account the cultural, economic, social and physical environments when examining matters to do with the provision of health care. The aim will be to introduce students to the issues of planning and priorities, financing and resource allocation, management principles, arguments concerning quality versus quantity, community health and public education as they relate to health administration.

SOWK6034. Medical knowledge for social sciences students

Chronic illness, pain, accidents, and terminal illness are a major source of stress in contemporary society. It is important for students to be knowledgeable about the human body and its common illnesses. The objectives of this course include: to familiarize students with the disease patterns in local context, to study common diseases which present major health hazards, and to acquire a basic understanding of the medical language. No prior knowledge in medicine is required. A basic understanding of human biology will be an advantage.

SOWK6039. Policy analysis and planning II

This course introduces a selected package of methods and techniques for policy analysis, planning and evaluation. It includes techniques for priority setting, participatory strategies, social statistics, social indicators, community surveys, programme monitoring, programme impact analysis, cost-benefit analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, client analysis, and information and accountability systems.

SOWK6043. Socio-cultural context of aging

The aging experience and age-related changes in physical, mental, and social functioning vary across different cultures and societies. This course examines the psychological, environmental, and societal factors accompanying and shaping the process of aging with a special emphasis on examining the Chinese and Western cultures. Specifically, the course focuses on how unique aspects of a particular culture or society determine physical, mental and social well-being in old people. Normal and pathological changes in physical, mental, and social functioning associated with aging will be examined, and the implications of such factors as ageism, economic deprivation, exits from social roles, and being widow, and for the well-being of older adults will be addressed. The roles of family caregivers and human service providers, in the enhancement of the well-being of the elderly will also be explored.

SOWK6048. Social welfare in China

This course facilitates students to understand the nature and seriousness of current social problems in China such as aging population, widening income disparities, floating population, persistent poverty, women status, family breakdown, and unemployment, in the context of rapid market-oriented economic reforms. The course also provides an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the existing social welfare system.

SOWK6055. Special topics in social work - A

Any specific topics in social work that reflect current topical and changing needs in the community.

SOWK6056. Special topics in social work - B

Any specific topics in social work that reflect current topical and changing needs in the community.

SOWK6071. Body politics

Are you forever on diet or frantically toning up your muscles? Are you attracted to tattoo, piercing, breast transplant or other forms of body manipulation? Do you dye your hair, keep it long or shave it clean? Do you desire a body like yours or of the other sex? How private is your body? Did your parents ever beat you up to quiet you down? Do you detest torture while admiring extreme sports? If you believe in body language, do you know when your body is silenced? Does a handicapped, deformed or ageing body disturb you? And a corpse? Who has control over your body: your family, your lover, your doctor, or the Government?

This course provides students with insights in the meaning of body as an object of inquiry. If a body is a playground providing us with sensational pleasures, it is also a battlefield where forces of domination are constantly at war. The complex ways in which our bodies are manipulated, abused and used as source of power will be explored. Guided by a diversity of classical and contemporary perspectives, this course helps you search your soul by getting inside your body.

SOWK6074. Counselling skills for human resource management

This course is designed to train the students in (1) the basic knowledge in employee counselling theories; (2) the practical skills in solution-focused employee counselling. At the end of this course, the students will learn the basics in assessment and treatment approaches in some common personal or work-related problems among employees in local context.

The course will focus on skill development and practical learning through small group teaching, behavioural rehearsal, role-play, case studies, and small group exercise. It will cover various counselling situations at the workplace. Topics to be covered will include: human need and motivation; attitude, cognition, and behaviour; the process of change; people and environment; preparing for the counselling interview; understanding the problem and the need of the staff, effective listening and probing skills; goal setting for counselling; handling resistance; solution-focused intervention strategies; performance management counselling; career development counselling; conflict management counselling; change management counselling; and making referrals to professionals.

SOWK6076. Evaluation of social services

This course will introduce students to a variety of approaches used to evaluate social services. Students will learn how evaluation techniques can help social service personnel respond to the growing demand for accountability, given that appropriate measures have been taken to collect and analyze data in order to inform decision making. These techniques include: evaluability assessment, designing goals and objectives, choosing an evaluation approach and developing process and outcome measures. Through the course materials, students come to understand the necessity of grounding evaluation approaches within an organization context and the practical issues that arise while implementing an evaluation and using evaluation results.

SOWK6077. Family and society – a policy perspective

This course will study the changing functions of the family system as the most fundamental caring unit in society. Policies affecting the family system, its relation with other social institutions, and measures necessary to strengthen its roles will be discussed.

SOWK6079. Financial development and management for social service organizations

This course introduces and examines concepts and practices critical to good financial management of social service organizations. The focus is on preparing students to understand the financial activities and reports essential to management and to analyze and use financial information in planning, budgeting and measuring results to promote the organization's mission and goals. Fund-raising will also be discussed.

SOWK6080. Gender and society - a policy perspective

Men and women's experience of the social world is significantly different but gender as a social construct is frequently overlooked both in academic discourse and in policy planning arenas. Gender effects are clear in health, education, employment, housing, social security provision, political activity and family (both in terms of private relations and family policy). This course will examine the different theories of gender discrimination, the consequent effects on social, economic and political life and attempt to answer the question 'what is to be done about it?'

SOWK6082. Information and communication technology in human services

This course is designed to introduce students to the utilization of information and communication technology in human service settings. The major areas are (a) a review of the trends in the human service agencies' use of information and communication technology; (b) an exploration of software frequently used in the human services; and (c) the ethics of IT usage in the human services.

SOWK6086. Management in human service organizations

The aim of this course is to enable students to understand the recent business-oriented reforms in human service organizations. Human service organizations provide welfare, education and medical services to their users. The dynamics of quality improvements, strategic planning, monitoring and control, management information system, performance appraisal, supervision, stress management, teamwork, financial management and change are included.

SOWK6087. Managing people in human services

This course introduces concepts for the understanding of organization behaviour and emphasizes on the application of these concepts and the skills in managing people in non-profit making organizations. This course is particularly suitable for students who have not taken any management courses before but will be soon required to take up people management responsibility as a team leader or supervisor in the course of their own professional career development. The topics will include basic concepts on management functions, purposes of a managerial position and the roles of a manager; and skills in managing subordinates including motivation, morale, leadership, coaching, performance management and disciplinary actions.

SOWK6096. Social service research project (*whole-year course*)

In this course, students will conduct research of their interest under the guidance of the teacher. Students are expected to work in groups to complete a research project based on primary and/or secondary empirical data. The project should be made up of 4 basic components (literature review for problem formulation, data collection, data analysis, and preparation of a report not exceeding 20,000 words). Even contributions amongst the students in each research group are expected.

SOWK6134. Current social policy issues

This course will examine the issues of current social policy including privatization of welfare services, the impact of ideology of welfare on welfare development, the issue of equity and equality in welfare provision, community care and service needs of the migrant population. Different theories of welfare will be discussed in relation to local welfare issues.

SOWK6135. Public affairs and moral controversies

The course is intended to enhance students' knowledge of public affairs in Hong Kong, equip them with the ability to critically evaluate social issues from both ethical and social perspectives, and help them develop presentation and argumentation skills in open debates. Methods of teaching include lectures, video-shows, group discussions and debates. Local material will be used and an understanding of Chinese is needed. It is hoped that students taking the course will acquire the ability to make informed evaluations about moral controversies in Hong Kong and knowledge of some philosophical principles that can be used as analytical tools. Topics include: should euthanasia for the terminally ill be legalized? Should homosexual couples have the legal right to marry? Should pornography be censored? 100% coursework.

SOWK6157. Government and policies of social services

This course explores alternative approaches to understanding the political, economic, and social dynamics that influence social policy and the implications of these dynamics for social reform. The formation of political responses to human problems and the impact of such responses on social policy will be discussed with reference to the local context.

SOWK6172. Human service development, promotion, and evaluation

As society increasingly emphasizes accountability of human services, the organizations providing such services have to develop, improve and deliver these services in a more cost-effective and cost-efficient way to satisfy the changing needs of the citizens. This course examines the roles of social marketing and market research in the human services through application of the principles and practices learned. This course provides students with some essentials - values, knowledge and skills - in human service development, promotion, distribution and evaluation. The students will have the opportunity to develop and apply decision-making and analytical skills relevant to the functions of social marketing and market research within the human services.

SOWK6185. Qualitative research methods

This course is designed for students with an interest in understanding all aspects of social life and social relations especially those who will undertake a dissertation study. Starting with the question “what is reality?”, the course begins with an introduction to different perspectives on approaching reality, followed by an assessment of the general strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research in comparison with other conventions such as quantitative surveys. The lectures will focus on introducing the general process of ethnographic research and the variety of methods for data collection and analysis including ethnography, grounded theory, observation, interviewing, focus groups and narrative analysis, etc. Various cases will be used to demonstrate how qualitative research helps make meaningful policy and social work practice. Seminars will be organized around practical methodological issues with the objective of helping students proceed with their own research projects. Hands-on experience of a range of research techniques will also be provided.

SOWK6221. Information technology and society

This course examines the various issues related to the impact of the development of information and communication technology on modern society. Such issues range from family and interpersonal relationship, organizational changes, social organization, digital divide and politics. Relevant theories, researches, social interventions and social policy will be covered in this semester course.

URBP6208. Housing, planning and sustainability

This course aims to provide an integrative and in-depth understanding of Hong Kong's housing system and its relationships with urban planning and the concepts of sustainable development. It discusses the theoretical and practical aspects of housing, making special reference to their relationships with urban planning and sustainable development. Major topics include the housing system concepts, the political economy of housing policies, land use planning and housing affordability, principals of residential planning, housing policy analyses, housing market analyses, and the application of the sustainable development perspective to housing analyses.

Area 2: Social work practice

SOWK6013. Aspects of handicap and rehabilitation

This course will consider selected aspects of handicap and rehabilitation and will cover such areas as: the nature of handicap; the experience of handicap; the handicapped person within the family; community attitudes and the problem of stigma; specific problems of handicapped people at different stages in the life cycle. The process of rehabilitation, its physical, social, psychological, educational and vocational aspects; habilitation versus rehabilitation; the holistic approach and the role of the social worker.

SOWK6022. Emotion-focused interventions: theory and practice

Social work practice recognizes the importance of the role of emotions in therapeutic change. This course will begin with a review of current theories and research on emotion-focused interventions before focusing on the application of these theories in the local setting. This is followed by an examination of the awareness, the arousal, and reorganization of the emotions in counselling and psychotherapy. Commonly encountered emotions in casework and group work practice like anger, fear, guilt, shame, sadness and grief will be examined. Moreover, the course aims to enhance students' self-awareness and competence in handling critical incidents in clinical practice.

SOWK6023. Evaluative research for clinical practice

The course is designed to help prospective social workers to evaluate their own practice. Students will acquire knowledge and skills in operationalizing intervention objectives, utilizing and/or designing measuring instruments to assess changes in target systems, collecting and analyzing data to evaluate practice. Students may be required to design and/or conduct an independent evaluation study in one of their own field practice.

SOWK6025. Family social work

This course helps the student to evolve a frame of reference for work within family situations. Various schools of thought for working in areas of parent-child, marital, and intergenerational exchanges are critically examined for their applicability to the local setting. The focus is on family structure and transactional processes. The course provides a working approach to the family's communicative, affective, relationship and role systems. Issues arising out of the course of the family life cycle as well as from family crises will be considered.

SOWK6029. Human sexuality

Why is sex so fascinating and yet so difficult to talk about? To what extent is 'sex' a 'natural' drive? What does 'sex' have to do with 'love'? What makes a 'good' lover? How do ideas about gender, class, religion and ethnicity affect our decisions about who we should and should not have sex with? Why are there so many 'problems' with sex? And for whom are they 'problems'? What's the problem with being 'promiscuous', being 'gay', being 'top' or 'bottom'? Why are there so many moral and legal prohibitions on something so 'private'?

This course introduces students to different approaches of understanding sexuality from evolutionary theory to post-structuralism. It draws on current studies in anthropology, sociology, political philosophy, and cultural studies on sexuality to examine the changing meanings of sexuality in our society.

SOWK6032. Legal issues and legislative processes

This course critically examines the legal system in various Chinese communities and some of the legislation that applies particularly to social work practice. The social worker's role and advocacy on behalf of clients' rights, legislative changes and their implications will also be addressed.

SOWK6035. Oncology, palliative and hospice care

Professionals in the field of medical and health settings are expected to be competent in oncology care, palliative and hospice care. The students will learn about the medical, psychological, social, spiritual and policy aspects of care for cancer patients and persons with terminal illness. Cultural, sociological and traditional approaches to death and dying as well as bereavement will be explored through student projects.

SOWK6037. Personal development and interpersonal communication

This course aims to help students discover and appreciate the individual uniqueness of every person. Through enhanced self-awareness and sensitivity, students can cultivate their personal strengths and learn to harness their own potentials. The course uses structured experiences, mini-lectures and group support to help the students acquire knowledge and skills facilitative of interpersonal communication.

SOWK6041. Psycho-social pathology

This course examines maladaptive behaviour from a social psychological point of view. Contents include: concepts of normality and abnormality; classification and Assessment; clinical syndromes, neuroses, psychoses, personality disorders, psychophysiologic disorders, organic brain syndromes, and mental retardation; social problems such as sociopathy, sexual deviations, and drug abuses; behavioural disorders of childhood and adolescence; and community mental health.

SOWK6049. Social work in health, illness and disability

The course will cover the psycho-social aspects of health, illness and disability; theories related to coping, stress and crisis management, family adjustment to illness, loss, pain and grief, systems and resource mobilization; social work intervention in health and hospital settings; intervention approaches of empowerment, team work, crisis intervention, group work and community work in health settings.

SOWK6050. Social work in marital situations

This course will examine the various issues brought up by couples as they work towards conciliation or reconciliation in their marriage. The psychodynamic, social learning and system approaches will provide the basic foundation concepts. These will be examined for their assessment and intervention focus and strategies, and for their contribution in work with marriage difficulties whether they arise from personal vulnerabilities, reciprocal and intergenerational concerns and clashes, communication impasses or intimacy issues.

SOWK6054. Social work with the mentally ill

The course would cover different theoretical orientations towards mental illness and its definition(s); the relationships between mental illness and environmental conditions; current models of service provision for persons with mental illness; the concept of professional 'teamwork' with particular relation to the mentally ill; the professional role and necessary skills for the social worker working with mentally ill people and their families.

SOWK6057. Special topics in social work - C

Any specific topics in social work that reflect current topical and changing needs in the community.

SOWK6058. Special topics in social work - D

Any specific topics in social work that reflect current topical and changing needs in the community.

SOWK6059. Special topics in social work - E

Any specific topics in social work that reflect current topical and changing needs in the community.

SOWK6062. The Satir model and family reconstruction

Human behaviour is heavily influenced by family upbringing and socialization. This course, based on a marathon experiential training mode, aims to help students to achieve an understanding of their family. Virginia Satir's concepts of family rules, communication patterns, family mapping and self-esteem will be used to guide students through a process of self-discovery. Active participation will be essential.

SOWK6065. Working with youth at risk and juvenile offenders

This course will focus on the various approaches in working with delinquents and young people experiencing emotional or behavioral problems. To facilitate skills development, emphasis will be placed on experiential learning through the use of simulated exercises, games and role-play. Throughout the course, case and group examples will be drawn from a variety of local practice settings-probation, residential facilities for juvenile offenders, correctional services, outreach work and school social work.

SOWK6066. Young people in the juvenile justice system

This course will begin with a critical review of the current state of theory and research on youth problems and delinquency. It will then go on to evaluate existing policies and services directed at youth at risk and juvenile offenders in indigenous context. Finally it will explore current issues in the field of youth policy and juvenile justice, particularly the development overseas of new programme initiatives. Special emphasis will be given to the relevance of these issues and programmes within the local context.

SOWK6069. Aging and society

This course is to study the ways in which social and cultural factors enter into the aging process. The practical and immediate effects of aging on society are examined. The course provides a comprehensive description of the dimensions of aging. The goal is to provide a holistic view of aging and to point to the ways in which the personal, social and structural levels of the process interact to shape the daily life of the elderly. With these understandings, the ways to deliver appropriate services to the elderly are discussed.

SOWK6070. Application of psychotherapeutic techniques in life situations

Effective counseling involve a lot of techniques which have been proven to be power skills that can be applied to other life situations such as selling, courtship, bargaining, making friends, and self-improvement and growth. The course aims at equipping the students to master some powerful psychotherapeutic techniques so that they can effectively handle difficult interpersonal demands in daily life. For example, to win people over to your viewpoint; overcome resistance; demonstrate that you actually care about what the other person has to say; handling complaints, making a persuasive presentation, establish your personal style with amiable feelings and so on. This course will cover: a) demonstrated powerful psychotherapeutic techniques such as paradox, yes set, empty chair, reframing, cognitive restructuring, etc.; b) strategies, tactics, and conversation processes; c) interpretive processes and language analysis; d) conversation situation and context analysis; e) the basic steps to sharpening your conversational skills; f) the "Ten Golden Rules" in conducting an interactive, persuasive presentation. The special features of this course are: a) Extensive use of life-demonstration and role-play; b) "Learning by doing" is the number one rule so every participant must practice and experience the changes themselves; c) all the participants will perform on a small group basis; d) experts from social work services, commercial and professional areas will joint this course for co-trainers. The assessment of this course is 100% based on course work.

SOWK6072. Care management

Care management is a major practice strategy to promote effective service delivery to diverse target populations. It is based on the notion that human service practitioners often work with people who have multiple needs. The major outcomes of care management are better integration of services provided by a cluster of organizations and community of care. This course covers the role of care management in the human services; the method and functions of care management in both direct and indirect services; and the monitoring and evaluation functions of care management practice.

SOWK6073. Career skills training

Success in one's career is one of the most important life tasks for most people. Besides teaching students the necessary knowledge and practice of core career skills, this course also trains students to design and conduct career skills programmes. Through participation in this course, students will be able to master the theories and skills of career planning, understand the relationship between labour market dynamics and job searching, analyze the effect of social, economic and political changes on the job market. Through understanding the social psychology of career aspects, students will become more sensitive to human dynamics in the work setting.

SOWK6078. Family as a resource: an intellectual and a personal examination

Socrates said "know thyself"; we say "know thy family". Based on theories of family systems and social studies on family roles and gender politics, this course examines the powerful forces of family and society in shaping our personality, value orientations, life goals, expectations about interpersonal relationships, and aspirations about future families. Through intellectual understanding of these dynamics and personal reflections, students will reexamine the impact of their families on them, to shape and reshape their current and future family life to their greater satisfaction, and to unlock the treasure of this great resource, which has become the first and the last emotional refuge in modern living.

SOWK6083. International perspective in human services

This course is a joint venture with universities from other parts of the world. The objective of the course is to promote cultural exchanges and appreciation of diversity. The course is designed to provide a forum for discussion and interaction among students from different races and cultural backgrounds. Students will be visiting other participating universities or vice versa. It is expected that through the joint projects, which will be developed during the course, students will gain better awareness of how each culture is constrained or aided by their values, beliefs, norms, and attitudes.

SOWK6084. Intervention in health care settings

Social intervention approaches used in health care such as crisis intervention, grief work, self-help group, art therapy, community education skills, hospice, and home care will be examined. Students will be provided with experiential training on skills/techniques in working with patients in hospitals and in the community.

SOWK6085. Journey into madness

Why do some people become mentally ill and not others? Are certain types of people more prone to develop mental health problems? How should one interact with persons with mental health problems? These are just some of the questions that are discussed in the course. Specifically, this course examines the causes and process of occurrence of major types of mental health problems. It also helps students develop skills in relating to persons with mental health problems. Lastly, the course introduces methods to enhance students' own mental health. Video viewing and sharing of personal experiences by people with mental illness will be arranged.

SOWK6088. Media and identity

In a society where pop idols make headline news, where TV drama characters become our friends, where blockbusters are never to be missed..... How are the media involved in the construction of our social identities? The course takes students through the media landscape to explore the constructions of female identities (the ideology of freshness in feminine hygiene commercials? the good sex-worker fantasy in Hollywood movies?.....), male identities (the emergence of new men in soap series? the dominance of male singers in pop music scene?.....) as well as national/ethnic identities (the charm of Jacky Chan in his kung fu comedies? Americanisation and Japanisation of local culture?.....). A wide variety of media representation will be looked at to find out how identity construction is constantly at work. Reception studies will also be examined to see how audiences interpret and deal with media texts.

SOWK6089. New age health care in community

An innovative course aims at promoting holistic health care concepts and intervention models in local context. Topics include: Cultural Concepts on Health & Illness, Chinese Help-Seeking Behaviors; Concepts on Psychosocial Needs and Intervention, Total Patient Care, Team Work in Health Care Setting; Gender Perspectives and Health Care: Working with Powerless Women and Couples; Working with Sick Children and Families; Community Rehabilitation, Self-Help Movement and Patient Right; Geriatric Health Care, Care-Giver Supports; Grief & Bereavement, Death and Hospice Care; Working with Individuals / Casework Approach; Expressive Art and Group Approach; Use of Healing Skills, Alternative Medicine; Research Agenda and Methods in Health Care Setting.

SOWK6093. Religions and superstitions in everyday life

Using a social psychological framework, the course examines practices commonly observed in indigenous context and elsewhere, such as church going, the worshipping of gods at home, in the street and in temples, visits to shamans and ceremonies concerned with the dead. These practices are then placed in the wider framework of beliefs and knowledge about the world and about ourselves. The growth and development of belief and knowledge in the individual and in society is explored, in an attempt to understand why people do what they do. All of it leads inevitably to a discussion of science and religion in its historical and current perspectives.

SOWK6094. Romance and heterosexual skills training

This course takes students to the awareness of intimate relationships: its romance, power and aggression. It will examine the social construction of romantic love, gender role expectations, self-containing man and idealization of women, identity, sex and power in intimacy. After the course, students will learn skills in cultivating intimate relationship, conflict resolution in intimate relationship and communication in non-abusive way.

SOWK6097. Social skills training for human service personnel

This course will consider the theoretical foundation of social skills training. The relevance of social skills training to different areas of human service practice including teamwork and staff training will be discussed. Skills in working with individuals and groups in human service settings will be practiced. The course will be run in form of lectures, demonstrations, class discussion and exercises.

SOWK6098. Spirituality in counselling

This course examines the basic foundation of the helping process in the form of exploring the impact of religious faiths and beliefs of various kinds on human behaviour. It examines the question of how belief systems grow and develop, and the role they play in the understanding of one's own behaviour, whether as a counsellor, or as an individual in the quest of 'knowing oneself'. In the counselling process when helper and client meet, the issue of how human interactions is seen to be influenced by different understandings of the world, and how beliefs affect the healing of disturbed behaviours, will be studied.

SOWK6099. Teachers as counsellors

As many students might join the teaching profession when they graduate, a purpose of this course is to help course participants understand the developmental characteristics, needs and struggles of students (children and adolescents). To understand the counselling process and acquire necessary skills in offering counselling to students are also main focuses of this course. It is expected that through the course, participants can be more equipped to be effective helpers in working with students to cope with their school life.

SOWK6100. Treasure hunting: promoting children's multiple intelligence

This course is designed against the conviction that there are hidden treasures in each and every child. The course aims to facilitate people with a genuine concern for children, and people who has to work with children, to master key theories and strategies to bring the giftedness out of every child. The

course will review current controversies on the conceptualization of multiple intelligence. Effective models to uncover and promote treasures in children will be presented in the light of indigenous unique socio-economic and cultural context, as well as current education reforms. Upon course completion, students will be equipped with theory-guided strategies and techniques to understand and promote children's holistic development in contemporary societies.

SOWK6101. Understanding and working with young people

This course examines the developmental characteristics and needs of young people and their actualization in the local context. Special focus is put on understanding the contemporary local youth culture and how it reveals the needs of the young people. Major models and concepts in youth work are introduced. Working skills with young people implied from these models and concepts are also introduced. This course is especially suitable for students who intend to join the fields that work with young people.

SOWK6102. Violence in intimate relationships

The issue of violence in intimate relationships (e.g. domestic violence & violence in dating) is examined through multi-lenses. The course introduces the nature of the different kinds of violence in intimate relationships. The knowledge and skills necessary to understand the dynamics of violent behavior are taught. How to assess violence, how to identify appropriate intervention strategies, and how to apply such related skills are examined. A particular emphasis is given to the relationship between violence and gender issues.

SOWK6136. Adventure-Based Counselling: theory and practice

Adventure-Based Counselling (ABC) is a popular contemporary approach employed to work with people in order to assist their building and/or promoting of a positive self-concept, improve their interpersonal relationship and enhance their problem-solving abilities. Although it is especially popular among working with young people, it can also be used in working with different age groups, families and couples. This course aims to introduce the basic theories and practices of ABC. Besides introducing the theoretical base of the approach, how to design and run sessions of ABC will also be taught. Some micro skills in conducting ABC sessions will be introduced. Last, but not least, the quality of an ABC facilitator and the ethical considerations in employing ABC to work with people will be discussed in the course. The format of the course includes lectures, seminars and ABC workshops for students to participate and experience the process.

SOWK6173. Generation Y: youth (sub)cultures

This course explores various youth (sub)cultures, and will be organized around the following topics: (1) body and beauty; (2) club cultures and drugs; (3) sex and the cyber-space; (4) popular and indie music. This course focuses on the insiders' perspective, i.e. the ways in which young people actually experience and make sense of their own activities, while sensitizing students to the historical specificity of the construction of youth as a social category and the politics of representation.

SOWK6174. Tender violence: a seminar course on love, sex, gender and the family

This is a seminar course for post-graduates who are interested in exploring the meanings of love, sex, gender and family with reference to a different philosophical tradition and in particular a

post-structuralist perspective. The emphasis is on love as self-affirming, ecstatic, affective but also dangerous/“violent” adventure. We will read and discuss the work of authors including Freud, Marx, Engels, Foucault, Derrida and other contemporary thinkers to help us reflect on gender and sexuality issues. Students are expected to come to the class well-prepared to discuss the assigned readings in relation to their own spiritual pursuits and/or research projects in the area.

SOWK6189. Working with children and families

This course adopts a developmental perspective in understanding children. Common behavior problems in children, such as emotional problems, oppositional behavior, conduct disorder, school problems, will be addressed. The principles and procedures of particular intervention theories relevant to the Hong Kong situation will be examined.

SOWK6202. Systematic approach to marital therapy

This course utilizes a system perspective in the introduction of marital therapy, divorce therapy and mediation services in working with couples. An effective marital counsellor relies on a solid integration of knowledge, skills, philosophical reflection of the issues in intimacy and genuine human compassion. This course will cover the basic theoretical framework of marital therapy, divorce therapy and mediation services in working with couples in the local context. Simultaneously, the students will be stimulated to exercise active reflection on one’s own values, personal experiences and philosophical stance in the treatment of marital problems. A synthesis of clinical wisdom in practice will be emphasized.

SOWK6203. Clinical social work practice

This advance course on social work intervention aims to challenge the students to integrate different methods and models of practice to serve needy client groups in an effective and mutually empowering manner. Focusing on using an integrative perspective to handle critical social issues, the course builds on the students’ previous knowledge of Social Work Theories and Practice and their field placement experience. Students will also be required to work on an integrated project to be presented in the course on Advanced Social Work Practice II. The project will sensitize students to current social issues and prepare them for effective professional practice.