The Ph.D. Program in Social Welfare

The PhD program in the School of Social Welfare prepares the next generation of scholars and educators grounded in advanced data collection methods, with an emphasis on the social determinants of health, research on ameliorating racial, ethnic, and identity-based disparities in access to quality treatment, and policy-based solutions.

Admission requirements of the Social Welfare Department

The application can be found at graduateadmissions.stonybrook.edu/apply. If you have any questions, you may contact ssw_phdadmissions@stonybrook.edu.

Degree Requirements

Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree in Social Welfare

A) One year in residence
B) Satisfactory completion of all required and elective courses (54 credits)
C) Satisfactory completion of research and teaching practicum
D) Satisfactory performance on the comprehensive qualifying exams
E) Advancement to candidacy by vote of the doctoral committee upon successful completion of all course work and the comprehensive exam
F) Completion of a dissertation
G) Successful defense of the dissertation

A program summary booklet is available describing the Ph.D. program in detail, its curriculum and requirements for admission. To receive a copy of this booklet, contact the School of Social Welfare’s Ph.D. program office at (631) 444-3142.

Program Structure and Content

The structure of this program consists of 14 required courses (42 credits) as follows:

Statistics I and II (HWC 600 & HWC 601)
Research Methods I and II (HWC 602 & HWC 603)
Research Practicum I and II (HWC 606 & HWC 607)
Social Welfare Policy Analysis I and II (HWC 608 & 609)
Organizational Theory and Social Welfare Administration (HWC 610)
Theories of Social Work Intervention (HWC 612)
Seminar in Social Work Education (HWC 613)
Teaching Practicum (HWC 614)

Dissertation Seminar I and II (HWC 615 & HWC 616)

Also required are four electives (12 credits), a comprehensive exam and the production and defense of a scholarly dissertation. Fifty-four credits are required for graduation. In the first three years, students take three courses each semester. The full-time program is designed to be completed in a minimum of four years.

Once all coursework and the comprehensive exam have been completed successfully, students select a preliminary dissertation chair and committee and develop an approved dissertation proposal. The student is then advanced to candidacy and begins dissertation research. The fourth year is spent on completion of the dissertation and defense.

Faculty of the Social Welfare Department

Professors

Ballan, Michelle, Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin: Prevention and treatment interventions for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families; research focused on sexuality, intimate partner violence and direct practice for individuals with disabilities; bioethics; disability studies; human rights and social justice for underserved populations.

Miller, Shari, Ph.D., University of Maryland: Dr. Miller's research and scholarship focuses on educational innovation with implications for reflective practice; her work is enhanced by a collaborative focus on inter- and trans-disciplinary and interprofessional approaches to education, with implications for expanding the scope of how we conceptualize practice and interprofessional workforce development, as well as how we work toward sustainable pathways for socially just change. Some specific areas include innovation in social work education, professional socialization, theory development, self care, empathy as a skill, orientation, and way of being, and environmental social work.

Miguel Muñoz-Laboy, DrPH, Columbia University: Social determinants of Latinx health, HIV continuity of care, Globalization and migrant health, Co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, bisexual health research, masculinity and structural determinants of substance misuse, social isolation/loneliness and economic exclusion, medical-legal partnerships, social epidemiology.

Associate Professors

Bessaha, Melissa, Ph.D., University of Maryland: Mental health and educational disparities among youth and young adults, Immigration and social determinants of mental health during the transition to adulthood, Influence of social relationships, Higher education equity, Social Work in higher education, Evaluating programs serving transition age youth.

Fineberg, Iris, Ph.D., Boston University: Palliative and end of life care, oncology, family-oriented health care, interdisciplinary education and teamwork, advance care planning, clinical and research ethics, qualitative research methods, mixed methods, evaluation.

Hammock, Amy, Ph.D., University of Michigan: Intimate partner violence intervention and prevention; Community-based participatory research; Community practice with immigrant populations; Qualitative methods; Feminist theory and practice.

Hayward-Everson, R. Anna, Ph.D., University of Maryland, Baltimore: Child welfare, undocumented immigrant children, family-centered practice, research, program evaluation, environmental social work.

Monahan, Kathleen, DSW, Director of the Family Violence Education and Research Center and Director of the Trauma Specialization, D.S.W., Adelphi University: Sexual abuse; sexual abuse and adult health issues; Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), battered women and Traumatic Brain Injury; domestic violence shelters; disability; aging and trauma; children exposed to domestic violence and siblings.

Morris, Zachary A., PhD., University of California, Berkeley: Disability policy; comparative social policy; social isolation; poverty; program evaluation; management and leadership in the nonprofit and public sectors.

Assistant Professors

Brock-Petrosius, Kristen, Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles: Community Organizing & Policy Practice, Racial Justice Policies, Anti-Carceral Social Work, Attitude Change Interventions, Race, Ethnicity, and Politics, Field Experiments.

Malik, Sana, Ph.D., The John Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Social determinants of health, international public health, health systems strengthening, health disparities among minority, immigrant, and refugee populations, health education & behavior, culturally and religiously tailored programming, maternal & child health and welfare, program design & evaluation.

Torres, Maria, PhD, Brandeis University, Health Services research focused on the behavioral health care treatment system, the impacts of federal and state policies on those seeking behavioral health treatment, the behavioral health care workforce, racial/ethnic disparities in behavioral health treatment, mechanisms to improve quality of behavioral health care treatment, increasing access to quality care for racial/ethnic minorities.

Zhang, Yalu, Ph.D., Columbia University: Aging, Disability, Health Inequality, Social Welfare Policy, Cross-Cultural Comparison.

Clinical Professors

DeLuca-Aconci, Ph.D., Stony Brook University: School Social Work; School Based Mental Health; Educational Access and Equity; Anxiety in Children and Adolescents; Social Emotional Learning; Human Rights Education and Advocacy; Trauma-Sensitive School Interventions.
Earle, Melissa, Ph.D., City University of New York: Tele-mental health; technology in social work education and practice; online education; trauma; veterans; addiction: gender sensitive responses to co-occurring disorders.

Kardaras, Nicholas, Ph.D., Sofia University: The global mental health crisis; trends, etiology, and treatment; Substance and Behavioral Addiction: causes and treatment; Digital technology and the impacts on mental health; socio-cultural aspects of addiction and mental health; Philosophy/ethics; Meaning, purpose and the modern existential crisis; neuropsychology; young adult mental health; consciousness research.

Morgan, Richard, Ph.D., Fordham University: Child welfare policy and programs; research; social work ethics; organizational theory.


Velázquez, Suzanne, Ph.D., Stony Brook University: Community Development, service-learning, cultural competency, leadership, transformative learning, higher education policy, organizational culture management, women's life work issues.

NOTE: The course descriptions for this program can be found in the corresponding program PDF or at COURSE SEARCH.