PhD PROGRAM in SOCIAL WELFARE

socwork.wisc.edu/programs/phd
Program Mission
The doctoral program in social welfare strives to develop scholars, leaders, and social work educators who will advance knowledge about social work, social welfare policy, and intervention strategies from a behavioral and social science perspective to improve the quality of life of individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations.

Curriculum
Students are trained to apply sophisticated research methods and theory from multiple disciplines. The requirements to obtain a PhD in Social Welfare include a minimum of 42 credits of coursework, completion of a preliminary examination, and completion of a dissertation. The first two years of study are comprised of courses across world-class social and behavioral science departments. Coursework focuses on:

- Foundation and advanced research methods
- Application of research methods
- Applied theory
- Social policy

A joint MSW/PhD option is available for students without an MSW.

Financial Support
The School of Social Work provides highly-competitive financial support to new and continuing PhD students. Graduate Assistantship and Fellowship positions include paid tuition, health insurance coverage, and a monthly stipend.

Application
The PhD Program considers students for fall semester admission only. Applications open in early September and are due by December 1st for the following year.

Apply to the UW-Madison Graduate School online. In addition, applicants will need to provide:

- Social Welfare PhD Supplemental Application
- Writing Sample
- Official Transcript(s)
- Statement
- Résumé or Curriculum Vitae
- Three Letters of Recommendation
- Application Fee
- Official GRE Scores
- English Proficiency Test Scores (if required)

For more information, visit: socwork.wisc.edu/admissions/phd
Where Are Our Graduates?

Graduates primarily take tenure-track faculty positions, but many also pursue non-academic tracks. Examples include leadership positions in think tanks, and in research and policy organizations.

Living in Madison, Wisconsin

Madison, a college town and state capital of over 255,000, sits on an isthmus between Lakes Monona and Mendota, providing scenic views throughout the city. Madison ranks as one of the best cities in the U.S. in many areas: well-designed bike trails, cutting-edge technology, strong educational systems, excellent health care, green resources, and plenty of entertainment, nightlife, and a vibrant food culture.

Why UW–Madison School of Social Work?

- National Reputation of Excellence
- Highly Recruited Graduates
- Strong Faculty Mentoring Model
- Individualized Program of Study
- Substantial Financial Support
- Rigorous Interdisciplinary Research Training
- Vibrant Graduate Student Community
- Opportunities to collaborate with world-renowned research centers and institutes
- Options to pursue interdisciplinary PhD minors in Aging; Prevention and Intervention Science; and Women’s Studies, among others.

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Since its start in 1968, the PhD program in Social Welfare has conferred well over 200 degrees. Graduates have become leaders in social work and social welfare scholarship, policy, and practice throughout the world.

“In my role as doctoral program chair, my job is to facilitate students’ exploration of multiple career options, seek opportunities for students to engage in professional development activities, and provide mentorship throughout the PhD program experience. Our program is rigorous, but you will experience it in the context of a highly supportive community of faculty, staff, and students. Our doctoral students are a great source of pride for our entire School, and I’m honored to be a part of their journey.”

“I take great pride in the legacy of our PhD alumni who have gone on to conduct research that has transformed social work knowledge, practice, and policy. Many serve as deans and directors of leading schools of social work across the globe. Our current students are destined to become future leaders in the field, and our students benefit from the expertise of some of the world’s foremost experts in their subject areas.”
Lauren Bishop-Fitzpatrick, PhD
bishopfitzpa@wisc.edu
Developmental disabilities, autism, aging, health, psychosocial interventions

Aaron M. Brower, PhD
ambrower@wisc.edu
College success and transition to college, educational innovations and evaluation, integrative and immersion learning

Pajarita Charles, PhD
paja.charles@wisc.edu
Incarceration, reentry, and family and child well-being; father involvement and parenting; intervention research

Lawrence M. Berger, PhD
lmberger@wisc.edu
Child and family policy, child wellbeing, child maltreatment, parenting, family complexity, family resources

Jooyoung Kong, PhD
jkong7@wisc.edu
Aging, family violence across the life course, later-life intergenerational relationships, long-term care, family caregiving

Jan S. Greenberg, PhD
greenberg@waisman.wisc.edu
Disabilities, family relationships in later life, serious mental illness
Lara B. Gerassi, PhD
gerassi@wisc.edu
Sex trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, intimate partner violence, inclusive social services for diverse individuals

Katherine A. Magnuson, PhD
kmagnuson@wisc.edu
Socioeconomic status and child development, early education and intervention, welfare reform and family well-being

Daniel R. Meyer, PhD
drmeyer1@wisc.edu
Poverty policy, welfare reform, economic well-being of single-parent families

Marah A. Curtis, PhD
mcurtis3@wisc.edu
Housing policy and family well-being; housing policies, housing environment and health; income-stabilizing policies and housing bundles
Tally Moses, PhD
moses@wisc.edu
Adolescent & young adult mental health, mental illness stigma, mental illness & identity, intersectionality, mental health services in schools, youth treatment utilization & outcomes, family stigma & supports

Alejandra Ros Pilarz, PhD
pilarz@wisc.edu
Parental employment, early care and education, and child development; child and family policy; child and family well-being

Tracy A. Schroepfer, PhD
tschroepfer@wisc.edu
Aging, psychosocial needs of terminally ill elders and their families, health disparities in underserved communities

Tova Walsh, PhD
tbwalsh@wisc.edu
Child & family wellbeing, relationship disruptions & repair, parenting interventions in early childhood, military families, fathers and fathering

Yang S. Xiong, PhD
ysxiong2@wisc.edu
Immigrants and refugees, civic engagement, social mobility
“My training at the Waisman Center and faculty mentorship at the School of Social Work prepared me well for my current faculty position and taught me to confidently participate in multidisciplinary research teams.”

**Kelly Aschbrenner, PhD ‘07**
Assistant Professor of Psychiatry
Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice
Geisel School of Medicine

“As a prospective student, I met individually with several faculty members. Their willingness to meet with me is what sold me on the UW–Madison Program. I couldn’t be more grateful for the amazing support and mentorship they have given me over the last five years.”

**Laura Cuesta Rueda, PhD ‘15**
Assistant Professor
Rutgers University
School of Social Work

“Madison is a lovely place to live, work, and raise a family: beautiful scenery, Badger sports, wonderful schools, and a vibrant busy campus. Plus, chocolate peanut butter ice cream on the terrace!”

**Tora Frank, PhD Candidate**

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