

FOCUSED AREAS OF STUDY

2023-2024

- **HEALTH AND WELLNESS THROUGH THE LIFESPAN**
- **INTERNATIONAL ISSUES IN SOCIAL WORK**
- **INTERSECTIONALITY, HUMAN AGENCY, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**
- **URBAN ISSUES IN SOCIAL WORK**
- **VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

FOCUSED AREAS OF STUDY

A Focused Area of Study (FAS) provides an opportunity for students to organize six of their elective credits around a population or social problem area as a complement to their concentration. Students completing the requirements within an area of study will receive a letter of recognition. FAS offerings are based on faculty expertise and student interest as well as being reflective of the School's mission. Students should contact the Focused Area Chair with questions or if additional information is needed.

Students may choose to organize six elective credits in one of five Focused Areas of Study:

- Health and Wellness through the Lifespan
- International Issues in Social Work
- Intersectionality, Human Agency, and Social Justice
- Urban Issues in Social Work
- Violence Prevention in Families and Communities

Requirements

All FAS in the curriculum consist of the following components:

- Successful completion of six elective credits. Of these six credits, students must take one three-credit required course that contains the core knowledge deemed to be essential by the Focused Area Study faculty. Requirements for the *Violence Prevention in Families and Communities* Focused Area of Study differ slightly, as there is no dedicated required course.
- A year-long Field Placement in a field or practice relevant for the Focused Area of Study (required)

The second course necessary to complete a Focused Area of Study may be taken as follows:

- An elective from a carefully selected list of Focused Area of Study electives offered at the School;
- An elective from other graduate units of the University (only with prior approval from the FAS Chair);
- An independent study or special topics course of no more than three credits (only with prior approval from the FAS Chair).

Please note: some required FAS courses are not necessarily offered each semester, so plans must be made with Faculty Advisor and the FAS Chair with this in mind.

Health and Wellness through the Lifespan

This Focused Area of Study is designed to provide students the chance to enhance their knowledge and skills related to working with people across the lifespan (from early life to older adults) relevant to social work practice in mental health and/or substance disorders. This focused area prepares students with the theory and practice needed to address a range of needs related to children; adolescents; adults with mental health or substance abuse disorders; or practice with older adults.

Students are required to take a Core Elective from the following:

- HBEL 5357: Social Gerontology (offered in Spring 2024)
- HBEL 5393: Emerging Issues in Mental Health and Substance Abuse (offered in Fall 2023 & Spring 2024)

Students will take an additional elective from the following:

- HBEL 5300: Substance Abuse I (offered in Fall 2023 & Spring 2024)
- HBEL 5301: Substance Abuse II: Treatment and Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drugs
- HBEL 5318: Grief & Loss (offered in Fall 2023)

- IGFP 5342: Clinical Conditions with Groups (offered in Fall 2023 & Spring 2024)
- IGFP 5345: Clinical Conditions with Children and Adolescents (offered in Fall 2023 & Spring 2024)
- IGFP 5346: Clinical Conditions with Adults and Older Adults (offered in Fall 2023 & Spring 2024)
- DSEL 5320: Direct Practice in Schools for Children with Educational Disabilities and their Families (offered in Fall 2023 & Spring 2024)
- SPTP 5318: Health Equity and Disability Justice in Social Work Practice (offered in Fall 2023)
- SWEL 5318: Child and Adolescent Trauma and Mental Health (offered in Fall 2023 & Spring 2024)
- IS 5394: Independent Study for a maximum of three credits (requires advanced approval by the Focused Area of Study Chair)

Students in IGFP who are required to take either:

- IGFP 5345: Clinical Conditions with Children and Adolescents;
- IGFP 5346: Clinical Conditions with Adults and Older Adults; or
- IGFP 5342: Clinical Conditions with Groups.

to fulfill their requirement for the IGFP Concentration. The student may not use any of these courses to satisfy the requirements for this Focused Area of Study. However, IGFP concentration students may take another elective course from the listed courses in addition to the required elective course toward completing this Focused Area of Study.

Relevant graduate electives from other departments or professional schools of the University may be used toward the Focused Area of Study with permission of the Chair. Students will take a year-long Field Placement in a field or practice relevant to the Focused Area of Study, required. The Field Placement can include public and private agencies; schools; and inpatient, residential, or outpatient settings.

Chair: Regina Lester-Harriat, LMSW (regina.lester-harriat@uconn.edu)

Committee Members: Dr. S. Megan Berthold, Dr. Margaret Lloyd Sieger, Dr. Rupal Parekh, Dr. Ellen Smith

International Issues in Social Work

The Focused Area of Study in International Issues in Social Work is designed for students who want to include a global perspective in their social work program. International Issues specialization is useful for students considering careers in international development; work with immigrants, refugees, or inter-country adoption; advocacy work on global policy issues; and those who wish to broaden their domestic practice competence through understanding social issues internationally.

Students are required to take:

- A Core Elective: SWEL 5348: International Social Work: Global Social Issues and the Profession (offered in the Spring semester 2024)
- A one year-long Field Placement in an organization emphasizing international practice, issues or populations, required.
- And an additional three credits are required. (Please see below.)

Students must take an additional elective chosen from the following:

- HBEL 5328: Ethnic Minorities and the Social work Profession: The Puerto Rican/Latin@ Experience
- HBEL 5328: Germany Travel Study: Implications of the Holocaust for Social Work Practitioners
- SWEL 5310: Services to Immigrants and Refugees and Cross-Cultural Helping

- SWEL 5333: Travel Study for Social Work in Puerto Rico
- SWEL 5345: International Development Theory and Practice
- SWEL 5350: Comparative Social Welfare Policy between the United States and the Second World
- SWEL 5377: Urban Policy Issues
- SWEL 5385: Human Rights and Social Work
- IS 5394: Independent Study for a maximum of three credits (requires advanced approval by the Focused Area of Study Chair)

Relevant graduate electives from other departments or professional schools of the University may be used toward the Focused Area of Study with permission of the Focused Area Chair.

Students will take a year-long Field Placement in a field or practice relevant to the Focused Area of Study, required.

Students' Field Placement will be in an organization emphasizing international practice, issues, or populations. Options include Save the Children; the United Nations; the Center for International Social Work Students at the School of Social Work; the Immigrant and Refugee Coalition; refugee resettlement and service programs; new arrivals programs in school systems; and inter-country adoption programs.

Placements may be completed in other countries depending upon language requirements, availability of appropriate supervision, and planning with the concentration for completion of course requirements. Early planning is advised as there is a special application process for an international placement.

Chair: *Dr. Rebecca Thomas*, (rlthomas@uconn.edu)

Committee Members: Dr. S. Megan Berthold and Dr. Rupal Parekh

Intersectionality, Human Agency, and Social Justice

This Focus Area of Study gives students an opportunity to examine the intersection of various social identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, citizenship status, and social class. While this FAS forefronts race and ethnicity because of its unique role in U.S. society, through the frameworks of intersectionality and social justice students examine how different power structures interact in the lived experiences of Latin@s, Blacks, LGBTQ, and immigrant populations. Students advance their understanding of multiple dimensions of social relationships and the development of human agency and identities in these communities. They will enhance their critical consciousness around advocacy; empowerment; and the dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion. By analyzing these intersections within the context of various structural forces and arrangements that exist and how they maintain and perpetuate systems of inequity and oppression, students will enhance their ability to advocate for social change.

Students are required to take the Core Elective HBEL 5328: Puerto Rican/Latino Experience (offered in Fall 2023).

Students will take an additional elective from the following:

- HBEL 5370: The LGBT Experience: Sexual and Gender Diversities
- HBEL 5386: German Travel Study: Implications of the Holocaust for Social Work Practitioners (offered in Spring 2024)
- SWEL 5310: Services to Immigrants and Refugees
- SWEL 5333: Puerto Rican Travel Study

- SPTP 5318: Health Equity and Disability Justice in Social Work Practice (offered in Fall 2023)
- IS 5394: Independent Study for a maximum of three credits (requires advanced approval by the Focused Area of Study Chair)

Relevant graduate electives from other departments or professional schools of the University may be used toward the Focused Area of Study with permission of the Focused Area Chair. Students will take a year-long Field Placement in a field or practice relevant to the Focused Area of Study, required. The Field Placement is working with Latin@s, Blacks, LGBTQ, and/or immigrants.

Chair: *Vacant*

Urban Issues in Social Work

This FAS examines issues that affect the context for urban social work practice areas across concentrations and diverse populations. The content in this Focused Area of Study combines and expands interest in specific populations with a broader understanding of urban political economy; the impact of globalization on cities; and the problems that affect all urban communities across race and ethnicity and those who impact disenfranchised populations. Courses to complete the Focused Area of Study requirements cover content relevant to urban issues and populations; and issues pertinent to social work practice in urban areas.

Students are required to take this Core Elective: SWEL 5377: Urban Policy Issues (offered in Fall 2023).

Students will take an additional elective from those listed below. An additional three credits are required and may be selected from the following list of elective course offerings. Elective courses address social, political, and economic issues relevant to urban social work concerns, and organizing techniques relevant in urban settings.

- CORG 5370: Grassroots Neighborhood Organizing – *cannot count for this FAS for CORG students as it is a required course* (offered in Fall 2023)
- SWEL 5348: International Social Work: Global Social Issues and the Profession (offered in Spring 2024)
- SWEL 5360: Economic Justice, Labor, and Social Work (offered in Spring 2024)
- SWEL 5380: Political Social Work Practice - *cannot count for this FAS for CORG or POPR students as it is a required course* (offered in Spring 2024)

Elective courses that address urban populations:

- HBEL 5327*: The Black Experience and its Consequences for Practice
- HBEL 5328*: Ethnic Minorities and the Social Work Profession: Puerto Rican/Latin@ Experience (offered in Fall 2023)
- IS 5394: Independent Study for a maximum of 3 credits (requires advanced approval by the Focused Area of Study Chair)

*These above courses all focus on populations found in large measure in urban areas and the issues that confront social workers engaging in practice in urban areas. Issues of racism and social and economic justice are covered in the required course (SWEL 5377) and these courses reinforce the themes of that course.

Relevant graduate electives from other departments or professional schools of the University may be used toward the Focused Area of Study with permission of the Focused Area Chair, as well as new courses developed in the School of Social Work that are relevant to urban areas.

Students will take a year-long Field Placement in a field or practice relevant to the Focused Area of Study, required.

Chair: *Vacant*

Violence Prevention in Families and Communities

This Focused Area of Study offers MSW students an opportunity to concentrate their electives and Field Education on policies, programs, and practices to prevent and address the effects of violence in varied settings. The Violence Prevention in Families and Communities Focused Area of Study pays special attention to developing skills of micro and macro practitioners working in families; schools; prisons or other involuntary institutional settings; elder care facilities; other community settings; or in policy-making arenas.

Students are required to take two of the following:

- SWEL 5318: Child and Adolescent Trauma and Mental Health (Fall 2023 and Spring 2024)
- SWEL 5385: Human Rights and Social Work (Spring 2024)
- HBEL 5381: Child Maltreatment: History, Theory, Prevention, and Intervention (Spring 2024)
- IS 5394: Independent Study for a maximum of three credits (requires advanced approval by the Focused Area of Study Chair)
- SPTP 5318: Core Components and Skills for Trauma-Informed Practice.

Relevant graduate electives from other departments or professional schools of the University may be used toward the Focused Area of Study with permission of the Focused Area Chair. Students must also take a year-long Field Placement in a field or practice setting addressing violence prevention, including either clinical and/or macro approaches, required.

Committee Members: *Dr. Kathryn Libal, Chair,* (kathryn.libal@uconn.edu)

Dr. Megan Berthold, Dr. Caitlin Elsaesser, & Dr. Megan Feely