

# Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College

## FIELD OF PRACTICE SPECIALIZATIONS

Updated Summer 2019

*“Recognition of the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”*

—**Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)**

*“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”* —**Eleanor Roosevelt (1958)**

*“I think it is necessary to realize that we have moved from the era of civil rights to the era of human rights.”* —**The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. (1967)**

*“We have the Bill of Rights and we have civil rights. Now we need a Right to Care, and it's going to take a movement to get it.”* —**Deborah Stone (2000)**

The School of Social Work currently offers students the option to choose a specialization in a field of practice (FOP) during their second year of study (Advanced Standing students may consider an FOP earlier in their trajectory). As a reflection of both our commitment to a social justice and human rights framework and the nature of the service systems where we do our work, the School has chosen the following FOP specializations. Each of these areas is linked to a universal human right.

***Aging***  
***Child Welfare: Children, Youth, and Families***  
***Global Social Work and Practice with Immigrants and Refugees***  
***Health***  
***Mental Health***  
***World of Work***  
***School Social Work***  
***Criminal Justice***  
***Sexuality and Gender***

This guide provides essential information necessary for students to understand and select a field of practice specialization and meet its requirements.

### **HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL WORK**

Human rights are necessary for every human being to live in freedom with dignity, security, and equality and for people to have their needs met. They are universal and indivisible and apply no matter where people come from and regardless of their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, income level, or ability. Human rights are not privileges. They apply equally to all simply because we are human beings. Both the Council on Social Work Education and the National Association of Social Workers have concluded that the purpose of social work is actualized through social work practice that develops the capacity for individuals, groups, and communities to exercise their human rights and through the development of social policies, programs, and organizations that ameliorate conditions that limit the exercise of these rights. In effect, the work that we do “is the technical mechanism that transforms human rights from universal principles to real experience in the lives of children, families, and communities.”

The U.S. participated in creating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), much of which drew on the vision of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the work of Eleanor Roosevelt. Typically viewed as an international program, the human rights model is now being integrated into social work and social services in the United States (See the NASW Internal Affairs Department, CSWE competency 2.1.5; The Heartland Alliance [a large Chicago-based social service agency]; the Kensington Welfare Rights Organization [a grassroots group]; the National Economic and Social Rights Initiative [NESRI]; and the many other organizations that have successfully applied the human rights framework to their work in the U.S.).

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND FIELDS OF PRACTICE

Each of our identified fields of practice reflects attention and commitment to a universal human right:

***The Right to Health (and Mental Health) Care:*** The Right to Health Care, an indispensable component of the broader right to health, is universally recognized as fundamental to human dignity, freedom, and well-being and indispensable for the exercise of other human rights. It recognizes “the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health” without discrimination of any kind and depends on the effective delivery of quality health care. The World Health Organization defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Many external factors influence our health, such as the environment, housing, workplace conditions, and medical care. In so far as these are shaped by society, the government has an obligation to protect our health (see Article 25, UDHR, Article 12, The International Convention on Social and Economic Rights).

***The Rights of Children and Families:*** The child is viewed as an individual *and* as a member of a family and community, with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development. Children everywhere have the right to survival; to the fullest development; to protection from harmful influences, abuse, and exploitation; and to full participation in family, cultural, and social life. Children’s earliest experiences significantly influence their future development. To assure their full and harmonious development, children should grow up in a family environment that promotes an atmosphere of happiness, love, and understanding. Since children have the right to a standard of living adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development, families must be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that they can fully assume their responsibilities within the community, including fostering the growth and well-being of all their members, particularly children. The best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities, or legislative bodies.

Governments are obliged to respect parents’ primary responsibility of providing care and guidance for their children and to support parents in this regard, providing material assistance and support programs (adapted from Convention on the Rights of the Child).

***The Rights of the Aging:*** The Madrid International Plan of Action on Aging (MIPAA), adopted by UN Member States in 2002, recommends many specific rights for older persons in a wide range of areas. In its *Priority Direction I: Older Persons and Development*, the MIPAA specifies the following areas among others: “active participation in society and development”; “work and the aging labor force”; “access to knowledge, education, and training”; “intergenerational solidarity”; and “eradication of poverty.” In addition, *Priority Direction III: Ensuring Enabling and Supportive Environments* focuses on “housing and the living environment”; “neglect, abuse, and violence”; and “images of ageing.” *Global Action on Aging* advocates for the protection of older persons as a key element of the human rights movement. Increasingly subject to theft, physical and emotional abuse, negative stereotyping, and discrimination, older persons often feel vulnerable and frightened. In addition, older people often face serious discrimination in the workplace. While many rights issues affect them negatively, older persons are claiming new sets of entitlements,

including choice of sexuality and sexual activity, appropriate housing, innovative care-giving programs, and more control over end-of-life decisions.

**The Right To Work:** The Right to Work guarantees the free choice of employment and the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain a living by work which is freely chosen or accepted and will take appropriate steps to safeguard this right. It includes the right to fair wages that ensure a decent living for oneself and one's family, safe and healthy working conditions, protection against unemployment, the absence of discrimination, equal pay for equal work, and the right to form and to join trade unions to protect one's interests. The full realization of these rights includes access to technical and vocational guidance as well as training programs, policies, and techniques to achieve steady economic, social, and cultural development and full and productive employment under conditions safeguarding fundamental political and economic freedoms to the individual. Everyone also has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay (adapted from Article 23, 24 UDHR and Article 6, 7, 8 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights).

**The Right to Freedom of Movement:** Everyone has the right to movement and residence within the borders of each state, to leave any country including his or her own, and to return to any country. Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy protection from persecution, including asylum and refuge. The rights of immigrants, refugees, and economic migrants were originally set down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Articles 13 and 14. The 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees guaranteed the right of persons to leave their country of origin "owing to the well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion." The Charter of the Organization of African Unity extended these protections to include those escaping external aggression, occupation, foreign domination, or situations of violence or natural disaster entailing disturbance of the public order. These conventions require that unification of family members in safety be a high priority in caring for those who are forced to migrate. The General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of 1991 established standards and implementation bodies to address the needs of people around the globe in times of emergency, whether because of armed conflict, climate change, or disaster.

The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families entered into force in July 2003. This convention recognizes the reality of an increasingly interdependent world that requires people to leave home in search of economic opportunity. The primary objective of this convention is to protect migrant workers and their families, a particularly vulnerable population, from exploitation and the violation of their human rights and to extend the protections formerly afforded only to refugees to people who leave home in search of improved economic opportunity.

It should be noted that this field of practice recognizes that human rights standards are global, informed and established worldwide by people from a range of cultures and societies coming together to support one another in an interdependent world.

**The Right to Justice:** The Criminal Justice FOP will be grounded in the following Article from The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR): Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. Embedded in this Article is the idea

that the American criminal justice is driven by public safety and public health.

As such, students can focus on public health issues that affect communities, or issues that protect public safety such as corrections.

### **WHY IS THERE A FIELD OF PRACTICE SPECIALIZATION OPTION?**

Building upon the knowledge and skills acquired in first-year courses, a FOP specialization provides students with the opportunity to develop advanced competencies as they enhance their knowledge of distinctive institutional settings, particular client populations, or social problems. The goals of a field of practice specialization are to accomplish the following:

- Provide students with opportunities to develop advanced competencies: in-depth knowledge and skill in an area of social work.
- Prepare students for a competitive job market given the organization of service delivery systems.
- Bring together faculty, students, and field agencies with similar interests to share and develop knowledge around contemporary issues and trends in social work.
- Provide an additional vehicle for generating innovation and new course material in the curriculum.
- Maintain the focus of the School, the faculty, and the curriculum on the changing needs of the urban community.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETING A FIELD OF PRACTICE (FOP)**

Planning and information gathering for a FOP specialization begin during the first semester of the first year. All students may opt to choose an FOP specialization as part of their Year 2 Field Planning Form. OYR students will make their FOP determination as part of their Field Practicum Packet. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss their interest in a field of practice with their Field and/or Academic Advisor and the Chair of the FOP specialization in which they have an interest.

The requirements for completing a field of practice specialization are the following: (a) an appropriate second or residency year (OYR) field practicum, (b) a Professional Seminar project and/or Research topic related to the FOP, and (c) at least [1] elective option that falls under the FOP.

\*\*In certain instances, a 702 Policy 2 class may also serve as the elective requirement.

When students complete the requirements of their FOP specialization, they will have this accomplishment recognized in their final evaluation summary; they may add this achievement to their résumé and they will receive a certificate upon graduation. A description of each approved field of practice follows. **\*\*Please note: Although only one elective related to their chosen FOP is required, students are encouraged to take policy and elective courses as available that support their field of practice.**

## FIELDS OF PRACTICE SPECIALIZATIONS

### AGING

Consistent with the human rights framework, the Aging Field of Practice (FOP) is guided by the principle that older adults are individuals—and members of a family and community with rights and responsibilities—who must be afforded the necessary protection and assistance to participate fully in family, cultural, and social life. Although older adults are clients who can be served in a variety of fields of practice, this specialization is defined by its formal and informal service structure; its social and legislative sanctions; the population it serves; its specific policy debates; and its practices.

The Aging Field of Practice (Gerontology) addresses the aging process from a life course perspective. This specialization explores the aging process and the variety of issues affecting older adults and their family systems. Course selections provide content with a focus on issues such as health and mental health; social service delivery in clinical and community-based settings; assessment of risk and protective factors associated with healthy aging; assessment, intervention, and evaluation of specialized services for older adults and their family systems; caregiving; long-term care policy; and the implications of the growing demographic of the aging society.

**Range of Clientele:** Anyone who is an older adult, those who might be dependent on an older adult, or those who provide care or support to an older adult.

#### **Field Placement Opportunities:**

Field placements will provide strong practice opportunities across the various methods of casework, group work, community organization, and administration. Placements vary from those which provide a range of services for a variety of client needs to placements that are more specialized in their focus on the aging population. Students complete their field instruction in approved field settings that specialize in working with the issues related to aging. Environments may include public agencies that specialize in working with individuals, families, and groups; community-based centers (i.e., senior centers, adult day care, etc.); agencies that are privately and/or publicly funded; agencies that combine direct service with policy work; preventive and protective services programs; health/mental health (medical/psychiatric) centers; and hospice settings and housing court. Field practicum settings have a primary orientation towards providing services to older adults, with some agencies that provide services for immigrants or refugees and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans families.

#### **Courses that may be taken to support this specialization (pending availability):**

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| SSW 702.13 | Women and Social Welfare Policy  |
| SSW 702.16 | Social Work with the Homeless: Implications for Policy and Practice                  |
| SSW 702.17 | Social Welfare Policy in the Field of Aging  |
| SSW 713    | HBSE III (Adults and Older Adults)   |
| SSW 724    | Social Casework IV: Family Treatment; Brief Therapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy |
| SSW 735    | Group Work for Non-Majors (Project must be in Gerontology)                           |
| SSW 770    | Alcohol and Drug Abuse: Social Work Practice   |
| SSW 797.72 | Field of Practice Platform Course  |
| SSW 791.57 | Social Work with Victims of Violence against Women                                   |
| SSW 791.76 | Social Services to the Gay & Lesbian Community                                       |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| SSW 791.89 | Perspectives on the Aging Process: Implication for Social Work Practice  |
| SSW 794    | Social Work Practice: Family Treatment   |
| SSW 796.60 | Clinical Issues in Social Work Practice with the Aged  |
| SSW 797.01 | Clinical Social Work Practice in Health Settings   |
| SSW 791.58 | Human Sexuality  |
| SSW 702.18 | Seminar in Social Welfare Section 1: Changing the Parameters of the Possible: Bringing Human Rights into Social Welfare Policy |
| SSW 702.22 | International Social Welfare Policy and Services   |

#### **AGING FIELD OF PRACTICE CHAIRS:**

Nancy Giunta                      Room 453                      212-396-7552                      [nancy.giunta@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:nancy.giunta@hunter.cuny.edu)

#### **CHILD WELFARE: CHILDREN, YOUTH, & FAMILIES**

Consistent with the human rights framework, the Child Welfare: Children, Youth, and Families (CWCYF) Field of Practice (FOP) takes the view that the child or youth is an individual—and a member of a family and community with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development—who must be afforded the necessary protection and assistance to participate fully in family, cultural, and social life. Although children, youth, and families are the typical clients of most fields of practice, this field/specialization is defined by its particular service structure, its social and legislative sanctions, the population it serves, its specific policy debates, and its practices.

Thus, the CWCYF FOP is designed for students interested in working in public and/or private child welfare agencies; or children, youth, and family organizations in direct service and supervisory and administrative capacities as well as organizing on behalf of all children, youth, and families for access, social justice, and equality. It prepares social workers to provide a broad range of services to individuals, groups, and families in all phases of the family life cycle. Family and individual counseling, parent education and engagement, and the full spectrum of child welfare services are emphasized in this specialization. Students who elect a CWCYF FOP develop a plan of study which includes a field practicum in a placement related to children, youth, and family services.

***Range of Clientele:*** Anyone who is a child, youth, or family member.

#### ***Field Placement Opportunities:***

Students complete their field instruction in approved field settings that specialize in working with the issues of children, youth, and families. Environments may include public agencies that specialize in working with individuals, families, and groups; community-based centers; agencies that are privately and/or publicly funded; agencies that combine direct service with policy work; child guidance clinics; preventive services programs; school-based programs; family therapy programs; health/mental health (medical/psychiatric) centers; group care and residential treatment centers; multiple or neighborhood service centers; day care programs; family court; and children's or parents' rights groups. Field practicum settings have a primary orientation towards providing services to children and adolescents in biological families, foster kinship, or adoptive families; group home settings; homeless or displaced families; immigrant or refugee families; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans families; and families with serious health and mental health problems, including child

sexual abuse or substance abuse.

Enrichment seminars will be offered twice a semester (evening or weekends) on a cutting-edge child welfare topic from leading experts in child welfare from New York City, including voluntary child welfare agencies (state or county). For Clinical, COP&D, and OML, the 2<sup>nd</sup> year Field Instruction experience will take place in a children, youth, and family services agency.

Students are encouraged to become involved in the CWCYF FOP Student Alliance to be connected to the network of students in the same FOP and to take advantage of various opportunities and activities organized by this alliance.

**To be competent in this specialization, students are encouraged to take one of following 702 courses:**

SSW 702.15 Policy and Practice in Child Welfare *or*  
SSW 702. Child Welfare and Family Court Advocacy

**Courses that may be taken to support this specialization (pending availability):**

SSW 702.13 Women and Social Welfare Policy  
SSW 702. Domestic Violence  
SSW 702.16 Social Work with the Homeless  
SSW 702.18 Social Welfare Policy Analysis, Development, and Change  
SSW 713 HBSE III (Child & Adolescent)  
SSW 715 Seminar in Psychodynamics  
SSW 724 Clinical Practice Elective: Family Therapy  
Child & Adolescent  
Trauma  
Cognitive/Behavioral Approaches  
Social Casework IV: Relational Therapy  
SSW 734 Group Work IV (field-based project must focus on CYF)  
SSW 735 Group Work for Non-Majors (field-based project must focus on CYF)  
SSW 770 Alcohol and Drug Abuse: Social Work Practice  
SSW 791.57 Social Work with Victims of Violence  
SSW 791.76 Social Work Practice with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender People  
SSW 792 Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents  
SSW 794 Social Work Practice with Families  
SSW 796.53 Clinical Practice Issues in Child Welfare  
SSW 796.61 Social Work Practice in School Settings

**Child Welfare & Children, Youth, and Families Field of Practice Chair:**

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### III. GLOBAL SOCIAL WORK & PRACTICE WITH IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

The 21st century is characterized by unprecedented levels of global interdependence in which people, communities, and their institutions are engaged with international forces affecting their lives in very intimate ways. From climate change to economic adversity, these realities have called forth responses based on an increasing awareness of human interconnectedness. The Global Social Work and Practice with Immigrants and Refugees (GSWPIR) field specialization is defined by its mission to incorporate indigenous social work perspectives from around the globe to inform learning and practice in international contexts—with immigrants and refugees as well as in the U.S. urban environment. Many families are transnational today, with members in the U.S. and in other countries around the globe, and social workers must be prepared to engage families and communities as they navigate these complexities, redefining concepts along the way. In the context of international standards of social justice and human rights, students will become aware of the differing discourses in this field and the varied understandings of and responses to adversity.

The GSWPIR FOP is designed for students experienced in a global context with immigrant, refugee, and other multicultural communities or with international organizations. The FOP will prepare students to work flexibly in multiple roles, informed by multiple ways of knowing and based on their chosen social work method. Students will develop competencies needed to practice in a global, multicultural environment and address clinical issues with individuals, families, and groups; those of policy leadership and planning; or those of community organization policy and development. The concept of community is central to the field, and students will learn in practice how to utilize methods learned from global experience. Students who elect the GSWPIR FOP develop a plan of study which includes a field practicum in a global, immigrant, and/or refugee-related placement in the New York metropolitan area; as well as a final research or professional seminar paper on a related subject, a related Policy course and at least one practice elective chosen from the list below.

**Range of Clients:** Immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers and their family members as well as people and organizations engaged with or affected by globalization and global interdependence.

**Field Placement Opportunities:**

Students complete their field instruction in approved field settings that specialize in working with immigrants, refugees, asylees, and/or global practice issues. 38% of New Yorkers were born outside of the U.S., and many others are part of transnational families; i.e. have family members who remain in, have returned or migrated to homes abroad. Therefore, most of the city's important social agencies seek specialists in work with this population. Field education takes place in community agencies, working with people throughout the lifespan; schools and other education programs; health facilities including hospitals, clinics, and community health facilities or substance abuse and other specialized programs; public and private social welfare institutions; psychoanalytic and advanced practice institutes; legal settings; and selected international organizations, including the United Nations. Special populations include survivors of trafficking, domestic violence, and HIV/AIDS, LGBTQI+ asylum seekers; and undocumented workers. Some placements will require proficiency in a language other than English and/or previous grassroots experiences in cross-cultural contexts or with immigrants, refugees, or multicultural populations. **All field placements are located in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area and its environs.**

**The following courses may be taken to support this specialization. Please note that not all courses are offered every semester.**

**Choose ONE of the following policy related courses:**

SSW 702.22 International Social Welfare Policy and Services *or*

SSW 702.19 Immigrants and Refugees; Policies and Issues

SSW 797.73 - Introduction to Global Social Work and Practice with Immigrants and Refugees

**And/Or**

**Choose ONE practice course from the menu below:**

SSW 791.88 Spirituality and Healing

SSW 798.02 Social Work and the Latino Community

SSW 791.71 Practice with Immigrants and Refugees

SSW 796.70 Social Work with Veterans and Military Service Members

SSW 791.57 Social Work with Victims of Violence

SSW 791.76 Social Work Practice w/ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender People

SSW 797.60 Neighborhood Lab: Strengthening Community Capacity

SSW 798.10 Multicultural Social Work Practice

SSW 724.00 Clinical Practice 4: Trauma

SSW 724.00 Clinical Practice 4: Relational Therapy

SSW 791.75 Social Work and AIDS

SSW 791.58 Human Sexuality

SSW 796.61 Social Work Practice in School Settings

SSW 796.52 Social Work Practice with Workers and Their Families

SSW775.00 Trauma and Resilience

**In addition, we encourage students to choose one of the courses below to enhance their range as practitioners:**

SSW 725      Casework for Non-Majors (must include work with immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers)

SSW 747      Community Organization/Non-Majors (must focus on global or immigrant issues)

SSW 780      Administration for Non-Majors (must focus on global or immigration issues)

**Other courses are possible with appropriate assignments—just ask!**

Students are encouraged to become involved in the Global Social Work Alliance to be connected to the network of students in the same FOP and to take advantage of various opportunities and activities organized by the alliance (including specialized lectures, films, and other experiences) and to receive mailings about related events around town.

**Global Social Work and Practice with Immigrants and Refugees Field of Practice Chair:**

Martha Bragin

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## HEALTH

In this field of practice, health and illness are considered as points along a continuum. Health is not merely the absence of disease. It is the ability to function in complete harmony with one's environment and the capability of meeting the ordinary physical, social, and emotional stresses of life. The newest definition includes community as well as individual well-being. The goals of this specialization are to prepare social workers who can responsibly meet the changing needs of people faced with health concerns and who can effectively advocate for quality health/mental health policies and practices in New York City. Depending on settings, Students in this specialization generally have the opportunity to:

- participate in a multidisciplinary health care team
- work with a range of client needs (illness to wellness) and the continuum of care (prevention to long-term care) to meet those needs
- learn about public and private health/mental health laws, programs, resources, benefits, and services;
- obtain skills necessary to provide quality health care services in existing mainstream and/or alternative health care systems
- participate in consumer and professional advocacy networks and organizations established to protect patients' rights.

### ***Field Placement Opportunities:***

Field placement settings in this specialization include large hospitals; ambulatory care or primary care facilities; hospital out-patient and in-patient clinics or community-based health centers; day treatment programs; substance abuse treatment facilities; and specialized nursing care facilities for the chronically ill, aged, or those in need of intensive rehabilitation and/or hospice care. Some settings focus on health education or patient advocacy.

Some examples of Health/Mental Health Specializations include work with:

- MICA/CAMI clients; cancer patients and their families; end-of-life decisions in palliative care settings; groups with persons diagnosed with HIV/AIDS; discussion groups for parents around family health needs; community health education programs; persons with mental illness advocating for their mental health needs; training programs for workers providing intensive case management; or older adults and their families in extended-care facilities.

### **Courses that may be taken to support this specialization (pending availability):**

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| SSW 702.14 | Social Policy: Health Systems                                  |
| SSW 735    | Group work for non-majors (group or project must have H focus) |
| SSW 770    | Alcoholism and Drug Abuse                                      |
| SSW 797.73 | Field of Practice Platform Course                              |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| SSW 791.58 | Human Sexuality  |
| SSW 796.60 | Clinical Issues in Social Work Practice with the Aged          |
| SSW 796.62 | Social Work Practice with People with AIDS and Chronic Illness |
| SSW 797.01 | Clinical Social Work Practice in Health Settings               |

**Health Field of Practice Chairs:**

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**MENTAL HEALTH**

In this field of practice, mental health and mental illness are considered as points along a continuum. Mental Health is not merely the absence of mental illness. It is the ability to function in complete harmony with one's environment and the capability of meeting the ordinary psychosocial and emotional stresses of life. The goals of this specialization are to prepare social workers who can responsibly meet the changing needs of people faced with mental health concerns and who can effectively advocate for quality mental health policies and practices in New York City. Students in this specialization generally have the opportunity to participate on a multidisciplinary team; work with the range of client needs (illness to wellness) and the continuum of care (prevention to acute or long-term care) to meet those needs; learn about public and private mental health laws, programs, resources, benefits, and services; use skills necessary to provide quality mental health care services in existing or alternative mental health care systems; and participate in consumer and professional advocacy networks and organizations established to protect patients' rights.

***Field Placement Opportunities:***

Field placement settings in this specialization include any setting that addresses part of the spectrum of mental health. This may include large hospitals; ambulatory care or primary care facilities; hospital based in-patient psychiatric units or outpatient clinics; community-based mental health clinics; day treatment or partial hospitalization programs; and substance abuse treatment facilities. Field placements may also take place in settings that are not part of the formal health care system, such as criminal justice settings but may center on working with particular populations.

Some examples of Mental Health Specializations include: working with individuals with any DSM-5 diagnosis or those who may be what are called diagnostic orphans (e.g., functioning may be impaired but they do not qualify for a DSM-5 diagnosis); substance using clients; clients with co-occurring disorders (substance use disorder and other mental health conditions); individuals coping with trauma; groups for parents around family health needs; community health education programs; persons with mental illness advocating for their mental health needs; training programs for workers providing intensive case management; or older adults and their families in extended-care facilities.

**Courses that may be taken to support this specialization (pending availability):**

|            |                                      |
|------------|--------------------------------------|
| SSW 702.14 | Social Policy: Mental Health Systems |
| SSW 702.14 | Social Policy: Substance Abuse       |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
|            | Social Policy: Homelessness  |
|            | Social Policy: Criminal Justice                                    |
| SSW 715    | Seminar in Psychodynamics  |
| SSW 724    | Brief Therapies or Cognitive-Behavioral Therapies                  |
|            | Family Therapy   |
|            | Advanced Clinical Practice with Children                           |
|            | Advanced Practice with Survivors of Trauma                         |
| SSW 770    | Alcoholism and Substance Abuse                                     |
| SSW 797.73 | Field of Practice Platform Course                                  |
| SSW791.57  | SW with Victims of Violence  |
| SSW 791.58 | Human Sexuality  |
| SSW791.93  | Community Mental Health  |
| SSW794.00  | SW Practice: Family Treatment                                      |
| SSW 796.58 | Psychosocial Approaches in the Treatment of Chronic Mental Illness |
| SSW 796.60 | Clinical Issues in Social Work Practice with the Aged              |
| SSW 796.62 | Social Work Practice with People with AIDS and Chronic Illness     |
| SSW 797.01 | Clinical Social Work Practice in Health Settings                   |
|            | Social Work in the Criminal Justice System                         |
|            | Core Concept Child Trauma  |
|            | Trauma and Resilience  |
|            | Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents                 |
|            | SW Practice w/Immigrants and Refugees                              |
|            | SW Practice in School Settings                                     |
|            | Social Work with Veterans and Military Service Members             |
|            | Spirituality & Healing   |
|            | Evidence-Based Practices in the Criminal Justice System            |

**Mental Health Field of Practice Chair:**

Alexis Kuerbis

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**WORLD OF WORK**

**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE:** Given the intersectionality of the World of Work Specialization with the other Field of Practice Specializations, we will be developing World of Work as a sub-specialization. Students planning their FOP Specializations would not choose this as their primary FOP Specialization.

The World of Work Field of Practice Specialization underscores the importance of work, income, and employment in our society and in the lives of the clients and communities we serve. Increasingly in this country, “you are what you do”; therefore, work issues are always central to our clients. Indeed, the theme of work covers the entire life span and offers opportunities for social work intervention with adults, older adults, adolescents, their families, and the communities involved. This FOP adopts a holistic approach to work, income generation, and employment: through involvement in the labor

force, individuals benefit from time structure, a sense of responsibility, and social contacts—all of which positively influence their health, mental health, and social and community networks.

***Field Placement Opportunities:***

Field placements will provide opportunities to develop and strengthen clinical, community, and organizational practice skills with individuals, families, small groups, communities, and organizations. Placements are in a wide array of clinical and macro (community organizing, planning, development, research/evaluation, and leadership) settings, including labor unions, non-profit agency employment programs, university labor research centers, labor-management-based Member Assistance Programs (MAPs), and management-sponsored Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) under the auspices of hospitals, universities, trade unions, city agencies, and external corporate providers. In addition, there are placement opportunities in employment agencies, welfare-to-work programs, and supported employment and vocational rehabilitation settings. Many of these field placements provide stipends. These placements also offer a particularly good opportunity for students wishing to consider EAPs and other workplace settings for employment upon graduation because many of our World of Work alumni are employed in these settings. However, experience shows that the World of Work specialization also prepares students exceedingly well for career success in all social work settings. Students completing the World of Work FOP will receive recognition at graduation certifying their completion of the requirements for this specialization, and they may note this on their résumé.

**Courses that may be taken to support this specialization (pending availability):**

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| SSW 702.10 | The Organization and Delivery of Social Services to Workers and Their Families |
| SSW 702.11 | The Political Economy and Social Welfare                                       |
| SSW 702.13 | Women and Social Welfare Policy  |
| SSW 702.18 | Social Welfare Policy Analysis, Development, and Change                        |
| SSW 702.19 | Immigration and Refugees   |
| SSW 702.21 | Social Welfare and Disabilities  |
| SSW 713    | HBSE III (Adults and Older Adults)   |
| SSW 724    | Casework IV: Brief Therapies; Trauma; or Cognitive-Behavioral                  |
| SSW 727    | Social Work with Clients in Authoritarian Settings                             |
| SSW 770    | Alcohol and Drug Abuse: Social Work Practice                                   |
| SSW        | Field of Practice Platform Course  |
| SSW 791.71 | Social Work Practice with Immigrants and Refugees                              |
| SSW 791.83 | Social Work Practice and the Disabled  |
| SSW 796.52 | Social Work Practice with Workers and Their Families                           |
| SSW 748.00 | Grantsmanship  |
| SSW 796.66 | Political Advocacy and Social Work (CO 4)                                      |

**World of Work Field of Practice Chair:**

Paul Kurzman

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## SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

School social work is a distinctive field of practice with ties to both social work and education. In keeping with the human rights framework, the School Social Work Field of Practice takes the view that the child or youth is an individual—and a member of a family and community with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development—who must be afforded the necessary protection and assistance to participate fully in family, cultural, and social life.

The history of provision of social services through the schools goes back to the early years of the 20th century. Under the United States Constitution, every child has the rights to a public education regardless of race, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, or his/her psycho-developmental performance. The school is a natural environment where children can be found. In fact, the school is the only social institution in which virtually every child and family has contact. The school provides a logical organizational setting for providing access to high-risk families and children. Schools are normative, non-stigmatizing settings for children and adolescents to receive social services. Next to the family, school is probably the biggest influence on a child's life. Social workers are in a key position to help others within the educational system to understand the relationship among poverty, marginalization, racism, and educational outcomes. The school is viewed as a strategic center for social workers to link children and their families with resources, so that learning and growth are not hindered. Although children, youth, and families are the typical clients of most fields of practice, this field/specialization is defined by its particular service structure, its social and legislative sanctions, the population it serves, its specific policy debates, and its practices. Educational legislation and government funding have continued to play a major role in shaping and expanding school social work services.

**Consider School Social Work Placement if you are:** (1) interested in developing a range of skills including how to negotiate complex organizational settings, while working with individuals, groups, and community organizations; (2) interested in interdisciplinary collaboration with other professionals and workers in a school system; (3) committed to improving educational and social services to clients with diverse cultural, ethnic, and racial backgrounds; (4) flexible, self-directed, able to meet new challenges, and willing to take risks; (5) interested to be a member of the interdisciplinary Committee on Special Education—responsible to contribute to the students' Individualized Educational Plan (IEP); (6) interested about social work policies and their impact on service delivery to children in school and impact on school social workers.

**Social work students who elect School Social Work as FOP:** School social work FOP prepares social workers who are interested in social work practice with children, adolescents and their families who may be facing critical academic, social, and environmental stresses. After graduation you may wish to work directly for the Department of Education (DOE) or you may work for a community-based agency housed in a school setting providing mental health counseling; or you may work in a charter school.

**Range of Clientele:** *Children, Youth, Family members, school as a social organization, community-based centers, etc.*

**Field Placement Opportunities in School Settings:**

Field practicum settings have a primary orientation towards providing comprehensive social work services to parents, children, youth, and school staff. Additionally, social work students provide crisis intervention, counseling, and case management with pupils and their families, under professional MSW supervision. Work with children and families from diverse cultures (e.g., immigrant or refugee families; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender families). The purpose of school social work is to allow each child and or adolescent to have an equal education opportunity, by addressing issues they might have, e.g., depression, homelessness, family issues, AD/HD, or drugs/alcohol.

In addition, school social workers use a range of practice interventions such as conflict resolution, group work, and community organizing. Social work intern: (1) May collaborate with teachers and other school personnel and participate in faculty and staff meetings to promote children's social and academic development; (2) address issues such as homelessness, discrimination, immigration, substance abuse, violence, bullying, and death; (3) work with parents' organization and advisory groups; (4) work with health and other human service personnel in school or in community; (5) participate and develop school/community programs and resources for students and their families.

The purpose of school social work is to allow each child and or adolescent to have an equal education opportunity, by addressing issues they might have, e.g., depression, homelessness, family issues, AD/HD, or drugs/alcohol. Social work students complete their field instruction in approved field settings that specialize in working with children, youth, and families in school settings and or school – based programs, or specialize in working with individuals, families, and groups; community-based centers; child guidance clinics; preventive services programs (early child focused, e.g., pre-k and day care programs); health/mental health (medical/psychiatric) centers; or neighborhood service centers.

**Courses that may be taken to support this specialization (pending availability):**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| SSW 702.15 | Policy and Practice in Child Welfare  |
| SSW 702.19 | Immigrants & Refugees and Policies Issues   |
| SSW 702.21 | Social Policy and Disabilities  |
| SSW 713    | HBSE III  |
| SSW 715    | Seminar in Psychodynamics   |
| SSW 724    | Clinical Practice Elective: Family; Child & Adolescent; Trauma or Cognitive/Behavioral Approaches |
| SSW 735    | SW Practice with Groups   |
| SSW 770    | Alcohol and Drug Abuse: Social Work Practice  |
| SSW 791.40 | Social Work in the Criminal Justice System  |
| SSW 791.57 | Social Work with Victims of Violence  |
| SSW 791.71 | Services to Immigrants and Refugees   |
| SSW 791.76 | Social Work Practice with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender People                            |
| SSW 792    | Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents  |
| SSW 794    | Social Work Practice with Families  |
| SSW 796.53 | Clinical Practice Issues in Child Welfare   |
| SSW 796.61 | Social Work Practice in School Settings   |
| SSW 796.66 | Political Advocacy and Social Work (CO4 Elective)   |
| SSW 797.20 | Trauma and Resilience   |
| SSW 797.35 | Intellectual Disabilities in Social Work Practice   |



Students are encouraged to become involved in the School Social Work FOP Student Alliance to be connected to the network of students in the same FOP and to take advantage of various opportunities and activities organized by this alliance.

**School Social Work Field of Practice Chair:**

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## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

The Criminal Justice Field of Practice (FOP) is characterized by social work practice in the juvenile justice system and the adult criminal justice system. The FOP strongly supports the criminal justice system dual focus on public safety and public health. This dual focus on public safety and public health is consistent with The Universal *Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR): Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. The Criminal Justice FOP is designed for students interested in providing social work services to offenders, and victim and survivors. It prepares social workers to provide primarily micro level interventions to these criminal justice-involved populations. The goals of this specialization are to prepare social workers to balance rehabilitation and retribution, treatment and punishment, and understand the relationships between reentry and homelessness, reentry and public health, and criminal justice and health and mental health, among others. Elective course allow students a great deal of flexibility to focus on learning needs and areas of specialization within the criminal justice system such as substance abuse, health, mental health, trauma-informed care, cognitive behavior therapy; and special populations such as youth, women and older offenders.

**Range of Clientele:** Any individual(s) who has criminal justice system involvement, specifically with one or more of the four components of the criminal justice system: legislation, law enforcement, courts and/or corrections. Criminal justice-involved populations can be youth, adults, individuals, families or groups.

**Field Placement Opportunities:** Field placements will provide experiential learning specific to the role of social work in the criminal justice system. Field placements range from: (1) criminal justice settings such as courts and corrections, (2) agencies that provide social services primarily to criminal justice-involved populations; and (3) agencies that serve a wide variety of populations including some that have criminal justice involvement. In this way, students can concentrate on their learning needs and type of setting they prefer for specialization.

**Courses that may be taken to support this specialization (pending availability):**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| SSW 702.13 | Women and Social Welfare Policy                                     |
| SSW 702.14 | Social Policy: Health or Mental Health Systems                      |
| SSW 702.15 | Policy and Practice in Child Welfare                                |
| SSW 702.16 | Social Work with the Homeless: Implications for Policy and Practice |
| SSW 702.17 | Social Welfare Policy in the Field of Aging                         |

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| SSW 702.18 | Social Policies: Criminal Justice Policy                |
| SSW 702.20 | Clients Rights, the Legal System and Social Policy      |
| SSSW 735   | Group Work for Non-Majors                               |
| SSW 770    | Alcohol and Drug Abuse: Social Work Practice            |
| SSW 791.40 | Social Work in the Criminal Justice System              |
| SSW 791.57 | Social Work with Victims of Violence against Women      |
| SSW 791.71 | Services to Immigrants and Refugees                     |
| SSW 791.75 | Social Work and AIDS                                    |
| SSW 791.76 | Social Services to the Gay & Lesbian Community          |
| SSW 794    | Social Work Practice: Family Treatment                  |
| SSW 796.53 | Clinical Practice Issues in Child Welfare               |
| SSW 796.60 | Clinical Issues in Social Work Practice with the Aged   |
| SSW 796.70 | Work with Veterans and Military Service Members         |
| SSW 797.01 | Clinical Social Work Practice in Health Settings        |
| SSW 797.20 | Trauma and Resilience                                   |
| SSW 797.61 | Evidence-Based Practices in the Criminal Justice System |

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE FIELD OF PRACTICE CHAIR:**

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**SEXUALITY AND GENDER**

Sexuality and gender identity are core aspects of development across the lifespan. Social work practice, therefore, requires an understanding of how to support people exploring their questions, needs, and concerns regarding sex, sexuality, and gender in a range of practice settings and with a variety of client populations. Some clients explore sexual and/or gender focused issues, such as sexual desires, needs and agency; sexual identity; gender identity; relationship issues; sex trade participation; traumatic experiences; and, reproductive health issues. Other clients present with different primary concerns (e.g. depression, anxiety, PTSD, personality disorders), but uncover sexual and/or gender issues in need of addressing.

The Sexuality and Gender (S&G) FOP is designed for students interested in working from a strengths-based, sex positive and gender-affirming perspective. Students are also encouraged to embrace rather than avoid issues of sexuality and gender (i.e., restrictive masculinity, gender-based oppression) within their practices, incorporating the sexual dimension into biopsychosocial and community assessments. Students who elect a S&G FOP develop a plan of study which includes a field practicum in a placement related to sexuality and/or gender, an S&G approved elective (see list provided as available) and a paper on a related topic as the focus of either professional seminar or research.

**Range of Clientele:** While every social work client has both a sexual identity and a gender identity, for the purposes of this FOP the clientele is anyone engaging with issues related to their own or someone else's sexual behaviors, sexual identity, or gender identity as a central part of their purpose for seeking services.

**Field Placement Opportunities:**

Students complete their field practicum in approved field settings that have an emphasis on issues related to sexuality and gender (broadly defined). Environments may include schools with specific sexuality and/or gender assignments; community-based centers that specialize in working with LGBTQ clients; reproductive justice organizations; interpersonal violence related agencies; clinics working with people who have committed sexual violence; agencies engaged with people in sex trades; and, health or mental health care settings that specialize in a related area.

**Courses that may be taken to support this specialization (pending availability):**

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| SSW 791.58 | Human Sexuality  |
| SSW 702.13 | Women and Social Welfare Policy  |
| SSW 791.76 | Social Work Practice with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender People |
| SSW 791.57 | Social Work with Victims of Violence                                   |
| SSW 791.75 | Social Work Practice with People with AIDS                             |
| SSW 796.62 | Social Work Practice with People with AIDS and Chronic Illness         |

**SEXUALITY AND GENDER FIELD OF PRACTICE CHAIR:**

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**HOW TO CHOOSE A FIELD OF PRACTICE**

**STEP 1: FALL SEMESTER (or first semester in the program)—Selecting an FOP**

1. Please read the requirements for each field of practice specialization; attend meetings with the field of practice faculty or academic advisors.
2. Discuss your field of practice preferences with your Field Advisor in the spring semester as part of the field placement planning process for next year. OYR students should also discuss FOP preference with their advisors.

**STEP 2: SPRING SEMESTER (or second semester in the program)—Making a Commitment**

1. Prior to the start of the spring semester of your first year or OYR Time Frame 1 year, you will be asked to choose a field of practice and confirm this choice with your Field Advisor (as part of submitting the Field Planning Form); you may also wish to consult an Academic

Advisor to discuss courses that will enhance your FOP experience.

2. Indicate a **Field of Practice Preference** on your field planning form/OYR packet. Please review how your choice will inform your field placement and subsequent registration choices.

***STEP 3: BEFORE GRADUATION—Completing the Field of Practice Requirements***

In the semester of your expected graduation (April 15 for spring graduates, July 15 for fall graduates, and December 15 for January graduates), **submit the following:**

1. **One copy** of the **Field of Practice Completion** form (found in the **Student Services** section of the **Silberman website**: <http://sssw.hunter.cuny.edu/studentservices/>).
2. A copy of your unofficial transcript on which you indicate the elective(s) taken to fulfill your Field of Practice requirement.
3. If you have made changes in your agency or field placement assignments, it will be necessary for you to update your **Specialization Plan**. Please follow the outline on the application form and use the headings provided. Ask your Field Advisor to sign off on the field placement description **ONLY** if your placement has changed.

***STEP 4: FINAL STEP—Submitting the Completion Form***

Please turn in your completed application in a self-addressed 9"x12" envelope to Student Services, Room 301. Keep copies of your paperwork in case anything is lost or misplaced in the process.

The Field of Practice Chair will review your material, give approval, and sign your certificate (which will be mailed to you after graduation).