

Social Worker

Background –

Social Workers advocate for their client's needs. They assess the individual's strengths, situations and support networks to help them in their time of need. Duties include maintaining records and case histories, referring clients to community resources, responding to clients in crisis situations and developing relationships with clients that foster client growth.

Specializations of Licensed Social Workers -

1. **Child, Family and School Social Workers:** Specialize in the psychological and social functioning of children and their families. Work to assist in the general well-being of foster or adopted children (including safety and academic functioning, in some cases).
2. **Mental Health & Substance Abuse Workers:** Assess and treat individuals with mental, emotional and substance abuse problems. Crisis intervention, case management and counseling are important aspects of this position.
3. **Healthcare Social Workers:** Specialize in working with individuals who need psychosocial support when dealing with a chronic, acute or terminal illness. Counseling, resource coordination or education may be important aspects of this position.

What additional education is required for this position?

To become a Licensed Social Worker, a Master's Degree is required. In addition, clinical setting work and the passing of an exam is required to become licensed. Most Social Work Master's programs will accept students with a bachelor's degree in Psychology.

1. More information on GVSU's Social Work program - <https://www.gvsu.edu/grad/msw/>
2. More information on Michigan's licensing requirements - http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-72600_72603_27529_27554---,00.html

What can I expect to make in this career? \$46, 890* annual median pay

What classes at GVSU may help prepare me for work in this field? Discuss with your advisor which courses among those on this list, along with other courses not listed here, would best serve your career goals.

1. **PSY 310** – Behavior Modification
2. **PSY 303** – Psychopathology
3. **PSY 324** Child Psychopathology
4. **PSY 355** – Psychology & Culture
5. **PSY 302** – Psychology of Adjustment
6. **PSY 381** – Group Dynamics

7. **COM 302** – Small Group Communication
8. **SW 150** – Human Needs in Complex Societies – Freshman & Sophomore Students
9. **SW 300** – Pluralism in American Society - Freshman & Sophomore Students
10. **SW 322** – Responding to Illness – Junior & Senior Students
11. **SW 333** – Community Work with the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Community – Junior and Senior Students

What experiences outside of my classes could I explore to prepare me for my work? The National Association of Social Workers has membership opportunities for those enrolled in Social Work undergraduate, graduate degrees AND undergraduate degrees that are NOT social work (psychology)

1. **More information** - <https://www.socialworkers.org/>

What skills are applicable to the field of Social Work? Listening skills, interpersonal communication and relationship skills, reading comprehension, and coordination/organization skills are all important for social workers to strive for.

Employer Possibilities – Examples of job postings (Fall 2017)

1. Infant Mental Health Therapist – with MSW and then obtain a Level 2 Endorsement as an Infant Mental Health Specialist
2. Social Worker – Kent County Mental Health Court Liaison