



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Certificate in Social Work Practice in Substance Use Disorders

The School of Social Work offers MSSW students the opportunity to graduate with a certificate in Social Work Practice in Substance Use Disorders. This certificate program prepares both Clinical and APP students to be social work practitioners with people with substance use disorders and to impact the systems of care with which they interact. Coursework emphasizes culturally appropriate direct practice, leadership, advocacy, policy, and interprofessional collaboration.

Certificate Requirements

The certificate program in Social Work Practice in Substance Use Disorders is composed of one anchor course, Substance Use and Social Work Practice, elective and selective coursework, 20 hours of professional development, and an approved practicum placement. All coursework counted toward earning a certificate must be taken at the graduate level at the School of Social Work or through approved out-of-department classes. The student is responsible for documenting that all requirements for the certificate have been successfully completed. Throughout enrollment in the certificate program, the certificate coordinator will provide ongoing support, including guidance on course selection, practicum alignment, and progress tracking to ensure students stay on track toward completion.

Approved Practicum Placement

Certificate students may complete their practicum in settings that serve or engage with their population of interest, including specialized agencies or broader organizations offering relevant services. Social Work Practice in Substance Use Disorders certificate students will complete one official practicum focused on addictions or includes substantial opportunity to engage in addiction-related social work practice. Examples of placements are programs, agencies, or organizations that emphasize substance use prevention, treatment, and/or harm reduction services, advocate on behalf of those with substance use disorders, or play a key role in substance use policy development. The placement is a key educational component, providing students with hands-on learning and an opportunity to apply and integrate classroom-based knowledge. This placement may occur in the student's first or final practicum experience. Securing a final practicum placement is a competitive process. Students must confirm with the certificate coordinator that their placement meets the requirements of the certificate program. Because of external factors, such as funding, placement is competitive and not guaranteed at any specific agency. Regardless of placement, all students gain valuable experience through specialized coursework, practicum opportunities, and faculty mentorship, preparing them for effective practice across various social work environments.

Additional Proposed Coursework

Certificate students in the Clinical concentration would select three of their five choices from the suggested course options on page two. Students in the APP concentration would select three of their four choices from the suggested course options on page two. Other courses may be approved as offered, through consultation with the certificate coordinator.

Professional Development

Certificate students are required to engage in a minimum of 20 hours of professional development



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during the course of their graduate program, either through participation in university and community-sponsored lectures, seminars, conferences, interprofessional simulations, and/or research project participation that relates to Social Work Practice in Substance Use Disorders. Professional development hours must be approved by the certificate coordinator prior to the certificate being awarded and may not count toward fulfillment of requirements of another course or program at the School.

Process

Students will fill out an application for the certificate program, which can be found at <https://socialwork.utexas.edu/academics/mssw/certificate-programs/>.

Certificate Coordinator

For more information, please contact Prof. Robin Smith at robinsmith@austin.utexas.edu.

Social Work Coursework		
Anchor course: Substance Use and Social Work Practice		
APP Selectives*	Clinical Selectives*	Electives*
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Program Evaluation• Grant Development• Advanced Policy Practice• Nonprofit Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cognitive Behavior Therapy• Coexisting Psychiatric and Substance Use Disorders• Neurobiology and Social Work Practice• Assessment and Treatment of Traumatized Populations• Grief Counseling• Motivational Interviewing• Solution Focused Brief Therapy• Crisis Intervention• Attachment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mindfulness and Social Work Practice• Social Work Practice with Older Adults• Loss and Grief• Transformative Teams in Healthcare
* These are not exhaustive lists. Additional courses, including out-of-department courses, may be presented to the Certificate Coordinator for approval. Additionally, not all courses may be offered in all semesters and seats are not guaranteed.		