

The University of Kansas

**Masters Level Studies in
Spiritual Diversity and Social Work**

-Guidelines for Coordinating Two Masters Degrees-
2013

Masters in Social Welfare
And
M.A. in Religious Studies

Note: All current requirements set by The University of Kansas, the School of Social Welfare, and the Department of Religious Studies must be followed. These guidelines are intended to help students plan to complete two Masters degrees in a coordinated manner. Their academic advisors must approve the details of any student's plan. Students must be accepted into each program separately and must meet the requirements of each program.

M.A. in Religious Studies

The Master of Arts program in Religious Studies acquaints students with the academic and objective study of religion as an important phenomenon of human experience. Students examine the forms in which religious experience has been described, organized, and practiced in history and in varying cultures; analyzes the interaction of religion with social institutions and areas of personal and group experience; and focuses on religion as expressions of meanings and values in the context of what is perceived as ultimate. Interdisciplinary by nature, students in Religious Studies work with diverse religious traditions and approaches to the study of religion, while at the same time bringing these skills to bear on a specific area of concentration, such as a given tradition, aspect of religiosity, or theoretical issue in the study of religion.

MSW

The Master of Social Work degree prepares graduates for advanced social work practice in one of two broad areas—either clinical social work practice with individuals, families and groups, or social work administration/advocacy aimed at social service administration and social policy development. The MSW program prepares students to work effectively and ethically with the full range of social systems, emphasizing social justice, a strengths approach, diversity and a critical perspective. Students are prepared to understand the dynamic and fluid social and organizational contexts of social work practice and to assume responsibility for continued professional growth and development.

Spiritual Diversity in Social Work: How the M.A. and MSW Programs Connect

In social work, we think of spirituality as the quest for meaning, purpose, and connectedness. It provides a source of resilience. For most people, this includes religious expression. Religion influences the institutions that surround us; it organizes and brings meaning to existence at large,

shaping personal and community identities and values. For many, it shapes their very wellbeing including physical and mental health and social justice.

The fields of religious studies and social work complement each other to provide students with preparation to understand spiritual diversity and to work with clients for whom this is important. They find common cause in the conviction that an awareness of religious difference is essential to our ability to function well as a social worker or as an educated citizen of the world.

Social work has a strong commitment to developing culturally competent and spiritually sensitive practice that supports diversity and promotes well-being and justice.

CURRICULUM OUTLINE

Each student will have an advisor in both Religious Studies and Social Work to help create an enrollment plan. This plan might require special approval by the Associate Dean for Academic Programs in the School of Social Welfare.

Sample Four Year Plan

Note: Social Work students in the Advanced Standing Program would have fewer social work courses to complete.

1st year – SW Foundation Courses, Religious Studies Coursework

2nd year – SW Practicum, Religious Studies Courses (Declare Concentration Area)

3rd year – SW Concentration Courses and Practicum (Clinical or SWAAP), Preparation for Religious Studies Comp Exam

4th year – SW Concentration Courses and Practicum, Thesis Option in Religious Studies

For more information:

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