MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK (M.S.W.)

Ranked in the top 10 percent in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, Fordham University’s Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) program will prepare you to engage effectively across all areas of social work throughout your career.

The world of social work is complex and changing. That’s why we’ve developed a dynamic, forward-thinking curriculum that starts with a comprehensive foundational phase focusing on skills that are grounded in theory and ethics.

After completing core courses, you’ll move to the advanced phase, where you’ll create your own plan of study in one or more advanced practice areas:

• Individuals and Families: Learn how to provide direct services that address clients’ environment and overall well-being.
• Organizations and Community: Be prepared to work effectively with entire communities and various types of organizations, including private and public companies and nonprofits.
• Evaluation: Be prepared to develop an understanding of research and evidence-based practices.
• Policy Practice and Advocacy: Develop skills related to managing organizations and systems, creating policy, writing grant proposals, and obtaining funding.

Accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, our M.S.W. curriculum is designed to turn you into a highly competent, integrated practitioner who has the tools to succeed in every setting.

By earning a Fordham M.S.W., you’ll join an academic community that’s as passionate about social justice as you are. If you’re ready to change the world, we’re ready to help.

For more information, please go to the Fordham GSS website.

CIP Code
44.0701 - Social Work.
You can use the CIP code to learn more about career paths associated with this field of study and, for international students, possible post-graduation visa extensions. Learn more about CIP codes and other information resources.

Admissions
Gain the knowledge and skills you need to achieve your professional goals. Apply to the Master of Social Work program at Fordham University. We encourage applications from people who can meet the academic requirements of a graduate-level program and who demonstrate that their personal qualities and values are compatible with the mission of social work: To improve the lives of others.

Prerequisites
• Bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university.
• 18 undergraduate credits in liberal arts content.

The GRE is not required for admission into this program.

For more details about the application process for our on-campus M.S.W. program, please visit the GSS Admissions website.

For more details about the application process for our online M.S.W. program, please go visit the online M.S.W. Admissions website.

Requirements

Our Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) degree is a 62-credit program. It consists of:
• 48 credits of classwork
• 14 credits of fieldwork experience

The first 31 credits are part of the Generalist Phase; everyone takes the same courses at this level. The remaining 31 credits are part of the program’s Specialist Phase.

Fordham coursework applying towards the M.S.W. degree may be no older than 5 years (counted from the semester the coursework was taken).

Required Courses

Generalist Curriculum

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SWGS 6005</td>
<td>Contemporary Social Welfare Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWGS 6040</td>
<td>Integrating Human Rights and Justice in Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWGS 6323</td>
<td>Social Work Practice With Individuals Across the Lifespan</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWGS 6324</td>
<td>Social Work Practice With Families and Groups Across the Lifespan</td>
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<td>SWGS 6305</td>
<td>Social Work Skills Lab</td>
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<td>SWGS 6320</td>
<td>Social Work Practice With Organizations and Communities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWGS 6440</td>
<td>Advanced Clinical Assessment and Diagnosis</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWGS 6803</td>
<td>Applied Social Work Research and Evaluation</td>
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<td>SWGS 6901</td>
<td>Generalist Field Instruction</td>
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<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
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Specialist Curriculum

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<td>Selective #2: Organizations and Communities Domain- Choose one course</td>
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<td>Selective #3: Evaluation and Research Domain- Choose one course</td>
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<td>Selective #8: Course of your choice</td>
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Updated: 05-22-2024
The goals for the M.S.W. program are:

**Goals**

1. To develop a strong knowledge and skill base in generalist practice with a focus on and commitment to human rights and social justice.
2. Develop specialist skills in advanced areas of the social work profession such as clinical, leadership and macro practice, research, community and organizations, that build on the generalist practice foundation
3. Practice with and on behalf of diverse populations, in order to promote individual, familial, organizational, and community well-being.
4. Critical and systematic examination, evaluation, and utilization of research and other sources of empirical evidence in order to refine practice knowledge, skills, and interventions
5. Competent social work practice guided by a sense of professional identity, values and ethical standards, as well as by recognition of the need for ongoing professional development

**Objectives**

The objectives for the M.S.W. program are:

1. Practice the core values of the social work profession as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics including:
   a. Commitment to service, human rights and social justice
   b. Assistance to access resources, benefits and service in order for individuals to achieve their potential
   c. The ideal in which every individual in society has equal rights opportunities, social benefits, and protection
   d. Dignity & worth of every person
   e. Placing the individual in high esteem and valuing individual differences
   f. Importance of human relationships
   g. Integrity, trustworthiness and adherence to moral principles
   h. Competence, having the skills and abilities to work with clients effectively
2. Develop and practice a high level of self-awareness in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and other professionals
3. Demonstrate knowledge about the effects of oppression and discrimination on individuals, families, groups, and communities and the importance of human rights and social justice advocacy
4. Consistently work to assess the risk and resiliency factors of client systems of various sizes and types, especially with marginalized and culturally or socially diverse groups; and implement interventions that utilize a strengths perspective
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the history of social welfare as an institution and the history, mission and philosophy of the social work profession
6. Demonstrate knowledge, and skills in relation to varied practice settings with a focus on social policy, programs and practice development, organization and community change, and advocacy for clients with the goal of working to alleviate human oppression and discrimination by advancing human rights and social justice and the well-beings of all people
7. Critical thinking skills developed from a grounding in scientifically analyzed and applied theory and research that informs social work practice at all levels of intervention
8. Apply an analytic, empirically based approach to knowledge building in practice that integrates the methods of social research, the critical appraisal of research findings, and the evaluation of social policies, programs, practice processes and outcomes
9. Demonstrate the self-awareness skills necessary to evaluate practice outcomes through a commitment to ongoing learning and professional development

**Enrollment Policies**

**Life Experience**

No credit is given to students at GSS for work or life experience.

**Course Waiver**

A course waiver is granted to a beginning student who can document having successfully completed the course content required in our Master of Social Work program. You should make waiver requests during the admission process. When a course waiver is granted by the GSS Admissions Department, you are expected to enroll in other courses in order to earn the required total number of M.S.W. course credits. The student is being waived from the course requirement but not the credit requirement. The Assistant Dean of Admissions will refer you to the appropriate faculty member if a course waiver is indicated.

**Transfer Credits**

Transfer credits are credits for courses taken at another institution. Students may transfer graduate course work from a regionally accredited institution to Fordham University’s Master of Social Work degree program.

**Eligibility**

- Courses must have been completed at a graduate school.
- Course content must have been in a social science discipline and in the scope of social work education.
- A grade of B or higher must have been earned.

**Restrictions**

- Transfer credits will not be granted for courses taken more than five years before applying to GSS.
- Transfer coursework accepted for credit may apply towards the M.S.W. degree for up to 5 years from the term the student first begins the degree.
- Transfer credits will not be awarded for courses under three credit hours.
- Transfer credits will not be awarded for courses used toward the receipt or conferral of another degree.
- A maximum of 6 transfer credits can be awarded.
- Transfer credits are not granted for life or work experience.
- You must request the credits when you apply to Fordham’s M.S.W. program.

**Applying for Transfer Credits**

M.S.W. applicants who are eligible to apply for transfer credits must submit a Transfer Credit Application Form once they have been granted admission to the program. Your transfer credit application package must include:

- A Transfer Credit Application Form;
- Transcripts from those courses; and
- Course descriptions or syllabi of the courses for which you would like credit.

An addendum to your acceptance letter from GSS will indicate how many transfer credits you will receive. If you do not receive this notification, please contact the Office of Admission at gssadmission@fordham.edu or 212-636-6600 before registration.

**Advanced Standing Students**

To ensure that applicants who hold a B.S.W./B.A.S.W. degree do not repeat content that has been mastered, GSS only accepts applicants who have a B.S.W./B.A.S.W. degree from a CSWE-accredited social work school or program to the Advanced Standing plan of study of the M.S.W. degree program.

B.S.W./B.A.S.W. graduates are ineligible for all other plans of study offered within the M.S.W. degree program.

**Field Education Policies**

**Overview**

Field instruction is the signature pedagogy of Social Work education. Under the supervision of an experienced social worker, MSW students apply classroom knowledge and theory to direct work with clients at their field placement. Through hands-on experiences, MSW students develop ethical and culturally responsive practice skills that align with the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) competencies.

All field placements are coordinated by Fordham's Field Education Department. Fordham maintains long-standing relationships with hundreds of agencies and instructions, nationally that offer a wide range of programs and settings.

**Field Practicum**

The traditional MSW program spans two academic years of study (part-time plans of study span more than two calendar years of study). The first academic year of study is referred to as the "Generalist" or "Foundation" Year. The second academic year of study is referred to as the "Specialist" or "Advanced" Year.

**Generalist Year/Foundation**

In the Generalist/Foundation Field Year Field Practicum, students learn social work practice skills that apply to work with: client systems (individuals, families, and groups), organizations and communities. Requirements for the Generalist/Foundation year field practicum include:

- The development of social work skills that are transferable to all settings and populations
- Demonstration of skills and knowledge that reflect the nine competencies set by the CSWE. These competencies are measured in Mid-Year and Final Field Assessments
- Completion of a minimum of 16 field practicum hours per week
- Weekly participation in a minimum of 1.5 hours of supervision with their Field Instructor
- Submission of one Process Recording per week to their Field Instructor
- Completion of 450 field practicum hours

**Specialist/Advanced Year**

MSW students move on to their Specialist/Advanced Year Field Practicum after successfully completing the requirements of the Generalist/Foundation Year Field Practicum. The Specialist/Advanced Year Field Practicum is focused on learning advanced practice skills.
with individuals, families, communities and organizations. Specialist/Advanced field placements may involve direct practice with client systems, macro practice in administration, social policy and/or research. Requirements for the Specialist/Advanced Year Field Practicum include:

- The MSW student will build upon the nine competencies learned in Generalist/Foundation Year as they develop master-level social work intervention skills
- Completion of a minimum of 16 field practicum hours per week
- Weekly participation in a minimum of 1.5 hours of supervision with their Field Instructor
- Submission of one Process Recording per week to their Field Instructor
- Completion of 500 field practicum hours

**Advanced Standing Students**

Students who have earned a bachelor’s degree (BSW or BASW) from an accredited school of social work may be admitted to Fordham’s MSW Program as “Advanced Standing Students.” Advanced Standing students complete the requirements of the Specialist/Advanced Year Field Practicum, listed above

**Field Advisement Sessions**

Field advisement sessions are a mandatory part of field education for both Generalist/Foundation Year and Specialist/Advanced Year students. Students are expected to attend all seven advisement sessions scheduled over the course of the academic year. Student participation in these sessions is factored into the MSW student’s grade for field work each semester. Absences from field advisement sessions may result in a failing field work grade. Students indicate their time preference for these sessions each year when they register for courses.

Field advisement sessions offer students the opportunity to share and review their experiences in the field with peers and with their field advisor who facilitates the sessions. Field advisors take on the role of liaison between the student, the field placement agency, and Fordham University.

Please note:

- The field advisor is the first point of contact when a student and/or field instructor has any concerns regarding the field practicum experience. The field advisor will work with the student, the field instructor and the field education department to resolve potential barriers to the learning process.
- Certain placements require enrollment in specific advisement sessions, including but not limited to those students applying for Palliative Care placements and the Pipeline For Youth Health placements.

**Field Instruction Grades and Credits**

Field instruction is a year-long course. MSW students earn 3.5 credits per semester of field education for a total of 7 credits for each academic year of field work.

Field instruction is graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis:

- Mid-year and final grades will only be entered when the student’s field evaluations have been submitted by their field instructor.
- If the student is progressing well, a grade of “In Progress” (IP*) is given at the end of the first semester of field work.
- At the end of the second semester of field, the final field instruction grade is submitted. Grades of Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U) are given upon completion of the course.

Please note:

- The mid-year grade of "IP*" does not change after a final grade of "S" is submitted.
- Specialized placements may require additional evaluations.
- Generalist/Foundation Year students are not allowed to advance onto Specialist/Advanced year until they have a final Generalist/Foundation Year grade.

**Absences from Field Placement**

Over the course of an academic year, MSW students are permitted a maximum of three absences from their field placement (for illness or other emergencies). To ensure that the student meets the required hours for field work, absences should be made up at an alternate time which has been agreed upon with the agency/institution. Students should consult with their field instructor before making changes to their weekly schedule.

Extended time off is not an option; a field placement is a commitment to the field placement agency and their clients. The quality and continuity of care provided to vulnerable clients is negatively impacted by excessive absences. MSW students should plan ahead when arranging their social work internships. Students who require or request extended time off from field work may have to delay or defer field instruction. Deferring or delaying field work will likely affect a student’s plan of study; it is imperative that students consult with the Field Education and Student Services Departments when they are considering a deferral or delay of field education.

If a situation occurs in which the student is ill for an extended period of time or another emergency requires a lengthier absence, the student must immediately consult with their field advisor and field placement instructor/supervisor and obtain special approval from the field department to continue in the field for that current semester. For instances that require lengthy absences for medical reasons, a student may apply for a Medical Leave of Absence with the Student Services Department.

Field education spans a full academic-year (two consecutive semesters). Students who leave their field placement for one or more semesters will be required to restart field placement hours, regardless of the previous hours earned when an interruption or absence occurred.

**Administrative Review Process**

Students may experience challenges in field placement that require a formal Administrative Review. The student and their field Instructor/agency representatives each present their account of the circumstances that lead to the Administrative Review.

The objectives of a Administrative Review can include:

- Preservation of the field placement with a formal plan put in place
- Determination of next steps following a field placement termination
- An assessment of the student’s field performance

The Administrative Review Committee includes:
Field Placement Planning

MSW students should always refer to their plan of study when registering for courses and field work. Students are encouraged to work with their academic advisors to ensure that they remain on track to complete all requirements of the program.

Full time Generalist/Foundation and Advanced Standing students begin field instruction in their first semester of the program. Part-time students generally begin field work in later semesters (please refer to the GSS Plans of Study).

If you are accepted as a full-time student, the Office of Admissions provides the link to the electronic field application/planning forms in your acceptance package. If you began the program in a previous semester as a part-time student, you will attend a field planning meeting, and the link to the field application/planning form will be provided at that time.

Once the student submits a field application/planning form, a member of the Field Education team will be assigned to coordinate the student’s field placement for the upcoming academic year. Students will be contacted by their assigned placement specialist shortly after submitting their field application/planning form.

Work/Study Field Placements

Some students are able to meet their field instruction requirements at their place of employment. In order to qualify for a Work Study Field Placement, the student must:

- Indicate this preference on their field application
- Submit a Work Study Proposal to the Field Education Department
- Be employed by the agency for at least six months prior to the start of the placement.
- The field instructor must meet the general requirements for field instruction:
  - Two years post-M.S.W. experience
  - New York/New Jersey/Connecticut field instructors are required to complete the Seminar in Field Instruction (SIFI). Field instructors can sign up for this course at Fordham or any other New York area schools that offer this course.

Please note: Work Study Field Placements must be approved by both your employer and Fordham University. Applying for a Work Study Field Placement does not indicate certainty that this placement will be approved.

Choices in the Placement Process

The Field Education Department works collaboratively with students to coordinate a Field placement setting that provides the best possible learning experience for each practicum year.

While preferences are taken into account, the Generalist/Foundation Year placement setting will be directly assigned by the Field Department. Specialist/Advanced Year students have increased input regarding the setting and population served.

Please note:

- Field Placement options increase when students have flexible availability and less travel restrictions.
- Students who request evening and/or weekend hours are required to be in field placement for a portion of the required hours during the workweek.
Students are expected to establish their internship schedule in collaboration with the agency/institution.

Some sites and/or specialized placements may require specific hours and days; students who accept placements at these agencies are expected to meet this requirement for the entire academic year.

A field placement is a full academic year commitment.

Participating in Field means that students are not allowed to end field prior to the end of each semester/term.

In both their Generalist/Foundation and their Specialist/Advanced Year, students interview with the potential placement agency to ensure that the setting is a good fit for the student. Once a student has met with an agency/institution, a joint affiliation agreement regarding placement is made between Fordham and the site. Students should not contact agencies directly to arrange interviews until advised to participate in this process by your coordinator.

Some field placement agencies require a variety of onboarding and clearances that must be completed prior to beginning a field placement. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Criminal background check
- A recent physical exam and/or certain tests or immunizations prior to placement

Students are notified of any agency-related requirements in advance. Cooperation with these requirements is expected. In most instances, the costs of meeting these requirements are the responsibility of the student.

**Malpractice Insurance**

As a student in field placement, you are covered by a malpractice policy. The cost for this policy is $31 per year. The fee is charged to your account when you register for field instruction. This policy is only in effect during your internship hours. When you graduate and are no longer an intern, you may want to obtain your own liability policy. If you are a member of NASW, you are able to apply for liability insurance through its group plan.

**Contact Us**

The Fordham Graduate School of Social Services maintains three campuses:

- Lincoln Center Campus
- Westchester Campus
- Online MSW Campus

All Fordham MSW students are encouraged to contact the Field Education Department with questions or concerns at: gssfieldinstruction@fordham.edu

MSW students registered with the Online MSW Campus can contact the online placement team at: fieldeducation@onlinemsf.fordham.edu

Students also have the option of contacting Gwen Mitchell, Interim Director of Field Education at: gmitchell4@fordham.edu

We look forward to working with you!

**Field Education Forms**

**Available Forms**

- Proposal for Work/Study Field Placement

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**Important Information**

If you are interested in using your place of employment as a fieldwork placement, your employer must be willing to allow you to function in the role of an M.S.W. intern for a minimum of 16 hours and a maximum of 21 hours per week in your current work position (the tasks must be connected to the Council on Social Work Education Social Work Competencies).

Your immediate supervisor can function in the role of your field instructor to supervise your placement if they meet all criteria, although a different field instructor is preferred. The field instructor must possess an M.S.W. degree, and at least 2 years of post-master’s experience.

Applications must be submitted to the Field Education Office at gssfieldinstruction@fordham.edu no later than May 1 for work/study proposals.

**For more information**

Contact the Field Education Office at gssfieldinstruction@fordham.edu.

**Academic Advising**

Academic advising is a collaborative process between advisers and students that helps students meet their academic goals. It involves planning, evaluation, and decision-making in partnership with the advisee (the student) and the academic adviser. Members of the Student Services team are listed below. You may also email our general inbox at gssstudentservices@fordham.edu

- Mr. Johnny Torres (jtorres@fordham.edu)
- Ms. Melissa Lippiello (mlippiello@fordham.edu)
- Ms. Laura Sutter (lsutter@fordham.edu)
- Ms. Kaitlynn Toro (ktoro2@fordham.edu)
- Ms. Kathleen Rund (krund@fordham.edu)
- Ms. Lauren Sugantino (lsugantino@fordham.edu)

**Molloy Collaborative**

- Ms. Joanna Suppa (suppa@fordham.edu)

**Online Student Success Advisers**

- Assigned after admission

**Special Offerings**

**Advanced Standing Program**

This plan of study is open only to Bachelor of Social Work graduates who have achieved a competent level of academic performance and a successful fieldwork experience within five years of applying to the M.S.W. program at Fordham. The undergraduate social work program that the applicant attended must be accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). For Bachelor of Social Work graduates, your undergraduate coursework is the equivalent of the first year of the M.S.W. program at Fordham’s Graduate School of Social Service. The 31 credits of the applicant’s B.S.W. program are transferred into the Master of Social Work program at Fordham University.

**Credentialed Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC-T)**

Substance use disorders are defined broadly to include both alcohol and other mood-altering substances. The qualification will incorporate
content regarding multiple client populations and multiple service settings as they relate to alcohol and other mood-altering substances.

**Requirements**

- **Field Practicum:** Advanced/Specialist year in an approved substance use disorders setting. This will include specific learning goals and assignments related to services and practice in the area of substance use disorders.
- **Field Advisement Sessions:** A special section for Advanced/Specialist year students placed in substance use disorder settings.
- **Elective Requirement:** SWGS 6417 Social Work Practice with Substance Use Disorders

After completing these requirements, students will have met the New York State educational hours required (350 hours) for the CASAC-T (Credentialed Alcoholism Counselor in Training certificate). However, the qualification is not equivalent to the New York State CASAC credential. For further information, contact Dr. Linda White-Ryan, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, at whiteryan@fordham.edu.

**Joint Degree Programs**

**Joint Degree Program in Social Work and Law**

This program is designed for graduate students who wish to earn both a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree from the Fordham University School of Law and a Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) degree from the Graduate School of Social Service. Applicants interested in the combined law and social work degree must apply and be admitted to both programs simultaneously. Due to the requirements of the American Bar Association, the first year of study must be completed at the School of Law. Contact Assistant Dean of Admissions Melba Remice at 212-636-6601 or remice@fordham.edu or Melissa Fiore Lipiello, J.D., L.M.S.W., at mlippiello@fordham.edu for further information.

**Study Abroad**

**GSS London Summer Study**

GSS is very pleased to offer our M.S.W. students the opportunity to take courses taught by GSS faculty at Fordham University’s London Centre. The London Summer Program highlights the rich history of the settlement house movement in London and New York City, and its role in the formation of the social work profession and social welfare. Faculty will facilitate structured opportunities for students to integrate their community-based and classroom experiences and learning, and enhance the international comparative nature of their study abroad. For more information, contact Gregory Acevedo at gracevedo@fordham.edu or Dana Marlowe at marlowe@fordham.edu.

**Career and Alumni Resources**

**Career Planning**

GSS provides the opportunity for students to seek employment through the online internship and job database Handshake. As a current GSS student, you already have an account set up with your Fordham email address. Just click "Forgot Password." On the Handshake platform, you can post your resume, apply for jobs directly on the system, and access it after graduation as alumni. To learn more about using Handshake, visit the webpage.

**Continuing Education**

Continuing education is now required for licensing in New York State. GSS will be offering CEU opportunities for our graduates and the community. You can find upcoming opportunities on the school’s website.

**National Association of Social Workers (NASW)**

Keep your membership up as a graduate and enjoy the opportunity to have a continuing impact on your profession. It is also a good way to stay current on the issues that affect us as professionals, as well as the issues that affect our clients. There are a variety of committees at the local chapters, and being involved is an excellent form of professional networking.

**Licensing**

New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut all have different requirements for certification or licensing after you have your M.S.W. In New York and Connecticut, you may take the LMSW–Master’s level exam after you have graduated. New Jersey students may take the exam (the same test but called LSW) in their final semester. Exam highlight sessions on test-taking strategies and content review are held often during the end of the spring semester and early summer at both Westchester and Lincoln Center campuses. Announcements will be emailed in advance so that you can make whatever arrangements are necessary to attend.

There is an Online Licensing Preparation course (five hours) available to all M.S.W. students and alumni. The course includes five modules: The first module is on test-taking strategies, and the other four modules align with the four areas of the licensing exam. The course also outlines resources for studying. All graduating students receive an email in April providing access to the course. There is no fee for the course.

**Alumni Events**

You will receive information about Fordham University alumni events, and those specific to the Graduate School of Social Service, through the University’s Alumni Office. Make sure you update your information on the Forever Fordham page. You can use the online directory to search for fellow classmates or network with other alumni. Most information is sent electronically, so it is important that you keep your email address current. An Alumni tab will be accessible from your my.fordham.edu account.

All graduates are eligible for an alumni card Ram Pass that allows you building access and browsing privileges in the libraries. To receive one, go to the University’s homepage and click "Alumni." You can apply for a Ram Pass online.

**Professional Development Sessions**

Students, faculty, and administrators have spearheaded professional development sessions with invited speakers addressing topics of interest at the Lincoln Center and Westchester campuses. Times and topics are posted online, and you will receive an email with information on how to register for the sessions. Some of these sessions are recorded so that students unable to attend can view them.