

ADMISSION

Preparing for Program Admission Core Curriculum of Fordham University

The core curriculum provides students with a strong liberal arts platform from which to pursue upper-level study in social work. Students are expected to complete a substantial portion of the core curriculum before seeking admission to the social work program. Students are exposed to a wide body of knowledge, and are engaged in the cultivation of a spirit of inquiry, values and ethics, and critical thinking skills. The core consists of 18 courses drawn from nine disciplines and/or families of disciplines and seeks to provide all Fordham students with the liberal arts background that will prepare them for life. Courses may meet more than one core requirement, and detailed information is available in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

Social Work Prerequisites

In order to further strengthen the liberal arts base and bio-psycho-social knowledge of students entering the social work program, the following prerequisite courses are expected to be completed before program admission:

- One sociology course
- One psychology course
- One biology course (with emphasis on human biology)
- One American pluralism course
- One course related to contemporary government or social policy in the United States
- SOWK 2600 Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare – This course provides an introduction to the values, knowledge, and skills of the social work profession. Focus is on the historical and contemporary roles and relationships of the social work profession to community problems, fields of practice, vulnerable populations, and social welfare history and policy.

Some of these prerequisite courses may also be applied to requirements of Fordham's core curriculum and/or to requirements of other majors and programs in the University. Therefore, it is helpful to discuss students' interest in the social work program as early as possible in their academic careers. With early mentoring by program faculty, students are able to choose courses within the core curriculum that also serve as social work prerequisites (such as biology and American pluralism). As in the case of the core curriculum, the substitutions of courses taken at institutions other than Fordham University are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Admissions Policies and Procedures

Applicants to the baccalaureate program in social work must be accepted for matriculation by Fordham College at Lincoln Center, Fordham College at Rose Hill or Fordham School of Professional and Continuing Studies. Following their admission to the University, students may apply to the baccalaureate program in social work once they have completed a substantial number of core courses in the liberal arts (approximately 50 credit hours). Students entering the social work program will be expected to complete the 31 credits of the major within a two-year period (either on a full- or part-time basis) and should consider this in timing their applications. Transfer students will be formally considered for admission in the social work program once they have been admitted to Fordham

University and have had a review and determination of credits to be accepted by the University.

The baccalaureate program in social work is interested in applicants who demonstrate both academic competency and personal characteristics that will serve as a sound base for professional development. Therefore, a combination of admissions criteria is used for evaluating applicants.

It is usually expected that an undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale will have been achieved in courses taken before applying to the social work program. An applicant may have had a successful experience in areas related to social work practice, and/or may have demonstrated a capacity for professional work by virtue of study in other areas related to social work. The GPA is reviewed within the context of the total application. If a student's GPA is below 3.0, they may be offered a conditional acceptance. With a conditional acceptance, the student must receive a grade of B or above in their first two social work courses to continue in the program.

A basic facility in English communication is required for admission to the program and for continued enrollment. The autobiographical statement that is part of the application provides the social work program with the opportunity to judge whether the applicant has the writing ability necessary to be admitted and to remain in the program. Candidates will want to be certain that their autobiographical statements are fair samples of their abilities to use the written word and are at the same level of proficiency that the faculty might expect in response to writing assignments given in class. Applicants should also note that an interview is required as part of the admissions process.

Also as part of the admission process, the course instructor of SOWK 2600 Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare is asked to evaluate the performance of students in their class when students apply to the program. This evaluation is based on a variety of factors, including academic achievement, openness to new ideas, and readiness to become seriously involved in the learning process.

There are a number of characteristics deemed to be desirable in people who wish to become a social worker. Among these are maturity of judgment, openness to new ideas, capacity for the development of self-awareness and readiness to change, and acceptance of differences in people. There are other qualities considered essential, which include commitment to social and institutional change and possession of values consistent with those traditionally associated with the social work perspective. Work in social or civic organizations—either paid or volunteer—is viewed favorably as evidence of the kind of motivation sought in applicants. Persons completing letters of reference will be asked to evaluate the applicant on these qualities.

The following is required as part of the application process:

1. Application form completed in full
2. Autobiographical statement
3. Evaluation of performance and professional readiness by student's instructor of SOWK 2600 Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare
4. Two letters of reference, at minimum one of which is from an instructor of a course taken by the applicant within the last two years
5. Completion and signature on "Release of Student Records"
6. Admission interview

All application materials are held confidential and shared only with those persons directly involved in the admission process. All records and

documents become the property of the baccalaureate program in social work of Fordham University.