

Department of Social Work Mission, Goals and Objectives

The mission of the Sisters of Mercy, sponsors of Salve Regina University, includes a direct call to “magnify mercy and justice while promoting systemic change.” The University responds to that call by “encouraging students to work for a world that is harmonious, just and merciful.” This focus of education on service and social justice is the context in which the Department of Social Work defines its mission.

In keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church and the mission of the University, the Department of Social Work promotes economic and social justice through the inculcation of values, the expansion of knowledge and the development of professional skills. In response to the call of the Sisters of Mercy, the Department of Social Work strives to work toward the alleviation of oppression, especially that which impacts poor women and poor children. It does so by preparing students both personally and professionally for entry-level generalist practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities while providing them with a solid foundation for graduate study.

Department faculty fulfill this mission by providing an integrated course of study consistent with the purposes, values and ethics of the social work profession. While the primary focus of the department is the preparation of its majors, the goals of the department include a clear commitment of service that fosters the purposes, values and ethics of the social work profession throughout the larger University and civic communities of which it is a part. The stated goals of the department are as follows:

Social Work Department Goals

1. To develop and maintain a curriculum that responds to the needs of students and reflects the dynamic nature of the social work profession.

Objectives:

- a.) ensuring that each graduate with a major in Social Work demonstrates competency in each of the 9 Competencies (CSWE – EPAS Standards, 2015) and their associated behaviors and dimensions and the Social Work Department’s Competency and associated behaviors;
- b.) challenging students to reach a level of understanding that demands not only mastery of individual competencies, but the ability to synthesize information gleaned from various sources as they work toward the development of an integrated knowledge base through ongoing assessment;
- c.) providing Social Work majors a comprehensive generalist curriculum, emphasizing the need for on-going self-assessment and the integration of Social Work knowledge, skills and values for problem solving, and cognitive and affective processes from person-in-environment and systems framework from an empowerment and strengths based perspective and approach.

2. To provide opportunities for all students in the University to learn more about the values and knowledge base of the social work profession and its commitment to alleviate oppression in all of its forms.

Objectives:

- a.) offering courses, workshops and activities that are open to all students at the University and through which students can learn more about the values and knowledge base of the social work profession, especially its respect for the contributions made through diversity in a pluralistic society;
 - b.) serving as resource persons and agents of change on campus by promoting activities to educate around issues of oppression;
3. To establish and to strengthen a mutual and visible relationship between the Social Work Department and the civic community, especially social service agencies.

Objectives:

- a.) working with agencies and individuals in the civic community to share resources of talent, time and energy toward the fulfillment of shared goals;
- b.) developing and sustaining working relationships with external colleagues that are enriching to both students and clients;
- c.) participating as professional social workers in various local, state and national conferences, workshops and initiatives, while encouraging students to do likewise.

EPAS 2015 Competencies-Student Learning Objectives

Competency #1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

- ❖ make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- ❖ use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- ❖ demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- ❖ use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes;
- ❖ use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency #2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

- ❖ apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- ❖ present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- ❖ apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency #3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

- ❖ apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels;
- ❖ engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency #4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

- ❖ use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- ❖ apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings;
- ❖ use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Competency #5: Engage in Policy Practice

- ❖ identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- ❖ assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
- ❖ apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency #6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- ❖ apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies;
- ❖ use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency #7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- ❖ collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- ❖ apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- ❖ develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies;
- ❖ select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

Competency #8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- ❖ critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- ❖ apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- ❖ use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- ❖ negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies;
- ❖ facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

Competency #9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- ❖ select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- ❖ apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- ❖ critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes;
- ❖ apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Competency #10: Prepare for On-going Professional Challenges

- ❖ demonstrate an understanding of boundaries that determine professional roles and agency function;
- ❖ engage in career-long learning;
- ❖ recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power;
- ❖ respond to contexts that shape practice by attending to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.