Over 80% of our B.S.W. and M.S.W. students secured employment after graduation or decided to enroll in graduate school.

19% growth from 2012 to 2022 in employment of social workers.

Over 90% of our B.S.W. and M.S.W. graduates passed the licensure exam on the first attempt, which is well above the national average.
WHAT SOCIAL WORKERS DO?

Social workers help people solve and cope with problems in their everyday lives. One group of social workers, clinical social workers, also diagnose and treat mental, behavioral, and emotional issues.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Social workers are employed in a variety of settings, including mental health clinics, schools, child welfare and human service agencies, hospitals, and private practices. They generally work full-time and may need to work evenings, weekends and holidays.

HOW TO BECOME A SOCIAL WORKER

A Bachelor of Social Work (B.S.W.) degree allows those awarded the degree to be professionally licensed. It prepares students for beginning generalist social work practice with an emphasis on public social services. The curriculum promotes understanding and analysis of social work knowledge, values, and skills, and it is founded on a broad liberal arts education. A B.S.W. is the most common requirement for entry-level positions such as caseworker and mental health assistant.

A Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) degree prepares graduates for advanced practice in one of two broad areas of social work practice: social work administrative and advocacy practice aimed at macro-level practice or direct clinical practice with individuals, families and groups. A master’s degree is required for many social work positions and settings, such as positions in health, schools, clinical work and administration. Clinical social workers must have an M.S.W. and two years of post-master experience in a supervised clinical setting.

A Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work prepares students for academic and research careers. Recent graduates are employed at large universities in academic positions that involve both teaching and research, as well as in smaller colleges where teaching is the primary function. Some graduates also work as researchers and administrators in non-academic positions.

PAY

The median annual wage for social workers was $44,200 in May 2012.

JOB OUTLOOK

Employment of social workers is projected to grow 19 percent from 2012 to 2022, faster than the average for all occupations. Employment growth will be driven by increased demand for health care and social services, but will vary by specialty.

1. The information on this page was provided by the United States Department of Labor Bureau and the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare in February 2014. For more in depth labor statistics, visit bls.gov/ooh/Community-and-Social-Service/Social-workers.htm. For more information on the School of Social Welfare programs, please visit socwel.ku.edu.
WHY THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS?

QUALITY

For more than 20 years the graduate program at the School of Social Welfare at KU has been ranked in the top 20 in the nation by *US News and World Report*. The Fiske Guide of Undergraduate Programs has ranked the B.S.W. program among the strongest at KU.

HISTORY

The University of Kansas has been offering graduate social work education for over 50 years longer than any other institution in the state. The M.S.W. program has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education since 1948; the B.S.W. program has been continuously accredited by CSWE since 1974. The Ph.D. program began in 1981.

DEPTH

The School of Social Welfare offers social work education at all levels, undergraduate through doctoral work, and at the master’s level, we are the only program in the state of Kansas and the greater Kansas City metro that offers both clinical and administrative concentrations.

FACULTY

Our faculty are recognized internationally for their expertise in a variety of areas including mental health, child welfare, aging, spirituality and assets. They are pioneers in the development of the strengths perspective approach to social work practice.

CONVENIENT

The B.S.W. program is offered on the main campus in Lawrence, Kan. and on the Kansas City Kansas Community College Campus in Kansas City, Kan. The M.S.W. program is offered on the main campus in Lawrence, Kan., the Edwards campus in Overland Park, the Fort Hays State University campus in Hays, Kan., and the Garden City Community College campus in Garden City, Kan. The M.S.W. program offers all required courses in the foundation level and the SWAAP concentration in a blended courses format, which combines face-to-face and online learning, with in-class attendance on campus occurring one day every other week. In addition, we offer late afternoon, evening and Saturday courses at our Edwards campus.

VALUE

The University of Kansas is nationally known for offering high-quality education at a reasonable cost. In addition, KU now offers the KU Edwards Campus MetroKC tuition rate, which allows Missouri residents of Bates, Buchanan, Cass, Clay, Clinton, Henry, Jackson, Johnson, Lafayette, Platte or Ray counties in-state Edwards Campus tuition rates when they enroll in classes on the Edwards Campus. Interested individuals who qualify must fill out appropriate paperwork.
A bachelor’s degree in social work prepares graduates for beginning generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. An advanced degree is required for many social work positions and settings, such as positions in health, schools, clinical work and administrative. The KU School of Social Welfare is the only M.S.W. program in Kansas and the greater Kansas City metro that offers both clinical and administrative concentrations.

**CLINICAL CONCENTRATION**

The clinical concentration prepares students in the professional application of social work theory and methods to the treatment and prevention of psychosocial problems, disability, or impairment, including emotional and mental disorders. Clinical practice includes the application of assessment and diagnostic strategies, the formation of a treatment plan that may include psychotherapy, counseling, client advocacy, systemic and organizational interventions, consultation and evaluation, and other clinically appropriate interventions with individuals, families, couples, groups, and social systems. The clinical concentration is available to all students regardless of the campus they attend.

**MENTAL HEALTH: INPATIENT SERVICES AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

An area of social work that is growing across the country is mental health social work. Mental health social workers may work in inpatient or outpatient settings and help people with mental illnesses deal with problems or issues that they face in their daily lives providing counseling, therapy and support.

In inpatient settings, the mental health social worker counsels patients who live in a supervised facility. When a person suffering from a mental illness is getting ready to be discharged, the social worker will help them succeed in the community by doing things like, finding a home, a job, the appropriate education to secure a job, and/or community support groups.

In outpatient settings, mental health social workers work with people with mental illness who are living in their own home. The social worker will help these people with issues they face daily, such as work related issues, personal issues that may be affecting their work responsibilities, relationships, or school work and provide therapy.

**Field Practicum site examples:**

- Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center
- Rainbow Mental Health Facility
- The Family Conservancy
- Valeo Behavioral Health Care
- Counseling and Psychological Services
ALCOHOL, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY

Alcohol, substance abuse and chemical dependency are diseases that affect not only the person suffering from the disease but also the family or people that interact with the person. Social workers support individuals and their families dealing with chemical dependency by providing a variety of services such as counseling, coordinating treatment plans and meeting with patients to make sure they are following these plans.

In this field, social workers are employed primarily by outpatient treatment programs of hospitals and specialty treatment centers. Social workers in dual diagnosis units work with patients with both mental illness and substance abuse issues.

Field Practicum site examples:
• DCCCA, Inc.
• Heartland Regional Alcohol and Drug Assessment
• Johnson County Mental Health Center
• Adolescent Center for Treatment

JUSTICE SERVICES, VICTIM SERVICES, DOMESTIC RELATIONS AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

There are numerous job opportunities in this area of social work. Family or juvenile courts, public defenders offices, corrections facilities, victim services, and crisis shelters hire social workers to work in a range of positions. These position could include advocates for victims, counseling with families, supervisors of family visits, children’s program coordinators, program and executive directors for shelters, and deputy juvenile officers. Social work skills support critical individual and family needs in this arena.

Field Practicum site examples:
• Jackson County Family Court
• Lenexa Municipal Court
• The Willow Domestic Violence Shelter

KU School of Social Welfare offers a joint degree program with the KU Law School. Social workers with this combination of professional degrees have broad career opportunities.

Employment of mental health and substance abuse social workers is projected to grow 23 percent from 2012 to 2022.1
HEALTH

Social workers can be found in numerous health care settings. These settings include hospitals, home health agencies, hospice programs, school-based clinics, physician offices, rehabilitation hospitals, addiction recovery programs and nursing home facilities.

In these settings, you have the opportunity to work with individuals, families and groups. Services include providing discharge planning, patient education and counseling, advising for family caregivers, making referrals for other services, finding financial support for payment of services, providing support for those coping with illnesses, crisis intervention, and policy development.

Field Practicum site examples:
- Children’s Mercy Hospital
- Crossroads Hospice
- Kansas City Free Health Clinic

AGING

The number of older adults is increasing as is the demand for services. Social workers provide services to individuals and families, coordinate programs specific to older adults, manage organizations, and create new initiatives focused on gerontology. Some gerontological social workers have their own case management practices assisting older adults and families to manage health, social and financial needs. Social workers work in nursing homes, residential centers, guardian programs, adult day care program and senior centers. Those interested in coordinating programs may run education services for active older adults or the chapter of a national health advocacy organization or a safety program.

Field Practicum site examples:
- Douglas County Health Department—Project Lively
- Plaza West Care Center
- St. John Hospital—Senior Behavioral Health Center
- Wyandotte/Leavenworth Counties Area Agency on Aging

Employment of health care social workers is projected to grow 27 percent from 2012 to 2022, much faster than the average for all occupations.¹

Usually Master of Social Work degrees are required for positions in health care settings.
**DISABILITY SERVICES**

Rehabilitation social workers help people with emotional and physical disabilities live independently. They work with clients to overcome or manage the personal, social, and professional effects of disabilities on employment or independent living. Rehabilitation counselors help people with physical, mental, emotional, or social disabilities at various stages in their lives. Some work with students to develop strategies to live with their disability and move from school to work. Others help veterans cope with the mental or physical effects of their military service. Still others help elderly people adapt to disabilities developed later in life from illness or injury. Some rehabilitation counselors deal specifically with employment issues. These counselors, sometimes called vocational rehabilitation counselors, typically work with older students and adults rather than young children.

Field Practicum site examples:
- Community Works
- Kansas City Regional Center
- Trinity Respite Care

**HOMELESS SERVICES**

Individuals and families who have unstable housing live in a variety of settings, both urban and rural, range in age, face health issues, and find themselves homeless for a variety of reasons that require a wide range of social work services. Many of them may be runaway youth, people with severe mental health needs, veterans, individuals with addiction, and women and children.

Case managers, crisis and intervention workers, and group and individual counselors often are employed by government, and non-profit agencies that provide these services. Social workers have an opportunity to advocate for social change on behalf of the homeless in many agencies.

Field Practicum site examples:
- Lawrence Community Shelter
- Salvation Army
- Community LINC
- KCK School District-Homeless Children & Youth

CHILD WELFARE: ADOPTION, FOSTER CARE AND SPECIALTY CHILDREN’S SERVICES

Child welfare represents the single largest field in social work careers. Child welfare social workers support children in their community by providing services that keep them with their families or moving them to a permanent home. They offer services for children living in poor living conditions, children with special needs, such as autism, Down syndrome, physical disability, or children suffering from behavioral issues. A child welfare social worker provides various services for families in need, some of these services may include individual, family, marital or group counseling, family life education, case management, and program and organization management.

Field Practicum site examples:
• KVC Behavioral Healthcare Network
• Missouri Division of Family Service
• Kansas Department for Children and Families
• TFI Family Services
• The Child Protection Center

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

School social work is a very popular field. Social workers in schools help to identify and address the social and emotional difficulties that students face that can interfere with their success in school. Besides helping all students with academic issues, school social workers may also help specific students who have social, psychological, emotional or physical difficulties that can impact their performance in school. These may include housing, poverty, sexuality and physical/mental disabilities. School social workers also help parents learn more about the programs and services of the school and community.

Field Practicum site examples:
• KCK School District-Special Education Cooperative
• Independence School District
• Lawrence School District
• Topeka School District

Employment of child, family, and school social workers is projected to grow 15 percent from 2012 to 2022.¹

A Bachelor of Social Work degree prepares students for direct-service positions such as caseworker or mental health assistant.

Usually Master of Social Work degrees are required for positions in school settings.
POLICY/ADVOCACY/POLITICAL ARENA

A founding aspect of social work is advocating for all individuals and groups especially those with the greatest need to have equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities. Examples of influencing policy include, researching issues, drafting legislation, organizing coalitions, informing leaders and giving testimony to influence decision-makers. Many times social workers find themselves patient advocates in mental health, aging, child welfare, housing and which results in developing an expertise in these areas.

The MSW Social Work Administration and Advocacy Practice concentration includes advocacy skills training in a systemic way within its curriculum.

Field Practicum site examples:
- Administration for Children and Families
- Kansas Department of Corrections-Office of Victim Services
- Missouri Housing Development Commission-Community Initiatives
- Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Community practice can involve economic development such as improving local economies in rural areas experiencing population decline. Workers in the field of community development can be found in many areas of social work as listed throughout this book and in a variety of governmental and organizational settings.

Field Practicum site examples:
- ECKAN
- Argentine Middle School-Youth Success
- Kansas Department for Children and Families Health Care Policy Mental Health
- Administration for Children and Families

The KU School of Social Welfare is the only M.S.W. program in Kansas and the greater Kansas City metro that offers an administrative concentration.
INTERNATIONAL AND REFUGEE SERVICES

Social work professionals are often used to assist in the merging of families or individuals into the culture and society of a new country. Organizations which operate at an international level have social workers as program and project managers who help immigrants and refugees with legal issues, health, and basic needs to function in society. Generally, those who attain such positions have a long history of volunteer work for extensive periods abroad, have technical skills, and a strong network from their volunteer work abroad.

The School of Social Welfare offers international experiences through several study abroad courses to introduce students to various fields of international social work.

Field Practicum site examples:
- Mattie Rhodes Counseling Center
- Jewish Vocational Services
- Catholic Charities- Refugee and Migrant Services

FUND RAISING/COMMUNITY RELATIONS/MARKETING

Fund raising skills are critical for executives of non-profits. It is not uncommon for social workers to be employed as fund raisers for social services and other types of non-profits. They enjoy the challenge of identifying prospects, developing long-term relationships, producing events, writing grants, and designing for-profit projects or enterprises to fund critical services. For small organizations they may also handle public relations and marketing tasks. Often these social workers are planning long-term executive careers. In for-profit corporations they might coordinate large scale volunteer projects and programs for company employees.

The Social Work Administrative & Advocacy Practice concentration of our M.S.W. program offers students the opportunities to learn the skills for effective administration.

Field Practicum site examples:
- The Phoenix Family Housing
- United Way

A Master of Social Work degree is required for positions in administrative settings.
EXPAND YOUR EDUCATION

During your senior year as a KU B.S.W. student, you will get the opportunity to work in a social work agency 16 hours a week for both the fall and spring semesters. This is a curriculum requirement and is called field practicum. When the time comes, you will work with the School’s field education office to be placed at an agency. Field practicum settings include public health clinics, community mental health centers, child welfare agencies, court services, senior centers, community development projects, and many more.

During each semester of the M.S.W. program, you will also fulfill the required practicum hours in a social work setting. The school’s field education office will work with you and help place you in such settings that complement your clinical or administrative concentration such as community mental and behavioral health centers, hospitals, hospice programs, schools, family resource programs, and nonprofit agencies at the state, regional and federal levels.

Field practicum allows you to receive essential hands-on and real-world training in agencies around the state that will set you apart after graduation. The field education office works with more than 400 social work agencies in Kansas, so we are sure to find the right fit for you.

LICENSURE AND EMPLOYMENT RATES

When you graduate with a social work degree, you are prepared to sit for your licensing exam and start practicing social work immediately. Each year hundreds of graduates of B.S.W. and M.S.W. programs around the country take one of several National Licensure Exams. Over the last 10 years, our students have done remarkably well in exceeding the national first time pass rates. In other words, the percentage of KU graduates who pass the exam the first time around is well above the percentage of all those who take the exam around the country. The chart below shows the latest (2012) first time pass rates for KU graduates compared with first time pass rates for all those who took the same exam NATIONALLY.

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<th>B.S.W. Graduates</th>
<th>M.S.W. Graduate Exam</th>
<th>Clinical Exam</th>
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<td>KU Graduates</td>
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<td>First Time Pass Rates</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<td>National First Time Pass Rates</td>
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<td>84%</td>
<td>77%</td>
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In addition, 81 percent of our M.S.W. graduates secured employment in a social work field after graduation with the majority finding a job within a month. Fifty percent of B.S.W. graduates secured employment in a social work field and 33 percent decided to enroll in a graduate program.