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School of Social Work  
École de service social

February, 2011

Dear Applicant,

Please find attached the information regarding the Applicant Essay for the Master of Social Work program (MSW). Applications are accepted to the end of March 2011 or until all positions are filled. The applications will be reviewed in May, 2011 for admissions in the summer. Classes will begin in September, 2011. Registration is completed online but the Applicant Essay and detailed Curriculum Vitae are to be submitted in printed form to the Admissions Office at Laurentian University.

In order to ensure that you submit a complete application, please review the following checklist:

**MSW APPLICATION CHECKLIST (ONLINE AND PRINTED PORTIONS)**

- G Online application
- G Official transcripts
- G Detailed curriculum vitae (i.e. resume)
- G Three reference forms (you must use the online evaluation form)
- G Applicant essay (submit printed copy to Admissions)
- G Application fee

Attached to this document are the guidelines for the applicant essay as well as a description of the MSW program. If you require further information, please contact the School of Social Work at (705) 675-1151, ext. 5050 or email [ckauppi@laurentian.ca](mailto:ckauppi@laurentian.ca)

Sincerely,

Dr. Carol Kauppi  
Professor and  
MSW Program Coordinator

## GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANT ESSAY

All applicants are required to submit an essay of up to 2,000 typewritten words.

As used in the admissions process, this essay is viewed as one measure of the applicant's conceptual abilities and expository writing skills. For those admitted to the program, it serves as an *initial indication* of the applicant's expectations regarding specialization and general topic for the master's thesis or project. The following guiding questions should be considered in writing your essay.

1. What, from your socio-cultural perspective, do you bring to social work?
2. What contribution do you see yourself making to social work in Northern communities? (Please include any innovative notions you may have in this regard).
3. Carefully read the description of the MSW program and outline of courses. Indicate your current preference for a thesis or practicum. As specifically as you can, explain what topic might you consider for a research project or thesis. What are your thoughts on how you would go about accomplishing this inquiry? (Candidates may present two lines of inquiry for either the thesis or practicum options).

Your essay will be evaluated carefully by the Admissions Committee for clarity, specificity, conceptualization, and feasibility.

# SOCIAL WORK

## Faculty

### Professors

M.L. Garceau, BSW (UQAT), MA (UQAM), PhD (UQAM)

C. Kauppi <sup>§</sup> BA (Carleton), MA (Laurentian), PhD (Bristol)

A.M. Mawhiney, BA, BSW (Laurentian), MSW (McGill), PhD (York)

### Associate professors

M. Bals, D.E.U.G., D.E.A.S. (Toulouse), MSS (Montréal), PhD (Montréal)

F. Boudreau, BA, MA (UQAM), PhD (UQAM)

D. Coholic, BA (Guelph), MSW (Toronto), PhD (New South Wales)

D. Cote

A.D. Matheson, BA (Trent), MSW, PhD (Toronto)

### Assistant professors

L. MacEwan, BSW (Laurentian), MSW (Wilfrid Laurier), PhD (Sussex)

### Adjunct Professors

G. Broad, BA (Laurentian), PhD (Bristol)

G. Cooper, BA (Windsor), MA (Windsor), D.E. (Toronto, OISE)

P. Menzies, BA (Toronto), MSW (Laurentian), PhD (Toronto, OISE)

<sup>§</sup> Graduate coordinator for the MSW

Carol Kauppi

## Program

The objective of the graduate program is to provide students with an opportunity to build on their knowledge and experience in direct or indirect social work practice and social welfare analysis. It reflects the interests, resources, population and social conditions of northern Ontario.

Designed for human service professionals in mid-career, the program is offered on a part-time or full-time basis. Intensive four-day blocks of classes are provided on campus at approximately six-week intervals. This format appeals to students who prefer to continue working while completing a graduate degree and to those who wish to integrate their professional activity with their studies.

## Admission

Candidates for admission are ranked on the basis of academic performance (grades), professional experience (range and depth of activity, professional accomplishment, community involvement), personal qualities (self-direction, leadership ability) and research orientation (intellectual focus, clarity and fit in relation to program strengths and university mission). Rankings are determined by an admissions committee on the basis of university transcripts, personal statements and letters of reference.

The normal academic requirement for admission is a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) from a university recognized by the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work, with a mid-B average (75% or better), in the last two years of undergraduate study.

Exceptional candidates whose education and professional experience are deemed equivalent to a BSW will also be considered. These

candidates must hold a four-year degree in a discipline related to social work, with above average grades and at least five years of professional experience in the human services. In cases where admission is granted on exceptional grounds, students may be required to successfully complete specified undergraduate courses including a field practicum, practice theory, social policy or research methods prior to registering in graduate courses in the same area.

Applicants with work experience who do not have the academic background necessary for admission directly into the MSW program may be considered for a qualifying year tailored to their individual circumstances. Upon the successful completion of designated undergraduate courses, qualifying year students will be eligible to apply for admission to the graduate program.

The regulations of the School of Graduate Studies apply unless otherwise stipulated. The deadline for applications is March 31, preceding the fall registration period. An admissions committee will review all applications. Enrolment is limited. New students are admitted to the program for September.

## Study options

The program consists of core courses in social policy, social work practice and research methods, in addition to selected professional electives, and graduate research in the form of a thesis or advanced practicum.

Altogether, the program consists of 30 credits, as follows:

Core courses	12 credits
Elective courses	6 credits
Graduate research project	12 credits
Total	30 credits

Registration for the graduate research project is subject to:

- successful completion of core and elective courses, totalling 18 credits;
- approval of the project proposal by the MSW Program Committee; and
- approval of the project proposal by the Research Ethics Review Committee.

Graduate research projects are supervised by two readers, the first of whom is in the School of Social Work and formally accredited by Graduate Studies to the MSW program.

Given limited enrolments, courses are cycled to reflect student demand and faculty resources. Core courses are available in the fall and winter sessions, from September to April. Elective courses are offered every term, on a rotating basis. Student course loads vary, from term to term, according to personal and professional demands. However, core and elective requirements can be completed within two or three years, and there is a maximum limit of six years to complete the degree.

In addition to the courses listed below (where appropriate, feasible and approved), students may take advanced courses in related disciplines, in lieu of SWRK electives. Alternatively, reading seminars may be designed to reflect the content of courses not otherwise available to students in the Social Work program.

## Course descriptions

### Core courses

#### SWRK 5016 E – ADVANCED SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

In this course, students will explore the relationship between social analysis, advanced social work intervention and the importance of viewing work with people in a social, political and economic context. The course is designed to enable students to develop advanced social work practice skills with individuals, families, and/or communities taking into account rural and northern settings.

cr 3

#### SWRK 5026 E – SOCIAL POLICY: ISSUES & OPTIONS

This course will allow students to examine the current status of Canadian social policy, including its socio-economic and institutional context, its ideological underpinnings and contemporary political expression, and its perceived efficiency and effectiveness at achieving stated goals. Students will review current social policy in historical and contemporary context.

cr 3

#### **SWRK 5056 E – RESEARCH I: METHODS**

This course reviews concepts and methods of social scientific investigation from a critical-analytical perspective. It involves an examination of the role of the researchers – within a given social, cultural and organizational context – in terms of question formulation, mode of inquiry, application of theory, data analysis and interpretation of findings. In addition to quantitative methods and experimental designs, students will review a range of quasi-experimental and qualitative methods that address questions pertinent to professional practice, from single-subject designs to clinical trials, historical analyses (use of secondary data) to social action research, case studies to program and policy evaluations. By the end of the course, students will be able to critically assess existing social research and conceptualize a graduate research project.

cr 3

#### **SWRK 5057 E – RESEARCH II: ADVANCED**

This course is designed to prepare students for the design and implementation of a specific research project: a thesis, practicum report or program evaluation at the graduate level. Course content will advance knowledge of proposal writing, quantitative and qualitative methods (appropriate to selected areas of investigation), ethical considerations, project approval, implementation strategies, data analysis and the presentation of findings. The result will be a fully developed research project proposal.

cr 3

### **Elective courses**

#### **SWRK 5017 E – ADVANCED SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE II**

This course provides an overview of theory and practice concerning social work approaches with different types of groups, including therapeutic, task and action groups. Students will explore issues related to group development and process. Students will develop advanced practice skills in group facilitation through group planning, leadership, membership, and observation activities as well as readings, discussions and reflective journaling and/or independent study. cr 3

#### **SWRK 5027 E – SOCIAL POLICY: ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE**

In this course, students will examine the socio-economic, political and institutional forces, planning processes, and practice techniques involved in social policy making in Canada. The course focuses upon the development of professional skills in advocacy for policy change. cr 3

#### **SWRK 5036 E – SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

This course involves a review of organizational behaviour and management theory, with an examination of processes and techniques appropriate to the administration of human service organizations. Much of the content pertains to goal-oriented management techniques, with particular attention to strategic planning, management information systems, and program evaluation. Other topics include governance structures, management styles, staff motivation, change and conflict management. The course concludes with an analysis of current trends and challenges in the field of social service administration. cr 3

#### **SWRK 5037 E – SOCIAL PLANNING**

This course examines the theory and practice of social planning in an era of dramatic change. Technological advance, globalization of the economy, the information highway, deficit reduction, devolution, institutional restructuring, and program rationalization are some of the forces that have destabilized traditional assumptions and practices related to social planning. Students will review the evolution of social planning, consider its limits and explore the prospects for new practice models and theoretical paradigms that reflect contemporary reality. cr 3

#### **SWRK 5046 E – SUPERVISION**

This course addresses the theory and practice of staff supervision in human service organizations. Designed to enhance professional competence, course content focuses upon responsibilities, processes and models of supervision. Given the dynamic environment of contemporary social agencies in which structures, policies and practices are subject to constant change, it is the recurring issues and themes pertinent to supervisory relationships that are examined in depth. cr 3

### **SWRK 5066 E – MEDIATION**

This course examines theories, methods and techniques of mediation, a process of consensual dispute resolution, from a critical-analytical perspective. Following a review of the theoretical underpinnings of litigation and its dispute resolution alternatives, various philosophies of mediation will be examined. Drawing from social work practice in values clarification, dialogue facilitation, cross-cultural communication and negotiation, models of mediation will be compared and contrasted with respect to options, opportunities and limitations. Advanced issues to be explored will include the influence of gender and culture, the dynamics of power, conflicts of interest, professional standards, ethical considerations and evaluation. cr 3

### **SWRK 5076 E – READING SEMINAR I**

The object of this course is to pursue in depth a social work topic in which the student is particularly interested and in which he or she wishes to acquire some degree of specialization. The student prepares a proposal detailing goals and specific tasks to be accomplished. This proposal must be accepted by the student's tutor. A submission in writing will be used to evaluate the student's performance. cr 3

### **SWRK 5077 E – READING SEMINAR II**

The object of this course is to pursue in-depth a social work topic in which the student is particularly interested and in which he or she wishes to acquire some degree of specialization. The student prepares a proposal detailing goals and specific tasks to be accomplished. This proposal must be accepted by the student's tutor. A submission in writing will be used to evaluate the student's performance. cr 3

### **SWRK 5086 E – SELECTED METHODS OF DIRECT INTERVENTION**

This course examines the theoretical frameworks, intervention models and skills required for selected methods of practice with individuals, families and small groups. It is designed for those engaged in direct intervention who wish to further their knowledge and skills in selected areas of practice. Specific content will vary from year to year based upon faculty and student interest. Expert practitioners may be involved in course delivery and assignments may include a practice component. cr 3

### **SWRK 5096 E – NATIVE HUMAN SERVICES**

This course examines social welfare policy and practice issues relevant to Aboriginal Canadians. Beginning with a survey of the historical, demographic and economic context for social problems, it introduces students to traditional, culture-specific approaches to well-being, and examines contemporary initiatives to promote healthy communities. Issues of social change are addressed with an emphasis upon Native empowerment and control of human services. cr 3

## **Graduate Research Project**

Students are required to complete one of the following (12 credit) graduate research project options:

### **SWRK 6004 E – THESIS**

cr 12

### **SWRK 6024 E – ADVANCED PRACTICUM**

cr 12