INTRODUCTION TO THE MAJOR

The Social Welfare major provides undergraduate students with a broad-based introduction to America’s social welfare problems and social policies within a social science context. The curriculum focuses both on the history and institutions of social work as a field of activity, and on the welfare state as a collective enterprise addressing human need. Students gain knowledge of organized networks of public and private social services, and the basic practice methods associated with the social work profession.

The major is a designated “group major” grounded in the liberal arts, rather than specialized training in the profession of social work. Students who successfully complete the major program are awarded the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree.

“ My favorite thing about the Social Welfare major is the people I’ve met along the way. It’s great to be around people who are knowledgeable about the field and love what they do!”

– Monica Poblano, Class of 2022

ADMISSION TO THE MAJOR

Social Welfare is a capped major and prerequisites and enrollment controls for required courses are in place to manage student demand. Students interested in declaring should complete the prerequisite entry requirements as soon as possible. In order to declare, students must complete all prerequisites with a C or better, have a minimum GPA of 2.0, and have taken less than 80 units (including in progress classes).

Students should also be aware of application deadlines and complete the e-form as soon as all of the prerequisites have been completed.
SOCIAL WELFARE DESIGN YOUR JOURNEY

Bachelor of Arts

FIRST YEAR
- Meet with your major and college advisor to discuss your academic plans.
- Familiarize yourself with major and college requirements.
- Start working on prerequisite entry requirements, such as L&S Reading and Composition and Quantitative Reasoning, Introductory Psychology, and Introductory Sociology.

SECOND YEAR
- Complete prerequisite entry requirements by the end of your third semester and petition to declare the major.
- Get a head start on degree requirements by completing upper division social science electives.
- Review major guidelines for study abroad.
- Join a Social Welfare student organization such as the Social Welfare Association for the Greater Good.
- Start attending Social Welfare events.
- Get to know professors and graduate student instructors during their office hours.

THIRD YEAR
- Enroll in SOC WEL 110 once your petition to declare the major has been approved.
- Focus on upper division requirements and social science electives.
- Review your degree progress with your major and college advisor.
- Consult with your major advisor about the Honors Thesis Program.

FOURTH YEAR
- Continue to complete SOC WEL core courses and upper division social science electives.
- Do a degree check to ensure you are on track to graduate.
- Complete any "bucket list" courses and remaining major, college, and campus requirements.
- Participate in the Social Welfare commencement.

Connect and build community
- Get inspired by the faculty research and centers in Social Welfare.
- Discover new interests in a Freshman Seminar, L&S 1, or a student-run DeCal course.
- Visit the Undergraduate Research and Scholarships Fair in October.
- Take the Berkeley Connect in Social Welfare and L&S Mentors Program.
- Find study groups, tutoring, and academic support at the Student Learning Center.
- Follow Social Welfare on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Discover your passions
- Continue with a Sophomore Seminar, Big Ideas Course, or Discovery Course.
- Assist faculty in their research through URAP.
- Enrich your studies with a certificate, course thread, or summer minor.
- Check out the minor in Global Poverty and Practice.
- Plan a senior thesis or project? Apply to the Haas Scholars Program or SURF.
- Curious about entrepreneurship? Enroll in HUM 120: Entrepreneurship for All.
- Attend the Social Justice Symposium to discuss social justice work in the Bay Area.

Engage locally and globally
- Attend the Calapalooza student activities fair and get involved with a community-facing student organization like the Suitcase Clinic.
- Find service opportunities and internships through the Public Service Center.
- Explore study, internship, and research abroad options with Berkeley Study Abroad.
- Work with a community organization in an American Cultures Engaged Scholarship course.
- Experience life at another UC or college on a visitor and exchange program.
- Attend the Social Justice Symposium to discuss social justice work in the Bay Area.
- Study and intern in Washington D.C. with UCDC or Cal in the Capital.
- Consider a Berkeley Global Internship in the United States or abroad.
- Engage in advocacy, lobbying, and legislative action on social work issues as part of Lobby Days.

Reflect and plan your future
- Visit the Career Center and Career Counseling Library.
- Sign up for Handshake and CareerMail.
- Explore career fields in the Career Connections Networking Series or a winter externship.
- Check out the Social Welfare webpage on career resources.
- Reflect on your education so far and continue to set goals for yourself.
- Meet with a Career Center counselor to discuss your career options and goals.
- Think about doing an internship and attend an Internship Fair.
- Learn about graduate and professional school opportunities.
- See Step-by-Step for planning help.

WHAT CAN I DO WITH MY MAJOR?
Social work addresses the barriers, inequities, and injustices that exist in society. It responds to crises and emergencies as well as everyday personal and social problems. Social work utilizes a variety of skills, techniques, and activities consistent with its holistic focus on people and their environment.

Jobs and Employers
- Administrative Asst., Interface Engineering
- Advisor, UC Berkeley Business Development Coordinator, Oracle
- Community Health Worker, MLK Hospital
- Community Organizer, LAUSD Counselor Support, Alta Mira Recovery Centers
- Family Advocate, YMCA Healthcare Operations, Kaiser Permanente
- Home Health Aide, In-Home Support Services
- Residential Counselor, Larkin Street Youth Services
- Youth Specialist, Americorps

Graduate Programs
- Clinical Psychology
- Educational Administration
- Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences
- Hospitality Administration
- Public Health
- Public Policy
- Social Welfare
- Sociology
- Speech-Language Pathology

Examples gathered from the First Destination Survey of recent Berkeley graduates.

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