Doctor of Social Work (DSW) Degree Program
Doctor of **Social Work** (DSW) Degree Program

The Doctor of Social Work (DSW) degree program, designed around national social work education guidelines, focuses on leadership, advanced practitioner skills, and technology. The curriculum emphasizes critical thinking, leadership, advanced practice, and the integration of theoretical knowledge with practical experience. Learners engage in online coursework and conduct either an action research study or program evaluation. Successful graduates of this degree program are prepared to pursue positions as leaders, advanced practitioners, and educators in the social work field.
Capella’s Career Center proactively assists learners and alumni in developing and implementing their unique career management goals. The Career Center staff is committed to helping you move forward in your career.

## Career Information

### RELATED EMPLOYMENT SETTINGS TO EXPLORE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital or clinic</th>
<th>Nonprofit organization/Non-governmental organization</th>
<th>Land-based or online college or university</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government—local, state, federal</td>
<td>Research organization</td>
<td>Consulting firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community college</td>
<td></td>
<td>For-profit organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### RELATED JOB TITLES TO EXPLORE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjunct or part-time faculty</th>
<th>Director</th>
<th>Care coordination manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time faculty</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Mental health or substance abuse social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical instructor</td>
<td>Program officer</td>
<td>Medical or public health social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent consultant</td>
<td>Human services director</td>
<td>Child, family, or school social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author or keynote speaker</td>
<td>Nonprofit executive</td>
<td>Senior social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Director of quality assurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal investigator</td>
<td>Clinical director</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- Employ leadership skills to effectively advocate for and advance ethical social work policy and practice
- Advocate for social justice and policy change for the betterment of humanity and the global community
- Apply differential theoretical approaches to practice and demonstrate the ability to collaboratively recognize and respect other theoretical perspectives
- Integrate the ethical use of technology into clinical and policy practice
- Evaluate policy, programs, practice and the application of technology at the micro, mezzo, and macro level in the field of social work
- Develop professionally and engage in life-long learning in the social work field by recognizing and integrating new and emerging approaches to practice
- Communicate professionally and effectively with diverse individuals and groups through written, verbal and electronic formats
- Apply appropriate qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to contribute to knowledge base and to evaluate evidence-based practice

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*These are examples intended to serve as a general guide. Because many factors determine what position an individual may attain, Capella cannot guarantee that a graduate will secure any specific job title.

†Some positions require licensure and/or other designations. We encourage you to research requirements for your job target and career goals.
Curriculum

- 19 required courses
- Total program credits: 71 quarter credits

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Two four-day residencies.

REQUIRED COURSES

- PSL7010 21st-Century Communication and Leadership .......... 4 quarter credits
- PSL7020* Professional Practice and Collaboration in a Diverse and Dynamic World .................. 4 quarter credits
- PSL7030* Introduction to Critical Analysis and Research .......... 4 quarter credits
- SWK8015* Advanced Social Work Practice: Theoretical Perspectives .................................. 4 quarter credits
- SWK8025* Leadership and Management in Complex Social Systems .................................. 4 quarter credits
- SWK8035* Advanced Social Work Policy and Practice .......... 4 quarter credits
- SWK8045* Clinical Theories of Social Work Practice 1 ............ 4 quarter credits
- SWK8055* Advanced Social Work Practice with Diverse Populations in Complex Systems ............ 4 quarter credits
- SWK8065* Clinical Theories of Social Work Practice 2 ............ 4 quarter credits
- SWK8075* Advanced Social Work Practitioner as a Leader of Social Change .......................... 4 quarter credits
- PSL7860* Survey of Research Methods .......................... 4 quarter credits
- PSL7864* Quantitative Design and Analysis ..................... 4 quarter credits
- PSL7868* Qualitative Design and Analysis ..................... 4 quarter credits
- PSL-R8941* Professional Doctorate Research Seminar for Public Service Leadership Track 1† ................ 3 quarter credits
- PSL-R8942* Professional Doctorate Research Seminar for Public Service Leadership Track 2† ............ 3 quarter credits

In addition, choose one from the following courses:
- PSL8130* Action Research for Public Service Leadership .......... 4 quarter credits
- PSL8140* Program Evaluation for Public Service Leadership .......... 4 quarter credits

Upon completion of all required and elective coursework, learners must register for PSL9971 a minimum of three times to fulfill their program requirements.
- PSL9971* Doctoral Capstone .................................. 3 quarter credits

*Denotes courses that have prerequisite(s). Refer to the course descriptions for further details.
†Learners are responsible for the cost of their travel, accommodations, food, and other expenses associated with this course.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Master's degree in social work from an institution accredited by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE)
- Grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale

The courses in this program may require live web conferencing activities and/or learner audio/video recordings. Learners who require assistive technology or alternative communication methods to participate in these activities should contact Disability Services to request accommodations.
Required Course Descriptions

PSL7010  21st-Century Communication and Leadership  4 QUARTER CREDITS
This course begins the three-course sequence designed to enhance professional communication, scholarly competencies, and leadership effectiveness. Learners apply theoretical models of leadership and interpersonal relations to practical situations in the workplace. Learners also use contemporary technology to communicate effectively as scholars and professionals in real-world situations. Must be taken during the learner’s first quarter. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer or prior learning assessment.

PSL7020  Professional Practice and Collaboration in a Diverse and Dynamic World  4 QUARTER CREDITS
Learners in this course apply a variety of social and professional situations to build their skills in effective and creative collaboration across an organization. Learners analyze and benchmark best practices from an organizational, team, and individual perspective to create an environment of inclusivity and collaborative results. In addition, learners examine conflict management, diversity management, group dynamics, cultural competence, ethical decision making, followership, and social responsibility. Prerequisite(s): Completion of or concurrent registration in PSL7010.

PSL7030  Introduction to Critical Analysis and Research  4 QUARTER CREDITS
This course reinforces the leadership knowledge and skills gained during previous coursework, and enables learners to be more effective consumers of data and to better utilize research in applied and academic endeavors. Learners develop and demonstrate skills to evaluate source quality, credibility, and relevance to practice; assess research concepts and strengthen their ability to critically analyze; and apply information literacy, research ethics, and methods of inquiry. Prerequisite(s): PSL7010, completion of or concurrent registration in PSL7020.

SWK8015  Advanced Social Work Practice: Theoretical Perspectives  4 QUARTER CREDITS
Learners in this course assess the role of theory in social work practice at the micro, mezzo, macro, and meta levels. Learners critically appraise selected theories, perspectives, and models for relevance and evaluate the strengths and barriers regarding their application to practice. Through critical self-reflection, learners identify with specific theoretical orientations, as well as demonstrate recognition and respect for others’ theoretical orientations. Prerequisite(s): PSL7020; completion of or concurrent registration in PSL7030.

SWK8025  Leadership and Management in Complex Social Systems  4 QUARTER CREDITS
Learners in this course examine and integrate an understanding of leadership principles, skills, and applications in organizational or academic environments. Learners appraise and articulate the importance of cultural and ethical competency within a leadership context as well as a complex, global society. Learners investigate issues they may encounter in the field and determine how to address them through the practice of social work leadership. Prerequisite(s): PSL7030; completion of or concurrent registration in SWK8015.

SWK8035  Advanced Social Work Policy and Practice  4 QUARTER CREDITS
In this course, learners develop the ability to advocate for and create public policy, and evaluate how it impacts individuals, families, groups, and the community. Learners examine policies in light of diversity and globalization with emphasis on social justice. Learners also assess ethical concerns; policy analysis; advocacy strategies, including cross-system collaboration; and use of needs assessments. Prerequisite(s): SWK8015; completion of or concurrent registration in SWK8025.

SWK8045  Clinical Theories of Social Work Practice 1  4 QUARTER CREDITS
Learners in this course analyze clinical theories of social work based on ethical considerations, client diversity, and best practice as defined by the integration of practice wisdom and scientific knowledge, to ensure proper fit between clients’ needs and intervention. Learners also evaluate practice model(s) for client treatment with a focus on individuals and couples, and begin to apply this knowledge to supervision of colleagues. In addition, learners use research to examine cutting edge and emerging intervention strategies. Prerequisite(s): Completion of or concurrent registration in PSL7860; SWK8025, SWK8035.
SWK8055  Advanced Social Work Practice with Diverse Populations in Complex Systems 4 QUARTER CREDITS
In this course, learners examine concepts and theories related to diversity, such as critical race theory, through the lenses of complex systems, globalization, and the impact of technology. Learners evaluate systems as entities of social control, domination, and oppression in order to develop advocacy strategies for meaningful systems change and to apply practices that effectively address diversity. Learners also assess the impact of globalization and immigration on vulnerable populations and human needs, along with strategies to address these issues, including the use of technology to advance welfare and well-being for all. Prerequisite(s): Completion of or concurrent registration in SWK8045.

SWK8065  Clinical Theories of Social Work Practice 2 4 QUARTER CREDITS
In this course, learners strengthen and apply their knowledge of clinical theories of social work based on ethical considerations, client diversity, and best practice as defined by the integration of practice wisdom and scientific knowledge. Learners also identify practice model(s) and apply them for client treatment as well as for supervision, with a focus on families and groups. In addition, learners appraise the development of new theoretical paradigms in the age of technology. Prerequisite(s): Completion of or concurrent registration in PSL-R8941; SWK8055.

SWK8075  Advanced Social Work Practitioner as a Leader of Social Change 4 QUARTER CREDITS
Learners in this course articulate their individual leadership philosophies, styles, skills, and approaches to effective leadership. Learners evaluate policy, practice, programs, and the use of technology at all levels in the social work field, while evaluating social change strategies and approaches. Learners identify the use of self as they develop professional skills of influence and mobilization for change to better advocate for client groups at all levels. Learners create an individual plan for their continued self-development as leaders in the field of social work. In addition, learners demonstrate knowledge of lobbying, advocacy strategies, program evaluation, and ethical issues and concerns. Prerequisite(s): Completion of or concurrent registration in PSL7868; SWK8065.

PSL7860  Survey of Research Methods 4 QUARTER CREDITS
Learners in this course critically evaluate research in order to gain an understanding of the scientific methods of inquiry and the ethical considerations of research. Learners focus on becoming educated consumers and creators of research. Learners also use their research design skills to analyze and apply research methodologies, validity, reliability and other components of scientific research related to their field of interest. Prerequisite(s): DPA8416 or HS8204 or PSL7030 or PSL8106. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.

PSL7864  Quantitative Design and Analysis 4 QUARTER CREDITS
In this course, learners investigate the fundamental concepts needed to conduct quantitative research. Learners examine and apply quantitative research techniques; appropriate applications of quantitative research; research design, measurement, and analysis, and their associated interdependencies; variable types and levels of measurement; sampling; descriptive and inferential statistics; and hypothesis testing. Learners define the strengths and limitations of descriptive statistics, analyze the quantitative scales of measurement, review the logic of probability and null hypothesis testing, and leverage technology when applicable. Learners also determine the steps necessary to ensure human subjects protection, and consider methodological adaptations when conducting research with vulnerable and diverse populations. Prerequisite(s): PSL7860. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.

PSL7868  Qualitative Design and Analysis 4 QUARTER CREDITS
Learners in this course assess the fundamental concepts needed to conduct qualitative research. Learners practice qualitative research techniques; appropriate applications of qualitative research; the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research design, sampling, and analysis and their associated interdependencies; and leverage technology when applicable. Learners also determine the steps necessary to ensure human subjects protection, and consider methodological adaptations when conducting research with vulnerable and diverse populations. Prerequisite(s): PSL7864. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.
PSL8130  Action Research for Public Service Leadership  
In this course, learners attain a conceptual understanding of action research methods in public service leadership. Upon successful completion of this course, learners are able to evaluate research methodologies, analyze an action research study, and prepare an action research plan. **Prerequisite(s):** PSL7868 or DSW8160.

PSL8140  Program and Evaluation for Public Service Leadership  
Learners in this course gain knowledge and skills in different types of program evaluation, including needs assessment, formative and summative research, process evaluation, and the design and use of logic model monitoring of outputs and outcomes. Learners build and apply practical experience through the design of a conceptual framework and a logic model, as well as the development of indicators and an evaluation plan to measure impact. **Prerequisite(s):** PSL7868 or DSW8160.

Residency Course Descriptions

PSL-R8941  Professional Doctorate Research Seminar for Public Service Leadership Track 1  
This intensive, six-week seminar includes both an online courseroom and a face-to-face residency experience. Learners apply the skills necessary to identify a research problem, develop a research question, and select an appropriate capstone research topic. Learners also use current peer-reviewed articles to begin to develop a literature review, including an appropriate theory of change to support their topic. Upon successful completion of this course, learners achieve Professional Doctorate Capstone Milestone 1 (Topic Approval). **For DEM and DSW learners only. Prerequisite(s):** Completion of or concurrent registration in PSL7864.

PSL-R8942  Professional Doctorate Research Seminar for Public Service Leadership Track 2  
This seminar has both an online courseroom and a face-to-face residency experience. Learners apply the research skills necessary to initiate the development of a capstone research plan; identify and engage stakeholders in order to obtain site permission; and draft a full research plan, including a detailed action plan or program evaluation plan, research design, sampling plan, and strategy for data analysis. Upon successful completion of this course learners achieve Professional Doctorate Capstone Milestone 2 (Research Plan Approval). **For DEM and DSW learners only. Prerequisite(s):** Concurrent registration in PSL8130 or PSL8140; PSL-R8941.

Capstone Course Description

PSL9971  Doctoral Capstone  
This course provides learners with resources, guidance, and support as they complete the required milestones toward completion of a doctoral capstone. Learners apply scholarly research within a particular professional context to advance their knowledge in the science and practice of the profession and solve organizational, institutional, or community concerns. **Grading for this course is S/NS. DEM learners must register for this course a minimum of four times to fulfill their program requirements. DSW learners must register for this course a minimum of three times to fulfill their program requirements. Prerequisite(s): Completion of all required and elective coursework with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer.**
## Course Sequence

This recommended course sequence assumes learners take two courses per quarter. Some learners elect to take fewer or more based on workload and the amount of time available for graduate study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR 1</th>
<th>COURSES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>PSL7010 21st-Century Communication and Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>PSL7020 Professional Practice and Collaboration in a Diverse and Dynamic World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>PSL7030 Introduction to Critical Analysis and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>SWK8015 Advanced Social Work Practice: Theoretical Perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SWK8025 Leadership and Management in Complex Social Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>SWK8035 Advanced Social Work Policy and Practice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PSL7860 Survey of Research Methods</td>
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<tr>
<th>YEAR 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>SWK8045 Clinical Theories of Social Work Practice 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SWK8055 Advanced Social Work Practice with Diverse Populations in Complex Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESIDENCY</td>
<td>PSL7864 Quantitative Design and Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>PSL-R8941 Professional Doctorate Research Seminar for Public Service Leadership Track 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>SWK8065 Clinical Theories of Social Work Practice 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSL7868 Qualitative Design and Analysis</td>
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<td>Q8</td>
<td>SWK8075 Advanced Social Work Practitioner as a Leader of Social Change</td>
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<td>PSL8130 Action Research OR</td>
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<td>PSL8140 Program Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RESIDENCY</td>
<td>PSL9971 Doctoral Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSL-R8942 Professional Doctorate Research Seminar for Public Service Leadership Track 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9</td>
<td>PSL9971 Doctoral Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>PSL9971 Doctoral Capstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11</td>
<td>PSL9971 Doctoral Capstone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Financial Aid

Capella University offers assistance to learners who qualify and would like to secure educational funding to help finance their academic program. A number of options are available, given the diverse needs and backgrounds of prospective learners. Options include:

- Federal Direct Stafford Loan Program
- Federal Direct PLUS Loan Program
- Non-federal loans through preferred lenders and financial institutions
- Capella scholarships
- External scholarships
- Veterans’ educational benefits and U.S. armed forces discounts
- Corporate and higher education alliances
- Employer tuition reimbursement

Regarding loan programs, interest rates for Stafford student loans are low compared to other types of consumer loans, and repayment can be deferred until after graduation. In compliance with federal and state laws, Capella University has established policies for all learners regarding satisfactory academic progress, which is necessary for financial aid eligibility.

* Learners are responsible for the cost of their travel, accommodations, food, and other expenses associated with PSL-R8941 and PSL-R8942.

Tuition and Fees

This tuition estimate is effective July 10, 2017, and is subject to change. For current pricing, visit the Capella University website at www.capella.edu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TUITION/FEE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly tuition (includes residency)*</td>
<td>$4,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource kit per quarter</td>
<td>$175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Academic Leadership

Charlyn A. Hilliman, PhD
Dean
Dr. Charlyn Hilliman serves as the dean of Capella University’s School of Public Service Leadership. Dr. Hilliman has worked for the university since 2006, having served on the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and as a scientific merit reviewer; a residency instructor; a subject matter expert in research, criminal justice, and public administration; and the comprehensive examination lead. Dr. Hilliman also spent her career in health care information technology leadership at Columbia University and Florida International University, and has worked as a director of community programs evaluations and policy initiatives for the NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Hilliman holds both a PhD and Master of Philosophy in Criminal Justice from the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), as well as a Master’s in Public Administration from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY.

Rena Palloff, PhD, LCSW
Lead Faculty
Rena Palloff is lead faculty in the DSW Program at Capella. Rena has consulted extensively in health care, academic settings, juvenile justice, and addiction treatment for well over 20 years and has also taught in higher education for the last 20 years. She has written eight books on the topic of online distance education, three of which have been translated into Portuguese and Spanish, and is considered a pioneer in that area. She has been presenting this work across the United States and internationally since 1994 as well as consulting to academic institutions regarding the development of effective distance learning programs. She is the 2012 winner of the Richard Wedemeyer Award for Outstanding Practitioner in Distance Education. Rena received a Bachelor’s Degree in Sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a Master’s Degree in Social Work from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She holds a Master’s Degree in Organizational Development and a PhD in Human and Organizational Systems from Fielding Graduate University.

Brian L. Christenson, PhD
Faculty Chair
Dr. Brian L. Christenson, PhD, is the Faculty Chair of the Social Work Program at Capella University. His academic background includes a BSW from Lewis-Clark State College, an MSW from Eastern Washington University, and a PhD in Education from the University of Idaho. Dr. Christenson has direct practice and teaching experience in the disability field, education, and the child welfare field, including child protective services, adoption, foster care, evaluation, and foster/adoptive parent training. His areas of publication, special interests, and expertise and instruction include Outcome Evaluation, Aging, Child Welfare Practice, Education, Leadership and Supervision, Macro Practice, Research and Evaluation, Online Learning, Academic Integrity, Political Science, Social Welfare History, Social Work Practice, Social Work Advocacy for Social Justice, and Social Policy. Additionally, Dr. Christenson serves on a national social work education outcomes assessment committee, is the Field and Assessment Coordinator for a social work higher education program in Idaho, and maintains a private adoption practice as a Certified Adoption Professional in the State of Idaho and Washington State. Dr. Christenson has taught more than 250 course sections online focusing on research, education, human service practice, and program evaluation and has mentored and chaired more than 200 masters and doctoral level research projects.
Move Forward with Capella University

WORKING SCHOLARS
Capella provides an online, flexible learning environment for working adults who are also determined scholars. That connection between academic and professional work infuses the entire Capella experience—from the faculty we recruit to the course projects you complete. The theories discussed in the courseroom are designed to develop working knowledge for everyday situations.

AN ACCREDITED UNIVERSITY
Our accreditation* is an assurance to students, employers, and the public that Capella University meets or exceeds established standards for quality of faculty, curriculum, and learner services. It is also an important factor in the ability to transfer credits among higher education institutions. Regional accreditation, the type held by Capella, is the most common type for major public, state, and private institutions in the United States.

VALUING YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE
Adults bring a wealth of experience and learning to their education. Capella courses are designed to bring out your perspectives just as you gain from others’ ideas. Your knowledge can also be worth time and money: An enrollment counselor can help you estimate how much of your prior learning may apply toward your Capella degree program.

*ACCREDITATION
Capella University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION
https://www.hlcommission.org
800.621.7440

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