

BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

# Student Handbook

2024-2025



**RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**BSW STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
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## **The Social Work Faculty Welcomes You!**

The Student Handbook provides essential information for BSW students. Its principal purpose is to give you details about the program's policies and procedures, including the curriculum rationale. You are responsible for reading and using the contents of this Student Handbook.

Please communicate any questions or concerns you may encounter as you study and learn at Ramapo College. Our goal for you is that you prepare for generalist practice at the undergraduate level and for the next step of graduate education by challenging you to excellence. Remember to ask questions and communicate with your professors. We are here to help you be successful!

*Note that the Social Work Program at Ramapo College has transitioned the term "field" to "practicum" when referring to the signature pedagogy of social work education.*

The Bachelor of Social Work program has been accredited by the Council on Social Work Education according to the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards of 2015. Information about accreditation is available at [www.cswe.org](http://www.cswe.org)

## **THE SOCIAL WORK STAFF and FACULTY 2023-2024**

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## **Social Work at Ramapo College**

Ramapo College of New Jersey is the state's premier public liberal arts college with more than 6,000 students and offers 40 undergraduate majors, nine joint B.S. programs in the medical professions, eight graduate degree programs, programs leading to certification in Teacher Education, and two teaching post master's certificates. The campus is located in a country setting on a 357 acre, architecturally barrier-free campus in the northern part of New Jersey. The school is twenty-five miles from New York City and close to the center of the metropolitan region of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Toward the end of the 1960s, a decade of considerable upheaval in higher education throughout the country, the leaders who planned Ramapo College sought to establish a college that would contribute to a variety of newly developing approaches in higher education. The college was conceived to extend many of the advantages of the small, private liberal arts college to public college students. The students were provided with opportunities to work with faculty in developing programs of study that would prepare them for an increasingly knowledge-oriented, rapidly changing, global workplace, and society.

With the support of the originating Board of Trustees, founders developed a highly flexible approach to undergraduate education that focused on interdisciplinary liberal arts schools, organized by themes with a commitment of tutorials, seminars, and small classes. There was close integration of classroom, independent study, and experiential learning, and a strong commitment to serving first-generation working-class, and academically and economically disadvantaged young people. Historically, the students attending Ramapo came primarily from middle class and lower middle class backgrounds and hailed from the surrounding communities of Northern New Jersey. From its inception, Ramapo has actively recruited a diverse student body that reflects the make-up of the greater New York/New Jersey Metropolitan Region it calls home. This includes students with a variety of disabilities, veterans, returning adult students, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as first generation students and students who themselves are immigrants to the United States. Today, the student body reflects the diversity not only of the region but the world as we welcome an ever-growing body of international students. The diversity of the student body, the proximity of the College to a vibrant mix of multi-ethnic communities, some of the world's major multinational organizations, and talents of the faculty make Ramapo College well-suited to deliver an education that promotes social justice, serves local, state, and global needs, and prepares students to meet those needs.

Since its founding in 1969, Ramapo College has been committed to educating students to be active citizens in an increasingly complex and interrelated world. The College's five schools house academic programs that are actively linked to the outside community through experiential learning and independent study projects. Faculty and students are expected to be active citizens. Historically, Ramapo College has articulated its mission in terms of an interdisciplinary curriculum, international education, intercultural understanding, and experiential learning. Social justice is implicit in this conceptualization. This environment, characterized by diversity, inclusiveness, sustainability, student engagement, and community involvement, gave birth to social work at Ramapo College.

The mission of Ramapo College is centered in its dedication to providing students a strong foundation for a lifetime of achievement. The College is committed to academic excellence through interdisciplinary and experiential learning, as well as international and intercultural understanding. Ramapo College emphasizes teaching and individual attention to all students. We promote diversity, inclusiveness, sustainability, student engagement, and community involvement.

CSWE accredited the Bachelor of Social Work Program (BSW) in 1979, retroactive to 1977, has remained uninterrupted in reaffirmation, and currently experiences exponential growth. This thriving BSW program was the ideal launchpad for the Master of Social Work Program (MSW). The MSW program was accredited in February 2018. While incorporating the theory and knowledge required of competent practitioners at every level, the MSW program will continue to prioritize community engagement, intercultural understanding, and experiential learning, reflecting and supporting the mission of Ramapo College.

## **The Mission of the Bachelor of Social Work Program**

The Social Work Program's principal mission is preparing students for beginning level, professional generalist social work practice in a culturally diverse society and an increasingly global environment. Central to this mission is preparing students for a profession dedicated to assisting individuals, groups, families, communities, and organizations in their quest for well-being. The program is committed to teaching students to work for the development of a society which promotes equality, justice, respect for human diversity, and adequate sustenance for all its members. The program seeks to train and encourage its students to be active, personally and professionally, in taking leadership roles in addressing social problems and challenging social, economic, and environmental injustice. The program is committed to developing students' skills in culturally competent social work practice, research, social service and social policy formation, and political advocacy in order to further this mission.

## **The Goals of the Bachelor of Social Work Program**

The four goals of the BSW program are derived from the program's mission as follows:

- To prepare undergraduate students firmly grounded with an interdisciplinary liberal arts education, social work values and ethical standards, an understanding of the social work profession's history, purpose, and philosophical tenets
- To prepare students with the necessary competency skills for generalist beginning level professional social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities in a culturally diverse society
- To prepare students with the knowledge, values, and skills to be competent social work professionals who can effectively advocate for the development of social policies and social service delivery systems that improve the well-being of client systems
- To prepare students to advocate, personally and professionally, for the alleviation and eradication of social problems, and to promote global social, economic, and environmental sustainability

## **BSW Curriculum Design**

The curriculum of the Bachelor of Social Work Program at Ramapo College of New Jersey is designed to help students achieve competency in the nine areas identified by the Council on Social Work Education in the 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (cf. Appendix B).

Social work education at Ramapo relies on the foundation of the liberal arts to support social work values including service, social justice, dignity and worth of persons, the importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. In this way, we aim to instill in students the intellectual, social, psychological, and ethical tools that will ready them for bachelor's level generalist practice, as well as for graduate education and advanced professional development. Students are expected to develop their capacity to think critically and analytically about the world as well as their ability to synthesize information from multiple disciplines and areas of social work knowledge and skills. Throughout their undergraduate education, they develop knowledge about cultural, social, historical, and scientific aspects of life, and the ability to communicate effectively in academic and social contexts. Finally, the program guides students in the development of their consciousness about the full breadth of diversity and its implications for social work as well as society as a whole. Students grow in their ability to engage with our diverse world and to deal proactively with the ethical dilemmas that social workers confront in the pursuit of clients' well-being and the cause of social justice.

All students in the BSW program follow a curriculum established in accordance with the requirements of the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE). Competence is continually assessed according to the mission and goals of Ramapo College and the Social Work Program and in line with the EPAS established by CSWE.

### **Overview of the BSW Curriculum**

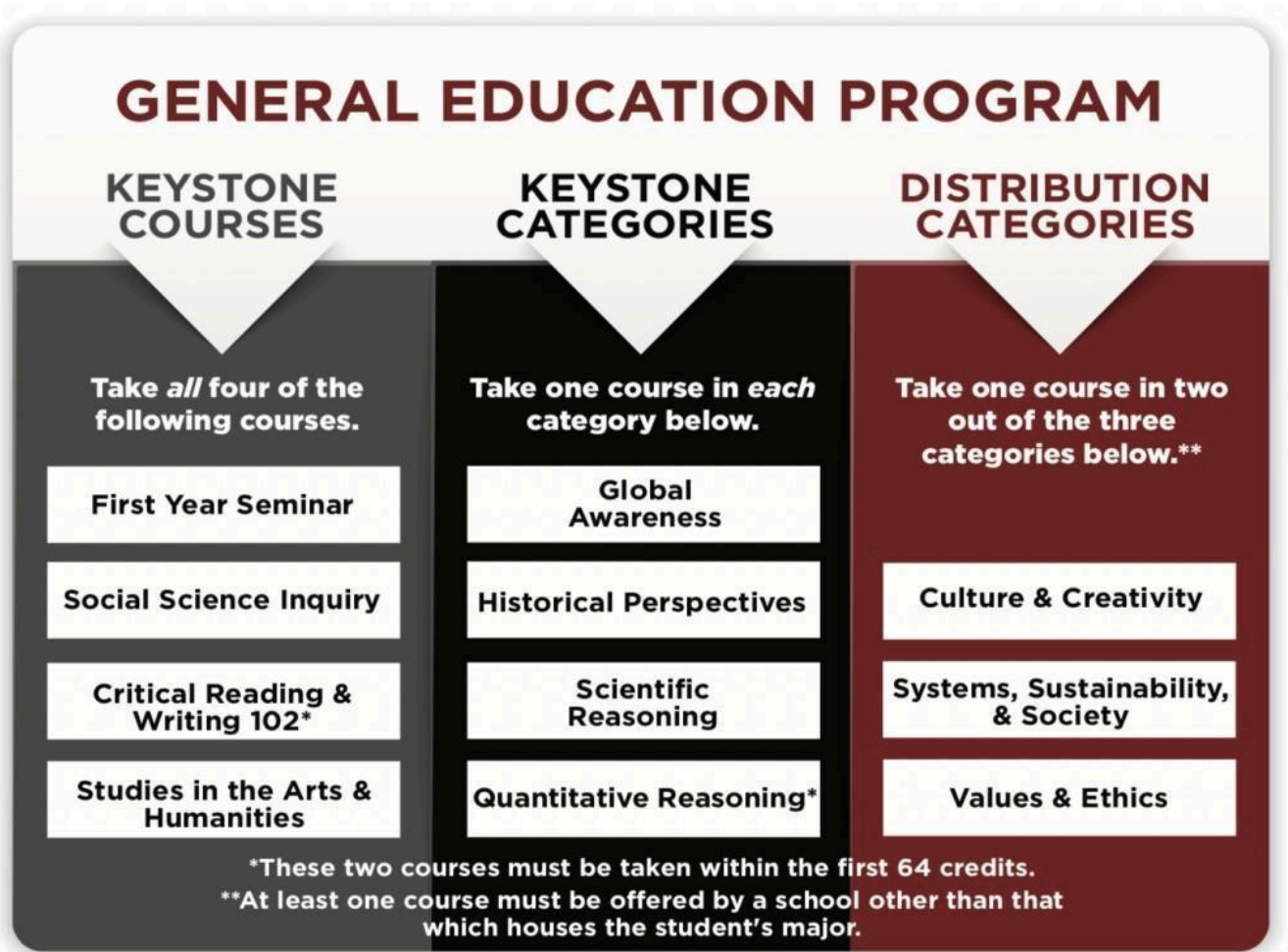
The social work curriculum is organized within an interdisciplinary liberal arts framework. The curriculum begins with students taking General Education courses in their first year. They continue this process through their second year during which they typically finish their 100-level courses and begin to take their 200-level General Education courses. At this point they may begin to fulfill the core requirements of the School of Social Science and Human Services as well. During the second year, students also complete two social work courses that are prerequisites for formal admission into the BSW program: *Introduction to Social Work* and *History and Philosophy of Social Welfare*. These courses build on the liberal arts knowledge base so that students may move on to pursue professional education in social work.

The curriculum's liberal arts foundation consists of the All-College General Education Requirements (64 credits), the School of Social Science and Human Services Core requirements (12 credits). In addition, students complete specific courses designated as prerequisites for admission to the BSW program (24 credits), some of which count towards General Education requirements and/or the SSHS core. Once students fulfill admissions criteria and are formally accepted into the BSW program, they move on to the core requirements of the program itself (44

credits). To round out the 128 credits required for completion of the undergraduate degree at Ramapo, students select from a wide variety of electives. These may be within social work, or in any of the five schools of the College. Students also complete the three modules of the Pathways career skills program which, while non-credit bearing, are required for graduation. In addition to preparing students for generalist social work practice with client systems of all sizes, the curriculum embraces four themes that emerge from the history and mission of Ramapo College and describe its essence: interdisciplinary education, international education, intercultural understanding, and experiential learning.

### **All-College General Education Requirements**

An overview of the College’s General Education Program is seen in the graphic that follows.





## **BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM OVERVIEW OF A TYPICAL STUDENT'S PATH THROUGH THE BSW PROGRAM**

### **Step 1: Prerequisites for admission to the Social Work major at Ramapo College**

- BIOL 101 - Introduction to Biology **OR** any other Science Course
- SOSOC 110 - Social Science Inquiry
- PSYC 101 - Introduction to Psychology
- SOCI 101 - Introduction to Sociology **OR** SOCI 232 - Sociology of the Family
- SWRK – 225 Introduction to Social Work\*
- SWRK 222 - History and Philosophy of Social Welfare\*
- 2.75 GPA

\*Must have a B average between these two courses to gain acceptance into the BSW program

### **Step 2: To be completed prior to graduation**

- SWRK 202- Political Economy of Social Welfare OR ECON 102 - Intro Macro Economics
- SOSOC 235 - History of Social Thought (SSHS School Core Course)

### **Step 3: Apply to the Social Work Program for formal acceptance into the major**

- For application information see <http://www.ramapo.edu/sshs/social/>

### **Step 4: Take First Sequence of Junior Year Courses within the Major**

- SWRK 329 - Social Work in Agencies and Communities (*must be accepted into the program and have completed all prerequisites to take this course...100 practicum hours are a required part of this course*)
- SWRK 270 - Cultural Diversity
- SWRK 362 – Human Behavior in the Social Environment I
- SWRK 363 - Human Behavior in the Social Environment II
- SWRK 307 - Social Work Research Methods

### **Step 5: Take Final Senior Year Social Work Courses**

- SWRK 325 - Theory and Practice of Social Work I (*Communities and Agencies is a prerequisite for this course...200 practicum hours are a required part of this course*)
- SWRK 326 - Theory and Practice of Social Work II (*Theory and Practice I is a prerequisite for this course...200 practicum hours are a required part of this course*)
- SWRK 420 - Contemporary Social Policy (*Theory and Practice I is a co-req or prerequisite for this course*)

## **Social Work**

### Recommended Four-Year Plan (Fall 2024)

The recommended **four-year plan** is designed to provide a blueprint for students to complete their degrees within four years. Students must meet with their Major Advisor to develop a more individualized plan to complete their degree. This plan assumes that no developmental courses are required. If developmental courses are needed, students may have additional requirements to fulfill which are not listed in the plan and may extend degree completion.

NOTE: This recommended Four-Year Plan is applicable to students admitted into the major during the 2024-2025 academic year.

1. Ideally, students should be fully admitted into the program by the end of their second year at Ramapo. Transfer students should be admitted by preregistration date of their first semester on campus. Students should be directed early to the Social Work program for admissions requirements.
2. Students must be fully admitted into Social Work program before registering for SWRK 329 Social Work with Communities and Agencies.
3. Students must take SWRK 329 before entering into the Theory & Practice I & II sequence (SWRK 425 & SWRK 426).
4. Theory & Practice I (SWRK 425) is offered in the Fall semester and Theory & Practice II (SWRK 426) is only offered in the Spring semester. These two courses must be taken consecutively over one academic year.
5. Most MSW programs require students take a course in Social Work Practice with Groups. We recommend students take this as an elective in the BSW program if they plan to attend a MSW program.

### **Social Work Professional Foundation Courses**

The following is a brief overview of the required social work foundation courses in the curriculum. It will be followed by a discussion of the sequencing of all courses within the curriculum.

#### **SWRK 222 History and Philosophy of Social Welfare, 4 credits**

This course examines the historical development of social welfare institutions and the social work profession in modern industrial and post-industrial societies. Attention is focused on changes in the labor market, the relationship between social welfare programs and the growth of capitalism, the philosophical arguments surrounding the provision of welfare services, the social demography of poverty, and policy issues facing today's social workers. Students take this course during their sophomore year. This course is the first course in the Social Welfare Policy and Services (SWPS) sequence, and is a prerequisite for admission into the social work program.

#### **SWRK 225 Introduction to Social Work, 4 credits**

This course is a pre-professional introduction to social work. Class work focuses on social work roles in the human services, agency structure and functioning, social work values and ethics, the nature of the helping process, and issues related to the method and delivery of social services. Students take this course during their second year. This course is a prerequisite for admission into the social work program.

**SWRK 262 HBSE I: Cultural Diversity, 4 credits**

This course focuses on aspects and configurations of cultural and human diversity within the social environment. The course examines individual, group, and community responses to cultural diversity and discrimination. Racism, sexism, ethnicity, ageism, homophobia, social class, and discrimination against the physically disabled, and persons with HIV/AIDS will be explored from a developmental and ecological systems perspective. Students analyze selected theories, concepts, and empirical data related to the harmful effects of inequality, discrimination, prejudice and oppression.

**SWRK 263 HBSE II: Life Cycle, 4 credits**

This course offers an understanding of the complex interplay of biological, psychological, and socio-cultural influences involved in human development throughout the life cycle. An ecological systems approach is used to draw together basic concepts from biology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and environmental studies in order that students may understand individual, family, and small group behavior and development.

**SWRK 307 Social Work Research Methods, 4 credits**

This course introduces students to the principles and methods of basic social work research. The ethical conduct of research is taught within the context of social work purposes and values. The formulation of problems for study that address the social needs of diverse groups is emphasized. Students are to gain competence in using data analysis software (SPSS), the ability to develop a research study, set up a database, and conduct and interpret relevant statistical analyses. Students take this course during their third year while they are in the practice-practicum sequence.

**SWRK 329 Social Work with Agencies and Communities, 4 credits**

This is the first professional practice course of the program with a practicum component. This course focuses on the dimensions of macro social work practice. Course content encompasses agency administration, program planning, grant writing, policy analysis, community organization, community development, and planned change in organizations and communities. Case histories of community organization efforts and community organization methods are analyzed for the purpose of integrating theoretical and practice material with actual cases. In addition, students are involved in a simulated community planning project, which incorporates various aspects of agency administration and planning. Students enrolled in the course are concurrently placed in a one-day-a-week practicum placement in a macro social work setting where they are expected to gain a working knowledge of community organization/macro practice skills. Students take this course the first or second semester of their junior year.

**SWRK 425 Theory and Practice of Social Work I, 8 credits**

This course is the second of a three-semester, practice-practicum course sequence designed to teach students the theories and practice skills utilized in generalist, beginning level social work practice. This is an integrated course with a two-day-a-week practicum placement in a social service agency in addition to two weekly class sessions where students are expected to learn social work practice skills working with individuals and families. Focus in this course is on the beginning, planning, and contracting phases of the helping process. Students take this course the first semester of their senior year.

**SWRK 426 Theory and Practice of Social Work II, 8 credits**

Theory and Practice II is the third part of a three semester, practice-practicum course sequence. While the primary goal of the entire sequence is to teach those skills utilized in generic,

beginning level social work, Theory and Practice II focuses on all stages of the helping process, and intervention with small groups and families. Students will continue with the same practicum placement begun in the first semester, with the expectation that by the end of the second semester they will have completed 400 hours of agency based practice for the year. Students take this course the second semester of their senior year.

### **SWRK 420 Contemporary Social Policy, 4 credits**

This course is designed to give students an understanding of the formation and implementation of social policy at the local, state, and federal levels. Attention is focused on social welfare policies within their political and historical contexts, the socio-economic forces that impact them, their differential effects on populations at risk and other groups, their social justice implications, and their system stabilization and destabilization dimensions. Additional emphasis is given to the relationship between social work practice and policy, underlying value orientations, the political barriers to policy formation, the skills of political advocacy, and how the legislative, executive, and judicial branches interrelate with social policy. Also, attention is given to how needs assessments, cost-benefit analysis, and social research are used in the policy making process. Students take this course at the end of their third year or later.

### **Research in the Social Work Curriculum**

All students in the Social Work Program are required to take a course in social work research. The purpose of the course is for them to:

- be informed consumers of social work research,
- be capable of using an array of research methods to evaluate their own practice or agency programs, and
- learn to conduct research for the purpose of adding to the social work knowledge base.

In order to fulfill this requirement, Social Work majors take **SWK 307 - Social Work Research Methods** during their junior/senior years. Students learn how to understand the nature of science and the scientific method; to collect and analyze primary data and present these in a research report; to use single system designs and statistics to evaluate their own practice; to read and critique scholarly articles which present empirical findings; and to understand the impact of values and ethics on the research process.

Practicum Instructors are asked to participate in the student's learning of research skills by:

- showing students research studies which relate to the agency services, specific interventions, or client population;
- sharing agency conducted research or program evaluations with the student;
- helping students think of a research project which is related to agency programs or client population;
- advocating for students in their attempt to get administrative approval or access to data for their research projects;
- involving students in research being conducted at the agency; and
- helping students to choose a client system for the single system evaluation assignment.

The research and practice faculty are committed to encouraging students and practicum agencies to conduct research and to explore evidence for practice.

## Practicum Education in the BSW Program

As the signature pedagogy of social work education, practicum education in the BSW program requires 500 hours total. Practicum education is connected to the Social Work in Agencies and Communities course (100 hours), as well as Theory and Practice of Social Work I and II (200 hours each).

The Practicum Education Director oversees the relationship between the Practicum Instructor, the student, and the classroom instructor. This coordination of classroom and practicum-based learning fosters the integrated development of concrete skills and problem-solving, as they relate to practice. The policies and procedures of the BSW Practicum Education Program are found in the **BSW Practicum Education Manual**.

## BSW Competencies and Practice Behaviors

The 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education measure learning outcomes according to competencies, which are defined by practice behaviors. The BSW curriculum at Ramapo College is built upon the CSWE competencies and practice behaviors.

<b><u>Program Competencies</u></b>	<b><u>Practice Behaviors</u></b>
<b><i>Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</i></b>	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
<b><i>Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice</i></b>	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
	Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies
<b><i>Competency 3: Advance Human Rights, and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice</i></b>	Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice for human rights at the individual and system levels
	Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice
<b><i>Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice</i></b>	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

<b>Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice</b>	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
<b>Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities</b>	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
<b>Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>	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
<b>Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities</b>	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 interprofessional 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
<b>Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities</b>	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

## **Minors in the BSW Program**

In addition to the social work major, students in the BSW program may elect to declare a minor that complements their studies on their path to degree completion. Within the social work program, two minors are offered:

### **Substance Use Disorders**

The minor in Substance Use Disorders is designed to fulfill all of the academic requirements applicable towards state certification in substance abuse counseling (Certified Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor).

The minor will be of particular interest to students majoring in the helping professions such as psychology and social work. Some courses in the minor also count towards satisfying major requirements in psychology and social work. However, the minor is open to all interested students.

Further information about the Substance Use Disorders minor may be found at this link:

<https://www.ramapo.edu/majors-minors/majors/substance-abuse/>

### **Gerontology**

Gerontology is the interdisciplinary study of the social, physical and cultural dimensions of aging. Gerontologists are concerned with creating environments for successful aging and with ensuring the maintenance of quality life experiences for the aging in our population. Since increasing numbers of Americans are living longer, there is a need for people trained in understanding the complex interaction between aging and society.

Further information about the Gerontology minor may be found at this link:

<https://www.ramapo.edu/majors-minors/majors/gerontology/>

The college offers a host of other minors from which students may also choose. A comprehensive list of the College's academic programs may be found at this link:

<https://www.ramapo.edu/majors-minors/>

## **Admissions Criteria, Application Process and Procedures**

Students may declare an interest in being admitted into the social work major prior to their admission into the college or during their freshman or sophomore years. However, students are not officially social work majors until they receive formal acceptance notification into the program just prior to the beginning of their junior year. Students from other colleges who plan to transfer to Ramapo College receive advisement about this process from the Program Convener. During their first two years at the college, students are expected to complete their 100 level General Education requirements and specific program prerequisites. In order to be eligible for acceptance into the Social Work Program students must meet the following:

- Completion of 100 Level General Education Requirements
- Completion of the following prerequisite liberal arts courses:
  - SOSC 101 *Social Issues*
  - SOCI 101 *Introduction to Sociology*
  - PSYC 101 *Introduction to Psychology*
  - BIOL 101 *Introduction to Biology*
  - SWRK 202 *Political Economy of Social Welfare* OR
  - ECON 102 *Introduction to Macroeconomics*
  - SOCI 232 *Sociology of the Family*
- Completion of the following two social work prerequisite courses with a combined average grade of **B**:
  - SWRK 225 *Introduction to Social Work*
  - SWRK 222 *History and Philosophy of Social Welfare*

- Completion of 60 academic credits
- A Minimum Grade Point Average of 2.75

Once having declared Social Work as their major at Ramapo College, to be considered for formal admission to the BSW program, an applicant must:

1. Have a minimum cumulative 2.75 GPA
2. Complete all prerequisite courses and earn an average of at least a B in Introduction to Social Work and History and Philosophy of Social Welfare.
3. Complete and submit the BSW program application which may be found [here](#). This includes providing a Ramapo College degree evaluation.

When applications are complete, they are automatically forwarded to the faculty who serve on the BSW Admissions Committee for review. If questions about the application arise, a committee member contacts the applicant directly. The disposition of the application (admission or denial) is communicated to the applicant in writing by email.

The BSW Admissions Committee examines each candidate's application and academic record, including observations made by social work faculty who have taught the candidate in the prerequisite social work courses. The faculty may, in some cases, request a personal interview with the applicant before making its decision. In addition to a student's intellectual capacity, attention is given to the student's personal qualities and suitability for the profession including his/her:

- motivation and interest in social work and social work education
- commitment to social work values and ethics
- demonstrated aptitude through work and life experience receptivity to new approaches and ideas
- ability to be self-reflective
- concern for helping others and solving social problems
- potential to form and sustain effective helping relationships with client systems
- ability to function in an agency under supervision.

The applicant is notified by letter of the social work faculty's decision. Students who are accepted are given instructions as to how to proceed in the program. Probationary acceptance may be granted when a student's academic performance is below the admission standards if the Social Work Convening Group feels that the student has good career potential and the ability to meet the academic requirements with remediation. Probationary acceptances include conditions that the student must meet, such as the necessity for the student to take specific remedial work and maintaining a 2.75 GPA. Students who are rejected for admission to the program are given the specific reasons as to why they were not accepted. Students who are denied admission into the Social Work Program may reapply at a later date.

A large percentage of students in the Social Work Program have transferred from community colleges. These students receive information about the program's admission policy and procedures through faculty and counselors at community colleges which have articulation agreements with Ramapo. In cases where no articulation agreement exists, Ramapo's Admissions Office instructs potential social work students to contact the Program Director for advisement regarding this process.



## Transfer Students

Ramapo College welcomes a large number of transfer students each year. Full information about the College's policies regarding transfer students may be found here:

<https://www.ramapo.edu/undergraduate/transfer/>

While students with varying numbers of credits may choose to transfer to Ramapo College to complete their Bachelor's degree, transfer students commonly come from surrounding community colleges with whom Ramapo has established articulation agreements. Details regarding these articulation agreements may be found here:

<https://www.ramapo.edu/undergraduate/transfer/agreements/>

### Evaluation of Transfer of Credit

#### Policy:

Students may receive credit for the two prerequisite social work courses required for admission into the program, *SWRK 225 Introduction to Social Work* and *SWRK 222 History and Philosophy of Social Welfare*.

#### Procedure:

There is an automatic transfer of credit for prerequisite courses to be admitted into the BSW program from community colleges with articulation agreements with Ramapo College. If the college does not have an articulation agreement, there is a two-step process:

1. The admissions office reviews the courses for general credit acceptance based on the criteria for course credit established by Middle States Commission on Higher Education.
2. The program reviews syllabi for social work courses taken at other institutions to determine comparability with courses offered in the BSW program.

Once a course has been approved for transfer credit, it is cataloged in a transfer credit database for future reference.

## Ramapo @ PCCC BSW

Ramapo College has entered into a special partnership with Passaic County Community College. Known as Ramapo@PCCC, the program allows students who complete their Associate's degree at Passaic County College to matriculate as Ramapo students in a variety of academic programs under the Ramapo@PCCC banner. Among these programs is the Ramapo BSW program, or what is commonly referred to as the 2+2 program.

Students in the Ramapo@PCCC 2+2 program complete an A.A. in Human Services and then, if they fulfill all other Ramapo BSW admissions criteria (including achieving and maintaining a 2.75 GPA), are directly admitted to the Ramapo BSW program. Students in these cohorts continue to attend class on the Passaic County Community College Campus where they are instructed by Ramapo social work faculty.

Students in the Ramapo@PCCC 2+2 social work program are Ramapo students in all respects and have equal access to the same programs, activities, opportunities, and supports as other Ramapo students.

It should be noted that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, classes in the Ramapo@PCCC 2+2 social work program have been held virtually (synchronous). However, beginning with the fall 2022 semester, classes will be held in person on the Passaic County Community College campus as intended.

The Ramapo@PCCC 2+2 social work program was approved as a substantive change to the Ramapo BSW Program by the Council on Social Work Education on December 10, 2020.

## **Academic Advisement**

Policies and procedures regarding undergraduate academic advisement at Ramapo College are overseen by the [Center for Student Success](#). The advisement process is designed to provide students with educational, vocational, and personal guidance. First year students at Ramapo College are advised by staff of the Center for Student Success. Once students have reached sophomore status and have declared social work as their major, the advisement is transferred for members of the BSW faculty. Transfer students who come to Ramapo College as social work majors are automatically assigned a member of the BSW faculty as advisor. The major objectives of the advisement process are:

- To assist students in planning their academic program.
- To provide students with an early and periodic assessment of their academic performance.
- To assist students in resolving any conflicts they may be experiencing in the classroom or practicum settings.
- To discuss with students their developmental/career goals and assist in developing a plan to meet them.

Students will meet formally once each semester and more frequently when requested by the student or advisor to discuss their academic schedules, career goals, and the progress they are making in the program. The Advisor is responsible for monitoring an advisee's academic work and discussing with appropriate faculty and practicum liaisons, as needed, any difficulties a student may be experiencing.

## **College and Program Policies**

A full list of College-wide policies please use the following link:

<https://www.ramapo.edu/fa/arc/college-wide-policies-courses/>

## **Grading Policy for Undergraduate Education at Ramapo College**

Listed below is the grading schema for undergraduate education at Ramapo College.

<b>A</b>	100 – 94 %
<b>A-</b>	90 - 93
<b>B+</b>	87 – 89 %
<b>B</b>	83 – 86
<b>B-</b>	80 - 82
<b>C+</b>	77 – 79 %
<b>C</b>	73 – 76
<b>C-</b>	70 – 72

<b>D+</b>	67– 69 %
<b>D</b>	65– 66
<b>F</b>	0– 64 %

## **Requirements for Study**

### **Social work students need**

1. An ability to think logically and conceptually and to formulate mature judgments
2. Excellent writing and verbal communication skills
3. Knowledge of the social work profession and readiness to be committed to it as a profession
4. Evidence of emotional maturity, concern for people and capacity for self-awareness and personal growth
5. Demonstrated concern and commitment to the values underlying professional social work
6. Respect for diversity and openness to life-long learning about one's self and others

## **Undergraduate Policy on Academic Standing**

*Listed here are the general policies of Ramapo College on academic standing. Note that the minimum GPA required to be admitted to and remain in the BSW Program is 2.75. Students who do not maintain a 2.75 GPA will not be able to continue in the BSW program, but may continue their progress as Ramapo College students in another major contingent upon their compliance with the following policies. Apart from the BSW program requirement regarding minimum GPA, all other aspects of the policies regarding academic standing that follow apply to BSW students.*

Students who have attempted 12 or more credits must have at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average to be in academic good standing.

### **Determination and Notification of Academic Standing**

At the close of each Fall and Spring semester, once final grades have been posted, the Dean and Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment review records of all matriculated students enrolled at the College who have attempted twelve (12) or more credits. Credits and grades of all Ramapo course work contribute to the cumulative grade point average. Courses transferred from other colleges count only as credits earned.

Matriculated students whose academic performance has fallen below a cumulative 2.0 GPA, which is required to graduate from Ramapo College, are advised of the deficiency in writing by the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment via Ramapo College e-mail.

### **Academic Warning**

Students who have a cumulative GPA below 2.0 for one semester are placed on Academic Warning.

Students placed on Academic Warning cannot appeal their standing.

- Students previously on Academic Warning who have achieved a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 are placed in good standing.

### **Academic Probation**

Students who have a cumulative GPA below 2.0 for two consecutive semesters are placed on Academic Probation.

Students placed on Academic Probation cannot appeal their standing.

Toward the middle of the Fall and Spring semester, the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment sends an email to students on Academic Probation, reminding students of their standing and the actions to be taken once grades have been posted at the end of the semester.

- Students previously on Academic Probation who have achieved a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 are placed in good standing after probation.
- Students previously on Academic Probation who have made *good academic progress* by achieving a semester GPA of at least 2.5 but whose cumulative GPA is still below a 2.0 are placed on Continued Probation for one semester.
- Students previously on Continued Probation who have achieved a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 are placed in good standing after probation.

### **Academic Suspension**

Students who have a cumulative GPA below 2.0 for three consecutive semesters are placed on Academic Suspension for one regular semester. Upon notification of suspension, the student is given an opportunity to submit a written appeal for immediate reinstatement to the Dean of the school in which they are majoring.

Appeals must include:

- Letter from the student requesting reinstatement
- If a student is reinstated based on an appeal, at the end of the probationary period:
- Students who achieve a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 will be placed in good standing after probation.
- Students who do not achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.0 but have made *good progress* by
- achieving a semester GPA of 2.5 or better will be placed on continued probation one final semester at the end of which they must achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better.
- Students who do not achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or a semester GPA of 2.5 or better will be permanently dismissed.

A student who does not appeal in writing to the Dean of the school in which they are majoring by the designated deadline [provided in the notification letter from the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment] is viewed as accepting the one full Fall or Spring semester suspension.

Decisions are final and do not have a further appeal.

### **Academic Dismissal**

Upon notification of dismissal, the student is given an opportunity to submit a written appeal for immediate reinstatement to the Dean of the school in which they are majoring.

The appeal process is the same as that for students who have been suspended.

If a student is reinstated based on an appeal, at the end of the probationary period:

- Students who achieve a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 will be placed in good standing after probation.
- Students who do not achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.0 but have made *good progress* by
- achieving a semester GPA of 2.5 or better will be placed on continued probation one final semester at the end of which he/she must achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better or will be permanently dismissed.
- Students who do not achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.0 and have not made *good progress* (as defined above) will be permanently dismissed.
- Decisions are final and do not have a further appeal.

### **Reinstatement following Academic Suspension**

A student who did not appeal their Fall or Spring semester Academic Suspension and wishes to return to the College must apply for reinstatement.

Reinstatement is neither automatic nor guaranteed after Academic Suspension.

Students are required to apply to their Dean of the school in which they are majoring by at least 14 days prior to the beginning of the fall and spring semesters.

The student begins the process for reinstatement by making an appointment with the Center for Student Success advisor, who does the following before advancing the student to the Dean:

- Reviews appeal letter
- Reviews courses and grades necessary for good standing to ensure feasibility of completing a Ramapo degree
- Review holds (e.g., Student Accounts) and has student remove all holds, except for Academic Standing hold, before advancing process
- Consults with Dean as necessary.

If the Dean of the school in which they are majoring rejects the student's reinstatement appeal, the student may petition for a review by the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment.

The petition is initiated by the submission of a written statement (submitted via email to the Vice Provost by the student) that explains his/her position and includes any evidence that counters the decision of the Dean of the school in which they are majoring.

If the Vice Provost accepts the petition, the student will be reinstated on Academic Probation.

The Vice Provost and Dean of the school in which they are majoring may stipulate additional conditions in connection with reinstatement.

At the end of the semester for which students are reinstated:

- Students who achieve a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 will be placed in good standing after probation.
- Students who do not achieve a cumulative GPA of at least a 2.0 but have made *good progress* by achieving a semester GPA of 2.5 or better and who meet any additional conditions set by the Dean or Vice Provost (if applicable) will be allowed one final semester on continued probation before permanent dismissal.

Students who did not make an *Immediate Reinstatement Appeal* of an Academic Dismissal are ineligible to apply for reinstatement. (*Immediate Reinstatement Appeal* refers to the imposed deadline for an appeal as contained in the letter sent to students from the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment.)

Students must apply for reinstatement through the Dean and then apply for readmission through the Office of Admissions *after* a suspension absence from the college of two or more consecutive semesters.

## **Policy on Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to read and understand Ramapo College's Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found online in the *College Catalog* (<https://www.ramapo.edu/catalog-2023-2024/academic-policies/>). Members of the Ramapo College community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Students who are suspected of violating this policy will be either required to meet with the faculty member (and in the event of a 'responsible' finding, reported to the Office of the Provost), or be referred directly to the Office of the Provost, which will adjudicate the matter.

## **Academic and Practicum Review Committee (APRC)**

The purpose of the Academic and Practicum Review Committee (APRC) process is to review and provide a nature of problems or issues concerning students enrolled in the BSW or MSW programs at Ramapo College. The problems or issues include matters related to academic and practicum education performance, and professional practice ethics and behavior.

### **Procedures for APRC**

1. Referrals of concerns that come to the attention of the APRC are to be made to the

2. student's Practicum Liaison or Faculty Advisor who, in turn, notifies and consults with the appropriate program and site directors and the referring faculty member about the referral.
3. The result of the consultation will be a determination as to whether to initiate the APRC process. The individual making the original referral will be notified of that decision.
4. When the decision is to initiate the APRC process, the Faculty Advisor contacts the APRC Chair and the student to inform them that an APRC hearing will be convened.
5. The APRC Chair will meet with the student and provide information regarding the APRC process, what to expect from a hearing, and who will attend. The Chair will inform the
6. student that he or she has the right to exclude the student member from the hearing and that the exercise of that right must be made in writing to the Chair.
7. The hearing will be convened by the Chair as soon as it can be arranged. The Hearing Panel will consist of the Chair, two faculty panelists, and one student panelist (unless the student undergoing review requests that a student panelist not be included).

If any student receives a failing grade on their practicum evaluation or is released from their practicum placement after all of the above-mentioned interventions and procedures have been executed, the final grade for that correlated practicum course cannot be higher than a "D".

## **Graduation Requirements**

Ramapo College policies and procedures regarding graduation requirements may be found at: <https://www.ramapo.edu/catalog-2023-2024/grad-requirements/>.

## **Social Work Club**

The Social Work Club welcomes all Ramapo College students, including social work and non-social work majors, as well as undergraduate and graduate students to collaborate on social service projects, listen to guest speakers, share ideas, and work together to create change locally and globally. In addition, students engage in a variety of activities with the support of advisors and based on the ideas and interests of the members.

## **Phi Alpha Honor Society**

### **THETA DELTA CHAPTER AT RAMAPO COLLEGE**

In July 1978, the Social Work Program of Ramapo College of New Jersey was approved as a chapter in the Phi Alpha National Honor Society. During the first year of the Theta Delta Chapter 28 juniors and seniors were installed as members.

The Phi Alpha Honor Society was established in 1962. The purposes of the society are to provide a closer bond among students of social work and promote humanitarian goals and ideas. Phi Alpha fosters high standards of education for social workers and invites into membership those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work. There are currently more than 155 chapters throughout the United States in accredited BSW and MSW programs.

Although the National Council is the policy-making body, each chapter is free to develop a

program to meet local needs. Membership may be offered to students, faculty, and practitioners. Each chapter may select two honorary members each year.

Membership shall be available to all eligible persons without regard to age, gender, color, race, creed, ethnic or national origin, political or sexual orientation, or disability. New members are inducted at a ceremony held each spring.

Eligibility criteria for BSW students are:

- Successful completion of Theory & Practice of Social Work I
- Achievement of an overall GPA of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale
- Achievement of a 3.5 GPA in required social work courses

## **Student Rights**

- Social work students have input into the formulation and modification of program policies, curriculum development, student affairs, hiring new faculty, and program evaluation.
- A student representative may serve *ex-officio* on hiring committees established to recruit and hire new faculty members. Applicants for faculty positions who are chosen as finalists must teach a class, and student feedback is crucial in determining the final decision.
- All social work students have input into curriculum and program modification through course evaluations completed at the end of each semester.
- Student evaluations of practicum agencies are completed annually.
- Students are encouraged to play an active role in the governance of the School of Social Science and Human Services (SSHS) and in the Student Government. Students are
- entitled to attend and participate in the School's Unit Council Meetings. Any student may become an active member of the School's Unit Council and is eligible to sit as a member of its standing committees.
- Students are permitted representation on the College's Board of Trustees.
- Social Work students have the unfettered right to organize and present their views to the social work faculty, the Program Director, the School's Unit Council, or to any other
- authoritative body at the College.
- All students at the College have the right to participate in Student Government, which is their primary governance organization.



# APPENDICES

## Appendix A

### Course Descriptions

Descriptions of Social Work courses offered may be found at this link:

<https://www.ramapo.edu/catalog-2023-2024/sshs/socialwork/>

## Appendix B

CSWE 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS):

<https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS/2015EPASandGlossary.pdf>

## Appendix C

National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics:

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

## **Appendix D**

Ramapo College Anti-Discrimination Policy:

<https://www.ramapo.edu/affirmaction/complaint-processing-forms/>

## Appendix E

Ramapo Student Handbook:

<https://www.ramapo.edu/student-conduct/student-handbook/>