

Media Relations

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UNH Offers New Online Master of Social Work Degree

DURHAM, N.H. – The University of New Hampshire has launched an online master of social work (MSW) degree program. The 28-month program provides the same high-quality professional education as the MSW programs at UNH's Durham and Manchester campuses; all online courses are designed by full-time department of social work faculty, who share responsibility for teaching the core online courses and oversee all courses taught online.

The online MSW is the only one in New Hampshire and one of just two in northern New England. It is the second online master's degree offered at UNH, which launched an online MBA in 2012.

[Application deadline](#) for the first session of the online MSW, which begins Jan. 2014, is Nov. 1, 2013.

“With this online MSW, we can prepare students to make the world a better place, whether or not their schedules or lifestyles allow them to come to campus,” says Patrick Shannon, associate professor of social work and coordinator of the online MSW program. “Like our campus-based programs in Durham and Manchester, the online MSW will educate social work professionals to work effectively with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to optimize human potential for productive participation in society.”

A master of social work degree is a professional degree that prepares students to in a very wide variety of employment settings, including advocacy organizations, child welfare, disability, education, health care, employee assistance programs, juvenile and adult criminal justice, mental health, substance abuse, the military and other human service oriented environments. National labor statistics demonstrate faster than average occupational growth through 2020 for social workers.

The program, accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, comprises 20 courses offered completely online with no campus visits required. Most courses are asynchronous, meaning students can participate, view lectures, complete assignments, and access materials at any time. Students who take two courses in each of the five eight-week sessions can complete their degrees in 28 months.

In addition, students are required to complete two field internships at a program or agency in their communities, identified with assistance from the department of social work's field office.

A unique feature of UNH's online MSW program will be an option for students to earn a graduate certificate in intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Through a partnership with the UNH Institute on Disability, a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, the online MSW offers a range of IDD-focused electives and funded internships with the New Hampshire-Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (NH-LEND) training program. Program administrators plan to roll out similar graduate certificate programs in areas like child welfare.

“These will provide students with the opportunity to specialize in specific areas of practice,” says Shannon.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,300 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

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