



WHAT IS A SOCIAL WORKER?

Looking for a career with meaning, action, diversity, satisfaction and an abundance of options? Social work may be the best major.

Social workers are professionals who care about people, want to assist in improving their wellbeing and want their work to make a difference through services provided to individuals, families, groups, communities and society.

According to the International Federation of Social Workers, social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing. (July 2014)

For sheer diversity, few occupations can match social work, which offers the broadest range of opportunities and settings. Social workers are found in public agencies, private business, hospitals, clinics, schools, nursing homes, private practices, police departments, courts and countless other interesting workplaces. Professional social workers can serve as managers, supervisors, administrators, educators, therapists and researchers. Many times, they are also elected political leaders and legislators, often serving in governmental positions.

Social workers included Labor Secretary Frances Perkins, who pushed for a minimum wage and Social Security; Nobel Peace Prize winner Jane Addams, who is considered the mother of social work; Civil Rights leaders Dorothy Height and Whitney Young Jr.; and Ambassador Wendy Sherman, who helped broker the Iran Nuclear Agreement.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, social work is one of the fastest-growing professions in the United States, with 110,000 more social workers expected to enter the profession in just seven years. The prediction is a 16% national growth rate for social workers from 2016-2026.

For more information on social work and salaries, see the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook at www.bls.gov/oco

School of Social Work

University of Central Florida
12805 Pegasus Drive, HPA I – 204
Orlando, Florida 32816-3358
407-823-2114

<http://www.chps.ucf.edu/socialwork>

Administration

Ana León, Ph.D., LCSW, Interim Director, School of Social Work/Professor (ana.leon@ucf.edu)

Robin M. Kohn, MSW, LCSW, BSW Program Director/Associate Instructor (robin.kohn@ucf.edu)

Maxine McGregor, MSW, MSW Program Director/Instructor (Maxine.mcgregor@ucf.edu)

Shellene Mazany, MSW, LCSW MSW Online Program Director/Associate Instructor (shellene.mazany@ucf.edu)

Jacque Withers, MSW, LCSW Director of Field Education/Associate Instructor (Jacque.withers@ucf.edu)

Julie Steen, Ph.D., Associate Director of Research/Associate Professor (julie.steen@ucf.edu)

Other resources:

National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

www.socialworkers.org/

Florida Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

www.naswfl.org/

Association for Community Practice and Social Administration (ACOSA)

www.acosa.org/