

Miscellaneous Best Practices

The CSU Chico BSW program operates on a cohort model to ensure maximum flexibility of the faculty to teach and advise the students in the School of Social Work. The faculty also implement a MSW program that similar to the BSW program and offers a traditional face to face option and a DL option as well. The BSW Program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) which requires all accredited programs in the United States to adhere to national standards with regards to curriculum and practices. The designated key pedagogy in the BSW curriculum is the field practicum or internship which provides the integrative capstone educational experience. All BSW seniors are required to complete 480 hours in an internship over two semesters at the rate of approximately 16 hours per week. The accreditation standards of the CSWE state that, “academic credit for life experience and previous work experience shall not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field internship or courses” thus ensuring that the practicum is at the heart of the BSW program. The CSU Chico BSW program has extensive and long-term partnerships with our North State regional agencies across the 18 counties. In fact, the CSU Chico School of Social Work could not implement the BSW program without these public and private agencies. Further, North State agency representatives are key partners on CSU Chico’s School of Social Work advisory boards. These representatives engage with the students and faculty on a regular basis as agency field instructors and agency preceptors who provide student interns with structured opportunities to shadow full time staff and gradually take on case management, community outreach, and direct practice responsibilities under the supervision of agency staff.

Distance Learning & Technology

The Distributed Learning Program has been partially supported by the region’s eighteen county consortium of mental health directors as part of its Workforce Education and Training (WET) initiative which, in turn, is funded through the California Mental Health Services Act

(MHSA). In recognition of the unique factors impacting our geographically-isolated region and the long-time collaborative partnerships that have been forged with public child welfare and mental health agencies, the School of Social Work faculty have unanimously voted to focus our program on primarily meeting the needs of the eighteen county region, referred to previously as the North State. The Bachelor's in Social Work Program is designed to meet the needs of our eighteen county region, which is large, sparsely populated, has a high rate of poverty, and a dearth of social work practitioners at all levels. The program is offered in a traditional face-to-face format at the California State University, Chico main campus and in a Distributed Learning (DL) format that includes a majority of hybrid classes and a minority of fully online classes.

Flexible Scheduling

Hybrid classes include fifteen hours of face-to-face instruction that occurs at the main campus during two weekends each semester. The students are drawn from both the students who are admitted as freshmen to the university and from the nine community colleges in our region. The BSW program does extensive outreach and recruitment to the community colleges and maintains/updates articulation agreements for many of the prerequisite transfer courses, which eases transfer and reduces costs to the students, as tuition at the community colleges is far lower. In addition, the BSW program does extensive outreach and recruitment to the public child welfare and mental health agencies in the North State region. To accommodate the schedules of the working county employees who comprise the majority of the students enrolled in the DL option, we offer both a two-year full-time and a three-year part-time DL program. The part-time program provides courses during the summer and is state-supported thus ensuring lower educational costs for the students

Advising to support timely graduation

All students are required to meet with the BSW Program Director once they declare their intent to transfer to CSU Chico or, alternatively, switch their major to Social Work. Meetings with potential students take place at North State community colleges in the Fall semester during annually scheduled *Transfer Days*, *CSU Chico Preview Day*, or *Choose Chico Day*. If students who intend to enroll in the CSU Chico BSW program cannot attend one of these events, they are encouraged to set up an individual meeting with the BSW Program Director before transferring to CSU Chico either in person or over the telephone. Once students are on campus they are required to attend either a Fall or Winter orientation meeting before the Fall or Spring semester begins and then meet with the BSW Program Director for each semester until the student begins the Professional Sequence. The Professional Sequence consists of 3 semesters with full-time enrollment and is required for completing the Social Work major. In a similar manner, the students enrolled in the DL option meet with the DL Program Coordinator and are similarly advised. The BSW Program Director and DL Program Coordinator both are assigned WTUs (weighted time units) to accommodate timely advising with students and collaboration with transfer counselors at the nine North State area community colleges. Once students commence in the Professional Sequence they are assigned a full-time tenured faculty advisor who will continue to meet with the student each semester until the student completes the Professional Sequence.