

Student Guide on Certificate Pathways

Wurzweiler School of Social Work

MSW Program

“Recognition of the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”

— Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

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Certificate Options

Certificates provide students with specialized knowledge and skills within a particular population, setting, or practice area. Students can pursue a certificate through the MSW program. Not all certificates are available in every MSW program option.

Important Policies — Please Read Before Applying

- It may be possible for students from a program option that does not offer the desired Certificate to take courses in another program option that does provide the required electives. Speak with your Academic Advisor.
- Students may not audit a course to meet degree requirements for a Certificate.
- A one-year practicum placement within the certificate's domain of practice is required for completion.
- Students who meet educational, practicum, and supplemental requirements are eligible for **one** certificate maximum.
- Students can complete courses for the CASAC 350 educational certificate or for a certificate, but cannot earn both before graduating. CASAC can be completed after graduation.
- Students must fill out the Certificate Declaration Form by the second semester of their generalist year (for 60 credit students), and upon admission (for Advanced Standing students).
- Students meet all certificate requirements by the degree conferral date.

Students are encouraged to speak with their Academic Advisor or Student Success Coordinator, as well as their Practicum Planner regarding appropriate placement, during the final semester of their generalist year or before, regarding earning a certificate.

Why a Certificate?

- Gain specialized, in-depth expertise in a focused area of social work practice.
- Stand out in a competitive job market with credentials that align with how modern service delivery systems are structured.
- Connect with faculty, peers, and field agencies who share your interests to explore current issues and emerging trends in the field.
- Access cutting-edge curriculum shaped by innovation and evolving real-world practice.
- Stay attuned to the shifting needs of urban communities through a program built around responsive, community-centered learning.

How to Apply for a Certificate

1. Speak with your Academic Advisor or Student Success Coordinator to determine eligibility and appropriate timing.
2. Discuss practicum placement with your Practicum Planner to ensure the placement aligns with certificate requirements.
3. Students must fill out the [Certificate Declaration Form](#), and meet the certificate requirements to graduate with a certificate
4. Meet all educational, practicum, and supplemental requirements as specified for your chosen certificate.

Certificate in Gerontology and Palliative Care

Certificate in Gerontology and Palliative Care Practice	
Availability	Face-to-Face/Live Virtual, Online MSW, and Israel Block program options
Contact	Dr. Gary Stein, glstein@yu.edu

The Certificate in Gerontology and Palliative Care Practice prepares students to understand the psychosocial and developmental issues around aging and serious illness.

Key areas of focus include:

- Promoting healthy aging in the community
- Initiating difficult conversations about aging in diverse settings
- Advance and end-of-life care planning
- Providing guidance that is client- and family-centered and culturally competent

Required Courses

Course Code	Course Title
SWK 6825	Palliative Care: Social Work Practice with Serious Illness
SWK 6686	Social Gerontology

Elective — Choose One

SWK 6702	Coping with Loss
SWK 6241	Social Work in Health Care

Practicum Requirement

Students specialized-year practicum placement must be in one of the following settings:

- An agency that focuses on the service needs and/or clinical issues of older adults
- A hospice facility
- A hospital focusing on serious illness
- A long-term care facility
- A community agency focusing on the service needs and/or clinical issues of individuals and families facing serious illness

Range of Clientele:

Anyone who us an older adult, those who might be dependent on an older adult or those who provider care or support to an older adult.

Certificate in Trauma Informed Practice

Certificate in Trauma-Informed Practice	
Availability	Face-to-Face/Live Virtual, Online MSW, and Sara Schenirer and Israel Block program options
Contact	Dr. Lisa Henshaw, lisa.henshaw@yu.edu

The Certificate in Trauma-Informed Practice prepares students by highlighting principles, tools, and strategies that expand knowledge and skills in identifying trauma, trauma response, and trauma-informed interventions. The goal of this Advanced Certificate is to expand the knowledge of students in understanding the many elements of trauma.

Areas of focus include:

- National and community trauma experiences
- Historical and geographic trauma
- Witnessing violence or other traumatic events
- Interpersonal violence in both childhood and adulthood, including:
 - Childhood sexual and physical abuse
 - Domestic violence (partner abuse)
 - Rape and sexual assault
 - Adult survivors of child sexual abuse
- Vicarious and indirect trauma
- Self-care practices for clinicians

Required Course

Course Code	Course Title
SWK 6685	Trauma and Interpersonal Violence

Electives — Choose Two

SWK 6691	Social Work Practice with Addictions
SWK 6823	Eating Disorders
SWK 6810	Social Practice with the Military

Practicum Requirement

Students' advanced-year practicum placement must be at a site or agency that focuses on trauma-based treatment and service delivery.

Range of Clientele:

Child or adult that has experienced primary or secondary trauma.

Joint MSW/CASAC Program

Certificate in Trauma-Informed Practice	
Availability	Face-to-Face/Live Virtual, Online MSW, and Israel Block program options
Contact	Dr. Michael Serrano, Michael.serrano@yu.edu

The CASAC credential is available to students in the Face-to-Face/Live Virtual program option, the Online MSW program option, and the Israel Block program option. For more information, contact casac@yu.edu or visit the CASAC credential program page on the WSSW website.

CASAC vs. Certificate — Important Distinction

Students can complete courses for the CASAC credential or for a certificate, but cannot earn both before graduating with the MSW. Students can complete the CASAC credential after graduation.

The primary goal of the Joint MSW/CASAC Program is to prepare master-level students to enter the addiction workforce after graduation as both an MSW and a certified addiction professional. The Joint MSW/CASAC Program leads to a certification by the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) to providers in the field of alcoholism and substance use.

This certification ensures that addiction counselors are competent and skilled in addressing substance misuse and substance use disorders, and in addressing the current opioid epidemic. WSSW students can meet the educational requirements while in the MSW program without requiring additional coursework and/or practicum credits.

Advanced Standing Students

Advanced standing students in the Face-to-Face/Live Virtual, Online MSW, and Israel Block program options have the option to complete the CASAC credential while at WSSW, but this will require taking an extra elective course to fulfill the credential requirements and thus may extend the time to graduation.

Program Requirements

Students seeking to complete the CASAC credential while completing their MSW at WSSW must complete all the same required courses while adhering to the following:

Course Sequence Requirements – Choose One Sequence Option	
Specialization Option A	Advanced Clinical Practice with Individuals and Families — complete SWK 6013 and SWK 6014 sequence
Specialization Option B	Advanced Groupwork Practice — complete SWK 6014 and SWK 6024 sequence

Required Electives — Must Be Taken Sequentially

Course Code	Course Title
SWK 6691	Social Work Practice with Addictions I
SWK 6791	Social Work Practice with Addictions II
SWK 6891	Social Work Practice with Addictions III

Practicum Requirement

It is best, though not required, to complete the generalist-year placement in a setting that treats addictions as well. A student's specialized-year practicum placement must be completed at a site or agency that at least partially treats addictions.

Upon Completion

Students who complete these courses and all other courses required for the 60-credit MSW will be issued a "CASAC-350 Hour" Certificate once their MSW degree is conferred.

Post-Graduation Hours Requirement

The State of New York requires 2,000 hours of practice in an addiction or mental health clinic for an MSW holder to earn the full CASAC credential.

Up to 1,200 of the practicum hours completed while in the MSW program may be applied towards this state requirement.

The remaining hours must be completed after graduation with the MSW degree.

Range of Clientele:

Anyone that is currently struggling with a substance use disorder or misusing substances.

Advanced Certificate in Interprofessional Aging and Palliative Care

Joint Program Requirements Summary	
Application	Separate applications to Advanced Certificate and MSW programs; acceptance into both required
Transferable Credits	18 credits (five courses) applied or part of your 60 credit MSW degree
Contact	Dr. Gary Stein, glstein@yu.edu

The Advanced Certificate in Interprofessional Aging and Palliative Care addresses a growing need for well-trained mental health, clergy, and chaplaincy professionals who can support and deliver compassionate guidance and sensitive care for those facing the many complexities of aging while maintaining a quality of life. The Program uses a holistic social work lens to address the psychosocial, spiritual, and developmental perspectives of individuals, families, and communities facing concerns related to the aging process, serious illness, difficult conversations about advanced care planning, and end of-life decisions.

The 18-credit Certificate can be earned independently or as a part of the 60-credit MSW degree. Students take six courses over three eight-week terms. All courses earn three-credits each. With two asynchronous online courses each, the certificate provides flexible solutions so students can continue to meet their multiple obligations. Students may begin the program in the Fall and Spring semesters. Students may choose to complete Wurzweiler's MSW program, enabling them to become eligible for social work licensure.

Program at a Glance

- Dual application required — students must apply separately to both programs
- Acceptance into both programs is required before beginning joint coursework
- 15 credits (five courses) are transferrable to the MSW degree as electives
- MSW specialization is limited to Advanced Clinical Practice

Admission Requirements

Interested students must apply separately to both the Advanced Certificate in Interprofessional Aging and Palliative Care and the MSW Program and be accepted into both programs before beginning the joint program.

Curriculum and Courses

The Program is traditionally split into three eight-week terms, comprising of two classes each. Students may take one class per term, but this will extend the length of time required to complete the certificate. The certificate requires successful completion of the required six courses. Courses have no prerequisites and may be taken in any order.

Course Code	Course Title
SWK 5696	Social Gerontology
SWK 5132	Philosophical Foundations for the Helping Professions
SWK 5825	Palliative Care: SW Practice with Serious Illness
SWK 5005	Basic Counseling with Individuals, Families and Groups
SWK 5702	Coping with Loss
SWK 5645	Interfaith Perspectives on Aging

Credit Transfer

The Program may accept transfer credits for one course (three credits) taken prior to entry to the program from another accredited graduate institution of higher education. This is at the discretion of the Program Director and Program faculty. Students must demonstrate completion of an equivalent graduate-level course in order to be waived from completing one comparable course in the Program. The Program Director and faculty will review course materials for equivalence with certificate coursework. Students who receive a course waiver will be exempt from taking that course to earn their certificate; however, they will not receive course credits. Once a student has placed a deposit for the program, they may begin the transfer of credits process. Students requesting credit transfer must directly submit a formal written request to the Program Director. Course syllabi and transcripts should accompany the request. Students should be prepared to provide any additional materials the Program Director may request. Additionally, transfer credits are subject to the policies for the whole School. Students can find the school policies [here](#), and the process for transferring credits [here](#).

MSW and Advanced Certificate in Interprofessional Aging and Palliative Care

Certificate students interested in becoming a social worker may transfer to Wurzweiler's MSW Program. Students transferring from the Certificate Program must apply separately to the MSW degree. Accepted Certificate Program transfer students can transfer up to 15 credits (five courses) from the Certificate Program to the MSW degree as electives. The same transfer credit policies apply. Students who are completing the MSW will take SWK 6003 Generalist Social Work Practice I instead of SWK 5005 Basic Counseling with Individuals, Families and Groups. Certificate Program transfer students are subject to the tuition and fees of the MSW program for all courses that do not count towards the Certificate.

Program Completion

Each student's course completion records and grades are reviewed following the fall and spring terms. Students who have completed the 18-credit roadmap will be awarded certificates and will be notified by the Program Director or their Designee

Post Graduate CASAC Programs

Program Requirements

Application

Separate application to the Post Graduate CASAC to upload unofficial transcript and resume.

The Post-MSW and Post-Graduate CASAC training programs prepare qualified MSW and other graduate degree holders—such as LMFT, LMHC, and MPH—for CASAC eligibility. The programs offer professionals the requisite education to provide specialized care to clients with addictions, including the required coursework to earn a New York State CASAC credential.

Both programs are completely asynchronous and offered several times a year.

Feature	Post-MSW Program	Post-Graduate Program
Eligible Applicants	MSW holders	Graduate degree holders (LMFT, LMHC, MPH, etc.)
Training Duration	16 weeks	21 weeks
Required Hours	100 hours (per NY State)	145 hours (per NY State)
Upon Completion	Certificate for OASAS hours + Continuing Education credit for licensed social workers	Certificate for OASAS approved hours
Format	Completely asynchronous; offered several times per year	

Upon completion, each participant is issued a certificate for New York Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) approved hours. Post-MSW students will also receive a certificate for Continuing Education hours.

For more information, contact casac@yu.edu