

## PROPOSED PROGRAM SUMMARY

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**Institution:** University of Louisville

**Program Name:** Doctor of Social Work

**Degree Designation:** Doctor of Social Work (DSW)

**Degree Level :** Doctor's Degree Professional Practice

### **Program Description**

To meet the needs of Kentucky's social work workforce and the aspirational goals of students seeking advanced social work degrees in the state, the nation, and abroad, this proposal requests to expand the degree offerings at the Kent School of Social Work (Kent School) with the Doctorate in Social Work (DSW).

The DSW is a "practice doctorate degree [and it] is intended to prepare social workers to assume advanced professional roles such as master practitioner, educator, administrator, policy practitioner, or leader in settings where social workers practice." The DSW degree program will educate social workers holding a master's degree with at least two years of post-Master's experience to become future practitioner scholars in teaching and social service leadership. A practitioner scholar is an individual who is academically trained in methods of scientific inquiry and social work best practices and equipped with leadership and teaching skills to be a bridge and navigate within and between the academic and social service settings as an educator and/or leader. A practitioner scholar is focused on critically examining and applying social work knowledge to implement innovative and just practices to promote organizational and community change.

As graduates of the DSW degree program, practitioner scholars will be instilled with 1) the belief and value of engaging in lifelong learning, 2) a trauma-informed, anti-oppressive, "learning organization" perspective to understand and enact change in social service organizations/settings, 3) theories, methods, and principles of adult learning, and of equity, fairness, and justice, and 4) advanced skills in assessing, implementing, and evaluating social work practices to motivate, teach, instruct, train, and lead for the betterment of social work practitioners, employees, social work students, and clients who are ultimately served (e.g., individuals seeking to manage behavioral health issues, families struggling with parenting, non-profit organizations managing change).

The overall goal of the DSW degree program is to offer advanced education, training, and mentoring to social workers holding a master's degree with at least two years of post-Master's experience who wish to become social work teaching faculty or leaders in public or private social service organizations throughout Kentucky, the nation, and abroad.

The DSW is a 44-credit hour, 100% fully online degree program taught through synchronous & asynchronous models, with no on-campus residency requirements. It can be completed in 8 semesters (three years), including continuous enrollment during the summer. It is designed for currently employed master-degreed social workers for whom it is not feasible to interrupt their employment to pursue doctoral education full-time but who, nevertheless, desire to have greater opportunity to advance into social service leadership and college/university teaching positions through advanced

academic training, credentialing, and mentorship with the convenience and flexibility of a fully online program.

**Will this program replace or enhance any existing programs(s) or tracks, concentrations, or specializations within an existing program? If yes, please specify**

This is a new program and it does not replace or enhance any existing program(s) or tracks, concentrations, or specializations within an existing program.

**CIP Code:** 44.0701

**Credit Hours:** 44

**Institutional Board Approval Date:** 4/22/2021

**Implementation Date:** 8/23/2021

**Student Demand**

Year 1 - 10  
Year 2 - 20  
Year 3 - 20  
Year 4 - 20  
Year 5 - 20

**Market Demand**

This new program that does not replace another program on campus. It is needed because nationally interest in and the establishment of the Doctorate in Social Work (DSW) as a degree option continues to grow nationally. The latest data indicates that enrollment increased annually by 34.4% from 2017 to 2018, and the number of programs has increased by 37.5% for the same time period<sup>2</sup>. In comparison, from 2017 to 2018, there was a 6.8% increase in social work PhD enrollment and 2.6% increase in the number of accredited programs. Though social work PhD enrollment did increase from 2017 to 2018, enrollment has declined for the rest of the 10-year period examined (2008 to 2018) for doctoral programs in social work.

In Kentucky, both the University of Kentucky and Spalding University began to offer a DSW degree in Fall 2020. Regionally, the University of Tennessee has had a DSW degree alongside its PhD program for several years. Nationally, there are 18 existing programs sprinkled throughout the country, on the Westcoast (e.g., California) and in the Midwest (e.g., Minnesota), Northeast (e.g., NY, NJ, Pennsylvania), and South (e.g., Florida).

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are 682,100 Social Worker jobs in the US. Social worker employment is expected to grow 16% between 2016 and 2026 - a much faster rate than the average growth rate (8%) across all careers in the US. PhD and DSW professionals earn \$20-\$25,000 more than MSWs and \$38,000+ more than BSW professionals (National Social Work Workforce Study, 2017). Labor Insight (2019) ranked jobs and positions seeking a DSW as the 9th most sought after in the Commonwealth and 16th in the nation.

Entities hiring DSW graduates include universities, government agencies, non-profit

agencies, and consulting firms. Jobs requiring or encouraging a doctorate degree include private clinical practice, faculty, academic administration, consulting, non-academic administration, and high-level program or systems management. Skills in demand (aligned with a doctorate degree) include academic instruction, supervision, policy analysis, curriculum development, and community programs development<sup>3</sup>. Although practice doctorate (DSW) graduates are primarily going into non-academic administrative positions (22.9% of graduates) and private clinical practice (17.7%); tenure-track faculty positions at CSWE-accredited programs (15.6%) and non-tenure-track faculty positions at CSWE-accredited programs (12.5%) are also first destinations.

A market feasibility report on online practice doctorates in social work prepared by UofL's Delphi Center for Teaching and Learning in January 2020<sup>3</sup> for the Kent School concluded: "the growth in demand for a social work doctorate education is increasing rapidly and more schools are offering or preparing to offer such a degree (University of Kentucky will be the main competitor in Kentucky). Based on the available industry data, competitor comparison and demand indicators, we recommend that UofL's Kent School of Social Work offer an online DSW degree" (p.1-2).

In designing the DSW program, we have included many of the recommendations from the market feasibility report. Our proposed program will have a national and international reach. Our program will be quite competitive, as it includes many of the aspects of interest to potential applicants that are offered in other programs (e.g., 100% online—of the current 18 DSW programs nationwide, only 5 are totally online) and is designed to address barriers of access and flexibility. Our program will train practitioner scholars in teaching and social service/ organizational leadership; a focus that only half of the existing programs emphasize. Our tuition rate per credit hour (\$764) is within the median tuition rate (\$800) per credit hour of existing programs. Our program will take three years to complete, which is comparable to the majority (n=13) of the existing DSW programs. Our proposal is unique in that it offers 8-week terms. Our program is fully online, utilizing both synchronous and asynchronous models of instruction without on-campus orientation or residency as a requirement. Additionally, students obtaining the DSW at the Kent School will have the advantage of earning an advanced degree from an R1 public institution.

Our program is distinct from the regional programs (University of Kentucky, Spalding University, and University of Tennessee) for its focus, required number of credit hours, being geared towards the working professional, sequentially placed and offered courses, and having the option for completing either a thesis or a capstone project. Our program is the only one that focuses on training teachers and organizational (specific to social service) leaders.

## **Employment Demand**

	<b>Regional</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>National</b>
<b>Type Of Job</b>	<b>Head of Social Service Agency</b>		
Avg. Wage	\$64,498	\$61,810	\$72,900
# Jobs (Postings)	1460	260	17800
Expected Growth	13%	14%	13%
<b>Type Of Job</b>	<b>University Faculty</b>		
Avg. Wage	\$67,794	\$64,450	\$78,320
# Jobs (Postings)	100	10	1500
Expected Growth	4%	7%	8%

### **Indicate source of market demand information**

Occupational Employment Statistics Query System, May 2019, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

[www.projectionscentral.com](http://www.projectionscentral.com) (State Occupational Projections)

### **Academic Demand**

This program is designed for students to enter the workforce immediately after graduation.

### **Unnecessary Duplication**

#### **Similar Program(s):**

<b>Program Id</b>	<b>Inst code</b>	<b>Inst Description</b>	<b>Degree Designation</b>	<b>Program Title</b>	<b>Report year</b>
14934	00198900	University of Kentucky	DSW	Social Work, DSW	

**Comparison of Objectives/Focus/Curriculum to Similar Programs:**

The main difference is that our program focuses on teaching in addition to social service organizational leadership. Our method of delivery is accelerated, and sequential offering of courses allows for greater flexibility for the working professional to advance their career goals.

**Comparison of Student Populations:**

There will be some overlap in both programs in target student population, as both programs will be targeting students interested in leadership. However, because our program is for the working professional and UK's program is full-time, our target student population will be different.

**Access to Existing Programs:**

Our program is focused on reaching the professional working in agencies/organizations as well those teaching in social work programs. UK's program does not specify a focus in these areas and thus would not be responsive to this student population.

**Feedback from Other Institutions:**

While several attempts have been made to gather feedback on the proposed program from UK, we have received no response.

**Cost**

**Projected Revenue over Next Five Years (\$) : 1792755**

**Projected Expenses over Next Five Years (\$) : 1290000**

**Will Additional faculty be needed? Yes**

Two new full-time term faculty and one new part-time faculty will be hired to teach in the DSW program. The two new full-time term faculty will be hired to start the program. The part-time faculty member will not be needed until year 3 of the program. A currently tenured faculty member will serve as interim director of the program until the program director, one of these new hires, is appointed. The director will receive a 25% workload reduction to serve in this role. A half-time program assistant will be provided for administrative and logistical support.

This new program will not impact current faculty workload. Current faculty could opt to teach a course or two in this new program and could offer to serve on thesis/capstone committees of DSW students. Currently, the school has a me

**Provide a budgetary rationale for creating this new program**

This program will generate new tuition dollars, increase revenue by attracting a new pool of students, meet employment needs in the state; and add to the pool of graduates that have been shown to be beneficial to the economic needs of the state.