



California State University, Los Angeles

**School of Social Work**

## MSW CONCENTRATION INFORMATION

The MSW program at Cal State offers the following three concentrations:

### **Aging and Families (AF)**

The Aging and Families concentration provides students the opportunity to increase their scope and depth of knowledge and skills for social work practice with older adults and their families at the individual, community, and broader social-political levels. The demographics of aging is increasingly drawing attention within the field of social work due to the dramatic growth of the older population in the United States especially among the oldest age segment (those over 85 years). It is estimated that by 2030, as the peak of the baby boomers will be 65 years old. The average life expectancy has surpassed 75 years, and many older adults are a part of four and even five generational families.

The aging of the population affects all generations. Course work in the Aging and Family concentration prepares students to assume practice and leadership roles and responsibilities in such settings as community agencies, social service, mental health organizations; health care and long-term care institutions; federal, state and local government agencies, including the aging network supported by the Older Americans Act; retirement communities; academic and other educational and research settings; and business and industry.

### **Children, Youth, Women, and Families (CYWF)**

The Children, Youth, Women, and Families (CYWF) concentration provides students the opportunity to increase their scope and depth of knowledge and skills for advanced social work generalist practice with children, youth, women, and families. Although CYWF concentration focuses on prevention, crisis intervention and short-term treatment with children, youth, women, and families, the scope is larger than just public child welfare. Required courses in this concentration prepare students to assume practice and leadership roles and responsibilities in such public child welfare programs as child protection, placement and adoption, school-based services, and in major public service systems including mental health, physical health and corrections.

### **Forensic Social Work (FSW)**

Forensic Social Work (FSW) serves people who interact with the criminal justice system. This practice area involves working with individuals, families, and groups within institutional and community systems. Forensic social workers bring about positive change through advocacy, empowerment and interventions targeting offenders and victims in various settings. FSW clients are notably from ethnic minority groups and lower socioeconomic backgrounds who are typically over-represented in the system.

Graduates of the FSW program will be able to advocate at the policy level to improve service delivery systems and to guide practice with involuntary clients. Specifically, forensic social workers may work in the following areas: child custody, correctional facilities (including jails and prisons), courts, criminalistics (crime scenes—including man-made disasters), forensic mental health hospitals, domestic violence (including child and partner abuse), juvenile justice system (including probation and residential settings such as the California Youth Authority), legal advocacy (expert witness testimony), law enforcement, DCFS and victim assistance programs.