

Area of Interest: Community and Social Services

Social Service Worker

Ontario College Diploma

Program Code: 0432X01FWO

2 Years

Ottawa Campus

Our Program

Pursue a fulfilling career working on the front line of social services.

In the two-year Social Service Worker Ontario College Diploma program, you gain the skills and knowledge to work effectively with individuals, groups and communities dealing with personal and social problems.

Through theory and practical experiences, the program prepares you to support a wide range of client groups and communities who are in the process of change or growth, including those impacted by issues such as:

- loss and separation
- family crisis
- poverty
- violence
- homelessness
- addiction
- disability
- unemployment
- oppression
- resettlement

As a student, you complete three semesters in field placement experiences totaling almost 700 hours. You identify, practice and incorporate theoretical knowledge at a level that provides top client service. As well, you strengthen the bond between yourself and the community by participating in various applied research projects and direct practice opportunities. With these opportunities, you are ready to work on the front line of social services.

Graduates may secure employment as Social Service Workers in provincial, municipal and private social service agencies including:

- social service departments
- long-term care facilities
- addiction and mental health services
- schools and youth services
- community health and resource centres
- shelters

- residential treatment programs

SUCCESS FACTORS

This program is well-suited for students who:

- Have effective interpersonal skills.
- Are committed to addressing social issues, such as poverty, homelessness, oppression and human rights.
- Have strong language skills (oral and written).
- Are team-oriented and enjoy working with others.
- Deal effectively with stressful situations.

Employment

This program prepares you for your career by providing you with the opportunity to apply for professional accreditation in the field of social services. Upon graduation, you need to register as a Social Service Worker through the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers in order to be recognized as such.

You may find work in:

- drop-in centres
- employment services
- addiction and mental health services
- schools and youth services
- community health and resource centres
- shelters
- residential treatment programs

Learning Outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

- Develop respectful and collaborative professional and interpersonal relationships that adhere to professional, legal, and ethical standards aligned to social service work.
- Record information accurately and communicate effectively in written, digital, verbal and non-verbal ways, in adherence to privacy and freedom of information legislation, in accordance with professional and workplace standards.
- Integrate a practice framework within a service delivery continuum, addressing the needs of individuals, families and communities at micro, mezzo, macro and global levels, and work with them in achieving their goals.
- Plan and implement accessible and responsive programs and services, recognizing the diverse needs and experiences of individuals, groups, families and communities, and meeting these needs.
- Examine current social policy, relevant legislation, and political, social, historical, and/or economic systems and their impacts for individuals and communities when delivering services to the user/client.
- Develop strategies and approaches that support individual clients, groups, families and communities in building the capacity for self-advocacy, while affirming their dignity and self-worth.

- Work from an anti-oppressive, strengths-based practice, recognizing the capacity for resilience and growth of individuals and communities when responding to the diverse needs of marginalized or vulnerable populations to act as allies and advocates.
- Develop strategies and approaches to implement and maintain holistic self-care as a member of a human service profession.
- Work with individuals, groups, families and their communities to ensure that service provider strategies promote social and economic justice, and challenge patterns of oppression, discrimination and harassment, and sexual violence with clients, coworkers and communities.
- Develop the capacity to work with the Indigenous individual, families, groups and communities while respecting their inherent rights to self-determine, and to identify and address systemic barriers that produce ill-effects, developing appropriate responses using approaches such as trauma informed care practice.
- Identify and apply discipline-specific practices that contribute to the local and global community through social responsibility, economic commitment and environmental stewardship.

Program of Study

Level: 01	Courses	Hours
ENL1813S	Communications I	42.0
FAM1114	Preparation for Field	28.0
FAM1115	Social Service Work Interviewing	28.0
FAM1131	Addictions	42.0
FAM1254	Social Welfare in Canada	42.0
FAM1382	Social Service Worker Ethics	28.0
PSY0029	Developmental Psychology I	42.0
Level: 02	Courses	Hours
ENL1881F	Communication for Social Service Workers	42.0
FAM1121	Group Work	28.0
FAM1129	Placement I	182.0
FAM1142	Legislation and Advocacy	42.0
FAM1263	Crisis Intervention	42.0
FAM1334	Placement Seminar I	21.0
PSY0031	Developmental Psychology II	42.0
Level: 03	Courses	Hours
FAM1134	Mental Health	28.0
FAM1139	Placement II	252.0
FAM1272	Community Development	42.0
FAM1280	Applied Social Service Work Practice	28.0

FAM1283	Working with Families	28.0
FAM1335	Placement Seminar II	21.0
Level: 04	Courses	Hours
FAM1149	Placement III	273.0
FAM1260	Assessment, Planning and Practice in Social Service Work	28.0
FAM1278	Aging in Society	42.0
FAM1444	Placement Seminar III	21.0
Choose one from equivalencies:	Courses	Hours
GED0432	General Education Elective	42.0

Fees for the 2023/2024 Academic Year

Tuition and related ancillary fees for this program can be viewed by using the Tuition and Fees Estimator tool at <https://www.algonquincollege.com/fee-estimator> .

Further information on fees can be found by visiting the Registrar's Office website at <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro> .

Fees are subject to change.

Additional program related expenses include:

- Supplies cost approximately \$1,500 in the first year and \$1,000 in the second year. Textbooks are available through the campus bookstore.
- Additional expenses related to verification for field placement requirements. ParaMed clearance police records check and health immunizations are the responsibility of the student.

Admission Requirements for the 2024/2025 Academic Year

College Eligibility

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalent. Applicants with an OSSD showing senior English and/or Mathematics courses at the Basic Level, or with Workplace or Open courses, will be tested to determine their eligibility for admission; OR
- Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) certificate; OR
- General Educational Development (GED) certificate; OR
- Mature Student status (19 years of age or older and without a high school diploma at the start of the program). Eligibility may be determined by academic achievement testing for which a fee of \$50 (subject to change) will be charged.

Program Eligibility

- English, Grade 12 (ENG4C or equivalent) with a grade of 65% or higher.
- Applicants with international transcripts must provide proof of the subject-specific requirements noted above and may be required to provide proof of language proficiency. Domestic applicants with international transcripts must be evaluated through the International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (ICAS) or World Education Services (WES).
- IELTS-International English Language Testing Service (Academic) Overall band of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each band; **OR** TOEFL-Internet-based (iBT)-overall 88, with a minimum of 22 in each component: Reading 22; Listening 22; Speaking 22; Writing 22; **OR** Duolingo English

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Not sure if you meet all of the requirements? Academic Upgrading may be able to help with that: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/access/>.

Should the number of qualified applicants exceed the number of available places, applicants will be selected on the basis of their proficiency in English.

Health Requirements:

The physical and emotional health of each applicant to the program must be such that he or she can successfully cope with the program of instruction including the demands of field placement (e.g. stress and time management). Individuals who have concerns about their ability to meet these requirements should contact the coordinator of the program prior to submitting an application. Students under the age of 18 years cannot obtain a PRCSVS. Upon the age of majority being reached this will be required. Students should be prepared to update their PRCSVS every six months.

Students accepted into the Social Service Worker program must meet the following health requirements:

Provide evidence of full and complete immunizations. The Algonquin College Health Services will review the student's record of immunization and provide authorization for entry into field placement. Field placement agencies require the Hepatitis B vaccine and the Influenza vaccine.

Police Records Check:

Though not an admission requirement, applicants must note important information listed below regarding Police Record Check program requirements.

Successful completion of field placement is a requirement for graduation from the Social Service Worker program. Agencies that provide placement opportunities may require you to have a clear Police Records Check for Service with the Vulnerable Sector (PRCSVS). Your acceptance for placement is at the discretion of the agency. If you register in the program and do not have a clear PRCSVS and as a result are unable to participate in placement, you will not be able to graduate.

Field Placement Eligibility:

To be eligible for placement, you must submit proof of a PRCSVS, which will be retained on your departmental file and used only for purposes related to your placement. You will be required to disclose the contents of the PRCSVS, including all notations, to the placement agencies.

It is your responsibility to obtain the PRCSVS from your local Police department prior to the deadline identified by your Department and to pay any associated costs. It may take a long time to obtain this documentation; please submit your application as early as possible. Should you require further information, contact the Program Chair.

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Application Information

SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER Program Code 0432X01FWO

Applications to full-time day programs must be submitted with official transcripts showing completion of the academic admission requirements through:

ontariocolleges.ca
60 Corporate Court
Guelph, Ontario N1G 5J3
1-888-892-2228

Students currently enrolled in an Ontario secondary school should notify their Guidance Office prior to their online application at <http://www.ontariocolleges.ca/>.

Applications for Fall Term and Winter Term admission received by February 1 will be given equal

consideration. Applications received after February 1 will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis as long as places are available.

International applicants please visit this link for application process information:
<https://algonquincollege.force.com/myACint/> .

For further information on the admissions process, contact:

Registrar`s Office
Algonquin College
1385 Woodroffe Ave
Ottawa, ON K2G 1V8
Telephone: 613-727-0002
Toll-free: 1-800-565-4723
TTY: 613-727-7766
Fax: 613-727-7632
Contact: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro>

Additional Information

The Social Service Worker program consists of courses that are delivered in a variety of formats including face-to-face in a classroom, hybrid (combination of classroom and online learning) and online courses. Students participate in all three types of learning. Students also participate in field placement learning activities. Class schedules vary from term to term and courses may be scheduled between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Friday. There is no flexibility in the assigned timetable. There is a significant workload in the program and students need to be prepared to make a full-time commitment to their studies and field placement in order to be successful.

Students may apply for transfer of academic credits from Algonquin College (internal transfer) or from other institutions (external transfer). College Policies AA09 and AA10 apply to transfer of credits. For more information visit: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/directives> .

Students may apply for credit by challenging courses using Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR). College Policy AA06 applies to PLAR. Students pay a fee for each course they wish to be exempt from and, through either a portfolio or challenge examination, a PLAR may lead to the acceptance of work and life experience in lieu of taking certain courses. For more information visit: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/col/plar.html> . Please note we do not PLAR any of our placements.

The social service worker field requires mature, flexible workers who commit to personal wellness and self-care as well as the principles of social justice and anti-oppression. This demanding program places students in learning environments and in contact with emotionally challenging situations. This may be unsettling to those who are in current recovery for mental health, abuse or addiction problems. As such, we encourage prospective students to reflect upon their readiness to meet these demands.

This full-time day program is also offered on the Pembroke Campus. While the learning outcomes at the Woodroffe and Pembroke Campuses are the same, subject delivery is reflective of the local circumstances which affect program delivery.

There is also an Intensive offering delivered at the Woodroffe Campus. This latter program is for individuals who have completed a degree or diploma (from an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology) in the humanities. Degrees outside of the humanities may be considered on an individual basis.

Social Service Worker is a registered professional title which may only be used by members in good standing of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW). This relates to Ontario legislation entitled The Social Work and Social Service Worker Act. Graduates of the Social Service Worker program are required by law to join the OCSWSSW after graduation in order to use this professional title. The OCSWSSW grants or denies membership. Visit <http://www.ocswssw.org/> for more information.

Contact Information

Program Coordinator(s)

- Vicky Green, <mailto:greenv@algonquincollege.com> , 613-727-4723, ext. 6852

Course Descriptions

ENL1813S Communications I

Communication remains an essential skill sought by employers, regardless of discipline or field of study. Using a practical, vocation-oriented approach, students focus on meeting the requirements of effective communication. Students practise writing, speaking, reading, listening, locating and documenting information, and using technology to communicate professionally. Students develop and strengthen communication skills that contribute to success in both educational and workplace environments.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

ENL1881F Communication for Social Service Workers

A social service worker creates and maintains a variety of records and documents related to their interactions with colleagues and clients. These records and documents must be coherent and objective assessments of the social service worker's observations, actions and interventions. Other written methods of communication involve drafting letters and reports for professional agencies and organizations. In some instances, the documentation created by a social service worker may be used in legal proceedings. Therefore, emphasis is placed on fundamental grammar, writing mechanics and critical-thinking skills.

Prerequisite(s): ENL1813S
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1114 Preparation for Field

The ability to understand one's professional roles and responsibilities in the workplace is foundational to success. Students explore their own beliefs and values as they relate to professional relationships and ethical principles in social service work practice. Students identify current social issues and research social networks that support meeting the diverse needs of the community.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1115 Social Service Work Interviewing

Gathering information through the interview process helps identify the strengths, resources and challenges of individuals, families, groups and communities to assist them in achieving their goals. As a major component of the field of Social Service Work, students review and recognize the essential elements of a social service work interview, including the skills of active listening, open and closed questioning, awareness of body language and using empathy to build trust. Attention is also paid to relationship building and the facilitation of change while recognizing diversity. Students practice with role-play scenarios to develop and fine tune these skills in preparation for work with clients.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1121 Group Work

Working in groups is part of many social service work settings. Making use of a simulated exercise, students have the opportunity to practice skills involved in the planning and facilitation of topic based support groups. Emphasis is placed on the co-leadership model, self-awareness and group process skills.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1115 and FAM1382
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1129 Placement I

Practical learning experiences support the integration of theory and professional expectations in social service agencies. Students may practice observation skills, information gathering, interviewing skills, documentation and preliminary assessment skills through supervised practice in an agency setting.

Prerequisite(s): ENL1813S and FAM1114 and FAM1115 and FAM1131 and FAM1254 and FAM1382 and PSY0029
Corerequisite(s):FAM1334

FAM1131 Addictions

Addictions affect people of all walks of life, in virtually all practice areas. Students gain basic knowledge regarding substance abuse and addiction recovery. Students learn the issues involved in dependency and how to work with clients who are using or misusing substance. Emphasis is placed on the student's capacity to examine their own attitudes towards people who use substances, so that they can help without judgment.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1134 Mental Health

Mental health is an increasing concern in Canada today and impacts all areas of social service work. Students explore a variety of mental health challenges faced by adults and the current trends in services, treatments, legislation/policies and medications. Attitudes, biases and barriers affecting persons with mental illness are examined in relation to the role of social service workers.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1129 and FAM1131 and FAM1263
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1139 Placement II

Practical learning experiences support the integration of theory and professional expectations in social service agencies. Students are provided the opportunity to deepen and expand their knowledge and skills through supervised practice in an agency setting. Students assume increasing levels of responsibility and independence, and continue to increase their writing, reporting, interviewing and engaging and assessment skills as social service professionals.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1121 and FAM1129 and FAM1142 and FAM1263 and FAM1334 and PSY0031
Corerequisite(s):FAM1335

FAM1142 Legislation and Advocacy

Legislation and Advocacy provides invaluable exposure to governance, courts, legislation and advocacy in Canada. Students explore, through research, role plays and discussion, such topics as immigration, human rights, policing, violence, income support, housing, criminal justice, child welfare and legal aid.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1254
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1149 Placement III

Practical learning experiences support the integration of theory and professional expectations in social service agencies. Students are provided the opportunity to deepen and expand their knowledge and skills through supervised practice in an agency setting. Students assume increasing levels of responsibility and independence, and refine their writing, reporting, interviewing and engaging and assessment skills as social service professionals.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1134 and FAM1139 and FAM1272 and FAM1280 and FAM1283
Corerequisite(s):FAM1444

FAM1254 Social Welfare in Canada

Students study the historical progress of the social welfare system in Canada. In addition, the fundamentals of inequity, poverty, homelessness, violence, oppression, and discrimination are introduced in both historical and current delivery of service. Students examine their own values and practices to develop their knowledge and to critically analyze current social welfare practices.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1260 Assessment, Planning and Practice in Social Service Work

Assessment and intervention are core skills for qualified social service workers and are fundamental learning requirements for practice in the field. Strong assessment skills are required to develop an accurate understanding of clients and their needs, to identify problems, and to serve as a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of helping interventions. Students develop skills related to data collection, data interpretation, problem identification and intervention. Students learn to assess common issues experienced in the field, as well as develop comprehensive and effective intervention plans.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1134 and FAM1139 and FAM1272 and FAM1280 and FAM1283
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1263 Crisis Intervention

One's ability to function in a professional manner in crisis situations is essential in the field of social service work. Students differentiate long-term counselling from crisis intervention and examine crisis related assessment techniques and intervention strategies to de-escalate and support those in crisis. Students explore the concept of professional burnout as it relates to crisis. Students practise Non-Violent Crisis Intervention techniques and qualify for an additional certification upon successful completion.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1115 and FAM1382
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1272 Community Development

Community development focuses on systemic issues that create social problems. It involves working to achieve social justice through structural change. Students learn how to improve community awareness, create strategic alliances, foster collaboration and build community. Social Service Workers are guided by the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Social Workers and Social Service Workers and by principles of sustainable community development capacity. Students develop a basic understanding of community development while undertaking a community project in a group.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1142 and FAM1263
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1278 Aging in Society

This course is designed to provide the student with a better understanding of the challenging aspects of growing older. Various topics related to ageing are explored from a social work perspective. Through increased knowledge, students become more effective in their interactions with older adults. The course examines concepts such as institutional vs. community living and diseases related to ageing.

Prerequisite(s): PSY0029 and PSY0031 or PSY0031
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1280 Applied Social Service Work Practice

Social service work practice is the foundation for meeting human needs in our society. Students apply core values, ethics and helping skills critical to social service work, combining philosophical bases for practice with experiential learning to develop helping skills. Students explore strength-based practice and principles of empowerment to establish relationships with clients including individuals, families, groups and communities. Students refine their skills and knowledge through interactive lectures and role-playing.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1129 and FAM1263
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1283 Working with Families

Understanding family systems is essential to providing optimum support to families. Students are grounded in family systems theory and explore patterns of interaction in terms of the wide range of problems that families and partners bring to social agencies. Emphasis is placed on how the family has changed over the generations and various intervention options. Students utilize genograms, timelines and eco maps to assess family functioning.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1129 and FAM1263
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1334 Placement Seminar I

Professional development of social service worker students continues with the extension of the learning opportunities that integrate theory and practice. Students learn with and from each other's direct experiences as beginning practitioners. The integration of theory, field-related issues and personal development is essential for students to formalize a basic understanding of how our community, clients and professionals work together to effect positive change. Students learn to identify and practice clinical, organizational and personal skills in a solution-focused manner. Students explore and solve ethical issues as they relate to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Social Workers & Social Service Workers. Self-care is emphasized.

Prerequisite(s): ENL1813S and FAM1114 and FAM1115 and FAM1131 and FAM1254 and FAM1282
Corerequisite(s):FAM1129

FAM1335 Placement Seminar II

Professional development of social service worker students continues with the extension of the learning opportunities that integrate theory and practice. The integration of theory, field-related issues and personal development is essential for students to formalize a basic understanding of how our community, clients and professionals work together to effect positive change. Students learn to identify and practice clinical, organizational and personal skills in a solution-focused manner. Students explore and solve ethical issues as they relate to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Social Workers and Social Service Workers. Self-care is emphasized.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1129 and FAM1334
Corerequisite(s):FAM1139

FAM1382 Social Service Worker Ethics

Ethics is the cornerstone for providing effective Social Service Work. Student examine the principles of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice as outlined by the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers as well as scopes of practice. Students gain the necessary skills and knowledge required to practice within an ethical framework.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

FAM1444 Placement Seminar III

Professional development of social service worker students continues with the extension of the

learning opportunities that integrate theory and practice. The integration of theory, field-related issues and personal development is essential for students to formalize a basic understanding of how our community, clients and professionals work together to effect positive change. Students learn to identify and practice clinical, organizational and personal skills in a solution-focused manner. Students explore and solve ethical issues as they relate to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Social Workers and Social Service Workers. Self-care is emphasized.

Prerequisite(s): FAM1139 and FAM1335
Corerequisite(s):FAM1149

GED0432 General Education Elective

Students choose one course, from a group of general education electives, which meets one of the following five theme requirements: Arts in Society, Civic Life, Personal Development, Social and Cultural Understanding, and Science and Technology.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

PSY0029 Developmental Psychology I

Success in ascertaining the needs of children and parents and our ability to work with them is inexorably intertwined with our knowledge of the pre-natal to adolescence development stages. Students investigate key developmental concepts, such as physical, cognitive and psychosocial aspects of the life span. Students apply a variety of theories and psychological concepts to in-class activities, such as watching videos, reading, individual and group presentations, research and reflection to gain a greater appreciation of the value of developmental psychology.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

PSY0031 Developmental Psychology II

Consideration and application of developmental stages from adolescence to the time of our death is essential when supporting the needs of people throughout their lifespan. Students explore the key concepts associated with the study of development. Students apply and reflect on a variety of theories and developmental concepts and stages.

Prerequisite(s): PSY0029
Corerequisite(s):none