

To prepare to be a professional social worker, you should major in... ***social work!***

An accredited bachelor's or master's degree in social work will give you the educational foundation you need to qualify for and perform successfully in a professional social work position. Many social work positions in the U.S. require that those hired have an accredited BSW or MSW and be licensed as social workers in their states of residence (or the states where they work).

The [Council on Social Work Education](#) (CSWE) is the organization that accredits social work degree programs in the U.S. This organization sets the standards that a school must meet in order to be accredited. These standards require that accredited programs offer a certain set of core courses, along with electives in the student's area of special interest. They also require a field placement (internship) that must be completed as part of the degree program.

The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) is most often offered as a generalist degree. Master of Social Work (MSW) programs often offer various areas of specialization, such as mental health, health care, aging, children and youth, international social work, and so forth. Some MSW programs also offer a choice between specializing in direct practice and administration.

You do not need to have a BSW before entering an MSW program. If you have a bachelor's degree in another field and want to be a social worker, you can enter an MSW program.

To find a listing of accredited BSW and MSW programs in the U.S., as well as programs that are in candidacy for accreditation, visit the [CSWE](#) site and click on "Member Program Directory."