

PH.D. PROGRAM CURRICULUM

First Summer

June-August
Smith College campus

First Internship Placement

September-April
Sites around the country

Second Summer

June-August
Smith College campus

Second Internship Placement

September-April
Sites around the country

Third Summer

June-August
Smith College campus

For those ready to elevate clinical social work, Smith College School for Social Work offers a Ph.D. program that prepares you to lead the conversation regarding some of the world's most pressing social issues. Combining research with constant examination of theory, the program will provide you with the knowledge and credentials for academia, or public or private practice, and enable you to become a valued mentor to new generations of your profession. Our low residency program focuses your energy on academics each summer while you immerse yourself in research and clinical practice in cities and towns across the country throughout the rest of the year.

You'll spend three intensive summers on campus with your cohort taking specialized courses in teaching philosophy and methods to help prepare you for an academic career. We also encourage you to engage in some form of clinical teaching—in the classroom, in an agency, as a supervisor or as a consultant—as part of your course of study. Typically, students take on this work during the second internship or the final summer of on-campus study, and they are mentored by an adviser or by individual faculty members.

You'll spend the intervening time in internships – two clinical and one research – where you will study and apply advanced practice methods with a range of clients, and study clinical theories and processes in depth. You'll also be encouraged to gain experience in clinical teaching and contribute to theory development. After your second summer, you'll also complete your research internship by choosing from three options: affiliate with ongoing research, partner with an SSW faculty member on existing research, or propose your own research project.

Finally, as in all Ph.D. programs, you must complete an individual doctoral dissertation. Dissertation topics may address any issue relevant to clinical social work, and students select topics in consultation with their research supervisor. Dissertations (https://scholarworks.smith.edu/ssw_etd/) vary in design and research methods, but all involve a new, independent contribution to the clinical social work literature.

Through the coursework you will advance your knowledge of:

- Clinical theory and practice with individuals, couples and families, with a focus on contemporary psychodynamic theories
- Clinical social work research, including both qualitative and quantitative methods and advanced statistics
- Social theories that advance racial and social justice in clinical social work practice
- The philosophical foundations of contemporary social work practice
- Social work education
- Social policy as related to clinical practice and mental health