SOCIAL WORKERS WEAR MANY HATS. They must be able to negotiate like lawyers and mediate like judges, with the cultural competence of diplomats and leadership skills of CEOs. The social worker is the essential link between individual families and their troubles on the one hand, and the community and its resources on the other.

If services are not available, the social worker jumps into the political arena and helps to create them by working with community leaders on public policy. Social workers will remain on the front line, providing direct services and advocating for the restructure of our country’s national priorities, in order to improve the standard of living for all Americans.

Minot State’s social work program is a well established program that began in 1976 and is accredited at the undergraduate level by the Council on Social Work Education. Graduates of the program receive a B.S.W. (Bachelor of Social Work) degree and are eligible to take the examination to qualify as a Licensed Social Worker (L.S.W.) in North Dakota. The program prepares students for entry level generalist social work practice with individuals, families, small groups, organizations, and communities. Particular emphasis is placed on needs of rural clients, those living in poverty, and the American Indian population of North Dakota. Students are prepared for graduate studies and may qualify for advanced standing in MSW programs.

The social work program’s organization and implementation is conducted without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, gender, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, political orientation or sexual orientation.

Coursework
The curriculum includes a strong liberal arts base, studies in social work practice, social welfare policy, human behavior, social research, and additional coursework in economics, psychology, sociology, and political science. Minot State’s social work program does not give academic credit for life experience or work experience, nor does the program allow such experience to be substituted for the field.
Career Opportunities

The demand for social workers has grown and is expected to continue increasing. Job availability will, of course, depend on available funding, and funding is often dependent on federal, state, and local government. Employment opportunities are most concentrated in urban areas, but many social workers also work in rural settings. Jobs are found in a wide variety of places: hospitals, social service offices, residential treatment centers, schools, nursing homes, community-based programs, and legal/judicial agencies.

Clients include people of all ages, cultural backgrounds, levels of skill, and socioeconomic standing. Some of the problems and conditions that are addressed include mental illness, child abuse and neglect, alcohol and drug abuse, mental retardation, legal problems, disabilities, foster care and adoption, family violence, and poverty.

Field Education

Students are required to complete 450 hours of direct practice with either a public or private human service agency. This supervised field practice enables students to get valuable hands-on experience in working with clients. The internship is also supplemented by an on-campus seminar that deals with integrating social work theory with the reality of specific practice situations.