

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE: CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE

Program Overview

The Child Welfare Practice Certificate prepares students for competent, ethical, and evidence-informed practice with children, families, and communities involved in the child welfare system. Grounded in culturally responsive, family-centered, and strengths-based approaches, the certificate equips students with the knowledge and skills necessary to assess risk, ensure safety, promote permanency, and support child and family well-being.

Through focused coursework in child welfare policy and practice, prevention and intervention in child abuse and neglect, and sexual abuse, students gain a comprehensive understanding of the causes, prevention, and treatment of child maltreatment. Emphasis is placed on assessment, intervention, and evaluation strategies across micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice, as well as the application of trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate approaches.

Students examine the historical and contemporary foundations of public child welfare services, including federal and state laws, policy development, and service delivery systems. The certificate highlights critical issues affecting families, including cultural and ethnic considerations, systemic inequities, and the impact of trauma. Graduates are prepared to work effectively in child welfare agencies, advocacy organizations, schools, healthcare settings, and community-based programs, with a strong foundation in best practices that support child safety, family stability, and long-term well-being.

Admission to the Certificate Program

Admission to the certificate program is granted to individuals who apply and meet the standards for admission to a graduate program. The certificate is awarded upon successful completion of all coursework with a minimum grade of “C” and an overall grade point average of 3.0 or above. No transfer credits may be used.

Certificate Requirements

SOWK 630	Child Welfare	3
SOWK 632	Prevention and Intervention in Child Abuse and Neglect	3
SOWK 656	Sexual Abuse	3
Total Credits		9