

Professional Educator License (PEL) in School Social Work

revised 8.17.26

To obtain a Professional Educator License Endorsed in School Social Work

Students interested in the School Social Work Track must meet with their Academic Advisor by end of January (or as soon as possible thereafter) of the calendar year during which they plan to begin a School Social Work practicum placement. Academic Advisors will review the requirements for successful completion of the PEL. The Advisor will complete an online form “clearing” the student to enter the School PEL Track. Please note that the PEL track is rigorous with demanding academic work and extensive writing assignments reflective of reports conducted by professional school social workers. Students must have strong writing skills and excellent time management skills. Students must be able to keep up with weekly assignments.

Course Requirements:

Students are required to complete the total number of credit hours in accordance with their plan of study, including 2 school social work track classes that are to be taken concurrently with their internship:

- SWK 664 Social Work Practice – offered in Fall semester only
- SWK 679 School Social Work with Exceptional Students – to be taken in Spring semester after taking 664

Students must meet the following grade minimum grade requirements. Failure to maintain the minimum grades will impact the internship, resulting in either termination of placement or a change of duties. Students may retake courses in the future at additional cost.

- GPA of 3.0
- Bs or better in SWK 610 and SWK 611
- Cs or better in all other courses
- Passing grades of Practicum Evaluations
- Cs or above in all courses. Per ISBE, students with C- or lower in any MSW course cannot enroll in the School Track or obtain their Professional Educator License.

Internship Requirements:

Internships may be completed at a pre-K through 12th grade publicly funded school placement that is approved by the Dominican University School of Social Work Practicum Office.

- Some school districts require applicants to pass a criminal background check. Any cost associated with this is the responsibility of the applicant.
- Students must follow the school calendar of the district in which they are interning, often beginning their internship in mid-August and ending in June.
- Students must be supervised by a Practicum Instructor who has an MSW, two years post-graduation experience, and a PEL Endorsed in School Social Work.
- **Hours Requirements:**
 - Advanced Generalist MSW students: 600 hours (300 in fall and 300 in spring semesters)
 - Post-MSW students: 480 hours (240 in fall and 240 in spring semesters)

Students who are not able to comply with the requirements listed above for the entirety of the internship year will no longer be considered PEL eligible, and therefore, not a school social work intern. They *may* be able to continue in their placement with a change in duties, as a school based mental health practitioner for example, but would not be allowed to provide IEP minutes or perform other special education specific duties reserved for an intern who is PEL eligible.

Post-MSW Social Workers Seeking Admittance into the Short-Term Approval Process must complete specific requirements - Contact the Graduate Admissions Department at gradinfo@dom.edu for more information. The State of Illinois is currently issuing Short-Term Approvals only through June 30th, 2029. <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/educator-licensure-approvals.aspx>

Documentation of PEL Requirement Completion:

To receive approval for the PEL, students must submit documents on a CANVAS site called “SSW School Social Work Endorsement (PEL CANVAS Site)” Most of these are assignments from the SWK 664, 679, 611, 651, 612 courses. Several submissions require a full **GRADED RUBRIC**. All parts of the rubric and the final grade must be visible. Detailed instructions can be found on the CANVAS site.

- School Social Work Contract
- Final Practicum Evaluations for SWK 611 and 651
- SWK 612 Single System Design paper (MSW students only. This does not apply to post-MSW students). Submit the assignment and the graded rubric.
- Completion of Safety Module
- Evidence of passing PEL School Social Work Content Exam 238 or 184
- Students completing the Post-MSW under a Short-Term Approval must submit the Employee Evaluation completed by your District, showing evidence of a proficient or higher rating. The evaluation must use a School Social Work-specific Evaluation rubric, such as Danielson Model rubric adapted for School Social Workers (see sample in the CANVAS site).
- The following assignments with their respective graded rubrics:
 - Social Developmental Study
 - Planning Instruction: Sample IEP goal
 - Planning Instruction: Group Planning
 - Snapshot assignment: The Learning Environment
 - SWK 664 Final Exam
 - Functional Behavior Analysis and Behavior Intervention Plan

It is the student’s responsibility to upload all the documents for approval by the School Track Lead. Upon approval, the School Track Lead sends authorization to the DU Licensing Officer, who assists the student through the endorsement process. **Students should not attempt to seek the endorsement on their own. They must go through the University.**

Out of State students in the School Social Work Track

Students who do not reside in the state of Illinois are allowed to select the Social Work Track provided the following conditions are met and accepted: The student must acknowledge and accept that they will be in courses completing work designed for the Illinois Professional Educator Licensing Standards. The student must acknowledge and accept that they will need to secure a placement in a public school in their state that allows the student to participate in and facilitate the required activities to meet the competencies of the Illinois Professional Educator License including, but not limited to:

- Creating, implementing, and monitoring IEP goals for students.
- Participating in and/or conducting behavioral intervention assessments.
- Participating in, and or/conducting other academic and social emotional evaluations.

The Social Work Practicum Office will need to confirm that the student's public-school selection for placement meets the criteria listed above as well as ensure that the placement has a supervisor that has a MSW with 2 years post-graduation experience working in a public-school setting.

The student must acknowledge and accept that they are responsible for ensuring that their home state requirements for school social worker licensure or credentialing will be met by the curriculum provided by the School Social Work track. The Dominican University faculty and staff will not be able to confirm that information on the student's behalf.