

Social Work for a Challenging Society

International Semester Programme

September 2021 — February 2022
Bachelor of Social Work

2021
2022

think. act. become.



International semester programme

- 30 ECTS
- Taught in English
- Autumn Semester
- Mid-September — End of January (specific dates can be found on the website)

In Belgium as well as in Europa and worldwide, the societal, cultural, economic and political context changes rapidly and affects living conditions.

These changes give rise to challenges that impact the competence-based training and the profession of social workers.

Personal and professional development, as well as development into global citizens, are essential components of the education of future social workers.

Dealing with diversity, acting towards inclusion, developing sustainable interventions, advocacy of the most vulnerable people, influencing policy, framing and reframing are just some of the challenges that need to be overcome.

In the bachelor in Social Work of Artevelde University of Applied Science we are committed to a strong generic competence profile that can be deployed in various professional contexts.

Challenged? Curious?

We invite you to take part in this programme!

Competences

think & act



Professional identity

become





Courses

Mixed groups with local students

Global and local social work

4 ECTS

Social work covers a wide range of social interventions, involves various actors and interacts dynamically with the broader society on a local and global level. This course focusses on gaining a deeper insight in social work by means of local, global and comparative perspectives. The principle question we will deal with is how global phenomena and trends can have an impact on social work in a local context in general and on the job floor in particular. Study visits in Ghent, testimonials of social workers and theoretical framing are all ways to better understand social work in a local context (definition, vision, professional field and practice ...). The influence of and interaction with a dynamic societal, cultural and economic context, and addressing current challenges are important elements of this story, as well as discovering the boundaries and opportunities of social work.

Bachelor project

6 ECTS

Starting from a concrete research question, a concrete problem or challenging issue students are collaborating in small groups in order to create a concrete output or answer. The project will be carried out in co-creation with a local professional organisation and coached by a lecturer.

Professional development

3 ECTS

Professional development is a process which should be ongoing and involves the critical reviewing of practice to identify learning requirements. It serves as the crossroads where theory, social research, field experience and personal growth meet to integrate into a unique and continually developing professional identity. It also implies an awareness of and well-founded vision on the challenges social work faces in today's world. Students reflect actively on their own professional identity. The reflection model used as well as the framework of 21st century skills respond to the rising challenges for our profession in a globalized and ever-shifting world.

Storytelling

3 ECTS

Social work starts by connecting with people in / and with their environment(s). Vulnerabilities and inequalities on individual as well as structural level are growing and new forms of needs are emerging. The professional positioning of social work demands both an examination of and a response to the complex configuration of needs produced by these effects. Storytelling or the narrative approach can provide a basic understanding of what works and what does not. Grasping the stories of people on the individual, group as well as community level suggest qualified solutions

as input in the decision making process of social change. The course explores several methods and perspectives on this issue.

Online social work with individuals and groups

3 ECTS

Digitisation affects our society deeply. We live in a GAFA economy in which Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon determine the rules of information, doing business and communicating. Not to forget that in a large country like China there are also a number of decisive players. Take Uber or AirBnB as an example: thanks to smart digital technology, these companies manage to offer a successful and user-friendly alternative to the classic taxi and hotel industry without owning a single vehicle or hotel room. Or look at the rapid growth of e-commerce: Amazon and Zalando, but also Alibaba challenges the traditional retail sector. And what about social work? Does digitisation also affect the way of working in this area? How can or should we relate to this as social worker? Central question of this course: How can we strengthen organisations in their online processes of communication, care and co-creation? This course focuses on the reflection about specific apps in either online and blended care or online social work with groups. In addition, students will gain some hands-on experience in the methodology of using online tools (chat and e-mail) as a social worker.

Diversity

3 ECTS

Facing the reality of diversity and being able as social worker to deal with this reality is the focus of this course. Diversity is defined very broadly but at the same time very tangible. We approach the reality of diversity by different perspectives and in diverse contexts/settings. The individual as well as structural aspects of diversity as well as the societal and personal impacts are discussed. Related issues such as exclusion, xenophobia, racism, polarization... Diversity is also challenging the social worker's role and position and asks for innovative answers and the design of inclusive approaches.

Influencing and realizing politics and policy

4 ECTS

Social work is related to Policy and politics. More over the social work profession always has a policy-oriented mission. The outcome, context, policy level and concrete implementation of this mission can vary, but trust, support, dialogue and participation are always part of the social worker's processes. To implement their commitment to society, social workers can be required to influence government policy, and/or shape it. This interesting tension is often part of the job of a social worker. Students will be involved in the case study of Europe.

Philosophical perspective

3 ECTS

Option 1:

Philosophical perspective on bioethics

Depending on our perspective, what science is capable of today and tomorrow, can be hopeful or frightening. In more than one way, medical technology is able to modify human life dramatically.

In more than one way, our idea of what is a healthy life and what is called disease, is crucial to question the limits of scientific interventions in human life. These questions are intertwined with social work as a practice. As social work is focused on human welfare and happiness, medical technology aims at the same goals but from a different angle.

Option 2:

Philosophy of late modernity

Modernity, which started in the 17th century, is not over and done with. Yet, there are some crucial changes, and in order to highlight those, one refers to our times as late modernity (or postmodernity). One of those changes concerns the very heart of modern philosophy, to wit the “ego” or, more technically put, the subject. Modern philosophy is often characterized as a “subject philosophy” – cf. Descartes’ famous dictum I think, therefore I am – whereas our times are characterized by a dissolution of the subject and a fragmentation of the ego. We will explore this shift from a modern solid, self-transparent

“ego” to an instable, insubstantial “self,” from René Descartes to contemporary authors such as Judith Butler and Slavoj Žižek.

Used materials are text fragments taken from philosophy and literature, parts from films and television series..

The Internation Semester is aimed at students...

- *in the subject area of Social Work (or a discipline close to this)*
- *from Higher Education Partner Institutes which we have a BILAK or MOU with*
- *with an advanced level (obtained 90 ECTS in social work or related studies)*
- *sufficiently proficient in English, level B2*



Interested?

Next steps and procedure

Step 1

Nomination by the International Officer of the involved institution

Email the following documents to international.socialwork@arteveldehs.be:

- data of the selected student
- confirmation that the student meets the necessary requirements, such as the advanced level and the language skills.

Step 2

Application by the student

The student enrolls in the online mobility application on www.artevelde-uas.be/enrolment

Period of online application:

1 March 2021 – 15 May 2021



Location

Bachelor of Social Work
Artevelde University of Applied Sciences
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