

The practice of social work emphasizes the importance of human relationships as the vehicle through which learning and change occurs. This emphasis on relationships pervades the work and requires that practitioners engage with others to advocate and innovate.

THE PROGRAM

The social work program, which is based on a strong foundation in the liberal arts, prepares students for generalist social work practice and graduate study. The program focuses on ethical behavior and competent practice, following Virginia Wesleyan's honor code and the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) Code of Ethics. Through community service and classroom experience, students encounter the relationships and social contexts in which they will learn and eventually practice. Students are immersed in the topics of mental and physical health, human rights, diversity, oppression, and economic and social justice, through a data-driven, outcomes-based curriculum in which critical thinking skills are applied.

THE MAJOR

Work in the major provides students with the opportunity to learn relevant history, information and values related to social work, study the theories which underlie practice, begin to practice interventions in projects, research, observation and role play, and reflect on how their personal values and those of the profession intersect. Students have ample opportunity to learn in many ways based on their learning style, to read, write, reflect, integrate and question.

THE COURSES

Classes at VWU are small and interactive. Some of the courses required for the social work program are Lifespan Development and Behavior, Diversity and Social Problems in Social Work, Social Work with Individuals and Families, Ageing in the Media, and Women on the Brink.

INTERNSHIPS/UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

The final spring semester is spent learning in the field 32-36 hours per week under the supervision of a qualified supervisor. The potential internship is carefully chosen by the Internship Director to match the student's interests, knowledge and developing skills. The students focus on their integration into the field both in the agency and in a professional role. Assignments reinforce professional skills and behaviors. Students learn from one another and develop an understanding of the broad array of resources available to their clients.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

The Bachelor of Social Work program at Virginia Wesleyan commits itself to the clients whom our students will ultimately serve. Social work is a profession which works with people in the most difficult of life circumstances. We believe that our clients deserve only the very best prepared workers. We commit ourselves to our program and to its reputation of excellence. Our program is respected within our community and commands some of the very best internship experiences as a result. We are committed to maintaining this reputation for the program and for the University. Ultimately, our clients deserve nothing less.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Benjamin D. Dobrin

Dean of the D. Henry Watts School
of Professional Studies
Director, Department of Social Work
Professor of Social Work
bdobrin@vwu.edu

April Christman, MSW, LCSW

Field Education Coordinator
Assistant Professor of Social Work
achristman@vwu.edu

