

SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER – GERONTOLOGY (SSWG)

About the Program

Statistics Canada reports that people over the age of 65 account for nearly 20 percent of the total population. This has created a demand for trained professionals to work with older adults. A lot of our students have multiple career opportunities to pursue upon graduation. This two-year diploma program combines the knowledge, professional values and skill sets of social service to assist older adults to maintain independence and a good quality of life. The program focuses on a holistic strength-based approach, current legislation and best practices.

Along with your studies in mandated government initiatives and service delivery models for working with seniors, you will have the opportunity to apply your knowledge in a 220-hour field placement and participate in additional educational training. You will engage in personal reflection and growth, work within a team, apply professional ethics, and successfully achieve the Ministry Vocational Learning outcomes so you can confidently enter the workforce. Once you complete the program, you are eligible to apply for registration in the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (see below for more details).

Please note: The SSWG program that starts in January at King Campus runs consecutively through the summer and students will complete the two-year diploma in one and a half years.

As a graduate of this program with a GPA of 3.0 or higher, you are eligible to pursue Seneca's Honours Bachelor of Mental Health and Addiction (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/programs/fulltime/BMHA.html>) program. This unique pathway allows you to earn a degree within two years (4 semesters plus a work-term) after completion of a summer bridging stream.

Completion of the summer bridging stream includes the following courses:

- MHB399 Advanced Studies in Community Mental Health
- MHB499 Health and Community Psychology
- MHB599 Introduction to Mental Health and Addiction
- MHB699 Crisis Counselling and Therapeutic Approaches
- MHB799 Trauma Methods and Practice in Community Mental Health

Provincial Registration

As a graduate of this program, you will meet the educational requirements to be eligible to apply for registration in the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW). To practice in Ontario as a "Social Service Worker" or a "Registered Social Service Worker," you must apply for registration. For more information, please visit [ocswssw.org](http://www.ocswssw.org/) (<http://www.ocswssw.org/>)

Credential Awarded

Ontario College Diploma

Duration

4 Semesters (2 Years)

Starts

January, September

Program and Course Delivery

This program is offered in Seneca's hybrid delivery format. Some coursework is online and some must be completed in person. Students will need to come on campus to complete in-person learning requirements.

Skills

Throughout this program you will develop the following skills:

- therapeutic program planning
- individual and group modes of facilitation
- interventions with clients, families and significant others
- service co-ordination and navigation
- interpersonal communications skills related to working with bereavement and grief
- assessment of client's needs and strengths
- advocacy

Work Experience

Field Work

Students in this program will have the opportunity to participate in a field placement. During your placement, you will gain hands-on experience and establish valuable networking connections. Many students in this program receive multiple high-paying job offers in anticipation of completing their studies.

Throughout your placement, you will work in a professional capacity and your performance will be evaluated based on an approved three-part learning contract. This contract will be agreed upon by you, the approved fieldwork agency and the Seneca SSWG program. Your Field Placement Coordinator will provide support and assistance throughout the process, enabling you to secure a placement that aligns with your career goals.

Fieldwork commitments typically involve:

- Two full days per week during semesters two, three and four, amounting to approximately 220 hours per semester.
- Block placements scheduled throughout the program, where you will engage in full-time work for one week at a time.
- One placement at a residential setting and another placement at a community agency that offers services to seniors. This arrangement allows you to gain diverse experience in different environments, further enhancing your understanding and skills in the field.

Your Career

When you graduate from this program, these are the types of career options you can explore:

- Government agencies
- Not-for-profit agencies and facilities, such as long term care facilities, group homes, and community agencies providing services to older adults living in the community such as adult day programs
- For profit facilities such as retirement homes
- Co-ordination of home support services

- Supportive housing co-ordination
- Co-ordination of volunteer programs
- Therapeutic recreation/activation

Program of Study

Course Code	Course Name	Weekly Hours
Semester 1		
COM101 or COM111	Communicating Across Contexts Communicating Across Contexts (Enriched)	3
GWL137	Introduction to Aging	3
GWL147	Gerontology Field Work Seminar	3
SLL307	Sociology: A Practical Approach ¹	3
SSW101	Interpersonal Communications	3
SSW102	Anti Oppressive Practice	3
Semester 2		
GWL208	Gerontological Group and Activation Techniques	3
GWL212	Interviewing and Assessing Older Adults	3
GWL219	The Retirement Home Industry - Overview and Skills	3
GWL247	Integrative Field Work Seminar	3
GWL257	Gerontology Field Work	14
GWL261	Therapeutic Program Planning	3
Semester 3		
GWL318	Therapeutic Interventions for Dementia	3
GWL347	Integrative Field Work Seminar	3
GWL357	Gerontology Field Work	14
GWL377	Volunteer Program Management	3
SSW311	Service Coordination and Advocacy	3
plus: General Education Course (1)		3
Semester 4		
GWL407	Death, Dying, Grief and Bereavement	3
GWL447	Integrative Field Work Seminar	3
GWL457	Gerontology Field Work	14
SSW402	Community Practice	3
plus: General Education Course (2)		6

¹ This course COM470 Interpersonal Communication, SCL100 An Introduction to Sociology, or SOC360 Diversity: Challenge and Promise will not fulfil a General Education requirement for the SSWG program, but may be used as a General Education option outside the SSWG program.

Program Learning Outcomes

This Seneca program has been validated by the Credential Validation Service as an Ontario College Credential as required by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

As a graduate, you will be prepared to reliably demonstrate the ability to:

- Identify needs, strengths and resources of older adults to assist them in setting goals that promote their optimal functioning, well being, and quality of life.
- Plan, implement and evaluate services and programs in response to identified needs and goals of older adults.
- Function effectively as a member of a multi-disciplinary and interagency team, in the development and provision of relevant services and programs for older adults.
- Record information accurately and communicate effectively in oral, written and electronic formats, in adherence to privacy, and freedom of information legislation.
- Establish and maintain helping relationships which adhere to professional, legal and ethical standards aligned to social service work.
- Recognize diverse needs and experiences of individuals, groups, families, and communities, to promote accessible and responsive programs and services.
- Develop strategies and plans that lead to the promotion of self care, improved job performance, and enhanced work relationships.
- Work in communities to advocate for change strategies that promote social and economic justice and challenge patterns of oppression and discrimination.

Admission Requirements

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), or equivalent, or a mature applicant (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/mature-applicants.html>)
- English: Grade 12 C or U, or equivalent course

Canadian citizens and permanent residents may satisfy the English requirements for this program through successful Seneca pre-admission testing. (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/mature-applicants.html>)

Recommended upgrading for applicants who do not meet academic subject requirements. (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/upgrading-options.html>)

Additional Information

After admission but before beginning field placement, you must obtain a Police Vulnerable Sector Check.

You will also need a flu shot and TB test for your placement at long-term care facilities.

International Student Information

International admissions requirements vary by program and in addition to English requirements (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/international/apply/how-to-apply/admission-requirements/english-requirements.html>), programs may require credits in mathematics, biology, and chemistry at a level equivalent to Ontario's curriculum, or a postsecondary degree or diploma, equivalent to an Ontario university or college. Program-specific pre-requisite courses and credentials are listed with the admission requirements on each program page. To review the academic requirements please visit: Academic Requirements - Seneca, Toronto, Canada ([senecapolytechnic.ca](https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca)) (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/international/apply/how-to-apply/admission-requirements/academic-requirements.html>).

Pathways

As a leader in academic pathways, we offer a range of options that will allow you to take your credential further in another Seneca program or a program at a partner institution.

To learn more about your eligibility, visit the Academic Pathways (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/pathways.html>) web page.

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