The BA in Human Services

The human services field continues to be one of the fastest growing in Massachusetts and the nation. Human service providers work in diverse settings, from state agencies to nonprofit organizations. Within these settings they carry out different roles, including advocate, case manager, educator, mediator, and provider of support services for individuals, families, and groups.

The Program

The BA Program in Human Services at UMass Boston’s College of Liberal Arts (CLA) prepares students for purposeful careers in human services and graduate education. It provides a theoretical framework, and hands-on experience working with individuals, families, and their communities. In this major, students learn to see people and systems ecologically, envisioning the individual in constant interaction with his or her environment. We examine how individuals and small groups affect and are affected by larger systems, including those that are socioeconomic and political.

Our curriculum provides knowledge and skills that are essential for the delivery of human services, with an emphasis on direct service. We offer service-learning opportunities that allow students to engage in local communities, working on mutually defined issues for the purpose of using one’s education to make a difference.

Acquired Skills and Knowledge:
- Human development, family functioning, and community dynamics
- Interventions with individuals, families, and groups
- History and structure of human services systems
- Research skills for gathering information to support effective service delivery
- Ethics, values, and policies guiding human services practice

Major-Specific Courses

The human services major requires ten courses, including:

- HUMCTR 220 The Life Cycle and the Environment
- HUMCTR 230 History of Social Welfare
- HUMCTR 320 Intervention with Individuals and Small Groups
- HUMCTR 322 Intervention with Large Systems
- HUMCTR 330 Human Service Systems for Contemporary Families
- HUMCTR 345 Professional Responsibility and Ethics
- HUMCTR 401 Research and Information for Evidence-Based Practice
- HUMCTR 420 Professional Internship Seminar
- HUMCTR 421 Human Service Policy and Practice (Capstone)
- HUMCTR 425 Case Management

Electives

In addition to courses that meet specific general education and major requirements, students are free to take elective courses that complement their work in the major, or satisfy any other interests they may have. For example, students who want to focus on Youth (children and youth in after school out-of-school-time programs) may take Human Services’ Youth Work Electives that include: YTHCTR 220-Understanding Youth; YTHCTR 320-Models of Practice in Youth Work; YTHCTR 340-Analyzing a Youth Issue; YTRCTR 410-Working on a Youth Issue: Working with Urban Youth. The rich resources of the college and the university are also open to them.

Degree Requirements

Human services majors must complete 120 credits, at least 30 of them at UMass Boston. Like all candidates for UMass Boston bachelor’s degrees, they must meet the university’s general education requirements. These include freshman English courses, interdisciplinary seminars, courses focused on quantitative reasoning and human diversity, and distribution courses in several areas of study. Students must also demonstrate elementary proficiency in a foreign language and meet the university’s writing proficiency requirement. Admission to the major requires a 2.5 GPA.

Internships and Service-Learning

All students majoring in human services participate in fieldwork experiences ranging from information-gathering activities, such as observations and interviews, to application-of-theory-to-practice through service-learning and internships. Students entering the major can expect that some human services classes will have community engagement as a requirement. In the senior year, the internship and capstone seminars together will require at least 150 fieldwork hours.

To Apply

- visit www.umb.edu/admissions
- email enrollment.info@umb.edu
- call 617.287.6000

For More Information

- visit www.umb.edu/academics/cla
- email amanda.achin@umb.edu
- call 617.287.5129 or 617.287.7232