

**NORTHERN LIGHTS COLLEGE  
REGISTRAR'S OFFICE  
PROGRAM INFORMATION AND COMPLETION GUIDE**

**Program Name:** Social Services Worker Diploma  
**Credential/Certification:** Social Services Worker Diploma  
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**Program Description:**

The Social Services Worker Diploma (SSWD) program provides opportunities for students to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and qualifications to enable them to work in a human services worker field. The program involves two years of full-time study, with a combination of practice, theory, and academic course requirements aimed to prepare students to become critical practitioners with an emphasis on advocacy, social justice, and social change. The program may also be taken on a part-time basis.

**Admission Requirements:**

English is the language of instruction in all programs at NLC, thus it is imperative that NLC students meet minimum English Language Proficiency requirements.

In University Arts and Sciences and Related Programs, it is understood that the minimum English Language Proficiency requirement is that required to graduate from a Canadian high school program conducted in English. This is defined in the English Language Requirement document.

\*Note that some SSWD program elective courses have specific pre-requisites. Meeting the entrance requirements for the SSWD program does not ensure course pre-requisites have been met for all available courses.

**Post-Admission Requirements:**

A. Students will be required to attend a program-specific orientation session, usually held the first class of SSWD 110. Accommodations can be made for students enrolling before the add/drop date or part-time students.

B. ALL students must complete a Ministry of Justice Schedule B Criminal Record Check (CRC) for working with children and vulnerable adults before beginning the program. Failure to do so will prevent students from registering in SSWD 220: Practicum and Seminar and may result in program withdrawal. Please see the NLC Criminal Records Check page for completion instructions and more information pertaining to Criminal Record Checks.

**Length of Program:** (weeks and total hours) 60 weeks (four terms) of full-time study comprising 1055 hours.

Part-time study is an option. However, all key\*\* SSWD courses must be completed within six years of program admission.

\*\*Key SSWD courses include SSWD 110, SSWD 120, SSWD 210, SSWD 215/PSYC 220/ECTA 121, SSWD 220, SOWK 200, and SOWK 201.

**Program Intake:** (start/finish dates) Depending on capacity, program intakes may occur in May, September or January.

Note: January intake is for domestic students only.

**Available Seats:** 25 in Fort St. John and 25 in Dawson Creek. Students at remote campuses will be added to the seat capacity of the Fort St. John or Dawson Creek campus (see program "Location" below).

**Application Deadline:** Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis.

**Career Prospects:** The SSWD program prepares students to work as paraprofessionals in a variety of social service and health agencies. Typical jobs include, but not limited to: financial assistance worker, bail supervisor, residential service worker, social work assistant, mental health assisted living worker, family support worker, supported employment, community living worker, transition houses, women's programs, Aboriginal support worker and family violence worker.

**Affiliations/Partnerships:** The SSWD Diploma at NLC is recognized for up to 60 transfer credits to UNBC, TRU, UVIC, RRU. For individual, course-by-course transfer to various institutions, students are advised to consult the BC Transfer Guide.

**Location:** Dawson Creek and Fort St. John campuses. The SSWD program can be available at remote campuses through a combination of online and videoconference course delivery methods. Arrangements can be made practicum placements at remote locations.

**Additional Requirements/Supplies:** (fees, supplies, materials)

A. Attendance Requirement: For each of the key\*\* SSWD courses, absences should not exceed 20% of contact time (i.e., 9 hours).

B. Professional Suitability: Student professional growth will be evaluated throughout the program. Students must adhere to the BC College of Social Workers Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, along with all NLC student conduct policies. Further details are described in the SSWD Program Handbook and in course syllabi.

**Eligibility for Canada Student Loans:** (Yes or No)

Yes

**Required Minimum Grade:** (overall and/or minimum within a course)

SSWD students must achieve a minimum grade of C+ in all key\*\* SSWD courses. An SSWD student who does not obtain a minimum grade of C+ (65%) in these key\*\* courses will receive an F grade.

A minimum program cumulative grade point average of 2.33 (C+) must be obtained from all courses applied to the Diploma.

A 'P' (Pass) must be achieved in SSWD 220.

**Residency Requirement:** (percentage of courses which must be taken at NLC)

Fifty per cent of coursework in the SSWD program must be completed at Northern Lights College. Students must complete the second-year practicum course, SSWD 220, at Northern Lights College.

**Required Courses:** (list courses required to complete credential and total hours for each course)

Semester One:

-ENGL 100: Academic Writing (3 credits/45 hours)

-SSWD 110: Introduction to Social Service Work (3 credits/45 hours)

OR

IHSW 101: Introduction to Human Service Work (3 credits/45 hours)

-PSYC 101: Introduction to Psychology I (3 credits/45 hours)

-One of the following:

- ANTH 101: Cultural and Social Anthropology I (3 credits/45 hours)

- ANTH 102: Cultural and Social Anthropology II (3 credits/45 hours)

- CRIM 101: Introduction to Criminology (3 credits/45 hours)

- CRIM 103: Psychological Explanations of Criminal and Deviant Behaviour (3 credits/45 hours)

- CRIM 131: Introduction to the Criminal Justice System (3 credits/45 hours)

- CRIM 135: Introduction to Canadian Law and Legal Institutions (3 credits/45 hours)

- CRIM 210: Youth and the Criminal Justice System (3 Credits/45 hours)

- IHSW 103: Indigenous Wellness and Healthy Practices (3 credits/45 hours)

- IHSW 104: Social and Health Issues in Indigenous Communities (3 credits/45 hours)

- PHIL 110: Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking (3 credits/45 hours)

- SOCI 101: Introduction to Sociology I (3 credits/45 hours)

- SOCI 102: Introduction to Sociology II (3 credits/45 hours)

- SOSC 220: Research Methods for the Social Sciences (3 credits/45 hours)

-One open elective (choose one elective course in any area at the baccalaureate level.)

Semester Two:

One of:

- ENGL 105: Nonfictional Prose (3 credits/45 hours)

OR

ENGL 110: Introduction to Workplace Communications (3 credits/45 hours)

OR

ENGL 111: Poetry and Drama (3 credits/45 hours)

OR

ENGL 112: Prose Fiction (3 credits/45 hours)

OR

ENGL 230: Technical Writing (3 credits/45 hours)

-SSWD 120: Ethics and Practice (3 credits/45 hours)

-PSYC 102: Introduction to Psychology II (3 credits/45 hours)

-One of the following:

- ANTH 101: Cultural and Social Anthropology I (3 credits/45 hours)
- ANTH 102: Cultural and Social Anthropology II (3 credits/45 hours)
- CRIM 101: Introduction to Criminology (3 credits/45 hours)
- CRIM 103: Psychological Explanations of Criminal and Deviant Behaviour (3 credits/45 hours)
- CRIM 131: Introduction to the Criminal Justice System (3 credits/45 hours)
- CRIM 135: Introduction to Canadian Law and Legal Institutions (3 credits/45 hours)
- CRIM 210: Youth and the Criminal Justice System (3 Credits/45 hours)
- IHSW 103: Indigenous Wellness and Healthy Practices (3 credits/45 hours)
- IHSW 104: Social and Health Issues in Indigenous Communities (3 credits/45 hours)
- PHIL 110: Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking (3 credits/45 hours)
- SOCI 101: Introduction to Sociology I (3 credits/45 hours)
- SOCI 102: Introduction to Sociology II (3 credits/45 hours)
- SOSOC 220: Research Methods for the Social Sciences (3 credits/45 hours)

-One open elective (choose one elective course in any area at the baccalaureate level.)

Semester Three:

- SOWK 200: Introduction to Social Work Practice (3 credits/45 hours)
  
- SSWD 210: Methods of Intervention and Practice Areas (3 credits/45 hours)
  
- WGST 100: Women and Gender Studies (3 credits/45 hours)
- OR
- PHIL 111 Contemporary Moral Issues (3 credits/45 hours)
  
- PSYC 211: Developmental Psychology (3 credits/45 hours)
- OR
- HDEC 101 (3 credits/45 hours) and HDEC 104 (3 credits/45 hours) \*\*

One of:

- SSWD 215: Interpersonal Communications (3 credits/45 hours)
- OR
- PSYC 220: Interpersonal Communications (3 credits/45 hours)
- OR
- ECTA 121: Interpersonal Communications (3 credits/45 hours) \*\*

Semester Four:

- SOWK 201: Introduction to Social Welfare (3 credits/45 hours)
  
- SSWD 220: Practicum and Seminar (3 credits/200 hours)
  
- HIST 104: Canada, Post-Confederation (3 credits/45 hours)
- OR
- POLI 101: The Government of Canada (3 credits/45 hours)

One of:

- FNST 100: Aboriginal Peoples of Canada (3 credits/45 hours)

OR

FNST 102: Treaties and Aboriginal Rights (3 credits/45 hours)

OR

ANTH 202: Ethnography of Canada's First Nations People (3 credits/45 hours)

OR

ANTH 203: Contemporary Canadian Native Peoples (3 credits/45 hours)

One of:

- PSYC 235: Structure and Dynamics of the Family (3 credits/45 hours)

OR

SOCI 204: The Family in Canada (3 credits/45 hours)

OR

IHSW 102: Indigenous Family and Parenting (3 credits/45 hours)

OR

ECEC 201: Building Professional-Family Partnerships (3 credits/45 hours)\*\*

Notes:

Students should consider post-diploma plans when choosing program-specific and open electives. In particular, students moving on to degree programs are advised to consult with receiving institutions to ensure students have selected required courses for a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program.

Students wanting to have an indigenous focus on Indigenous studies should select four of the following courses:

- ANTH 202: Ethnography of Canada's First Nations People (3 credits/45 hours)

- ANTH 203: Contemporary Canadian Native Peoples (3 credits/45 hours)

- IHSW 101: Introduction to Human Service Work (3 credits/45 hours)

- IHSW 102: Indigenous Family and Parenting (3 credits/45 hours)

- IHSW 103: Indigenous Wellness and Healthy Practices (3 credits/45 hours)

- IHSW 104: Social and Health Issues in Indigenous Communities (3 credits/45 hours)

- IHSW 105: Community Helping Project

- FNST 100: Aboriginal Peoples of Canada (3 credits/45 hours)

- FNST 102: Treaties and Aboriginal Rights (3 credits/45 hours)

\*\* Students who have completed the first 3 semesters of NLC's Early Childhood Education and Care diploma program (fifteen three-credit courses), and graduates of NLC's Education Assistant Certificate, will be granted course credit for SSWD 110; also, as indicated above, HDEC 101 & HDEC 104 will substitute for PSYC 211, ECTA 121 for SSWD 215, and ECEC 201 for either PSYC 235 or SOCI 204. These courses may impact transfer to other institutions; check the BCCAT transfer guide for information about transfer credit at <https://www.bctransferguide.ca/>

## General Academic English Language Proficiency Requirements

### 1. Overview

English is the language of instruction in all programs at NLC. Thus, it is imperative that NLC students meet minimum English Language Proficiency requirements.

In University Arts and Sciences and additional baccalaureate-level programs, students are required to have English Studies 12, English First Peoples 12, ENGL 050, or an equivalent course. Required final grades are specified by program.

### 2. Select Baccalaureate-Level Programs

The following English Language Requirement applies to the Associate of Arts Degree (general)<sup>1</sup>; to diplomas in Archaeology, Business Management,<sup>2</sup> Criminology, Interactive Technologies and Game Design, Land and Water Resources, and Social Services Worker; and to certificates in Business Management and University Arts and Sciences.<sup>3</sup>

A. Domestic students<sup>4</sup> and students from countries<sup>5</sup> that practice Standard Written English must have official transcripts demonstrating that they have met one of the following English Requirements with a "B" grade or higher: English Studies 12, English First Peoples 12, English 050, or English 099; alternatively, any university-level English course<sup>6</sup> with a "C" grade or higher. Students who do not meet one of the above English requirements must complete the NLC Writing Assessment for appropriate course placement.

B. International students and domestic students who received their secondary education in French or another language must show that they have met the NLC English requirement for baccalaureate-level programs specified above by demonstrating one of the following:

- An IELTS result with an overall score of 6.0 or higher with no band less than 6.0. Students with a writing band of 6.0 are required to complete English 099 with a "B" grade or higher in their initial semester. Alternatively, NLC will accept a TOEFL iBT of 78, Canadian Academic English Assessment (CAEL) 60 overall band, Canadian Language Benchmark Assessment (CLBA) 8 in each section, Pearson Test of English (PTE) 57, Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB) 76, Cambridge-Michigan Language Assessment (CaMLA) 69 plus NLC's Writing Assessment.
- Documented completion of a post-secondary credential that is assessed as equivalent to a similar program from a reputable Canadian institution with its own appropriate English Language Requirement.
- Documented completion of the last two years of full-time Canadian secondary school education in English with a minimum grade of "B" in English 12, English Studies 12, English Literature 12, English 12 First Peoples, or equivalent.
- Completion of NLC's English for Academic Purposes (EAP) 060-level Certificate.

Where international students and domestic students who received their secondary education in French or another language are unable to provide an appropriate IELTS score or equivalent, such students may be conditionally enrolled in an NLC program with permission of the Chair. Upon arrival at NLC, these students will be assessed by the ESL department and transferred to the appropriate level of the EAP program as necessary.

<sup>1</sup>Not applicable to the Associate of Arts Degree (Health Studies) or to the Associate of Science Degree.

<sup>2</sup>Not applicable to the Executive Assistant Diploma.

<sup>3</sup>Not applicable to the Engineering Certificate, the Engineering Studies Certificate, the General University Arts and Sciences Certificate, the Indigenous Human Services Worker Diploma.

<sup>4</sup>Except those whose secondary education was conducted in French or in another language.

<sup>5</sup> Australia, England, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland, Wales, United States of America.

<sup>6</sup> From reputable institutions in Canada or from the above list of countries that practice Standard Written English.