

General Objectives for the Masters in Human Services Program through Your Pace

The mission of the Masters in Human Services program prepares practitioners for leadership in Human Service organizations. Practitioners are empowered to lead with integrity, utilize data driven and evidence-based practice to manage human service organizations, advocate for social justice, and deliver evidence-based interventions to promote the rights and well-being of individuals, families, and communities. The Masters degree is an interdisciplinary, competency-based degree developed jointly by the UMPI Social Work and Psychology programs. The interdisciplinary nature of this program design dovetails with the broader mandate of the field of human services to meet “human needs through an interdisciplinary knowledge base” and one that focuses on prevention, problem remediation, and enhancing the quality of life for clients/populations (National Organization of Human Services, 2024). Leveraging our existing Associate of Arts in Human Services and Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, the Master of Science in Human Services allows students to progress from earning an associate’s degree to earning a master’s degree, advancing their opportunities within the behavioral health field. For students who already hold a bachelor’s degree, this program allows them to leverage their existing academic foundation and professional experience to strengthen their transition into master’s level leadership roles.

This degree supports the [University of Maine System Strategic Plan](#), and the [UMPI Mission and Ethic of Care](#) by supporting learners of all backgrounds and locations with comprehensive tools, technology, and resources. The Masters degree in Human

Services also supports these missions by providing students with the knowledge and skills to make a difference in their local communities through an innovative online, competency based program that is benchmarked against national standards for providing services to a diverse range of human service agencies and clients.

The master's program was developed to meet the highest professional standards, specifically mapping curriculum to the Council for Standards in Human Service Education (CSHSE) guidelines. This ensures the program is ready for formal accreditation. The coursework also aligns directly with the national requirements for the Human Services-Board Certified Practitioner (HS-BCP) credential. At the master's level, having this certification proves you have the advanced theoretical knowledge needed to step into supervisory and leadership roles.

Evidence of Need

Evidence of need is indicated in all areas of human services, nationally. The United States [\(US\) Bureau of Labor Statistics \(2025\)](#) reported that employment in community and social service occupations are projected to grow much faster than the average with about 313,700 openings projected each year. Other examples include the key behavioral and mental health roles, human service professionals assume. For example, the United States is experiencing a behavioral Health crisis. In Maine alone, an ongoing shortage of human service professionals has led to a behavioral health crisis in the state. NASW-ME (2024) reports average wait lists for mental health care as high as 8900 and for case management 1395. In Aroostook County, wait times to see a human service professional can range from one year to

eighteen months (Popp, 2023). A similar situation exists across the border in New Brunswick, Canada, where the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers (2023) has noted a shortfall of 272 social workers or community workers by 2030 (NBASW, 2023).

Involvement of Universities with Similar Programming

There is currently no Masters in Human Services offered in the UMS system. Additionally, as noted by the Council for Standards in Human Services Education, “The master’s degree in human services differs from a counseling degree in that graduates are prepared to contribute to positive change through a wide range of service and administrative roles within organizations, rather than delivering therapeutic services.”

Extent of Support Presently Available and/or New Costs Required

Support for this program will come from the YourPace design team through the UMPI Center for Teaching and Learning, YourPace marketing, and existing faculty in the Social Work and Psychology programs. Additionally, qualified adjuncts will be identified as needed for course delivery. As these departments, processes, and personnel already exist, costs should be kept to a minimum. The timeline for this certification is detailed below:

Timeline

Dates	Activities
January-May, 2026	-Benchmark human services standards against proposed human services curriculum. -Design curriculum, program and course learning outcomes -Prepare the ITP
Summer, 2026	Prepare documents for UMPI Curriculum Committees
September/October 2026	Submissions to Curriculum Committees; Development of the Program Proposal to CAOC.
January-May, 2027	Request for Brightspace shells, designers finalized and meetings with UMPI Center for Teaching and Learning.
June-July, 2027	Final review of course content by Institutional Designers and Subject Matter Experts; Your Pace Marketing Alerted

Intent to Plan: Competency Based Masters in Human Services

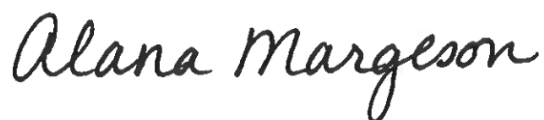
June-July, 2027	Office of Student Data, Courses Created in Maine, Street, Final Teaching Assignments; Meet with Your Pace Advisors
Fall, 2027	Degree begins.

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References

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National Organization of Human Services (2024). What is human services"
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New Brunswick Association of Social Workers (2023). 2023-2028 Social work recruitment and retention strategy. *New Brunswick Association of Social Workers*. <https://www.nbasw-atsnb.ca/>

Popp, E. (2023, November 15). Renewed energy to fix Maine's broken mental health care system in upcoming legislative session. *Maine Morning Star*, <https://mainemorningstar.com/2023/11/15/renewed-energy-to-address-maines-broken-mental-health-care-system-in-upcoming-session/>

US Bureau of Labor Statistics (2025). Community and Social Service Occupations. *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/>