

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES WORKER

Program: DSWR

Credential: Ontario College Diploma

Delivery: Full-time + Part-time

Work Integrated Learning: 2 Field Placements

Length: 4 Semesters

Duration: 2 Years

Effective: Fall 2025

Location: Orillia

Description

Students develop the knowledge and skills to support children, youth and adults who have a developmental disability in all aspects of life across the lifespan. Respecting an individual's right to direct their life, students develop advocacy skills that promote self-determination and assist individuals in the development of skills that encourage independence, community engagement, and citizenship.

In the counselling and apartment labs, students practice sign language, medication administration, health care skills, counselling supports, and use of assistive devices and technology. In collaboration with community partners, students plan and implement activities that promote inclusion and self-determination. Other areas of study include intellectual, physical and mental disabilities, autism and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, support options, health and well-being, social relationships, and teaching strategies.

Students consolidate this learning in fourteen weeks of supervised field placements in their preferred geographical location.

Career Opportunities

Diverse opportunities within the field of developmental services are available in educational, community living, and day services organizations. Job titles include direct support professional, educational assistant, community support worker, community living counsellor, vocational coach, senior's program counsellor, developmental services advocate, supported independent living counsellor, home care provider, life skills instructor, specialized care provider, employment coach, family support worker, and recreation inclusion counsellor.

Program Learning Outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

1. conduct oneself in an ethical, competent and accountable manner in all professional relationships;
2. provide person-directed supports and services that respect and promote self-determination for people with developmental disabilities;
3. provide for the safety of people with developmental disabilities, self and others in compliance with all applicable legislation, regulations and standards of practice;
4. support health and well-being of people with developmental disabilities;
5. employ and adapt formal and informal strategies to support the learning of people with developmental disabilities;

6. provide leadership in the development of inclusive communities;
7. develop professional and personal plans that enhance job performance and well-being;
8. apply basic entrepreneurial strategies to realize social, environmental and/or financial rewards;
9. apply knowledge of cultures and traditions in the promotion of an inclusive community and in the planning and implementation of services and supports.

Program Progression

The following reflects the planned progression for full-time offerings of the program.

Fall Intake

- **Sem 1:** Fall 2025
- **Sem 2:** Winter 2026
- **Sem 3:** Fall 2026
- **Sem 4:** Winter 2027

Articulation

A number of articulation agreements have been negotiated with universities and other institutions across Canada, North America and internationally. These agreements are assessed, revised and updated on a regular basis. Please contact the program co-ordinator for specific details if you are interested in pursuing such an option. Additional information can be found on our website at <https://www.georgiancollege.ca/admissions/credit-transfer/> (<http://www.georgiancollege.ca/admissions/credit-transfer/>)

Admission Requirements

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalent or mature student status
- Grade 12 English (C or U)

Mature students, non-secondary school applicants (19 years or older), and home school applicants may also be considered for admission. Eligibility may be met by applicants who have taken equivalent courses, upgrading, completed their GED, and equivalency testing. For complete details refer to: www.georgiancollege.ca/admissions/academic-regulations/ (<https://www.georgiancollege.ca/admissions/academic-regulations/>)

Applicants who have taken courses from a recognized and accredited post-secondary institution and/or have relevant life/learning experience may also be considered for admission; refer to the Credit for Prior Learning website for details:

www.georgiancollege.ca/admissions/credit-transfer/ (<https://www.georgiancollege.ca/admissions/credit-transfer/>)

Criminal Reference/Vulnerable Sector Check

Placement agencies require an up-to-date clear criminal reference check and vulnerable sector check prior to going out on placement. Students should obtain their criminal reference three months prior to placement; checks conducted earlier may not be considered current. As some jurisdictions require longer lead-time for processing, please check with the program coordinator to ensure you allow for sufficient turn-around

time. It is the student's responsibility to provide the completed document prior to placement start.

NOTE: A record of criminal offences, for which a pardon has not been granted, may prevent students from completing their placements, thereby affecting their ability to graduate.

Additional Information

Applicants must have an up-to-date immunization record, Standard First Aid and CPR level C or HCP certification before proceeding on field placement. It is recommended that First Aid training is completed prior to program entry.

Graduates of the Child and Youth Care, Early Childhood Education, Social Services Worker and Personal Support Worker programs may be eligible for Advanced Standing in the Developmental Services Worker program.

Graduation Requirements

- 19 Program Courses
- 2 Communications Courses
- 3 General Education Courses
- 2 Field Placements

Graduation Eligibility

To graduate from this program, the passing weighted average for promotion through each semester, from year to year, and to graduate is 60%. Additionally, a student must attain a minimum of 50% or a letter grade of P (Pass) or S (Satisfactory) in each course in each semester unless otherwise stated on the course outline.

Program Tracking

The following reflects the planned course sequence for full-time offerings of the Fall intake of the program. Where more than one intake is offered contact the program co-ordinator for the program tracking.

Semester 1		Hours
Program Courses		
DEVS 1009	Augmentative Communication	28
DEVS 1010	Teaching Strategies	42
DEVS 1011	Person-Directed Planning	42
DEVS 1019	Introduction to Developmental Services	42
DEVS 1020	Community Building and Active Living	42
HUMN 1016	Human Lifespan Development	42
Communications Course		
Select 1 course from the communications list during registration.		42
General Education Course		
Select 1 course from the general education list during registration.		42
Hours		322
Semester 2		
Program Courses		
DEVS 1012	Body Systems and Disorders	42
DEVS 1013	Social Relationships	28
DEVS 1021	Developmental Disabilities	42
DEVS 2001	Intervention Strategies	42
DEVS 2016	Dual Diagnosis	42
HLTH 2000	Health Skills	42
Communications Course		
Select 1 course from the communications list during registration.		42
General Education Course		

Select 1 course from the general education list during registration.		42
Hours		322
Semester 3		
Program Courses		
DEVS 2015	Supportive Counselling	42
DEVS 2019	Positive Behavioural Supports	42
DEVS 2027	Professional Practice and Field Preparation	42
DEVS 2028	Developmental Services: Issues and Trends	42
DEVS 2029	Gerontology in Developmental Services	28
DEVS 2032	Spectrum Disorders	42
HLTH 2005	Pharmacology and Medication Administration	42
General Education Course		
Select 1 course from the general education list during registration.		42
Hours		322
Semester 4		
Field Placements		
DEVS 2030	Field Placement A	280
DEVS 2031	Field Placement B	280
Hours		560
Total Hours		1526

Graduation Window

Students unable to adhere to the program duration of two years (as stated above) may take a maximum of four years to complete their credential. After this time, students must be re-admitted into the program, and follow the curriculum in place at the time of re-admission.

Disclaimer: *The information in this document is correct at the time of publication. Academic content of programs and courses is revised on an ongoing basis to ensure relevance to changing educational objectives and employment market needs.*

Program outlines may be subject to change in response to emerging situations, in order to facilitate student achievement of the learning outcomes required for graduation. Components such as courses, progression, coop work terms, placements, internships and other requirements may be delivered differently than published.