

Tulane brings one-of-a-kind disaster resilience leadership degree online

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sholden1@tulane.edu



Reggie Ferreira, professor and director of the Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy.

Starting next fall, Tulane University School of Social Work will launch an online version of its unique Master of Science in Disaster Resilience Leadership (MS-DRL), a pioneering program that equips future leaders with the skills necessary to address and manage the complex challenges posed by disasters and crises.

Housed within Tulane's Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy, the program is

designed to meet the need for trained professionals in disaster resilience as the frequency and intensity of disasters continue to rise globally. The MS-DRL program aims to cultivate a new generation of leaders who can strategize, implement and assess effective human-centered disaster preparedness and recovery initiatives to strengthen resilience.

The program is the latest in a series of disaster leadership initiatives from Tulane, including the School of Professional Advancement's [Master of Professional Studies in Homeland Security](#) and the Master of Public Health in Disaster Management offered by the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine's [Department of Environmental Health Sciences](#).

“In the disaster resilience space we have been on the forefront of innovative curricula, that are focused on addressing the most vexing questions of our lifetime” said Reggie Ferreira, professor and director of the Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy. “With our focus on fostering disaster resilience and equitable disaster recovery practices, we are ensuring that our graduates are able to meet the community where they are but also ensure that community needs and wants are addressed.”

The MS-DRL is a 36-credit-hour program comprising 12 graduate-level courses that can be completed in anywhere from three to six semesters. The curriculum focuses on developing a foundation of disaster mitigation, risk reduction, preparedness, response, and recovery knowledge through applied experiences with community-based organizations and interdisciplinary research. Courses are taught by experts across several fields, including economic development, nonprofit management, social work, public health, and emergency management, and delivered in a synchronous format to maximize student connection.

“Our one-of-a-kind master of science in Disaster Resilience Leadership is perfectly poised to fill the employment gap by focusing on the human and community impacts of disasters in ways that other programs don’t,” said Tulane School of Social Work’s Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management Amanda Rosales. “Our flexible online and on-campus programs are open to all educational backgrounds. All you need is a passion for supporting humans in a time of need and an interest in learning how to promote and establish equitable recovery.”

With the launch of the Online MS-DRL, the School of Social Work now offers online options for all of its programs. In addition to the Online MS-DRL, TSSW offers online versions of its full- and part-time Master of Social Work degrees, full- and part-time MSW/MS-DRL dual degrees, a Doctor of Social Work (DSW) degree, and certificates in Disaster Resilience Leadership and Sport Social Work.

“We are working to train our students to be proactive and collaborative disaster resilience leaders,” said Susan Davies, interim dean for the School of Social Work. “The DRLS academic program is supported by evidence-based practice from New Orleans and beyond, aimed to provide our students with the best possible educational experience.”

Applications for the online MS-DRL are currently being accepted for fall 2025 admission. For more information, visit tssw.tulane.edu.