

---

## BA Handbook Appendix B

### ADMISSIONS

#### College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Criteria for Admission

Applicants to the BA Social Work program must have met the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) requirements and be admitted to CLAS. Students are admitted to the CLAS on the basis of three criteria: completion of a set of high school unit requirements; high school class rank or college transfer grade-point average; and ACT/SAT results or a combination of high school/college records and standardized test scores. These requirements are further explained on the web: <https://admissions.uiowa.edu/undergraduate-programs/first-year-admission-college-liberal-arts-and-sciences> and in the current University of Iowa General Catalog: <http://catalog.registrar.uiowa.edu/registrar/catalog/liberalartsandsciences/socialwork/> Applicants to the School of Social Work must meet additional criteria detailed below. Due to class size restrictions, not all students who meet the criteria are admitted when the applicant pool is large.

#### I. School of Social Work Criteria for Selective Admission for BA Social Work

##### A. Academic qualifications

1. A cumulative GPA of 2.50 (on a 4.0 scale) at the time of admission. Applicants who do not meet the minimum GPA but demonstrate strengths/potential in other areas may be granted consideration for admission on an individual basis.
2. A grade of C or above in SSW:2222(042:022)-Introduction to Social Work or comparable course taken in another college and approved by the School of Social Work.

B. Application deadline details available here: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/socialwork/undergraduate-program/admission>

The application is a writable pdf and begins on page 11 of this document. It includes demographic and academic information, a series of essays and a table of volunteer or work experiences. Students that have taken the introductory level social work course(s) at an institution other than the UI, shall request that instructor to complete the Transfer Reference Form found at the end of this document.

The review committee will be assessing the applicant's personal qualities and values that are considered essential for the professional practice of social work, including: good intellectual capacity and analytical skills combined with an ability to work constructively with others; good communication skills, judgment, adaptability, sense of responsibility, resourcefulness, caring and compassionate qualities; and a personal commitment to social justice, empowering individuals, and serving underrepresented groups. Applicants' willingness and interest in addressing social justice issues that affect human beings as a consequence of oppression, poverty, marginalization and alienation because of the intersection of multiple factors, including those identified by CSWE: class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, sex, sexual orientation, and religious, non-religious or spiritual beliefs is fundamental to a successful experience in the School. These qualities are to be evidenced in the application.

A description of each of the parts of the application follows.

#### Demographic and Academic Information

Complete these sections within the writable pdf application.

#### Essays

These essays are your opportunity to help us understand more about you, who you are, and what you hope to accomplish as part of our School of Social Work and in your career.

#### Instructions for writing your essay

There are five required essays for all applicants and one reapplication essay required for students who have previously applied to the School of Social Work.

Essay 5 is an additional opportunity for you to distinguish yourself and enhance your application. This statement helps the admissions committee understand why you are a good fit for the School of Social Work.

Each essay identifies a maximum number of words allowed per response. It is your responsibility to limit your responses to no more than the limit, including spaces and punctuation, for each question.

The accuracy and quality of writing in this statement will be evaluated as evidence of the Candidate's potential for professional written communication.

- ▯ Compose your statements in a word-processing program to take advantage of spelling and grammar tools, as well as character counters.
- ▯ Once you are satisfied with your essays, save them and paste them into the space provided on the writable pdf. Proofread once more to make sure no odd characters or line breaks have appeared.

If you are reapplying to the School of Social Work, your responses should be different from those previously submitted. The admissions committee will review your prior application and statements.

**Please answer the following in essay format.**

Required Essay 1

We are interested in how you selected social work as your academic and career path. Reflect on things you have done or experienced that have helped you make an informed decision to pursue a social work career. There is a 400 word limit to this essay.

Required Essay 2

Choose **one** of the following ethical situations and write how you would respond. Discuss how your response is congruent with the Social Work Code of Ethics\*. Be sure to site the code and how it applies to your response. \*Code of Ethics may be found online: <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>. There is a 250 word limit to this essay.

- You notice that you and one of your clients have mutual friends on social media. You and this client recently started discussion about termination. The client is requesting permission to connect and communicate with you through one of your personal social media accounts, such as a "Friend" request in Facebook." What would you do? How does the code guide you with this decision?
- You are in a social setting and your friend starts gossiping about one of her co-workers. This co-worker is one of your clients and the gossip is around issues that your client is dealing with during therapy sessions. This "making fun" gossip is potentially hurtful to your client's reputation. What would you do? How does the code guide you with this decision?

Required Essay 3

Tell us about a time you persevered in the face of failure or significant challenges. What problem-solving skills or personal attributes did you use to get through the situation? What did you learn about yourself from the experience? There is a 250 word limit to this essay.

Required Essay 4

Describe an experience you have had with someone from a different background (e.g., racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, age, dis/ability) that impacted you either positively or negatively. What happened and what did you learn from the experience? There is a 250 word limit to this essay.

Required Essay 5

Please include anything else about yourself that is not found elsewhere in your application that you feel would be important for us to consider. There is a 250 word limit to this essay.

Reapplication Essay <sup>B-2</sup> *(Respond to this prompt only if you have applied for admission to the School of Social Work in the past.)*  
Describe what you have done to strengthen your social work application since your last application. Include relevant academic,

volunteer, employment, and personal experiences. There is a 250 word limit to this essay.

### **Volunteer/Work Experience Table (in writable pdf application)**

We are interested in relevant social service experiences you've had that have informed your decision to become a social worker. There are two tables, the first focuses on volunteer and professional experience(s) for positions that have been longer term (lasted over a period of two months or more), the second table focuses on volunteer and professional experiences that have been short term but you feel are important.

#### **I. Who Can Apply**

Applicants for the Social Work major may include Social Work Interest majors, students transferring from other majors such as sociology or psychology, or students transferring from other institutions. All applicants must complete the BA Social Work application (described above) which is reviewed by members of the admissions panel. Transfer students who have completed Introduction to Social Work or equivalent course at another institution, are required to submit a completed reference form from that course instructor. No other references will be accepted. Applicants who are not accepted on their first attempt may apply the following year. There is a maximum of two attempts to apply to the BA program.

Students interested in applying to the School of Social Work may declare 42P (Social Work Interest) through the University's Academic Programs Office at any point during the first 3 years in their academic program but usually when sufficient time remains to complete the program within the normal four-year schedule. Students who have earned more than 72 hours are not permitted to declare 42P. The pre-major declaration qualifies students to participate in the Student Association and other activities of the School, but they are not permitted to register for required social work major courses. (Freshman students are advised by The Academic Counseling Center. Social Work Interest students with more than 24 semester hours and until admitted to the major are advised by CLAS Senior Academic Advisor Tiffany Phillips: [tiffany-b-phillips@uiowa.edu](mailto:tiffany-b-phillips@uiowa.edu), 319-335-2487, in W149 Seashore Hall. The BA Program Director and/or Program Administrator confer with these advisors upon request and meet annually with the advising staff to provide updates on social work requirements.) The student will remain a Social Work Interest major until formal admission to the BA Social Work major or until they exceed 72 hours when they must declare another major to register for classes. Students are expected to enroll in SSW:1022 Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States, or SSW:2222 Intro to Social Work, and apply to the major in their sophomore year. Juniors are permitted to apply and if they do so, it is with the expectation that at least one additional summer semester of coursework will be necessary to complete all of the requirements of the major, due, in part, to the sequencing of social work courses.

#### **Transfer students**

Transfer students should follow the admissions process delineated above, noting the **February 15th deadline** for application. If the transfer student has taken the introductory level social work course at another institution, the student shall obtain that instructor's completed reference form. Substitute references must be pre-approved. The completed reference should be sent to Admissions Coordinator: Tomeka Petersen, UI School of Social Work, 308 North Hall, Iowa City IA 52242 **prior to the February 15th deadline**. The form may be emailed to [ssw-admissions@uiowa.edu](mailto:ssw-admissions@uiowa.edu) or faxed 319-335-1711.

Upon admission to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, transfer students' transcripts are evaluated by Undergraduate Admissions and the Registrars' Office and the student is informed of their remaining general educational requirements by the University's Office of Admissions Degree Evaluation form. Transfer students who have taken an equivalent introductory social work course elsewhere may apply to be reviewed for admission during the annual review period. Previously earned credits which may apply to the major are evaluated by the Undergraduate Program Director on a case-by-case basis for applicability to the Social Work major. Generally, courses earned more than 10 years ago will not be accepted. Transfer students are expected to present a transcript and syllabi of courses for which they are requesting social work course requirement equivalency or waiver. The BA Program Director or Program Administrator meets individually with each student to determine if equivalent course content has been covered. A plan is developed, based upon this review and filed for the student and student's advisor's information. In the case of social work courses, only courses earned in a CSWE accredited program are considered equivalent, except for the Intro to Social Work course. If sufficient similar course content has been covered, an individual study may be designed or waiver granted but the hours must be taken in social work.

#### **II. Admission Decisions**

The applicant will be notified prior to the early registration period in the spring of their acceptance or non-acceptance. Decisions regarding applicants who are currently enrolled in but have not yet completed the introductory social work course, or

for applicants who do not meet the minimum GPA, may be delayed until the spring semester's grades have been submitted. Effort is made to assure representation of persons underrepresented in social work practice and from a diversity of social, cultural, and economic groups. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, gender, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, ability, and socioeconomic class.

### III. Records

All admission materials will be retained until the student graduates; at which time they will be destroyed. All materials submitted by a non-accepted student will be retained for two years.

### IV. Review Procedures

The admission criteria, policies, and procedures are reviewed annually by the Program Administrator. Major changes in policies or procedures are reviewed by the Admissions Committee and reported to the Faculty of the Whole. Questions regarding the Undergraduate Admissions Policy should be directed to the Program Administrator, Kate Kemp, 319-335-1254, or email: [kate-kemp@uiowa.edu](mailto:kate-kemp@uiowa.edu).

### Tips for Writing the Essays of Your Social Work Application

1. In thinking about your life experiences and attitudes that have shaped your interest in the Social Work profession, you might consider such questions as:
  - Who has most influenced my choice of the profession? How did they influence my choice?
  - What life events, both positive and negative, have influenced my choice of the profession? What did I learn from these experiences?
  - Balance the Personal with the Professional. For example, it is appropriate to discuss personal challenges that you have experienced. However, these challenges should be used, for example, to demonstrate how they increased your knowledge or skills, or as a basis for understanding your motivation and commitment to the Social Work program and profession.
  - How have my experiences with persons who are different from me (by color, gender, sexual orientation, age, belief systems, etc.) influenced my choice of the profession?
  - How have my paid or volunteer experiences influenced my choice of the profession? What important lessons about a choice of Social Work as a career did I learn from these experiences?
  - Using the [Code of Ethics](#) of the National Association of Social Workers and its Preamble, how are your values consistent with the Code?
  - What are my strengths and in what areas do I hope to grow as a student in this Program?
  - What issues or experiences have I experienced (or are currently experiencing) that may affect my choice of the profession and/or ability to complete the degree requirements?
  - What are my short term and long term goals as a professional social worker? Do I have special interests in working with a particular problem (such as homelessness, violence, substance abuse, etc) or with a particular population (youth, the elderly, etc.)? How do these interests influence my choice of goals?
2. Because of the word limit of each essay, be selective in the material you present. Obviously you cannot respond to every question posed above; they are questions to ponder as you reflect on what material you will write about.
3. No Bad Grammar Please. The essays will be used to evaluate your written communication skill. Make sure your grammar and spelling are correct. Use topic sentences to begin paragraphs. If you have difficulty with your writing skills, get help from a Writing Lab on-campus. These skills are important not only in writing your essays, they will be invaluable as you write papers for your Social Work courses and as you write reports in the future as a professional Social Worker.
4. Get feedback. Ask someone to read the essays, with directions, and give you critical feedback about its organization and content. Because members of the Admission Committee cannot read and give you feedback about your Essay in advance of your submitting it, other possible feedback might be obtained from other social workers with whom you might have contact in your volunteer placement etc.
5. Do not wait until the night before it's due to write this application! Give yourself time to reflect on the point you want to make. Seek information that you need from books, websites, etc. Write a draft. Sleep on it. Re-write the draft as a polished product. Get feedback. Re-write as necessary to improve the organization or content.

The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination in employment, educational programs, and activities on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual. The University also affirms its commitment to providing equal opportunities and equal access to University facilities. For additional information <https://diversity.uiowa.edu/office/equal-opportunity-and-diversity> (319) 335-0705.

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to attend all University of Iowa-sponsored events. If you are a person with a disability who requires a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in this program, please contact School of Social Work Student Services Center, in advance at: [ssw\\_office@iowa.uiowa.edu](mailto:ssw_office@iowa.uiowa.edu) or phone: 319 335-1250.

2018