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School of Social Work Overview of Program Options

Master in Social Work Program Options

The University of Iowa School of Social Work has offered the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited MSW program continuously since 1951. Currently – three options to complete the MSW are available, depending upon the applicant's prior preparation. Applicants to any of these options, at any of our centers, complete the same application.

- [Regular Standing](#) (available full-time and part-time)– designed for those who have completed a degree in a discipline other than a CSWE-accredited social work degree program.
- [Advanced Standing](#) (available full-time and part-time) – designed for those who have completed the BA in Social Work or BSW from a CSWE-accredited social work degree program.
- [Accelerated Advanced Standing](#) (3 semester one year program) – offered in Iowa City or Des Moines only, is designed for those who have completed the BA in Social Work or BSW from a CSWE-accredited social work degree program and who meet additional criteria.

Questions may be directed to Tomeka Petersen at ssw-admissions@uiowa.edu, 319-335-1250.

School of Social Work MSW Admissions Policy

I. Criteria for Admission

Admission to the Master's program at The University of Iowa School of Social Work is granted on a selective basis as determined by the merit of the total application. An applicant is expected to meet the following requirements:

A. Academic Background

1. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, (or an equivalent degree from another country as determined by the Office of Graduate Admissions), with a distribution of courses reflecting a liberal arts perspective, including courses in the humanities, as well as in the social, behavioral, and biological sciences.
2. Competency with word processing and spreadsheet application on personal computers is expected.

B. Academic Potential

A minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale of undergraduate study, (or foreign equivalent as determined by the Office of Admissions), or on 12 semester hours of graduate course work is required for the Regular Standing and Advanced Standing MSW programs. The Accelerated Advanced Standing program requires a minimum 3.2 GPA overall, and 3.5 GPA in social work courses. Completion of the GRE exam is not required.

C. Proficiency in English

Applicants from other countries whose first language is not English must have a minimum score of 100 on the TOEFL iBT Total Score or minimum of 7 on the IELTS Overall Band Score, with no IELTS sub-score less than 6.0. A score of 26 on the speaking portion of the TOEFL is preferred. Automatic waivers of the TOEFL or IELTS requirement are granted for people who have completed a bachelor's degree (or higher) at an accredited university in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada (excluding French Quebec), Africa (English speaking), Australia, or New Zealand. For further information: <http://www.ets.org/toefl/>

D. Appropriateness for Professional Social Work Education

Applicants must provide evidence of a combination of personal qualities and values that are considered essential for the professional practice of social work: 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 vulnerable and under-represented groups. Employment or practice experience in social work related areas is highly valued. 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 are fundamental to a successful experience in the School. These qualities are to be evidenced in the following completed application materials, **all to be completed online**:

- The University's [Graduate College Application](#), apply and pay online.

- A School of Social Work MSW Supplemental (Departmental) Data Form.
- Applicant's Statement of Purpose
- Essays A and B
- Resume including relevant employment and volunteer experience.
- Three completed recommendation forms, including at least one academic and one employment-based, if applicable, submitted online by the reference writers. References from professional settings are recommended.
- Unofficial transcripts from all colleges attended, other than University of Iowa, and record of current registration, if currently attending.
- Additional materials for the Accelerated Advanced Standing track and for Online Hybrid applicants.

Please note: Applicants with a criminal history record may not be eligible for social work licensure. For more information, contact the Board of Social Work licensure in the state that you wish to reside and be licensed. A listing of [boards by state](#) is available online. In addition, applicants need to be aware that many social service agencies that meet our requirements for field/practicum placements now require background checks, some at the student's expense. These are the policies of social service agencies throughout this area, not The University of Iowa or School of Social Work policy. A criminal history may limit or prohibit a student's ability to obtain a field placement as well as limit or prohibit employment in social service agencies following graduation with a BSW/MSW degree.

E. Transfer into the MSW Program

Applications from students seeking to transfer from another MSW program are processed if the applicant meets the following conditions:

- All admission criteria previously specified.
- Completed recommendation form from advisor and other faculty from previous school.
- Agree to complete at least 36 semester hours of coursework after admission to the MSW program at Iowa and agree to meet all requirements of the Iowa program.
- Timeline: Transfer requests may be made in any semester, but accepted applicants may only register for required courses when prerequisites have been met. This may mean a delay in matriculation.
- Transfer requests must be first directed to the School's Admission Office: ssw-admissions@uiowa.edu, so the School can notify Graduate Admissions that a transfer request is coming, and you will be informed of additional materials needed to assess your status. Graduate College deadlines for application are stated on the Graduate College [Application](#).

F. Reapplication

Reapplication is required of students who:

- Withdraw from the program.
- Do not enroll in classes for two (2) consecutive semesters.
- Were admitted to the program but did not enroll in classes and did not receive written permission to defer enrollment.
- Submitted completed applications but were denied admission.
- Were dismissed from the program.

G. Deferment

If an applicant cannot enroll for the academic year accepted, a written request for delaying the enrollment date until the next academic year may be made. Granting of the request is at the

discretion of the Program Administrator. Generally, such requests are granted only because of extenuating circumstances.

II. Application Process

Applications will be accepted starting September 1st for the following academic year. All applications must be completed, submitted online and received no later than December 1st for the 41 s.h. [Accelerated](#) Advanced Standing track and all Online Hybrid applications; and February 1st for the Regular and Advanced Standing tracks of the MSW programs in Iowa City, Des Moines and the Quad Cities.

- A. Applicants who meet the admission criteria will be notified by mail or email when the review process is complete. The entire pool of applications received for the December 1st deadline will be reviewed in December/January and applicants will be notified of their admission status no later than February 1. All applications received by February 1st will be reviewed by the admissions panel in February/March and applicants will be notified of their admission status no later than April 15.
- B. An application is considered complete when the following items are received:
 - The University's [Graduate College Application](#), apply and pay online.
 - A School of Social Work MSW Supplemental (Departmental) Data Form.
 - Applicant's Statement of Purpose
 - Essays A and B
 - Resume including relevant employment and volunteer experience.
 - Three completed recommendation forms, including at least one academic and one employment-based, if applicable, submitted online by the reference writers. References from professional settings are recommended.
 - Unofficial transcripts from all colleges attended, other than University of Iowa, and record of current registration, if currently attending.
 - Additional materials for International applicants and the Online Hybrid applicants.
- C. Completed applications will be reviewed with the timelines indicated above in II.A. At least two members of the Admissions Panel will read each application and make recommendations to the Program Administrator. The Program Administrator will make the final recommendation to the Director of the School and to the Graduate College.
- D. The School is limited in the number of students it can admit. Qualified applicants may be declined for lack of space in a class.
- E. Social Work has a long history of dedication to social justice, social change and to the improvement of the well-being of marginalized and vulnerable groups. Effort will be made to assure representation in the class of persons from marginalized/vulnerable groups and diversity will be sought from among persons of different ages.
- F. Applicants will be notified in writing of the admission decision by Feb. 1st for the [Accelerated](#) 41 s.h. track and all Online Hybrid applicants; and by April 15th for the Regular and Advanced Standing tracks (Iowa City, Des Moines and the Quad Cities). Admission is not complete until the applicant has received a written offer of admission and:
 1. Received, read, signed, and returned the Admission Agreement form confirming acceptance of admission center and practicum assignments.
 2. Further agreeing on same form to be bound by the cultural inclusion effort and the following policies:

- a) Student Advancement Policy
- b) Statement on Academic Honesty
- c) Code of Ethics of the National Association and International Federation of Social Workers
- d) Practica Structure and Process Policy Statement

G. Reapplication

1. For students who were never accepted to the program, application materials are kept on file by the Graduate College for 12 months and the School of Social Work for 36 months. All who wish to reapply must do so to both the Graduate College and the School of Social Work.
2. Applicants who are reapplying to the Graduate College within one academic year, contact Graduate Admissions, 319-335-1525, gradmail@uiowa.edu, to change your admission session (e.g.: fall 2021 to fall 2022). This reactivates your existing application in that office. If more than a year has passed, the Grad College requires a complete new Grad College application. After two academic years, the School of Social Work requires a complete new MSW application. Contact the School's Admissions Coordinator, Tomeka Petersen to request reapplication to the School of Social Work: ssw-admissions@uiowa.edu
3. If an applicant has a School of Social Work application on file at the time of reapplication, and it has been less than 2 academic years since the initial application, the following additional materials must be submitted for reapplication:
 - a. A statement discussing the applicant's activities since the previous application and describing any changes in the applicant's personal situation which would affect program planning. You may opt to also rewrite your personal statement and/or essays if desired, according the current session instructions, page 5, III-D.
 - b. A current completed recommendation form from the applicant's current employer and academic advisor (if formerly a student in the Iowa program).
 - c. Transcripts for any coursework completed since previous application (other than UI).
 - d. An updated School of Social Work MSW Supplemental (Departmental) Data form.
 - e. An interview and additional recommendation(s) may be required.
4. For students who were accepted, enrolled and became inactive, materials are kept for ten years. After one academic year of being inactive, reapplication is necessary to be considered for readmission and recommence the program.
5. Readmitted students must meet all requirements of the current MSW program. Readmission is not complete until the applicant has received a written offer of admission and:
 - a. received, read, signed and returned the Admission Agreement form confirming acceptance of admission center and practicum assignments.
 - b. further agreeing on same form to be bound by the cultural inclusion effort and the following policies:
 - 1) Student Advancement Policy
 - 2) Statement on Academic Honesty
 - 3) Code of Ethics of the National Association and International Federation of Social Workers
 - 4) Practica Structure and Process Policy Statement

III. Essential Information about Admission Criteria for the Application

A. Academic Background

1. Students entering the professional curriculum must be capable of thinking critically about society, about people and their problems, and about expressions of culture such as art, literature, science, history and philosophy. Students must have a liberal arts academic background, including knowledge about social, psychological, and biological determinants of human behavior and of diverse cultures, social conditions, and social problems. This background is usually part of general education requirements in liberal arts programs. The School recommends that one of the science courses should be human biology. The University of Iowa provides course opportunities to students whose pre-professional work may require additional content in a certain area and the admissions panel reserves the right to recommend such course content as a condition of admission.
2. Students will be expected to demonstrate proficiency in basic word processing and spreadsheet applications prior to beginning the program.

B. Academic Potential

1. An undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale is required, or a minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate level courses at 3.0 or above for the Regular and Advanced Standing MSW programs. The Accelerated Advanced Standing track requires a minimum overall GPA of 3.2 and a 3.5 GPA in social work courses. The official admission GPA is calculated by the Graduate Admissions office, 107 Calvin Hall, Iowa City IA 52242. The GPA may be cumulative or may be based on the GPA from the degree conferring school.
2. If the undergraduate GPA is below 3.0, and no graduate hours have yet been earned, an applicant may choose to enroll in graduate level courses as a non-degree student, earning 12 semester hours of letter-graded graduate work to become eligible for admission. Non-degree students are allowed to earn a maximum of 12 semester hours. Non-degree students are not eligible for financial aid. For assistance in calculating your admissions GPA, submit transcripts to the Graduate Admissions office, 107 Calvin Hall, Iowa City IA 52242.
3. In exceptional cases where the GPA is below 3.0, the admissions panel may determine that there is sufficient evidence of scholastic ability to request an exemption from the Graduate College. In this event, the Admissions Administrator may opt to process a petition to the Graduate College Dean. Permission is granted only if there is sufficient evidence of the student's academic and/or professional achievement indicating his/her potential for success in a graduate program.

C. Proficiency in English

1. Non-native English-speaking students who are admitted are required to pass the overall English Proficiency Composition exam administered by the University's Linguistics Department/ESL Program. Failure to pass this exam will result in an automatic transfer to the part-time program. If and when the exam is passed, the student may be reinstated to the full-time program in consultation with the Advisor and Program Administrator.
2. The course structure for international students may be individualized depending on English language proficiency, educational background, and professional experience.

D. Guidelines for Completing the Statement of Purpose, Essays, Recommendation Forms, and Resume

Evidence of a combination of personal qualities and professional experience will be provided through a statement of purpose, essays, references, and a resume. You are asked to visit the NASW website and review the [Code of Ethics](#). The Admissions Committee will review the statement of purpose and essays with the following competencies in mind: communication skills, breadth and depth of experience, orientation to social work practice, social work values and ethics, ability to analyze and synthesize and emotional capacity and judgment. A demonstration of graduate level writing skills is expected.

1. Statement of Purpose and Essays

Begin your Statement of Purpose with these identifying points at the top of the document:

Last Name, First Name, University ID

The MSW Center location to which you wish to apply

Statement of Purpose

Part I – Experiences

1. Write an essay that does not exceed 1,000 words.
2. Describe:
 - a. Experiences (personal, professional, academic) that influenced your decision to be or become a social worker
 - b. Paid, volunteer, practicum, and life experience relevant to social work
 - c. Describe experiences working with people who have experienced oppression
 - d. Strengths you would bring to the School and the profession
 - e. Challenges you have faced or are facing that may affect your readiness for graduate study and/or social work practice
 - f. How you will balance graduate study with other responsibilities

Part II – Goals

1. Write an essay that is about 350 words. Do not exceed 400 words.
2. Describe
 - a. Areas of your development that you will focus on during the master's program, including your practicum/practica
 - b. Short and long term professional social work goals
 - c. Highlight goals related to creating a more just society
 - d. How the University of Iowa School of Social Work curriculum and faculty will facilitate your goals

Name the file "Statement of Purpose" and upload it to your Admissions Profile in [MyUI](#).

Additional essay required for Online MSW Program applicants ONLY. Do not complete this section if you are applying to the MSW program in Iowa City, Des Moines, Quad Cities, or Sioux City.

1. Add the heading "**Online MSW Program.**"
2. Write an essay that is about 750 words.
3. In addition to Parts I and II, describe your:

- a. Academic readiness. Please take the “Self-check Quiz” <https://distance.uiowa.edu/learning-online/prepare-online-learning>. Describe your assessment results and how they will inform your approach to successfully completing the online program. Describe what you learned about specific areas, such as your comfort or skill level with technology, your time management, or managing/enhancing your virtual relationships.
- b. Online learning benefits. Describe how the University of Iowa’s Online MSW Program will benefit you. Explain how an online program, rather than a classroom-based program, is a good fit for you? Specifically, describe barriers that make it difficult or impossible for you to enroll in our other learning centers (Des Moines, Iowa City, Quad Cities, or Sioux City).
- c. Structure and design of the program. Review the description of the required Summer Institutes, the format of the online classes, the two meetings per year with your geographic learning community and mentor, and practicum requirements. Describe your plan for achieving and maintaining academic success given this program structure, including identifying the resources you will draw upon to be successful. Consider resources such as academic, personal, professional, financial, and technical. Describe any modifications you will need to make to your schedule and personal circumstances to be successful.

Essays A & B

Applicants to all MSW tracks provide an essay for each of the following. Each essay may be about 500 words. Do not exceed 550 words.

Essay A

Go to the NASW website and review the entire [Code of Ethics](#), including “Ethical Principles” and “Ethical Standards.”

- Describe a real or hypothetical professional situation where social work values/principles, and your personal values were or could be in conflict.
- Refer to specific social work values/principles that apply to your professional situation in your essay (e.g., “Social workers challenge social injustice.”)
- Explain how you did or would use the Code of Ethics to address the professional situation.

Essay B

- Briefly describe a real or hypothetical social change strategy to address a social problem.
- Analyze the factors that did and did not (real strategy) OR would and would not (if hypothetical strategy) contribute to the effectiveness of your social change strategy.

The Admissions Committee will review the statement of purpose with the following competencies in mind: communication skills, breadth and depth of experience, orientation to social work practice, social work values and ethics, ability to analyze and synthesize and emotional capacity and judgment. A demonstration of graduate level writing skills is expected.

2. Recommendation Forms

- a. Recommendation forms will be examined for evidence of the same criteria as listed for the statement of purpose previously (section D.1. above). Completion of the form is required; however, a letter may also accompany the form.

Recommendation writers are asked to comment on the applicant's intelligence, maturity, sound judgment, compassion, self-awareness, adaptability, a sense of responsibility and resourcefulness, and their academic and professional promise within this context. The recommendation writer is asked for general comments as well as specific examples of the applicant's experiences as reflecting a desire and ability to enter the profession of social work.

The referee is also asked to rate and comment on the applicant relative to other students, employees, or people interested in social work that they have known, on the following qualities: sensitivity and capacity for accepting differences in race, class, culture, lifestyles and ideas; maturity/emotional stability; ability to seek and accept and effectively use feedback; clarity of focus regarding career goals and areas for development/growth; attitudes and behaviors reflecting social work values and ethics; ability to manage professional relationships and boundaries; commitment to social justice and social change; oral communication skills; written communication skills; ability to think critically and capacity to successfully complete a graduate level program.

- b. All applicants are responsible for providing email addresses and assuring that three completed recommendation forms are provided that show evidence of the applicant's potential for graduate social work education and practice. Recommendations from social work practitioners, allied professionals, and educators are preferred.
 - 1) At least one should be an academic recommendation regarding the applicant's college experience.
 - 2) If ever employed in social work or a related field, at least one of these recommendations should be provided from the applicant's most recent employer.
 - 3) The applicant will indicate whether they have waived the right to review the recommendation. All recommendations are destroyed once an applicant has matriculated. Applicants not approved for admission have no access to their file.

Applicants to the 41 s.h. Accelerated track have specific instructions for Reference #1

- a. Applicants who have already graduated with BA in Social Work or BSW in the past five years, will provide the name of their **current social work employment supervisor**;

Or

- b. Applicants who are currently completing a BA in Social Work or BSW program, will provide the name and email address of the **Program Director** of their BA/BSW Program.

For students applying to the Accelerated Advanced program, the Reference #1 form identifies different criteria than the form for Reference #2 and #3. Sample form at end of this document. For student applying to the Regular or Advanced program, the reference form is the same for all three references. Sample form at end of this document.

For applicants who are currently completing a BA in Social Work or BSW, Admission will be contingent upon also submitting a recommendation form from the **Field Director** by April 15. In addition, a copy of the final field evaluation must be provided by May 15. Applicants who are offered admission will be contacted following the admission decision with the form and instructions for providing these additional documents.

You may direct questions regarding eligibility and requirements for the MSW Accelerated Advanced Standing track to Kate Kemp, Admissions Administrator: kate-kemp@uiowa.edu. Questions regarding the application process to the Admissions Coordinator: Tomeka Petersen ssw-admissions@uiowa.edu

3. **Resume**

Provide a resume which includes relevant employment and volunteer experience with dates and whether part-time or full-time.

E. School of Social Work Departmental Supplemental Data Form – explanation of each item

The following information is intended to clarify the items to which you must respond on the School of Social Work Supplemental Data Form, an online form included in the MSW application.

Item 1: How did you learn about our program

List how you first heard about our program.

Item 2: Criminal background

Applicants with a criminal history record may not be eligible for practicum placement or social work licensure, see page 2, 1-D.

Item 3: Identity (optional)

Applicants are asked to provide optional information. If provided, this information will be treated confidentially, and may be used in an anonymous way to supply demographics to the CSWE and to the school.

Item 4: Related employment experience

Note your employment experience in social work or related field in full-time equivalence.

Item 5: Minimum hours required for the degree standing

Regular Standing (available full-time and part-time)– designed for those who have completed a degree in a discipline other than a CSWE-accredited social work degree program.

Advanced Standing (available full-time and part-time) – designed for those who have completed the BA in Social Work or BSW from a CSWE-accredited social work degree program.

Accelerated Advanced Standing (3 semester one year program) – offered in Iowa City or Des Moines only, is designed for those who have completed the BA in Social Work or BSW from a CSWE-accredited social work degree program and who meet additional criteria.

Item 6: Social Work Degree

Applicants who have completed a BA in Social Work from a Council on Social Work Education accredited program enter the name and location of the conferring Institution, or "NA" if degree major is not social work.

Item 7a: Choice of Center

The University of Iowa School of Social Work offers the MSW program in five learning center locations in Iowa City, Des Moines, the Quad Cities, Sioux City and Online.

- a. On the central campus in Iowa City and in Des Moines (at the Pappajohn Education Center, 1200 Grand Ave in Des Moines), both the full-time and part-time programs are offered, **admitting students for fall admission.**
- b. In the Quad Cities and Sioux City Social Work Educational Centers, the program is offered in sequence every three years. **We are currently accepting applications for the Quad Cities cohort to begin in Summer 2022.**
- c. The Online Hybrid program admits students every two years. It is a three-year sequenced program. **We are currently accepting applications for the Online Hybrid cohort to begin in Summer 2022.**
- d. Students must enroll for courses in the semester in which they are admitted and must thereafter follow the structured sequenced program which has been designed for each center. The sequence of courses at each center requires enrollment during the fall, spring, and summer semesters.
- e. Classes are usually held during the day and evening, Monday through Friday. Some courses are delivered using web-based technology.

Item 7b: Choice of Program

The University of Iowa School of Social Work offers the MSW degree on a full-time and a part-time basis.

- a. The advanced standing and regular full-time program requires completion of the MSW in five or six semesters.
- b. The Accelerated Advanced standing track requires completion in three semesters.
- c. The three-year program typically requires students to register for an average of two or three courses each semester.
- d. The part-time program requires completion of the MSW within 4 calendar years with a minimum registration of 2 courses in each of the fall and spring semesters. It is intended for students for whom full-time study would be a severe hardship due to financial or family reasons. However, courses are not always offered during evening and weekend hours. Please be aware that there are times in the MSW program when students will find outside employment very difficult, if not impossible. These times are when students are fulfilling the requirements for the Foundation Practicum (300 hours in spring or summer semester) and the Advanced Practicum (minimum of 300 hours in the fall and 300 hours in the spring semester of the final year). Combining 3-4 days/week in practicum with course work hinders the possibility of continuing in full-time employment. Before registering in the MSW program, students should make plans to reduce or eliminate their outside employment while they are in Foundation and Advanced Practicum.
- e. Joint Degree Applications (Iowa City Center)
 - 1) If you intend to pursue a joint degree, complete the application for each program and please indicate the name of the other department or college.
 - 2) Formal joint degree programs are possible with the School of Urban and Regional Planning, the College of Law and the Professional MBA. Students

must be accepted into each department through its regular admission process. 10 to 12 semester hours in each program may be applied to the other.

- 3) Informal joint degrees are possible as well with other Master's programs in Liberal Arts or with other colleges.
- 4) Joint degree applicants to the School of Social Work will be evaluated on the same basis as full-time applicants and the same admission procedure will apply.
- 5) Joint degree applicants must have an interview with a faculty person or the Program Administrator regarding their program.

Item 8: Grade Point Average

Please note your CUMULATIVE grade point average on your most recent degree. If you are currently attending and not graduated yet, note your cumulative grade point average at the end of your most recently completed semester.

Item 9: Concentration

The Social Work Clinical Practice concentration teaches specific knowledge and skills necessary for advanced social work practice with individuals and families. The Leadership Social Work Practice concentration teaches methods of advanced practice that empower organizational and community change at multiple system levels. Applicants are asked to indicate the concentration they are most likely to pursue, as well as their specialized interest areas. Concentrations are discussed at the Informational Meetings. Complete descriptions are found in The University of Iowa School of Social Work [catalog](#).

Item 10: Primary curriculum interest(s)

For the purpose of matching interests with a faculty advisor, list primary interest(s).

Item 11: Practicum Location

The applicant's preferences for a practicum location assist the School with planning. Practicum planning occurs in the fall semester for spring semester foundation practicum, in the spring for summer foundation practicum and in February for fall advanced practicum placements. Please see the practicum policy below.

F. Additional Information –Financial Arrangements and Transcripts

Financial Arrangements

The School of Social Work may have a very limited number of research and teaching assistantships for MSW students. These cannot be applied for prior to April 15, after admission decisions are final. Faculty select applicants based on financial need, previous experience and interests related to the position. Admitted students will be directed to assistantship application materials on our web site. Visit the web for [UI financial aid](#) information including loans and student employment, contact: financial-aid@uiowa.edu or call 319-335-1450. Admitted students may also seek assistantships and awards offered in other departments outside of the School of Social Work: <http://grad.admissions.uiowa.edu/finances>

Additional Information about Transcripts

Official transcripts are required to be sent from all previous and current educational institutions to The University of Iowa Graduate Admissions Office, 107 Calvin Hall, Iowa City IA 52242-1396 USA. University of Iowa students and alumni need not supply

University of Iowa transcripts to the graduate admissions office, as they are part of your permanent record and will be provided automatically. Official transcripts from all other colleges and universities must be submitted to the UI Graduate Admissions office. An exception to this is if you were an undergraduate student at UI and outside transcripts were previously submitted as part of your BA requirements. You are also expected to report if you are currently attending any outside institutions. You will have the opportunity to upload unofficial transcripts as a supplemental document in the online process. You may contact the graduate admissions office directly if you have questions or concerns about official transcripts from other institutions: gradmail@uiowa.edu, 319-335-1525.

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

PRACTICA STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

I. Structure and Sequence

Practicum at The University of Iowa School of Social Work is composed of two levels of courses.

- A. **Foundation Practica Course.** Students admitted to the M.S.W. program without a Bachelor's Degree with a major in social work from an accredited program are required to take Foundation Practicum: 300 contact hours during the spring semester of the **first year** for full-time students; during the summer semester of the **first year** for 3-year program students; or during the spring semester of the **third year** for four year students. Three (3) semester hours of credit will be earned for successful completion of the Foundation Practicum.
- B. **Advanced Practica Course.** All students admitted to the M.S.W. program are required to take the Advanced Practicum during the fall and spring of the **final year**. The minimum required 600 contact hours of Advanced Practicum will earn 6 semester hours of credit.
- C. **Co-Requisite Courses.** Foundation Seminar for Foundation Practicum and Advanced Seminar I and II for Advanced Practicum.

II. Placement Assignment Process

Approved placement sites and agencies are within a 50-mile radius of Iowa City/Cedar Rapids, Quad-Cities, Des Moines, and Sioux City. The sites provide learning opportunities for the two concentrations and many fields of practice. Placements outside these practicum centers are permitted only in extraordinary circumstances and are contingent upon the ability of the practicum instructor and student to travel to the School of Social Work center for meetings with Field Coordinators.

- A. **Foundation Practica** are assigned by either the Practicum Director or, in the Quad Cities, Des Moines, Sioux City and Online Hybrid centers, by the Learning Center Practicum Administrator.
- B. **Advanced Practica** are developed during a process that starts in the first year. Failure to obtain a practicum after five interviews will result in reconsideration of the student's suitability for advancement in the MSW program.

III. Employment While an MSW Student

The School of Social Work is committed to part-time graduate social work education. The School endeavors to educate as broad a cross section of students as possible, including non-traditional students who are older, who must work to support families, and who therefore find it difficult to be full-time students.

Students must be available to attend classes when they are scheduled. Thus, employed students need to have made arrangements with their employers to flex their work scheduled sufficiently to attend class. In addition, it is often challenging to adjust their schedules when they are fulfilling the requirements for the Foundation Practicum (300 hours) and the Advanced Practicum (300 hours in the fall and spring semesters of the final year). Combining 3-4 days/week in practicum with course work will likely conflict with continuing in full-time employment.

Before registering in the MSW program, employed students must make plans to flex, reduce or eliminate their outside employment while they are in Foundation and Advanced Practicum.

Practica are designed to extend and integrate learning achieved in class with practice in the field. The student has an opportunity to employ social work interventions and ethical decision-making processes with different client populations at multiple levels. A particular focus is the application of research to social work theory and practice, including the evaluation of interventions and outcomes. Because of the importance of practica to the overall preparation of students for the profession, as dictated by the Council on Social Work Education Accreditation Standards, work experience prior to admission into the M.S.W. program cannot meet the practica requirements.

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 at: ssw_office@iowa.uiowa.edu or phone: 319 335-1250.

7/12/2021

APPLICANT complete this section in full and forward to your reference writer by email or fax:

XApplicant's Name (Print) _____ UI ID#, if known, or leave blank: _____

XPrint your reference writer's name: _____

Under the Family Educational Rights Act of 1974, students are entitled to review their records, including letters of recommendation. It is your option to waive your right to review this recommendation, or you may decline to do so. If you waive your right to review your recommendation forms, these evaluations will be considered confidential by The University of Iowa and **will not be available** for your inspection or released to any third party. (Note: Applicants **not** approved for admission have **no** access to their file). Please mark the appropriate statement below, indicating your choice of options, and sign your name. Your choice has no bearing on admission decisions.

☐ I waive my right to review this recommendation. ☐ I do not waive my right to review this recommendation.
Applying to Center: ☐ Iowa City ☐ Des Moines

XApplicant's Signature (REQUIRED): _____ Date: _____
Typed Signature will be accepted and considered binding

REFERENCE WRITER complete this section in full:

1. Please check one of the following:

____ I am the applicant's Employment Supervisor

Applicants to the **Accelerated Advanced Standing MSW Program** who have already graduated with a bachelor's degree in social work within the past 5 years are required to provide this recommendation from their employment supervisor, if employed in a social work setting.

____ I am the applicant's BA Program Director

Applicants to the **Accelerated Advanced Standing MSW Program** currently enrolled in a BSW or BA Social Work program are required to provide your recommendation. Please evaluate the student overall, including all course work and professional behavior, which may require consulting with other faculty in the program.

Your candid opinion will be of great assistance to us in evaluating their application. Your comments will be confidential if the applicant has waived rights of review. Recommendations will be destroyed when an applicant has matriculated. (Note: Applicants not approved for admission have no access to their file).

2. How long have you known the applicant? _____ Years _____ Months

3. On the following page, please evaluate the applicant for readiness to enter graduate level advanced practicum placement using the following rating scale:

Superior / Advanced Competence: Consistently demonstrates the ability to function independently with very high levels of awareness, knowledge and/or skill; overall work quality/task completion is exceptional, suggesting mastery of the practice behavior.

Above Average Competence: Typically demonstrates moderate-to-high levels of awareness, knowledge and/or skill; overall work quality/task completion exceeds basic practice standards and the level of competence is above average, suggesting additional guidance in key areas would promote mastery.

Basic Competence: Normally demonstrates acceptable levels of awareness, knowledge and/or skill; overall work quality/task completion meets basic practice standards, but the level of competence is somewhat rudimentary, suggesting additional training and guidance may be beneficial but that the student is ready to enter the field.

Below Average Competence: Commonly demonstrates levels of awareness, knowledge and/or skill that are below basic practice standards; overall work quality/task completion is below acceptable standards and the degree of competence is lacking, suggesting the need for additional training and consideration of corrective action.

3.Cont.

The applicant demonstrates:

	Superior/ Advanced Competence	Above Average Competence	Basic Competence	Below Average Competence	Not Observed
Sensitivity and capacity for accepting differences in race, class, culture, lifestyles and ideas					
Maturity/emotional stability					
Ability to seek, accept and effectively use feedback.					
Clarity of focus regarding career goals and areas for development/growth.					
Attitudes and behaviors reflecting social work values and ethics					
Ability to manage professional relationships and boundaries.					
Commitment to social justice and social change					
Oral communication skills					
Written communication skills					
Ability to think critically					
Capacity to successfully complete a graduate level program					

4. From the questions above, please comment on items you rated Basic or below. Please include any additional comments you think would be helpful in our decision making process. You may opt to attach a separate letter* and note "see letter".

5. Please select one:

- ☐ I recommend highly.
☐ I recommend.
☐ I recommend with reservations.
☐ I do not recommend

*Optional reference letter. If you would like to submit a letter please be sure to address the qualities mentioned in numbers 1 and 2 above, and please note that PDF file works best if at all possible. Otherwise, please send Microsoft word format. Please email the form and optional letter to Tomeka Petersen at: ssw-admissions@uiowa.edu.

Send completed recommendation to the Admissions Coordinator, Tomeka Petersen at:
ssw-admissions@uiowa.edu

**Thank you for submitting this recommendation as soon as possible. The application deadline is December 1.
 If the recommendation form does not arrive by the deadline, the applicant's file will be incomplete and NOT reviewed.**

If you have difficulty with this form, contact the school's admission coordinator at: ssw-admissions@uiowa.edu.

If you have questions about our program, visit our website: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/socialwork/graduate-program/msw-programs>

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School of Social Work Admission
Confidential Reference Form
Master of Social Work

REFERENCE WRITER complete this section in full:

You have been asked to complete an evaluation for an applicant to the Graduate School of Social Work in order to obtain the Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) degree. Your candid opinion will be of great assistance to us in evaluating their application. Your comments will be confidential if the applicant has waived rights of review. All recommendations are destroyed once an applicant has matriculated. (Note: Applicants not approved for admission have no access to their file).

Please note **YOUR** Title:

Please note **YOUR** Credentials:

Your Last Name:

Your First Name:

Please note the **APPLICANT'S** Last Name:

APPLICANT'S First Name:

1. How long have you known the applicant? Years Months

2. In what capacities have you known the applicant?

Professor

Research Supervisor

Academic Advisor

Field Instructor

Employment Supervisor

Co-Worker

Other _____

3. Success as a social worker requires intelligence, maturity, sound judgment, compassion, self-awareness, adaptability, a sense of responsibility and resourcefulness. Please assess the applicant's academic and professional promise within this context. We would appreciate your general comments as well as specific examples of the applicant's experiences as they reflect a desire and ability to enter the profession of social work. Feel free to attach separate letter* and note "see letter".

Superior / Advanced Competence: Consistently demonstrates the ability to function independently with very high levels of awareness, knowledge and/or skill; overall work quality/task completion is exceptional, suggesting mastery of the practice behavior.

Above Average Competence: Typically demonstrates moderate-to-high levels of awareness, knowledge and/or skill; overall work quality/task completion exceeds basic practice standards and the level of competence is above average, suggesting additional guidance in key areas would promote mastery.

Basic Competence: Normally demonstrates acceptable levels of awareness, knowledge and/or skill; overall work quality/task completion meets basic practice standards, but the level of competence is somewhat rudimentary, suggesting additional training and guidance may be beneficial but that the student is ready to enter the field.

Below Average Competence: Commonly demonstrates levels of awareness, knowledge and/or skill that are below basic practice standards; overall work quality/task completion is below acceptable standards and the degree of competence is lacking, suggesting the need for additional training and consideration of corrective action.

4. Please rate the applicant relative to other students, employees, or people interested in social work that you have known.

	Superior/ Advanced Competence	Above Average Competence	Basic Competence	Below Average Competence	Not Observed
Sensitivity and capacity for accepting differences in race, class, culture, lifestyles and ideas					
Maturity/emotional stability					
Ability to seek and accept and effectively use feedback.					
Clarity of focus regarding career goals and areas for development/growth.					
Attitudes and behaviors reflecting <i>social work values and ethics</i>					
Ability to manage professional relationships and boundaries.					
Commitment to social justice and social change					
Oral communication skills					
Written communication skills					
Ability to think critically					
Capacity to successfully complete a graduate level program					

5. If on the previous ranking you rated the applicant particularly high or particularly low on any item, please comment or "NA" (not applicable).

6. Please select one:

- I recommend highly.
- I recommend.
- I recommend with reservations.
- I do not recommend.

*Optional reference letter. If you would like to submit a letter please be sure to address the qualities mentioned in numbers 2 and 4 above, if applicable. Upload the letter with the completed form per the instructions in the e-mail.

Thank you for submitting this reference **as soon as possible**. Please note the admissions deadline is December 1st for Accelerated track applicants and all Hybrid Online applicants or February 1st for Regular and Advanced track applicants (Iowa City, Des Moines, and Quad Cities programs).

If the reference form does not arrive by the deadline, the applicant file will be incomplete and NOT reviewed.

If you have questions about our program, visit our website: <https://socialwork.uiowa.edu/graduate/msw-social-work>

If you have difficulty with this form, you may contact UI Graduate Admissions office as directed in the original email, or you may contact the school's Admissions and Programs Coordinator, Tomeka Petersen at: ssw-admissions@uiowa.edu

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