



Ask a Current Student Chat Log
June 8, 2015

Audience Question

Q: I noticed that when ordering football tickets, there is a section for MSW students. If we choose to order basketball tickets, could we sit with an MSW group? I don't know anyone else buying tickets and would love to sit with fellow classmates. Thanks!

A: At this time there is no formal group seating for basketball tickets. You can organize with other students informally. Here's [more information](#) on basketball tickets.

Audience Question

Q: Do you need any kind of pass to park in the free commuter lots?

A: No pass needed. You can park in the commuter lots for free.

Audience Question

Q: Do you know when we'll get our MCard? If we move to Ann Arbor in August, is it possible to get our MCard before orientation so that we can ride the bus when we move to A2 before classes start?

A: You can get your MCard when you arrive to campus. If you get it over the summer the lines may be shorter. You will get your MCard at the Student Activities Building

Audience Question

Q: What's the one thing you wish you had known as an incoming MSW student? Any tips or tricks?

A: The one thing I wish I would have known is to be less worried and stressed about my move to Ann Arbor and coming back to graduate school. The school is very organized and welcoming, especially during the first week!

A: I wish I had known that we can take classes at the other schools (like the business, public health, and urban planning schools) AND if the class is similar to a course you need for graduation, you can do a course substitution. Don't feel like you have to only take social work classes.

Audience Question

Q: Is it common for students to have an on-campus field placement?

A: It depends on your concentration. There are a few students who have placements on campus, but it depends on the resources available for the upcoming year, and if the placements fit your program and what you are looking for!

Audience Question

Q: If any of you have done your field work at Curtis center, could you please give me some information about it?

A: None of us personally has done our field placement at The Curtis Center. You can learn more about the center here: <http://ssw.umich.edu/offices/curtis-center>.

Audience Question

Q: If our field placement is outside of Ann Arbor, do we get free access to public transportation?

A: If your field placement is outside of Ann Arbor, you'll most likely have to have a car or carpool. There is a free bus to Detroit on Thursdays-Sundays but the times are very random, and then you're in the city center and have to get to field from there. If you work in Lansing, there's a bus you can pay for that goes frequently daily. But it is very difficult to get to field outside of Ann Arbor without a car or amazing friend to drive you there.

Audience Question

Q: What are some of the challenges of the program?

A: One of the biggest challenges I faced was balancing school work, part-time work, and my field placement. It took me awhile to find how to balance my time, but the most important part for me was finding time for self-care, doing things that I enjoy like running and reading.

Audience Question

Q: Can you give an example of an IP/MH course that you could substitute with another course in a different college?

A: Typically advanced practice and practice area courses are not substituted. We more often see students substitute for foundation courses or take courses in other programs to fulfill electives.

Audience Question

Q: Is it too much to have 3 classes in one day? I am an incoming 20-month student with a school field placement that is 2.5 days that might have to crunch my classes together.

A: It is fairly common for students here to have 2 or 3 classes in a day. Everyone has a unique situation and needs, though!

Audience Question

Q: What is the date for orientation?

A: [Orientation](#) is September 2-4.

Audience Question

Q: I am a new student who is prepared for the interview from Curtis Center, the website does not provide much information about the MSW program.

A: Professor Sue Ann Savas can answer any additional questions you have about the Curtis Center.

Audience Question

Q: What are the professors like?

A: The professors are great! The faculty at Michigan are well informed on various topics and have diverse experiences in the field of social work. They are also very personable.

Audience Question

Q: I am an older graduate student; I have worked in the field of social work for almost 20 years. I realize that most of the graduate students will be younger students. Are there also some older graduate students in the MSW program?

A: I'm also an older student and when they showed the statistics for the incoming class at orientation, I was surprised at how many people are in their early to mid 20s. The great thing about your experience though is that you'll have case examples to share in class. I initially felt intimidated by younger classmates who know a lot academically, but older students are equally valued and we bring different opinions to the table.

Audience Question

Q: I am in a scholarship program. Will I get to meet other students in the program?

A: You will definitely have a chance to meet other students in your scholarship program. I would suggest joining the [admitted students Facebook page](#) to see who is also in the same scholarship program. That will give you a chance to connect before you come for orientation.

Audience Question

Q: To graduate, are student required to write a thesis, do a capstone, or take a competency exam?

A: There is no thesis requirement or capstone requirement. In order to graduate you must meet your credit requirements from classes, as well as complete all hours needed at your field placement.

Audience Question

Q: What is the link to the facebook page?

A: <https://www.facebook.com/UMSSWPprospective>

Audience Question

Q: This is a follow-up question to the field placement outside of Ann Arbor. When we get interviewed for our field placement is the fact that we don't have our own transportation affect our chances of getting placed there?

A: If you don't have a car it might affect your field options but not always. If you have a clinical internship, you might be asked to drive to clients' homes and therefore have to have your own transportation. But my field site didn't care because I'm at the office all day. As long as I can get there, they don't care if I have a car. All about carpooling. :)

Audience Question

Q: Are there evening classes?

A: Yes, there are evening classes available. During the Fall and Winter semesters classes are usually at the following times: 9am-12noon, 2pm-5pm, 5pm-8pm, 6pm-9pm. I would not count on having a schedule that only consists of night classes.

Audience Question

Q: HI! Are there any student organizations through either the SSW or Michigan in general that you have found especially rewarding? I am concentrating in IP/Mental Health but am also interested in public health. Are most of the campus student organizations primarily undergrad or is there a mix of grad/undergrad orgs?

A: There are a TON of [student organizations around campus](#) and in the [School of Social Work](#) -- you can find relatively anything that fits your interest. There is definitely a mix of grad and undergrad organizations. Additionally, you can always begin your own student org. There is a student organization fair in the school on Sept 16th.

Audience Question

Q: Can you elaborate more on what parking is like near the SSW building? I know there is a parking garage nearby but does that usually fill up?

A: Parking on campus can be a challenge. The close parking at the structures do fill up sometimes and charge \$1.20-1.50/hour. My friends who commute prefer to park at the [commuter lots](#) and take a bus to campus because this is a free option.

Audience Question

Q: I currently work a full-time job, but have been considering asking if I can stay on part-time when I start graduate school. In order to do this I would probably have to do classes (just classes, not counting field placement) for only two or three days. Do you think this is possible or should I go for employment through the school instead?

A: We find that 20 hours is typically the largest amount of work that students can handle in addition to classes and field. On campus jobs (both temp and work-study) tend to be more flexible and often pay \$12-15/hour.

Audience Question

Q: Are there any A2 or Ypsi neighborhoods/areas you recommend for housing? My husband and I are looking right now.

A: I would suggest looking on housing.umich.edu to see some off-campus locations in AA and Ypsi. There are lots of apartment/housing complexes nearby.

Audience Question

Q: Is there a way to do a minor while in the 16 month program? Would I need to take more credits to do it?

A: You can definitely do a minor as a 16 month student without taking extra credits as long as you use 6 credits of your electives to fulfill the minor requirement.

Audience Question

Q: Are most of the campus student organizations primarily undergrad or is there a mix of grad/undergrad orgs ?

A: You can check out some student orgs are the fair on <http://ssw.umich.edu/events/list/2015/09/16/48263-student-organization-information-fair>

Audience Question

Q: when are the university tuition and fees due?

A: Fees and tuition are due at the beginning of the term, between the last month of August and first month of September. The school will send out announcements to your school email once this gets sooner.

Audience Question

Q: Has anyone done their field work in CPS? Any feedback on it?

A: James- I don't work in CPS but I do work at the Family Assessment Clinic where we work with a lot of child welfare cases. You will be exposed to some challenging situations but the work is overall rewarding. But make sure you focus on your own self care!

Audience Question

Q: I heard that you can pretty much add a minor at any time, as long as you're able to get enough credits in the classes for it. Is this true?

A: Yes you can, however your field placement will also have to provide you with 171 hours of practice in the minor method. This is within the 912 hrs. You'll need to save 6 credits of electives for the minor as well.

Audience Question

Q: Hello, I will be commuting to campus and Brian had noted how much more expensive parking passes are than taking the AATA buses. For students who don't live near Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti where buses would be convenient, would any of you say that the parking pass is worth it?

A: It depends on your budget, for me I was not able to afford this so what I did was drive to the commuter lot where you can park for free, and then take the free AATA bus from that parking lot to campus.

Audience Question

Q: Is there an event during orientation to learn about student orgs/resource centers or do most students just do that on their own?

A: There is a [Student Organization/Information Fair](#) on September 16.

Audience Question

Q: I am assigned to Maize group for registration appointment and the on-campus summer new student program session for Maize group will be on July 28. I am not be able to attend the session on that date. Would it be okay for me to attend the session on another date?

A: Yes absolutely. Register on the 28th, but make sure you sign up for a session that you can attend on a later date.

Audience Question

Q: If I wanted to apply to the Ph.D program, how many more years, beyond the MSW degree would it take for me to earn a PhD?

A: If you want to learn more about the PhD program you can check out the [webpage](#) and contact the PhD Office. In general, the PhD program takes 6-7 years to complete.

Audience Question

Q: Hi Sparkle and Neetha, how have you liked working with AIH&FS? I am looking into doing my field work there. What do you typically do there?

A: I love my work at AIHFS! I'm focused on management and policy but I have opportunities to get clinical experience too.

Audience Question

Q: Lauren, what kind of work do you do with patients in the inpatient unit?

A: My work on the inpatient psychiatric unit is predominately working with patients suffering from severe depression and psychosis. Most patients are on our unit either due to a suicide attempt or suicidal ideation, and most patients stay in this acute care setting for 4-7 days. If you have further questions feel free to email me at Imorford@umich.edu.

Audience Question

Q: When we will get our bills for the fall 2015 semester?

A: Tuition and fees are due before classes begin, therefore most billing will come out electronically to your Umich email mid-August to beginning of September.

Audience Question

Q: Phyllis and Laura, what is the child welfare scholar program like?

A: I am really happy with the program. We are all really close -- I'm friends with virtually everyone in the program. You learn a lot and have a great cohort of students and faculty to rely on and work with. We had a BBQ at one of the faculty advisor's houses just this weekend!

A: It is awesome!! First, we are super close cohort. This is important because we deal with some challenging cases and it's nice to have someone to talk to. Also the child welfare professors are solid and they will make sure you are prepared to enter into the field

Audience Question

Q: Hi Sparkle, I am an incoming Detroit Clinical Scholar. I'm wondering how the different field placements for Detroit Clinical Scholars vary. What was the process of obtaining your field placement and what are you responsible for in your placement? Thanks for your help :)

A: The placements vary on your interests in population and location of services. This includes: children and families, transitional youth, adults, schools, home-based, in/outpatient. As a DCS you

will be given a list of sites to choose from that are based on your scholarship requirements. You will be responsible for whatever your interests are and what work is available at your placement. There will be a field orientation at the beginning of Fall semester. You'll learn all about the deadlines and requirements for field placement in the 16-month program. You can also look [here](#) for more info. If you have any further questions please feel free to email me personally.

Audience Question

Q: When or where can I find more information and details surrounding my scholarship program? I'm in the Detroit Clinical Scholars program.

A: You can find more information here <http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/financial-aid/clinical-scholars-program>. You can also contact Mary Ruffolo who is the supervisor for the DCS program

Audience Question

Q: I'm commuting from Oakland county and was wondering if there is a way to find out if anyone else is as well?

A: The best way would be to post on the [facebook page](#). Once the term begins you'll be added to the school list serve to connect to other students.

Audience Question

Q: Is there anyone on the panel that is older with families/children, etc? What are some challenges you have faced with balancing those roles while completing the program?

A: I know several students in the program that have families/children. I think for everyone in the program, school/life balance can be difficult. However, keep in mind that all of the staff and faculty here at SSW are super supportive! I've had family emergencies come up and had to miss classes, and faculty were always understanding and helped me get back on track. Just have a good line of communication with your instructor and you'll be ok. Hope this helps!

Audience Question

Q: What are the benefits of being in a scholar program?

A: Aside from the financial benefits of scholar programs, you'll also take some classes with just your scholarship team. I am very close with the folks in my program and we have a Facebook page for questions or fun activities to do together.

Audience Question

Q: What do SSW students do for fun in AA?

A: There are lots of great events and activities in AA! Students enjoy nightlife, arts, concerts, socializing with each other, and traveling to neighboring towns or cities like Detroit and Chicago. We try to hold each other accountable for self-care!

Audience Question

Q: What is the process for course exemptions? I took an undergraduate course that is very similar to one of my required classes

A: We will review your transcript for possible exemptions and email you 2 weeks prior to your registration date to let you know which courses you are exempt from.

Audience Question

Q: Are the internships more hands on than in undergrad?

A: Yes, the internships are usually more hands-on because you need the field hours and requirements to earn your degree.

Audience Question

Q: Where is the free commuter lot located?

A: There are commuter lots all around Ann Arbor. You can check them out [here](#).

Audience Question

Q: Are there printing resources at the library?

A: Yes, printing resources are available at both undergraduate and graduate libraries, which are right across the street from the SSW. We also have printing/scanning/copying etc. resources available for students right in the SSW building. You have a printing allotment as part of your tuition & fees each term. More details can be found [here](#).

Audience Question

Q: Hi Phyllis I am also a child welfare scholar. Are the courses laid out for you or is there some variation in what to take? What are some of the options for field placements you have seen on this track?

A: You will receive a [course planning sheet](#) and I would advise you to take the courses offered. However, if you are interested in a specific research topic within child welfare you have the option to do an independent study. I would advise you to talk about this with your advisor.

Audience Question

Q: How crowded does the commuter parking lot get, since it is free? Should we arrive extra early (as in, before 9 am) to make sure we have a spot?

A: I have never experienced the commuter lot being full in the nine months I have been here!

Audience Question

Q: When will 16 month students learn the deadlines for the field application process to be done in the Fall?

A: There will be a field orientation at the beginning of Fall semester. You'll learn all about the deadlines and requirements for field placement in the 16-month program. You can also look [here](#) for more info.

Audience Question

Q: I'm going to be studying Comm. Org and Children, Youth and Families. I'm interested in visiting some organizations in the area that do that work or might host field placements. Are there any organizations or field placements that you would recommend?

A: For confidentiality reasons, we can't have students visiting the field sites, unfortunately. You can chat with faculty in the Office of Field Instruction to learn more about the options that align with your concentrations.

Audience Question

Q: If your field placement requires you to carpool does SSW help you arrange a carpool with other students in nearby placements? Or do students do that on their own?

A: The school would never require you to carpool to field, but in the event that you want to or need to, that would be student initiated.

Audience Question

Q: How do you go about getting exemptions for foundation courses in the 16 month curriculum?

A: We will review transcripts for exemptions and email students two weeks prior to registration to let them know of exemptions that they'll receive.

Audience Question

Q: Phyllis and Laura, are there any classes you recommend over others for the Children & Youth concentration?

A: It totally depends on what your specific interests are! There are a lot of us in the program who take a variety of specialized classes based on our career goals.

Audience Question

Q: Are there any opportunities to do research with faculty?

A: Yes, there are many opportunities. You can look at the faculty page on the ssw.umich.edu website to find out more about their specific areas of expertise. I have approached professors in the past and just asked to do research with them. They are very friendly!

Audience Question

Q: Did any of you take time off in between undergrad and grad school?

A: I took 3 year off between undergrad and grad. It was a great decision because I was able to bring my real world/ professional experiences into the classroom.

Audience Question

Q: Hi. I am an incoming Advanced Standing Scholar IP/Mental Health. I will be commuting to Ann Arbor starting in Sept. How many days of week should I anticipate driving to Ann Arbor a week?

A: It really depends on your class schedule. Typically, I would say 2-3.

Audience Question

Q: This is to anyone, but primarily Sparkle and Lauren: I am also in the Int Practice/Mental Health track, and I understand such a combination can be very mentally draining, depending on your placement. Are there any mental health services on-campus for additional help or is that something I have to look into privately, if needed?

A: [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) is a wonderful program many of our students use.

Audience Question

Q: Would there be any tips for class registration?

A: First, be sure to view a [course planning webinar](#). If possible you should try to schedule your New Student Program Session on your date of registration. That way, you can sit down with someone at the SSW who can help you register in real-time. Registration will be a topic at New Student Program Sessions regardless of the date of your visit, so it's OK if you can't come on the date of your registration. I would also recommend following your Course Planning Worksheet and reading course descriptions via ssw.umich.edu or Wolverine Access. If you need additional help registering, feel free to contact the Office of Student Services.

Audience Question

Q: In regards to off-campus housing, where do MSW students generally live in?

A: Most people rent apartments around Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti.

Audience Question

Q: Neetha and Brian- what types of things do you do in your internship positions? I am also going into management of HS.

A: I do a little bit of everything at my field site. Last semester I was focused on researching fundraising options for the agency, worked on some policies, gained a better understanding of our services and how evaluations work, and wrote a grant. I also got to take workshops to get certified in counseling services my agency provides, specifically geared towards suicide intervention. Now, I'll be doing more policy work and running my own evaluations for various programs.

Audience Question

Q: Any advice for transitioning from a different undergrad field into Social Work?

A: Most students do not have a Bachelors of Social Work. You'll be in good company! The foundation courses offer good preparation for advanced courses and field.

Audience Question

Q: what is the average class size?

A: The average class size is 25 people.

Audience Question

Q: I understand practice area and concentration courses can vary as well as the way students go about studying but what is a ballpark estimate on how many hours one can expect to spend on reading/writing/studying per class ?

A: It totally depends on your style and the professor. I would expect to do at least 2 hours per week per class.

Audience Question

Q: Are there opportunities for first-year grad students to apply for scholarships to help with financial aid in their second year?

A: Throughout the year, OSS will email us about scholarships they hear about including a bunch of school scholarships you can apply for in September.

Audience Question

Q: Lauren and Sparkle - I'm currently placed in the Health concentration, but have interests in Mental Health as well. Is there a way to minor in it or at least take several classes in it? Do you have any ideas for someone who may be on the fence about an issue like this? Thank you :)

A: It is not possible to minor in a practice area, but you can just take classes that pertain to MH. I would suggest looking at your overall interests and goals then figuring out whether that falls under health or MH. Your field placement can also be one that takes both health and mental health students.

Audience Question

Q: If you do research with faculty, is it usually paid?

A: It is usually paid if it's work study. Or you can get academic credit for your work as a special studies.

Audience Question

Q: Looking at the scholarships page, there are some listed that don't have any information on applying. How do we apply for them? Is there a separate scholarship form we have to fill out or were we automatically considered for those when we applied and filled out the financial aid application there? Also, when do the individual scholarships open up for the 2015-2016 school year? Currently, the ones I looked at have 2014 deadlines.

A: Most grants and scholarships are given based upon your application for need and merit based aid at the time of application. We do have some scholarships that will become available in the fall. The school will send out an email with more information.

Audience Question

Q: Sparkle and Lauren, do you have any tips for those of us on the IP/MH track?

A: My one tip would be that many of the classes you are going to take are very therapy focused learning about things like CBT, DBT, and motivational interviewing for example!

A: Figure out what you want to study and really learn from the field as far as 1:1 and group work. Think of what inspires you in mental health and what you'd like to learn about the field.

Audience Question

Q: If this question is for anyone it may apply to. Did any of you defer your admissions? If so did that effect your financial aid, scholarships, or anything at all? Thanks.

A: I deferred, however, I deferred before I received any information about funding or scholarships. If you are in a special program you may request to have your program deferred but it is not always guaranteed.

Audience Question

Q: How do the Learning Communities work? Do you know anyone that's done something like the Michigan Youth and Community Program?

A: The learning communities are faculty-led programs focused on building leadership and community within certain social work topics. Some of them provide funding for events as well. I don't know anyone who has done that specific program, but we would be happy to set you up with someone to talk more about learning communities.

Audience Question

Q: How do I sign up for a graduate level class that isn't in the social work program?

A: You will need to contact the department to see if you need any special permission to register for the course. You will not be able to officially register for the course until your registration appointment time.

Audience Question

Q: Will you get experience actually doing clinical work with clients through field placements? (For students on the interpersonal practice track)

A: Yes! Absolutely!

Audience Question

Q: Are there any jobs available for just the summer?

A: Throughout the year there are tons of work study jobs that will be posted. There are definitely summer options but it might be tricky between field hours and classes. It just depends.

Audience Question

Q: Is anyone familiar with Northwood III housing? How is it?

A: Northwood 3 is closer to campus than 4 or 5. There will be more undergrads living around that area, as well.

Audience Question

Q: Does every class have a research paper? How long are they and are they in APA format?

A: Not every class will necessary have a research paper. Individual assignments vary from instructor to instructor. Typically, they will want you to format any papers in APA format.

Audience Question

Q: I'm a Comm. Org with Children, Youth and Family who's been thinking about minoring in management of human services. How do your concentration and minor experiences both get addressed in your internship?

A: At the beginning of each term, I sit down with my field supervisor and discuss how to integrate my coursework with agency goals and my concentration/minor. As a student with a Management focus, I'm involved with the organizational merger that we have going on at my placement right now. It's a great experience doing organizational visioning and talking about HR management with my

supervisor. I have a Community Organization minor, and I'm doing a lot of work on HIV-related stigma and discrimination with people living with HIV in metro Detroit. You have to complete 171 of your 912 field hours toward the minor method.

Audience Question

Q: I was wondering if any of you purchased season tickets for football and your reflections on it. Are you glad you did or not? Or do you regret not buying them? I come from a school without big sports teams and was wondering if it's popular about grad schools or SSW students in particular to buy them. I know all my friends who went to UM for undergrad had tickets- but undergrad is very different socially and academically.

A: I purchased tickets and I'd say it's worth it if you did not come from a school with big sports. There are a lot of students, grad and undergrad, that go to the games. It really depends on you. It's a great way to bond and get engaged in the university community. You can also sell your tickets if you decide not to go :)

Audience Question

Q: What happens if you would like to register for a foundation course taught by a certain professor who specializes in a particular area and there is no more room?

A: If a class is closed you can fill out a [closed course petition](#) to request entry into the course.

Audience Question

Q: What are the classes like? Are they discussion based, lecture, etc?

A: Most of my classes tend to be a combination of lecture and small/large group discussions. Only a couple of my classes have been more discussion focused and didn't even have Powerpoints. Some clinical classes tend to be very active so more hands-on learning.

Audience Question

Q: Any recommendations for summer reading, please?

A: Enjoy your summer, you will have a lot of reading coming your way soon. In terms of prep, reviewing APA style will be good if you are not familiar with this. Other than that, you can expect some light reading coming for SEED week!

Audience Question

Q: Are there any global opportunities?

A: There are definitely global opportunities. You can check out [this link](#) for more information.

Audience Question

Q: Are there study abroad opportunities?

A: There are plenty of study abroad opportunities but they can be tricky to fit in a 16 month schedule. I took a 3 week class to Amsterdam and Berlin but it cut into summer classes. If you're 16 month, you could also travel in August. [The Office of Global Activities](#) have a lot of options and money to study abroad but you need to be proactive about applying.

Audience Question

Q: How quickly do you typically need your textbooks? Can you shop around a bit or wait for shipping or do you typically need them very quickly?

A: You can usually shop around a bit. There may also be copies available on reserve in the libraries (which are right across the street).

Audience Question

Q: Laura and Phyllis, do the CWS field placement options change? Do you know where I could find out more about the Juvenile & Adult Justice Project?

A: There's about a quarter of field placements that we use specifically -- but new ones may also pop and get added. I'm not familiar with that particular placement. My placement at Detroit Behavioral Institute has a juvenile justice component. Bill Vanderwill (wmvand@umich.edu) could likely answer any additional questions you have.

Audience Question

Q: Will there be a webinar about how to register for classes?

A: Yes! <http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/admitted-students/course-planning>