

## **ADMISSIONS:**

**Q: When I applied, I was interested in signing up for an interview (which was offered as an option but not a requirement). How do I find out whether I requested that/how to request that?**

A: If your application is complete call the office of student services 734-936-0961 to schedule an admissions interview.

**Q: I haven't yet heard about my admissions decision, and I applied in early January. Should I be worried?**

A: We are currently reviewing January applicants so you should be receiving your decision very soon.

**Q: Will my application get marked off if I am unable to get a letter of rec for my academic performance? Can I replace that with more work/volunteer related recommendations instead?**

A: You do not have to provide an academic letter of recommendation. It's helpful to have one if you are currently in school or a recent grad, but it is not required.

**Q: I accepted enrollment, but I still need some documentation to ensure admission. How do I know if the University received my transcripts?**

A: Call the Office of Student Services to check: 734-936-0961.

**Q: What do you think is valued most in an application?**

A: There isn't one piece that is more valued than the other. The entire application is evaluated on a holistic level!

**Q: I've been accepted, but I haven't been asked for my official transcripts. Should I send them in to SSW and if so, where?**

A: The Office of Student Services will get in touch with you to let you know what is needed!

**Q: I've already been accepted and outside of setting up my UofM email, am not sure about next steps. Outside of financial aid, do you have any recommendations for ways to take advantage of so much time before classes start?**

A: Enjoy your free time! Look into housing, think about what your goals are for while you're in the program, and keep your eyes on your email. The School will be in touch with important information regarding steps you should take before starting the program. You'll be busy soon enough 😊

**Q: When is the deadline to apply for the program?**

A: The final deadline is August 1st. It is best to apply as soon as possible.

**Q: If you apply by the March 1st deadline when will you receive a response as to whether you have been accepted into the program?**

A: Your review typically takes 6-8 weeks. We are hoping to make admissions as soon as possible.

**Q: What is the MSW program acceptance rate?**

A: Usually we receive around 1500 applications and enroll an incoming class of approximately 380 students. Typically, 800 students are offered admission each year.

**Q: Does the school accept official electronic transcripts or is better to send the hard copy in the sealed envelope?**

A: We prefer electronic if they can come directly from your institution.

**Q: I was accepted after applying by the December 1st date and am expected to give my notice of enrollment or declining the program by March 15th. The national graduate school date is usually in later April. If I have not heard from all the schools I applied to yet, can I have my acceptance date pushed back in order to make the most educated decision?**

A: If you need more time you can request an extension by emailing [socialwork@umich.edu](mailto:socialwork@umich.edu)

**Q: I saw on the website that the admission office strongly recommends the international students to take the English courses during the summer vacation, is that necessary? And how many students take these courses every year?**

A: We let students know in their admissions letter whether or not they need to take it. It depends on the scores received on TOEFL.

**Q: I was accepted to the Advanced Standing program in September and still have not heard about financial aid. I completed the paperwork and paid my enrollment deposit in September. I also filled out my FAFSA at the beginning of January. Should I contact the financial aid office?**

A: You should be receiving your grant and scholarship award in the next week or two. Loan and work-study packages will be created next month.

**Q: Will our admission decision come in the mail or through email first?**

A: Admissions decisions exclusively come through email.

## **CONCENTRATION/CLASSES:**

**Q: Was it intimidating having to choose a specialization so quickly? Did any of you switch during the program or before starting courses?**

A: When I applied to the program, I originally indicated Interpersonal Practice/Children & Youth for my concentration, and then I switched to Interpersonal Practice/Mental Health right before starting school because I determined it would be a better fit for me. I can understand the feeling of intimidation though! If you're having trouble deciding, I would recommend taking a look at the required classes for the different concentrations as well as looking at the different field options.

**Q: Is there anyone I can talk to about the Social Policy and Evaluation concentration?**

A: The Office of Student Services would be happy to answer any questions you have about the concentration options. They can be reached at 734-936-0961.

**Q: Ashley - What do you like best about the community organization concentration?**

A: I really like the field placement options! I want to do education work in the future, and there are lots of options for that here! There are also amazing faculty doing really fantastic community work who I am able to work on projects with, publish papers with, and have as career mentors.

**Q: Do Interpersonal Practice majors get experience with/introduction to many different kinds of therapy practices, or is there a main style of therapy that most professors focus on?**

A: Most of my required Interpersonal Practice classes have included content on a number of different therapy modalities, which is helpful! If you're interested in gaining more training on specific types of therapy, I would recommend taking minicourses. I've taken some on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Interpersonal Psychotherapy, and I've also had full semester courses on Dialectical Behavioral Therapy and Play Therapy. The professors who specialize in one specific therapy modality are likely to teach a specific course on it.

**Q: Is research or a thesis required for graduation from the MSW program?**

A: It is not! The only mandatory research is through SW522, which is a foundation course specifically about research.

**Q: On the website, it said selecting a minor method can limit student's placement options. I want to know more about it. I chose Interpersonal Practice and Management of Human Service as minor method.**

A: To have a minor, 40% of your time in field needs to be dedicated to doing work related to that minor. This

means that your field placement will need to be able to offer opportunities for both Interpersonal Practice and Management. Once the field placement options are posted, you'll be able to go online to see what your options would look like.

**Q: Is it possible to change concentrations after your first semester if you find out that a different area interests you more?**

A: It depends on if your field placement can accommodate that. I would recommend trying to decide as soon as possible! If you're unsure, try to enroll in the 16-month track, as it will give you a couple of extra months to decide.

**Q: When does registration open for classes?**

A: We will email you in late April about the registration process. Registration takes place over July and August.

**Q: Is it common for a MSW student to apply for a dual-degree, such as public policy? How easy/hard is it to apply for a second program when you are enrolled in MSW?**

A: There are some students who do dual degrees in public policy, public health, or business. If this is something you're interested in, I would suggest applying during your first semester here if you have not already.

**Q: What jobs are out there for social workers who have concentrations in social policy and evaluation?**

A: There are many job opportunities for SPE students, including working for government organizations, consulting firms, school districts, etc.

**Q: What is the average class size and what is the level of interaction with professors?**

A: The average class has 25 students. Students interact with faculty through class, advising, work on research projects, etc. There is a lot of opportunity to work closely with them if you're interested in doing so.

**Q: Who do we talk to about what classes to take/which ones to avoid?**

A: The Office of Student Services will provide academic counseling, and during the summer sessions, you'll have the opportunity to speak with current students. More information on that to come in coming months.

**Q: How much time/room is there to switch your focus- say, from Children Youth and Families to Mental Health- after the first semester? Is it difficult to change if you decide you don't like what you're doing?**

A: Yes, but we recommend doing this as soon as possible and before you begin your field placement.

**Q: I went to law school with a graduate of this program, and she told me that many of her courses involved reading of case studies. Is this accurate?**

A: It definitely depends on your concentration and who your professors are. Some classes I have had assign case studies, others do not.

**Q: I'm interested in the Interpersonal practice track, but what is the main difference between mental health and children & youth sub concentrations? What if I want to work as a psychotherapist with youth who have substance abuse and mental health problem? How will it make a difference which one I choose?**

A: Good question. These concentrations do overlap quite a bit. For example, I'm an IP/Mental Health student, but in my field placement, I'm working with children 0-3 and their primary caregivers. From my personal experience, if you want to learn about diagnosing and treating mental illness, I'd recommend studying Mental Health, whereas if you are interested in working in a school, an adoption agency, or a child welfare agency, Children & Youth might be a better fit. I'd recommend looking at the required classes for each concentration as well as the field placements and use that to help you make your decision. From a licensure perspective, it can be very valuable to have knowledge of the DSM and diagnosing and treating mental illness as that is a large portion of the clinical licensure exam.

**Q: Are we pre-registered for classes?**

A: No, you'll register for classes over the summer. More information on summer registration will be coming to you

via email in the coming months.

**Q: Are there any large "lecture hall" style classes or are they capped at 25 students?**

A: Some of the foundation courses might be a bit bigger than 25 students, but I do not believe there are any large lecture hall style classes. The largest class I've had has been around 30 students.

**Q: How many hours would you say you spend outside of class preparing for class? What type of workload is it generally (I would assume lots of papers and reading, many projects)?**

A: I think this depends on your own personal work style and on the classes that you take. Since we usually have a lot of readings and reflection papers, I spend a few hours doing readings each night, and a little more time focusing when papers are due. We also have a lot of group projects, which take up a few hours outside of class time. It just depends on how you manage your time!

**Q: Are classes typically twice a week?**

A: Classes meet once a week for three hours generally. During the summer the classes meet once a week for four hours.

**Q: I'm in the IP/MH concentration, are there any classes any of you would suggest I take besides the required ones?**

A: I would recommend checking out the clinical minicourses (listed as different sections of SW 790). They're very helpful! I've also taken some interesting classes on different areas that interest me, such as Play Therapy and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy.

**Q: How do you make up for classes if you do not have a BSW?**

A: The majority of the students in our program do not have a BSW and thus take foundation level courses to provide a foundation of knowledge. I wouldn't worry about it!

**Q: When do classes begin for the 12 and 16 month program?**

A: All students begin classes on the Tuesday after Labor Day. Orientation is the Tuesday-Friday before classes start.

**Q: Generally, do the courses tend to be more of a lecture style or do the professors encourage discussion? How about group projects?**

A: This depends on the courses that you take! Some foundation courses are more lecture-based because of the nature of the material, but most of my courses are heavily focused on discussion and experiential learning activities. You can view available courses here for more information: <http://ssw.umich.edu/courses>

**Q: What does Interpersonal Practice mean?**

A: Interpersonal Practice is our term for clinical practice, or direct practice with individuals, families, and groups.

## **EMPLOYMENT:**

**Q: Where can we get more information about work study positions?**

A: If you go to main U of M student employment website, you can search for work study positions. See <https://studentemployment.umich.edu/> for more information.

**Q: How do you obtain a Graduate Staff Assistant job? Do you recommend applying for these as soon as possible?**

A: The School of Social Work GSSA positions had a Feb. 1st deadline. You can search for other GSSA positions in the University at <http://umjobs.org>

**Q: Is it possible to find a teaching position in another department if you have a degree in that area (ex: a BS in Psychology teaching intro level psychology courses)? Or are these opportunities given to the PhD students in that area?**

A: It is possible! Most positions are given to PhD students, but if you have previous teaching experience, you might have a chance! It is more common that MSW students GSI outside of the SSW rather than within the SSW.

**Q: Is it possible to hold a part-time job, do field placement, and class?**

A: Yes, it's possible! Many students do it!

**Q: Are there current students that work full-time while doing the program? How would I get in touch with them?**

A: I worked a full-time job during my first semester in the program. Once I started my field placement, though, it became impossible. I'd be happy to chat more about this if you email me at [aschwedt@umich.edu](mailto:aschwedt@umich.edu).

**Q: I am on the <http://umjobs.org> site right now. When should we start applying for part-time jobs? Should we wait until our financial aid package comes through to see if we qualify for state, federal or institutional work study?**

A: Most of the jobs list an intended start date. You can reach out to the contact for specific positions about if that would work for you. Many graduate students qualify for work-study awards. Work-study jobs are much easier to find for students than regular part-time jobs, so waiting might make sense!

**Q: Can you apply for the GSSA position as a second year student?**

A: GSSA positions in the School of Social Work are specifically for incoming first-year students because the hope is that they will be in the position for their entire time in the MSW program. Other departments in the University may be open to hiring GSSAs at different points in their academic careers.

**Q: Do most students have part-time jobs? If so, do you have any suggestions for part-time jobs in the area?**

A: Many students hold part time jobs while in the program. Check out [studentemployment.umich.edu](http://studentemployment.umich.edu) for help finding a job.

**Q: Is it easy to find job at Ann Arbor or Michigan? How about the places where the graduates go?**

A: Approximately 95% of our graduates find jobs within three months of graduating. Graduates really do go all over the country and world. For more information, see the Career Services alumni employment data website: <http://ssw.umich.edu/offices/career-services/employment-data>

**Q: For students who worked, was it difficult to balance the class load, placement, and working while in the advanced standing program?**

A: Everyone's experience is different. It depends on where your field placement is, how flexible your work schedule is, how much classwork you need to do, etc. Many students work, no matter what their track is, but the School does not recommend students work more than 20 hours/week.

**Q: Should you wait to apply to other assistantships until admitted?**

A: The specific position should say whether or not you need to be a current student to apply.

**Q: Amanda- Is there time to work during the advanced standing program?**

A: It is the same amount of credits per term in the advanced track. The program schedule is flexible and allows for students to make a schedule that has time to balance a job while in the program.

**Q: Is it typical for students to work part or full time as they complete their program? Is it manageable to do so with the school work load?**

A: Many students work 10-15 hours per week to subsidize the cost of the program.

**Q: Are there any incentives to working on campus, such as a living stipend or reduced tuition?**

A: If you work as a GSI or GSSA you may receive a tuition waiver and living stipend. If you work as an RA in a dorm, you may receive free housing. Work-study and temporary employment positions pay bi-weekly. This can be used for living expenses or tuition costs.

**Q: Does the University or the School of Social Work help you find summer internships if you are in the 20 month track?**

A: You can work with the Career Center to find options, but summer internships and jobs are self-initiated.

**Q: Is it easy to find work study opportunities? Does this need to be done prior to starting class?**

A: Many SSW students have work-study positions. You'll want to actively search for positions in the summer at this site: <https://studentemployment.umich.edu/>

**Q: For those doing assistantships, do you find yourself overwhelmed with having classes, a field placement, and your assistantship position or do you find it manageable?**

A: I definitely find it manageable! We take an extra semester so that we're able to spread out our course load. I also have a field placement in Ann Arbor, so travel time doesn't get in the way of my schedule.

**Q: I am on the <http://umjobs.org> site right now. When should we start applying for part-time jobs? Should we wait till our financial aid package comes through to see if we qualify for state, federal or institutional work study?**

A: Yes, most students work at the University through work-study awards. You should plan to apply for jobs during the summer so you can begin working in September.

**Q: Is it still possible to apply for a GSSA position? Can you apply during the middle of the program?**

A: The School of Social Work GSSA positions had a Feb. 1st deadline. You can search for other GSSA positions in the University at <http://umjobs.org/>

**Q: Can international student apply for work-study? How soon will I hear from the office about my financial aid package?**

A: No, but you can work up to 20 hours a week on campus as a temporary employee. We make every effort to provide financial aid information before your enrollment deposit is due. It is dependent on when we received your application. You can call our office if you'd like to check up on your status at 734-936-0961.

**Q: What opportunities for research are available to MSW students? Are there also teaching opportunities as there would be for PhD students?**

A: Some students will find specific faculty members who are doing research in an area that they are passionate about and are able to arrange a research opportunity. We also have a foundation course (SW522) that is solely focused on research. Many Grad Student Instructor (GSI) positions are open to anyone in a graduate program. It is less common that Masters students are chosen for these positions, but if you do have previous teaching experience, you would be a more competitive applicant. These positions can be found on [umjobs.org](http://umjobs.org) along with other staff/faculty positions at the University.

**FIELD:**

**Q: Does the university assist MSW students with field placements?**

A: Yes. When you apply for field placement, you are assigned a field liaison here at the School of Social Work that helps facilitate the process.

**Q: Jessica - I'm also Community Org and Children and Youth. At what other organizations do people with this focus do their placements?**

A: People do their placements at a variety of community organizations in Washtenaw County and Wayne County, and sometimes work with established after school programs. You can check out the Office of Field Instruction website for more info: <http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/field-instruction>

**Q: I applied for the Global Activities Scholarship program. When will the actual internship happen and how long will that last?**

A: Global Field Placements last from May to August.

**Q: Have any of you done a global field placement? If so, what was your experience like?**

A: No, but if you have questions please contact the Office of Global Activities at (734) 936-1964 or [ssw.oga@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.oga@umich.edu).

**Q: For those with a concentration in Child and Youth in Families, what types of field placements are available specifically relating to foster care?**

A: You will be able to access the field placement database once you have paid your enrollment deposit. More info. about applying for field will be sent out next month.

**Q: Where could I find the field placements on the website?**

A: You will be able to access the field placement database once you have paid your enrollment deposit. More info. about applying for field will be sent out next month.

**Q: Is it possible to change field placements if you are unhappy in your position?**

A: You can work with your field liaison if you're having difficulty in your field placement.

**Q: Do a lot of students find themselves in field placements outside of Ann Arbor because Ann Arbor may not have an organization that interests that student? Or is it easy to find a placement in Ann Arbor of a student's first choice?**

A: It really varies. Some people are able to find a placement that suits their interests and learning goals in Ann Arbor, and others find excellent opportunities outside of town. There are a lot of cool placements in the Ann Arbor area, but I would also encourage anyone to look at placements outside of Ann Arbor if that's feasible. I've found field placement to be one of the richest learning opportunities I've had, so definitely spend some time thinking about what interests you!

**Q: Hello Amanda, what has your experience been like at Power Inc?**

A: I am in my second semester working at POWER Inc. and I am very happy with my placement. I am able to work on my concentration and also on my minor under an amazing Executive Director. I have been challenged and encouraged daily. The POWER team is unique and I am learning a lot.

**Q: How safe do MSW students feel when they go out for their field placements? Are there any placements where you do house calls such as hospice care and if so, how does the university ensure student safety?**

A: I do home visits for my field placement, and I've felt very safe. My agency has been wonderful about helping me with this and giving me a caseload of families with whom I feel safe. For more specific questions about the University's liability insurance with field placements, contact the Office of Student Services.

**Q: Do professors and students spend time talking about experiences in field placement during class?**

A: Yes, my professors are regularly encouraging students to integrate field experience and course work through class discussions and assignments. I've done a number of case presentations in my courses and written assessments on a number of my clients (with confidentiality and anonymity maintained, of course).

**Q: I've heard that your field placement is very far from the university. Could the students take the public transportation to get there or it's better to buy a car?**

A: Your field placement does not have to be far from campus, and it all depends on your preference! You may be

limited to field placements that are accessible by bus if you do not have a car, and for that reason, I bought one once I moved here. It all depends on you! For more information on field placements, please look here: <http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/field-instruction>

**Q: How competitive are the field placements between MSW students?**

A: It really depends on the placement. My two placements haven't been very competitive, but some placements, such as the UMHS hospital placements, are quite competitive.

**Q: Are there any faith-based macro internships available?**

A: Yes, one example is Catholic Social Services in Washtenaw County. We also work with Jewish Family Services in the Metro Detroit area (to name a few).

**Q: Jessica, I am interested in focusing on Community organization and children & youth as well. What kind of macro-type roles do you have at your placement? I want to work with children but not necessarily counsel them so I am just curious!**

A: At my field placement, I work on program planning, implementation, and evaluation for a new after school program for seventh graders. I also have a direct services component where I work with seventh graders, which is fun and different! I also create and facilitate trainings for our staff working on the program.

**Q: Are there placement opportunities within the criminal justice system?**

A: Yes, absolutely!

**Q: Hi, Lauren. I'm a newly admitted student focusing on Interpersonal Practice and Mental Health. What sorts of field placement can be offered to students in this area?**

A: There are a lot of options available for IP/Mental Health students. Last year, I was placed at an outpatient partial hospitalization psychiatric program within a hospital setting. There are other hospital placements for IP/MH students, including psychiatric units, and there are also plenty of agencies that accept IP/MH students for counseling and therapy services. This year, I intern at an Early Head Start program where I do home-based therapy with kids 0-3 and their primary caregivers. I also know of IP/MH students being placed at schools, and many other types of agencies.

**Q: How are field placements determined?**

A: A few months before your field placement is set to start, you will be asked to fill out a personal statement and select your top five choices for field placements. Your field liaison will then look at the needs of the different organizations you prioritized to best match you. The organization will then reach out to you to set up an interview and determine if it is a good fit!

**Q: Jewel, Jessica, or Ashley-- What does your average day in the field look like?**

A: I work at the University of Michigan where I coordinate our Bystander Intervention work for students, faculty, and staff. I attend a lot of meetings, build partnerships, develop curriculum, facilitate workshops, present to large groups, travel to conferences, prepare and submit budgets, conduct strategic reviews... the list could go on and on! Everyone does different things depending on the needs of the organization and the skills/strengths of the student.

**Q: Lauren, what is your experience like at your field placement?**

A: I've had wonderful experiences at both of my field placements. My first placement was at a partial hospitalization program, which is a step down from inpatient psychiatric care. There, I facilitated group therapy and psychoeducation groups for adults with severe and persistent mental illness, and I had a small caseload of clients for whom I provided case management services, including discharge planning. This year, my placement at an Early Head Start program allows me to do home-based therapy with children 0-3 and their primary caregivers using an Infant Mental Health lens. Both placements have been fabulous fits for me and have informed where I see myself headed in the future.



**Q: Can research with a professor in the SSW count as a field placement?**

A: Research does not typically count as field placement credit unless you are completing the social policy and evaluation concentration. This may be different if you are in the PhD program.

**Q: When will I be able to apply for field placement?**

A: Incoming 20-month and Advanced Standing students apply for field placement in May (you'll get an email about it), and 16-month students will receive information toward the end of the summer/beginning of fall as their applications are due during the fall semester.

**Q: Can you make suggestions for your placement based on your undergrad placement experience?**

A: You will have a chance to work with the Office of Field Instruction on the answer to your question, and you can read more about them here: <http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/field-instruction>

**Q: Do most students you know enjoy their field placement? It seems like there's added pressure on field placement selection since you only get one in the 16 month program. What are the chances of getting something you actually want?**

A: I would definitely say that most students enjoy their field placements! Most folks I know got matched with their first or second choice, and if they did not, they are pleased with the alternative that was suggested to them!

**Q: Are any of the field placements paid?**

A: Field placements aren't paid, but some do offer a small stipend to offset costs of driving (mostly ones that are a distance away from Ann Arbor). SSW also offers a small stipend for some placements.

**Q: For IP/Mental Health field placements, are most of those in the Ann Arbor area or further afield?**

A: There are a number of placements in the Ann Arbor area (hospitals, agencies, schools), and there are also a good number that are a distance away. My first field placement was in Ann Arbor, and my current one is in Jackson, MI (45 minutes from Ann Arbor).

**Q: Amanda - for the IP/Children and Youth focus, what are the field placements like?**

A: I am an IP/ Child and Youth focus as well as a Management of Human Services minor. My field placement allows me to spend majority of my time working in a Family Advocacy Program. I also get to spend time working directly with the Executive Director and seeing the management side of a nonprofit.

**Q: For interpersonal practice, how many hours is needed for the field placement per week?**

A: IP students have the same field placement hour requirements as other students. The hour requirement is based on your curriculum track (20-month, 16-month, Advanced Standing) and not on your concentration. Most students are in field 16 hours a week, but some placements require 24 hours a week (for example, many hospital placements do)

## **FINANCIAL AID:**

**Q: When do we find out about merit-based scholarships? And what other scholarships are available to students entering the MSW program?**

A: Students will be notified about their financial aid package before their enrollment deposit is due.

**Q: How are the financial assistance packages? Meaning, on average, what percentage of tuition, etc does the school assist with?**

A: Most grants and scholarships cover partial tuition. Most students supplement with loans and work-study awards.

**Q: Does Michigan prefer that we apply for Direct PLUS loans on the studentloans.gov website, or is there another way to apply for loans?**

A: You should apply for loans with your FAFSA application ([www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)) and if you'd like supplemental GradPLUS loans you can go here (<http://www.finaid.umich.edu/Home/TypesofAid/Loans/DirectPLUSLoans.aspx>) for more information.

**Q: Are grad plus loans, loans that students take out or the parents?**

A: Grad plus loans are for students. Graduate students are considered independent from parents for financial aid purposes.

**Q: How do students without assistantships support themselves in the program?**

A: Students support themselves with a combination of scholarships, grants, loans, work study positions, and jobs outside of school.

**Q: If grants, scholarships are loans do not cover the cost of attendance, how were you able to pay for school?**

A: Many students do cover the cost of attendance through a combination of grants, scholarships, loans, work-study and Grad Plus loans. You can speak with the Office of Student Services if you are having difficulty with your funding package by calling 734-936-0961.

**Q: What is the average graduate debt of MSW students?**

A: Most students accept the federal loans which total \$41,000.

**Q: When I initially applied, I received a list of program I could apply to that offered tuition assistance. Will there be any more opportunities like these before school starts?**

A: Special program final deadlines are March 1. There are other scholarships and grants available on our financial aid website, <http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/financial-aid>.

**Q: Do a lot of student get awarded scholarships for their second year?**

A: Many scholarships cover both years of attendance. It depends on the specific award. There will be some scholarship that you can apply for once you are an enrolled student. These will be announced by email in the summer.

**Q: Do you know what the max amount is for grad plus loans?**

A: Each year, you can borrow the full out-of-pocket cost of your graduate study. To calculate the maximum PLUS eligibility, take the program's annual cost of attendance – which includes tuition, fees, books and living costs – and subtract any financial aid such as tuition waivers, grants or Direct loans.

## HOUSING:

**Q: How are on campus dorms?**

A: Most of our residence halls are filled by undergraduate students. There is a new graduate student dorm this year called Munger Residence. More information on Munger can be found at <http://mungerresidences.org/>. Graduate students also live in Northwood Apartments. Other than that, most students live in off-campus housing.

**Q: How do you find housing/ roommates? Do you suggest rooming with a social work cohort or no?**

A: On the SSW website, there's a roommate finding tool. When you go to the SSW website, search for "roommate finder," and then there's a link you can open for that tool. You'll have to sign on with your username to use the tool. As for a recommendation, it's completely up to you. I know some students who enjoy living with fellow SW students and others who would prefer live alone or with non-SSW students.

**Q: In the long run, is it cheaper to live on or off campus?**

A: It can be much cheaper to live off campus, especially if you can share housing with another student. Most students who choose to live in University Housing do so because of the ease. Ann Arbor housing market can be very competitive and is generally not all-inclusive of utilities and amenities.

**Q: I'm an admitted 16 mo Comm Org and Children and Youth and was wondering about field placements. I've been told that where you choose to live has an impact on your placement- are there any areas that students prefer to live or that give you better option for field placements?**

A: I am also CO/CY, and as long as you have a car, then you will not be limited in terms of your field placement options. If you do not have a car, you can still have a field placement that you want, but you might be limited to places that are accessible by bus or where you can carpool with other students. Many students live within walking distance of the school, and some people live in other areas of Ann Arbor or Ypsilanti - it just depends on your preference and what you are looking for in terms of housing!

**Q: Do any of you have a roommate? How did you all find roommates?**

A: I live in an apartment with roommates off campus and apartment complex had its own matching system. However, The School of Social Work also has a housing and roommate finder that many of my friends in the program used and loved. Looking back I wish I had utilized this resource and lived with fellow social work students. Here is the link to that page <https://ssw.umich.edu/my-ssw/student-housing>. You can also look on Craigslist – many grad students will list postings looking for other grad students.

**Q: Is it too early to do the roommate finder search right now?**

A: You can access the roommate matching feature as soon as you as you have paid your enrollment deposit.

**Q: For 16 month students, is it hard to find housing for 16 months? Or are most leases flexible?**

A: It depends! Some landlords are more flexible than others. If you intend to move immediately after graduation, it is important to have that conversation up front with a landlord. Some will let you sublet, so make sure to ask about that if the lease lasts a full year.

**Q: Does the university have agreements with any off-campus apartments in order to help students locate off-campus housing or pay rent for a lower amount?**

A: They do not have arrangements of that type, but there is an off-campus housing website (<https://offcampushousing.umich.edu/>) that many landlords list housing on. Because Ann Arbor is a college town, most places in the area that are up for rent are being rented by students.

**Q: In looking for off-campus housing, what neighborhoods would you recommend?**

A: It depends on if you'd like to be within walking distance of campus or not! If you'd like to still be in Ann Arbor and within walking distance, there are a few recommendations I'll give. I live over on the Old West Side (which you can search for on craigslist). This part of town is a lot more "townie" and has houses that have been broken into separate units and have backyards, porches, etc. There are also a lot of families and older residents of Ann Arbor who live there. I also suggest Kerrytown for graduate students. Kerrytown is home to our Farmer's Market, People's Food Co-Op, and Birkenstock store :) Many grad students will also live in neighboring Ypsilanti, but you will need to either bus or drive into town. There are a lot of apartment complexes off of Packard or Washtenaw that have easily accessible bus routes onto campus.

**Q: I've been looking at apartments is McKinley a good company?**

A: I know many people who have lived in different McKinley properties, and I think they're reputable. I'd recommend checking out specific apartment complexes that they manage to see which ones would best suit your preferences.

**Q: Are there any off-campus areas that you would NOT suggest living in based on crime or just a general knowledge of an unsafe area?**

A: I've lived in Ann Arbor my whole life, and I personally feel that the town is a very safe place to live. I've lived in various neighborhoods around campus and off-campus and have generally felt very safe all over. The Ann Arbor news maintains a crime map if you're interested in seeing it. You can also call or visit local police agencies to ask them about safe apartment complexes (my husband and I did this when looking for our current apartment,

we found it helpful).

## **PARKING/TRANSPORTATION:**

### **Q: Is it wise to have a car on campus?**

A: Parking on campus is very expensive and limited. If your house/apartment comes with a parking spot, you definitely can have a car, however you do not need one. Some students have cars for more flexibility with field placements, but there is a bus system in Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti and many students car pool. Having a car can be nice, but not a necessity.

### **Q: Do you have experience with commuting to school? Would it be recommended to have housing near the school if I live an hour away?**

A: I live about 20 minutes away from school, so I do commute a short distance, but I know plenty of students who commit 30-60 minutes. Some students are able to arrange to have their field placements closer to their home if they commute. Since students are typically on campus for 2-3 days a week (and at field the other days), you could really go either way. I personally like living close to campus.

### **Q: Are group projects more of a challenge for groups with students who commute, or is class time generally allotted to work on them?**

A: I've had professors give us time in class to work on class projects, and I've also had professors form groups based on where people live. I've also been able to do a lot of group work over email and phone.

### **Q: Do your classes (not field placements) ever require you to leave campus? If I don't have a driver's license or car, will that be an issue as an MSW student?**

A: I don't think it's an issue for most students. I've taken two classes that have an off-campus component, but one was within walking distance of the school, and the other was a short drive. For the latter, students were able to arrange carpools. Most people don't take classes that meet off-campus though (unless it's through a special program).

### **Q: If I decided to commute to campus, what is the parking situation like?**

A: We do not suggest that people drive to campus! If you are a commuter, I would recommend parking in one of our commuter lots and taking the bus in. Parking is very expensive and hard to find. Student parking passes are costly, and the lots where you can park are not nearby the School of Social Work. You can find out more on [theride.org](http://theride.org) or [pts.umich.edu](http://pts.umich.edu).

### **Q: What car would you recommend for Michigan commuters based on weather?**

A: There isn't any specific car I would recommend. Some people buy cars based on their fuel economy, others buy cars based on their stability and storage space. I have a Nissan Rogue, and I find it really great for being big enough for people and luggage, being able to carry my kayaks and bikes on top, and also having pretty decent gas mileage. I've never had a problem in the snow or ice. The only thing I would definitely recommend as a necessity is anti-lock brakes. They make a huge difference!

### **Q: I have accepted enrollment to U of M advanced standing program. I will be living about 20 min from the University. How does parking work?**

A: Parking on campus is expensive and very limited. I would suggest taking a bus to campus. If you're living in a location where the AATA (also called The Ride) goes, you can take that onto campus. Otherwise, you can drive and park in the State St. Commuter Lot and take the #36 Commuter Bus onto campus. For more information, you can go to [theride.org](http://theride.org).

### **Q: When you use the blue U of M buses (as opposed to the AATA buses), do you have to scan your ID card? Does it keep track of the amount of times you ride? Do the U of M buses have a wide enough spread that you**

**don't need a car?**

A: You don't have to swipe your card for the U of M buses, but you do for the AATA. U of M doesn't keep track of your bus riding (it's unlimited use), and AATA is also unlimited for U of M students. U of M buses run between campuses (north campus, central campus, south campus), but they don't run to the areas of Ann Arbor outside of campus. You'd have to ride the AATA buses for that. You can find more information about where those buses go at [theride.org](http://theride.org).

**PROGRAM DEMOGRAPHICS:**

**Q: How many students are from out of state in the program? Do you have any advice for settling in if someone is unfamiliar with Michigan in general?**

A: About 45% of the students are from out of state. I am an out of state student and the advice I would give is to attend all the orientation activities. During orientation is where I made some of my best friends in the program. Also utilize the School of Social Works housing and roommate finder (here's the link <https://ssw.umich.edu/my-ssw/student-housing>) this is a great tool that will connect you with other social work students moving to the area.

**Q: What would you say in response to the rumor of the UofM School of Social Work being majority white, and the likelihood of having POC students in classes low? Are your classes generally pretty racially diverse?**

A: Here is a link to the 2014 MSW Class Profile, which should answer some of your questions:  
<http://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/2014-msw-class-profile.pdf>

**Q: What is the gender ratio in the program?**

A: Here is a link to the 2014 MSW Class Profile, which should answer some of your questions:  
<http://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/2014-msw-class-profile.pdf>

**Q: How many students are in the social work program?**

A: Here is a link to the 2014 MSW Class Profile, which should answer some of your questions:  
<http://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/2014-msw-class-profile.pdf>. Because the number of students in 16-month, 20-month, and Advanced Standing varies every year, so does the exact number of students.

**Q: Do you have any Veterans in SSW?**

A: Yes, we do!

**Q: What percentage of the program is male?**

A: Here is a link to the latest class profile. <https://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/2014-msw-class-profile.pdf>

**Q: How many students in the program from China? How many from Asia?**

A: Here is a link to class profile of what last year's class looked like.  
<https://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/2014-msw-class-profile.pdf>

**Q: What percentage of your students come straight from undergrad?**

A: A significant number of our student body enters the SSW directly from undergrad. Here is a link to class profile of what last year's class looked like. <https://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/2014-msw-class-profile.pdf>

**Q: I am going to be 28 in May. Are there typically many older students or just a few?**

A: I am also 28, and find that there are quite a few people in the 25-35 age range who I've connected with!

**Q: What is the average age of students in the program?**

A: The class profile will provide an answer to your question :)

<http://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/2014-msw-class-profile.pdf>

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS:**

**Q: How competitive are the Special Programs? Does it look bad or decrease your chances of qualifying for one if you apply to multiple special programs?**

A: It's ok to apply to for multiple special programs. Multiple applications will not impact your selection. The selection process is specific for each program.

**Q: I am wondering if you are applying for one of the scholarship programs but are not accepted into that particular program if you will still be considered for admission into the general MSW program.**

A: Yes your admission review is independent from your special program review.

**Q: I applied to a ton of special programs. When will I hear back from these programs?**

A: If you applied by December 1st you will be receiving financial aid information very soon. We hope to give financial aid package info before everyone's enrollment deposit deadline (if you applied early to a special program).

**Q: If you are not accepted into a certificate program upon initial acceptance are there other points of times during your time at UM to pursue certificate programs?**

A: Special programs are only available to incoming students. You can add certificate at any time in your program but you have to plan as they have course and field requirements.

<http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/specialization-and-certification-programs>

**Q: If I wanted to apply for a special program, how do I do that?**

A: You can learn more about the Special Programs at <http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/financial-aid/special-programs>. Application deadlines are December 1, 2014 (early application), February 1, 2015 (priority), March 1, 2015. Selection of applicants will be made from all dates with priority given to those applicants that meet the December and February deadlines.

**Q: I applied for the Specialist in Aging certificate. When and how will I find out if I was accepted into this certificate program?**

A: You can contact professor Lydia Li at [lydiali@umich.edu](mailto:lydiali@umich.edu) for more information about your specific circumstance.

**Q: Do any of you have any insight into the CBI program?**

A: For more information on the CBI program, please look here: <http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/financial-aid/community-based-initiative-program>

## **TRACK:**

**Q: How do-able is the workload in the 16 month program comparative to the 20 month MSW program?**

A: The workload for the 16-month track is the same as the 20-month track, as both are four semesters. The difference is that 16-month students will take classes through the summer and then graduate in December, whereas 20-month students have the summer off and then graduate in May.

**Q: Will we be pre-registered for classes?**

A: No, you register for your own classes. The school will send an email in April detailing the registration process.

**Q: How do-able is the workload in the 16 month program comparative to longer (21 month) MSW programs?**

A: In the 16 month program, students begin field placements in their second semesters, and continue with their field placements from January through December. They are also taking a full load of classes at the same time. For 20

month students, they begin field placements in their first semester, and continue with them into their second semester. They also take a full load of classes at that time, but they do not take classes or have field placement over the summer. Additionally, 16 month students have only 1 field placement, while 20 month students have 2 different field placements.

**Q: If we are in the advanced standing program, will we only have classes with others in the same program?**

A: Classes are not specific to people in a certain track. You will likely have classes with second-year students as well as other first-year students.

**Q: Is it possible to switch from the 20 month program to the 16 month program after admission?**

A: 20-month students begin their field placements immediately, so changing over after starting is very difficult. Field placement selection begins in May, so I would suggest trying to decide what you'd like to do by then!

**Q: Is there a lot of overlap for students with an undergrad in social work and the first few advanced standing classes?**

A: There is not! The foundation courses are removed from the Advanced Standing curriculum for this exact reason.

**Q: If you enroll in the 16-month program in order to qualify for the Special Program scholarship opportunities but do not obtain the scholarship is it possible to switch to the 20-month track?**

A: Yes. Be sure to send an email to [socialwork@umich.edu](mailto:socialwork@umich.edu) as soon as you know you want to change your track.

**Q: If you are doing the 16 month program, how manageable is it to do this and add on a minor and still graduate on time? Does it all just depend on the minor you chose?**

A: Minors don't actually add time on to your track. You'll take two classes in your minor area that will replace two electives that you would have taken otherwise.

**Q: Hello I applied for the 16 month program but I have an undergrad in social work.**

A: We will automatically review you for advanced standing if you have a social work degree. If you are ineligible for advanced standing we will ask you to select either the 16 or 20 month program. If you want to decline advanced standing you'll need to complete a form to do so.

**Q: I got accepted to the 20-month Peace Corps program. Does that mean I would leave during the summer of 2016?**

A: Yes, it does.

**Q: Is the summer semester condensed?**

A: While a typical class is usually three hours long, in the summer they are four hours long to make up for it being a shorter semester.

**Q: Why did you choose the 16 month program over the 20 month?**

A: I didn't want to have the summer off, because I didn't want the pressure of finding a summer job/internship. I also liked the idea of being here for a semester before having to start my field placement so that I could get used to being in school again without the additional pressure of being an intern as well.

## **VISITING CAMPUS:**

**Q: What time of year is best to visit campus? Would you suggest waiting until we receive admission?**

A: You can visit campus at any time for a tour with a current student, lunch, and class shadowing! Please go here for more information: <http://ssw.umich.edu/about/visit>

**Q: I will be taking a visit to UM in a few weeks. What are some things outside the program that I should look**



**at? Any specific spots on the main campus, or things in Ann Arbor that a prospective resident would want to see?**

A: I would suggest looking at places where you might want to live! Go check out Kerrytown, the Old West Side, and Ypsilanti to get a feel for where you might want to be. I would also suggest going to the Law Quad, which is just a block down from the School of Social Work (it was the only place in the US considered for filming Harry Potter, you know). We also have fantastic food in Ann Arbor!! When you come visit, ask folks what their favorite is. I'm sure everyone will have lots of suggestions!

**Q: Do you have any tips for visiting campus?**

A: Yes! Fill out this form and we will give you a tour of the School of Social Work, as well as take you to lunch and direct you to a class to shadow. You can find the form here: <http://ssw.umich.edu/about/visit>

**Q: I plan on dropping in to observe a class in the near future. Are we able to choose the class?**

A: You communicate your interests to us, and we try to find a class that fits your preferences. Please fill out the form here: <http://ssw.umich.edu/about/visit>

## WHY MICHIGAN?:

**Q: What do you find most challenging about the program?**

A: I have found the most challenging part of the program to be not over committing! There are so many amazing opportunities within the School of Social Work and at the larger university that it is hard to say no to things.

**Q: What made you choose the MSW program at U of M?**

A: I really liked the feel of the city of Ann Arbor, the passions of the faculty, the small class size, the resources offered by being at the University of Michigan, and the connections developed in the Office of Student Services.

**Q: How internationally recognized is UM?**

A: We have been recognized as in the top three schools of social work in the country every year for the last 30 years and consistently are ranked #1. This ranking translates to being one of the top Schools of Social Work in the world.

**Q: What made you choose U-M over other schools you applied/were accepted to?**

A: I liked the variety of scholarship opportunities that were available here, as compared to other schools. I also noticed that many of our graduates obtain jobs within 3 to 6 months of graduation, which was important to me.

**Q: Why did you all choose to go to Michigan for social work?**

A: I was drawn to UM because of the breadth of opportunities available to students and the class offerings. Being an IP/Mental Health student, I was particularly drawn to opportunities to learn from faculty who are in clinical practice in the area.

**Q: In your opinion, what is the best thing you've gotten out of the program? What is something that you think the program could improve upon?**

A: My field placement is definitely something that has changed my life. I work at the University of Michigan and so that in itself is specific to this program. I am awarded so much responsibility, freedom, and independence. I manage a \$300,000 program where I develop curriculum, meet with the president and administrators, partner with schools and colleges, facilitate for students, faculty, and staff, and oversee a large evaluation effort. One area of improvement that the school is actually working on right now is to better educate students around social identity, social justice, and navigating classroom microaggressions.

**Q: How would you describe U-M ideology?**

A: Check out the greater UM website for more information about the university (<http://umich.edu/>). It is a place



with a intentional and intensive focus on education both inside and outside of the classroom and asks for a lot of personal reflection from its students.

**Q: If you were accepted to UM and Columbia which would you choose?**

A: UM! But that is for me personally. Make sure your program is the best fit for you and your goals.

## **OTHER:**

**Q: I know the program is very large. How do you find it making friends and being sociable in such a large department?**

A: We have over 500 students in our program at any given time, however, it feels a lot smaller than that. Because your courses will align with your practice and focus, you will end up having classes with the same people over and over again. These people will likely become your friends! There are also a number of student organizations at the School of Social Work where students can build relationships based on shared interest or identity. I am an introvert, and I still found it easy to make friends here!

**Q: What was the hardest thing about your first semester (even about entering graduate school compared to undergrad)?**

A: I found that it was a bit overwhelming because I started classes, my field placement, and a new job all the same week. With any big transitions, it's an adjustment, but it felt more manageable within a few weeks.

**Q: Is the assignment very heavy? How about your daily schedule? What do you always do during weekend?**

A: I generally have 2-3 assignments per class I take. The average paper is probably around 10 pages. My schedule is pretty packed 8am-5pm daily, but that is between work, field, and class. I find plenty of time to play soccer, exercise, shop, eat, read, and watch TV in the evenings and weekends.

**Q: Does the program feel a lot different from completing an undergraduate degree?**

A: Yes! There is a lot more flexibility, a lot more contact with faculty and staff, and a lot more comradery among students. The workload is very different, as it is more on your own schedule rather than so rigid. There is also a higher expectation of being engaged during class time.

**Q: Lauren - I'm an admitted IP/MH (16 month). How much free time would you say you have in a day?**

A: Congratulations on your admission! Between my field placement (which is two days a week), my courses (I've averaged around 15 credits a semester), and my job (where I work 16 hours a week), I find my weeks are pretty full. It's manageable, but my days are generally full 8-10 hour days, not including homework.

**Q: What's it like being a graduate student in Ann Arbor?**

A: I think Ann Arbor is a cool place to be a graduate student. I find that Ann Arbor has a fun vibe to it largely because the university is here. Ann Arbor is a great city for restaurants, music, and plays, and Detroit, which is about 40 minutes away, also has a lot of cool things going on.

**Q: Are any of you "out of state" students? And if so, do you feel the education and experience you are receiving is worth the cost of tuition as compared to going to an in state school that may be cheaper?**

As an out-of-state student, my short answer to this question is yes. However, I took the time to weigh the pros and cons of each university I was considering before agreeing to take on the cost of my education. Whether the program that best suits your needs, interests and budget is in-state or out-of-state, it is your decision. You could always look for funding opportunities from the school or through scholarships.

**Q: Are research opportunities with faculty that share your interests abundant/easy to set up?**

A: Yes absolutely. I'd encourage students to look into independent or special studies with professors who do research that interest you! Most faculty are happy to talk with students about research in their area. You just have

to find a professor to support you.

**Q: How are mentoring relationships established? Are mentors assigned based on concentration?**

A: Last year, we piloted a Mentorship Program for the first time at the School of Social Work! Incoming students filled out a form requesting a second-year mentor if they wanted one, and then were asked to select their priorities, such as same academic focus, similar social identities, or a specific characteristic like non-traditional student. We are currently evaluating the program to ensure that we are best meeting the needs of our incoming and first-year students, but will likely do something similar! Many students also find mentorship from their academic advisor or second-year students in the program.

**Q: Are there any opportunities for study abroad within the program?**

A: Yes, you can complete a special studies for elective credit. The Office of Global Activities can help you with this: <http://ssw.umich.edu/offices/global-activities>

**Q: How difficult are the language tests required for the Global Social Work certificate?**

A: You should contact Katie Lopez ([kalopez@umich.edu](mailto:kalopez@umich.edu)) for more information regarding this requirement.

**Q: Do you know anyone that has done the Global Activities Scholar Program? Is it worth coming to U-M specifically for that program?**

A: I have a few friends who were Global Scholars. They had an amazing experience from what I've heard. You should contact Katie Lopez ([kalopez@umich.edu](mailto:kalopez@umich.edu)) for more information regarding GASP.

**Q: What was the hardest thing about your first semester (even about entering graduate school compared to undergrad)?**

A: Time management between work and field was challenging but easy to deal with because of our student resources here.

**Q: What career development services are available?**

A: To both alumni and current students, we offer resume reviews, cover letter assistance, and writing and editing assistance. We offer workshops on interview techniques, salary negotiations, job searching techniques, and licensure questions. We also offer a practice licensure test in order to prepare for the real test. We also facilitate 3 networking trips each year to DC, Chicago, and San Francisco, in order to show our students the career options they have post graduation, and to meet our alumni.

**Q: I know Michigan is known for snow at what point do they actually close campus because of weather?**

A: Hah! This hardly ever happens. I have been on this campus for ten years, and classes have only been officially cancelled twice. Both times were because of a combination of snow and bitter cold. However, your individual professors may cancel class if they are unable to get to campus or might suggest an online class session if many students are commuters.

**Q: Can you apply for Michigan State citizenship after one year? Does being married make a difference in that process, or no?**

A: Typically students are not granted residency because they have simply been enrolled for one year. The determination is based on why you are in the state of Michigan. If you are deemed to be here for education purposes you will usually not be granted in state status. You'll want to work directly with the Residency Office regarding any questions that you have.

**Q: Did any of you not graduate with a degree in social work as an undergrad?**

A: I graduated with a Bachelor's in General Studies where I focused on American Culture, History, and Sociology. If you have more questions about this, feel free to email me at [aschwedt@umich.edu](mailto:aschwedt@umich.edu).

**Q: Is there a website where I can look up the organizations on campus?**

A: For campus organizations, you can use [maizepages.umich.edu](http://maizepages.umich.edu). You can also learn about SSW-specific organizations on the Student Union website, at <https://sites.google.com/a/umich.edu/ssw-student-union/>.

**Q: If I get accepted this year, the following year can I apply to a dual masters program?**

A: As long as you are not an advanced standing student you can add a dual degree in your second year.

**Q: Are there advisors that students meet with regularly or at all?**

A: Each student is assigned an academic advisor, and you typically first meet with your advisor at orientation.

**Q: If you get certified as a licensed social worker in Michigan, will that transfer to other states if you move elsewhere?**

A: Yes you can apply for reciprocity in other states. Our Career Center can offer more information.

**Q: What was the first 6 months of grad school like?**

A: I found that my first 6 semesters were really interesting and filled with a lot of new learning opportunities. Everyone starts field within the first six months (in September for 20-month and Advanced Standing students and in January for 16-month students), and so between that and courses, you'll have a lot of new opportunities coming your way! There were times I felt a little overwhelmed too, but I think everyone can relate to that adjustment, and it definitely becomes more manageable the more familiar you get!

**Q: Do most people get football passes at UM?**

A: Some students get football tickets. They are pretty expensive, so it is definitely not something that everyone does. I personally like to buy tickets to one or two games per year when others are selling them.

**Q: Is there much socialization between different graduate programs at U-M or do people generally stick within their separate programs?**

A: It really depends on if you take initiative to get involved with graduate student events, programs, and organizations. There are sometimes mixers between programs, and many SSW students live with grad students in other programs.

**Q: If I am enrolled to start school Fall of 2015, but I am moving in Ann Arbor spring of 2015. Can I get involved on campus before being an official student?**

A: It depends on what you'd like to get involved with! We will have new student sessions during the summer months where you'll get to meet other students, so this could be a good opportunity to start getting to know people from your program. You might also be able to find a job somewhere on campus before starting, as many jobs held by undergrads during the school year are open during the summer.

**Q: I know that the program can be very stressful, what is there to do for fun?**

A: For me personally, I think it is important to have a balance of school life and social life. Moving from a small town in Alabama I want to make sure I time manage enough to where I can explore Ann Arbor and surrounding areas with friends. There are fun places to go eat, live music, football and sports. You will be able to find a fun way to spend your free time.

**Q: Can I apply for PHD after or during my MSW program?**

A: Yes. If you apply in your first year and become a PhD in your second year, you'll have the benefit of the PhD funding package for a portion of your MSW program.

**Q: Any advice you would give for someone who's been out of school for a while? I finished undergrad in '10 and would love any advice you have to get the grad school mindset.**

A: I graduated in '08, so this was a question of mine, as well! It is an adjustment to be back in school, but many other people are in the same situation as you and can serve as great sources of support. It took me a few weeks to get into a new routine of reading for classes and keeping up with work, but it is possible! It all depends on your

work style, and there are resources here to help you along in this transition, as well.

**Q: What journals would you recommend for us incoming students?**

A: This may not be what you're looking for, but honestly, I would enjoy your time not being a student and fill it with leisure reading while you can. You'll have plenty of opportunities to read scholarly articles when you start school :)

**Q: If I am currently a Michigan resident and have lived here my whole life, do I need to apply for residency?**

A: If do not have ANY out of state activity you will not need to apply for residency.

**Q: Is there a mascot? I'd like to try out. I was the mascot for my undergraduate university and my high school. It's the best way to show my UMich pride!**

A: Michigan is the Wolverines, but no one dresses up as one!

**Q: For students coming from warm places like California, how was it getting used to the cold weather in Michigan? What do you recommend to be able to prepare? Specifically, what kind of clothing is best to purchase?**

A: I just moved to Michigan this fall from Alabama and getting use to the cold was not as bad as I had imagined it would be. I bought a down coat that is good for -50 and it was worth the investment! Snow boot and wool socks were two other items I am happy I purchased. The cold weather is all about learning how to layer.

**Q: What do spouses do about health insurance? Do they have access to the student health center via the student health fee?**

A: Only students can use University Health Services as part of their tuition coverage. You can purchase health insurance to cover family members here: <http://uhs.umich.edu/fees-insurance>

**Q: Are there any professional organizations that you can recommend checking out or possibly joining to help with networking and exposure?**

A: Absolutely! You can check out the National Association of Social Workers at: <http://www.socialworkers.org/>

**Q: In terms of technology, do you have any laptop suggestions for a PC inclined student?**

A: For Windows-based computers, we recommend that it have

- Dual core 1.6 GHz minimum processor
- Minimum of 4 GB RAM
- 128 GB minimum SSD or 500 GB minimum hard drive
- 2.4/5 GHz dual-band 802.11n (or better) Wi-Fi
- Windows 7 or Windows 8.x

One source for purchasing a laptop is through the [University of Michigan Computer Showcase](#). The U-M Computer Showcase is on-campus and offers academic pricing on a selection of options. The U-M Computer Showcase [Support & Repair centers](#) offer no- and low-cost services for computers purchased in the Showcase and elsewhere.

**Q: Can you speak about the human bio requirement? Would you recommend doing it online before starting or taking the test?**

A: We do not offer an online examination and do not recommend that students enroll in a course in order to meet this requirement. Students can read the required text and take an examination in their first term to meet the biological determinants of human behavior requirement (if informed that this is needed in the admission letter).

**Q: I am interested in becoming a social policy research analyst. Is the SSW right for me?**

A: It can be! Everyone's experience is different and it would completely depend on your goals and expectations. There are definitely opportunities to work with both Social Policy and research in the MSW curriculum and field placements.

**Q: In your experience(s), do SSW students get jobs in Michigan, or do people get jobs all over the country? In other words, if someone want to go to UM, but do not want to stay in Michigan long-term, what is the best course of action?**

A: I am currently in the process of looking at jobs outside of the state of Michigan. The Career Center is a great help in finding connections in different locations.

**Q: Besides being a social worker, what are some of the fields/jobs that graduates end up in?**

A: There are many jobs that people with social work degrees do! Some do counseling, therapy, or case work. Others work in Student Affairs on college campuses. Some work in the K-12 education system, and some do community organizing on a more grassroots level. Others work for government institutions or as consultants. Social work is really a skillset of knowledge, so the options are endless!

**Q: As far as jobs are concerned, does having a degree from U-M help MSW students after leaving the state? Also, does the university have connections across the country to help with job placement?**

A: Definitely! U-M has the largest living alumni network of any university. Here at the SSW, we have our own Career Center, which assists in a number of ways, one of which is planning networking trips to San Francisco, Washington DC, and Chicago each year. They also have alumni connections all around the country and world.

**Q: Anyone married with children, what has the experience been like for your family? Any input on Northwood apartments?**

A: If your family is relocating to Ann Arbor for a couple of years, Northwood Apartments are a really good option. They have a nice sense of community, parks, and lots of families with young children. They also feed into Angell Elementary School, which is a really great school in Ann Arbor.

**Q: For Amanda: I'm coming from Georgia, and I wondered how bad the adjustment to Michigan winters was for you? I've never lived north of the Mason Dixon line.**

A: Moving to Michigan was the first time I ever experienced a winter that actually got cold and stayed that way! It has not been as bad as I had imagined. Honestly, I feel I have adjusted well due mainly to the winter wardrobe preparation (investing in a nice winter coat, wool socks and learning to layer). I am ready for the summer weather though!

**Q: I did my undergraduate work in Music Education, and am interested in using my arts background in the community in some way. How can I look into opportunities for that?**

A: I know many people who have found field placements that allow them to incorporate creative arts into community organizing practice. You can also get involved with the Social Justice Art Fair, which is a student run event every year.

**Q: What is your favorite and least favorite part of your program or your experience at U-M?**

A: My favorite thing about my experience here is getting to know the faculty at the School of Social Work. There are people doing really innovative work who are excited to talk about it and involve students in it. I have found some amazing mentors and truly enjoy spending time with SSW faculty. My least favorite part is when undergrads infiltrate our building during finals week and sprawl out in the atrium!!

**Q: What is one thing you wish you knew before starting the program?**

A: I wish I had known about the opportunities for research. I could have built a relationship with a faculty member who is doing work I'm passionate about to be able to work more closely together.

**Q: What is one wish (or an area that may need improving) that you wished either U-M or the School of Social Work supported you with?**

A: I've actually felt very supported here! I was struggling at one point last year in one of my classes because of some things that other students were saying that I found problematic. I approached the professor about it, and we were able to come up with a way to address it. Even beyond that, I talked to the Associate Dean about this

experience, and we were able to implement a training for students and faculty so that these problematic conversations would happen less in the future!

**Q: I am a bit nervous coming to a different school for my MSW. What are some of the things that you wish you had known before starting the MSW program?**

A: I wish I had known to buy good gloves and earmuffs before winter starts but to never buy books for classes until your professor explicitly tells you to! This campus and city are great, so just make sure to find time to explore and take advantage of it!