

# **Ask a Current Student Webinar- Question Transcript**

## **January 27, 2014**

### **Application and Admissions Questions**

**Q: When do you typically find out if you are accepted or not?**

A: Students who met the December 1st deadline will have their initial decision by March 1st (or sooner). If you applied after December 1st decisions will be made on a rolling basis. Applications are reviewed in the order that they are received.

**Q: How did you find out that you were accepted to the MSW program; did you find out via mail, email, or both?**

A: You will be notified via email.

**Q: What are the key factors that the admissions counselors review when selecting candidates? Is there a systematic point system, if so could you share the breakdown of the qualifying factors please?**

A: The review is qualitative and very holistic. Academics, experience, recommendations, supplementary statement, and personal characteristics are taken into consideration.

**Q: I am interested in getting both my MSW and Doctorate, are there people who explain how to apply for these?**

A: Students can apply for both the MSW and PhD program simultaneously. It would be best to meet with an admissions counselor in the Office of Student Services (734-936-0961) to get more info.

**Q: Have people already been accepted into the program?**

A: There are students who have already been offered admission.

**Q: Are students conditionally admitted, if so why?**

A: In some cases, it is possible; however it is only used for international students and students who were admitted under the Non-Baccalaureate provision.

**Q: What is the student acceptance rate? If denied is there an appeal process, or can you apply for the following semester?**

A: 55% of applicants were admitted last year. There is no appeal process for an admission decision. You can re-apply for the next year. We recommend speaking to an admissions counselor to learn how to strengthen your application.

**Q: What makes for a strong MSW candidate and how does Michigan use the application to determine if one has such characteristics?**

A: The admission committee is evaluating your academic, experience, recommendations, supplementary statement and personal characteristics to assess your ability to succeed academically and as a social worker. You can talk more with an admission counselor about the review process: 734-936-0961.

**Q: Is experience of private sector important for acceptance? Approximately how many students are there who have experienced in private sector before?**

A: It can be beneficial if it's related to the area of interest. Generally we're looking for experience in human services. Fewer students have experience in private sectors.

**Q: Is it necessary to become licensed at the BSW level if accepted into the MSW program at UM?**

A: No, it is not, however some BSW graduates choose to pursue their license which is sometimes helpful for field placement.

**Q: I would like to go visit the surrounding area and possibly take a tour of the campus. Are there tours that are offered by the program or by the school? If there are, how would I set that up?**

A: You can contact us at <http://ssw.umich.edu/about/visit> or the university at <http://campusinfo.umich.edu/visiting-ann-arbor>

## **Track Questions (16-month, 20-month, Advanced Standing)**

**Q: Do you recommend the Advanced Standing MSW Program?**

A: Yes if students are eligible for advanced standing it can allow them to complete the program in 45 credits instead of 60. This saves on time and tuition cost.

**Q: Is 16 months the same as Advanced Standing?**

A: 16 month is not the same as advanced standing. 16 month students take the full 60 credits, (Fall, Winter, Spring/Summer, Fall) and Advanced Standing take 45 credits (Fall, Winter, Spring/Summer) For the full breakdown, take a look at our website and what it means to be each track. <http://ssw.umich.edu/faq/question/7351-what-is-the-difference-between-the-16-and-20-month-programs-how-do-i-decide-which-one-to-choose>

**Q: Why most of you preferred to study for 16 months? (Not a longer period of time?)**

A: It was important to me to be at my field placement for a full calendar year. The fact that I'll graduate in December is just an advantage. Some students like that you can be in 2 separate, school-year long internships as a 20-month student.

**Q: If I apply for the advanced standing MSW program, do I have to complete a second application if I also want to apply for the two year MSW program?**

A: Simply apply for advanced standing on the application. If you are ineligible for advanced standing we'll review you for the regular program.

**Q: I'm a deferred admit that has been accepted for Fall 2014. I've been accepted for the 16 month track, but have realized that the pace might not be what I want. Is it possible to switch to the 20 month track?**

A: You can absolutely change your track. You can email [ssw.oss@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.oss@umich.edu) with your request to change.

**Q: If I choose the 16-month, is it possible for me to change it to the 20 month if I change my mind once I start in the fall?**

A: You can however, it's best to make the decision as soon as possible because 20-month students begin field placement in the fall (apply for field in May). If you make a late change you may not have as many field options available to you.

**Q: If someone is interested in school social work, would the 20 month program be optimal for them because of the summer break? Or would it not make a difference?**

A: If you are interested in school social work, 20 month is the best choice, because there are very few opportunities to be in a school system during the summer. You also will be able to take part in two field placements, so that is a plus.

**Q: Can anyone tell me about the advanced standing program?**

A: Advanced standing is a 45 semester program. You begin in September and graduate the following August. You're enrolled in 15 credits each term consisting of 4 classes and 2 days of work in field placement each week. <http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/overview/advanced-standing>

**Q: Why is there an extra semester for the aging population track?**

A: There is not an extra semester for choosing aging.

**Q: Do the students in Advance standing think the course load is too much?**

A: Advanced standing is the same load as the regular program. You typically carry 15 credits/term. Our advanced standing students like other students successfully graduate on time :)

## **Concentration, Area, Dual Degree and Curriculum Questions**

**Q: How soon will we start seeing information for course schedules for the fall semester as well as field placement information?**

A: Field information will be sent in April. Registration information will be sent in late April/early May. You'll register for classes in July or August.

**Q: What's the regular class size for each concentration?**

A: Here are some demographics from last year's incoming class. The average class size is 25. Each incoming cohort is 370. <http://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/2013-msw-class-profile.pdf>

**Q: About how big are classes?**

A: Most of my classes have between 15 and 30 people. It is a really good size and allows people to speak up in class and to work in groups with other people. It also allows people to really get to know the faculty here.

**Q: Are there online classes?**

A: No, we do not offer online courses.

**Q: Do we need to take any intro to quantitative analysis/statistics courses before we enter the program?**

A: Statistics courses are not required for the program.

**Q: Rachel: Is grant writing a required course for your track, or is it offered as an elective?**

A: The grant-writing course is not required for management of human services and is considered an elective.

**Q: Do you know anyone that has done a dual program with Public Health? How have the balanced the programs? Are there opportunities to integrate both perspectives in fieldwork?**

A: There are students who pursue dual degrees in Public Health, Public Policy, Education, Business, Urban Planning, etc. The tracks are pretty much set up for you. You take both Public Health and Social Work courses in most terms. You would have a SW placement and a PH placement. The tracks are distinct and manageable. You generally will finish in 3 years.

**Q: What percentage of students are doing dual degrees with another program, and are they less integrated into academic/social life of the program than those who are just MSW candidates?**

A: About 15-20 students in each cohort are completing dual degrees. They are fully integrated, but also tend to have a close-knit cohort with other dual degree students.

**Q: Rachel: could you tell me how your combination of your concentration and specialization in systems are assisting you in your field placement? Also, with this combination what type of career positions could you seek?**

A: My concentration and practice area (Management & CSS) are directly effecting my field placement. Because of my concentration and area, I'm at community organizations/nonprofits that put me in management positions. Your placement is determined based on your concentration and area so you are placed somewhere that will allow you to fulfill your requirements and address your interests. My course work gives me context for what I'm seeing, experiencing, and doing in field. Career positions in management vary greatly. There are positions in nonprofits, foundations, higher education, and the public sector with government agencies.

**Q: Jessica or Lidi- what led you to focus on interpersonal practice?**

A: I really want to work directly with people, rather than on a macro level.

**Q: Are students able to switch their concentrations once they're in the program?**

A: Certainly. Just email [ssw.oss@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.oss@umich.edu) to change your concentration.

**Q: Is there an option to add a minor once you are admitted into the MSW program?**

A: Yes. You will want to make this decision before you start field placement as a minor requires that your field site can give you practice in that method as well. You'll also need 6 credits of electives in the minor method.

**Q: I'm interested in both micro and macro aspects of social work. If I concentrate in just one, will I have an opportunity at Michigan to still learn both?**

A: As a new student, you'll have to take foundation courses in each different area. For example, I took a Community Org. class, an Interpersonal Practice class, a Social Policy class, and a class about social identities over the lifespan. You'll have room for electives in your schedule as well, and you can take mini courses in a whole slew of topics! If it works for you, you can also choose to add a minor.

**Q: Ashley, what professors would you suggest looking into in order to determine if Community Organization is the right fit for me?**

A: There are so many great CO faculty members here! Barry Checkoway, Larry Gant, and Beth Glover Reed are three people who I've personally had classes with that are a pretty big deal in the organizing field. Depending on what specifically you're passionate about, I would also suggest checking out Shane Brady and Desmond Patton. You can also email me if you'd like to chat more about the CO curriculum!

**Q: For Lidi and Jessica - Why did you choose the Interpersonal Practice concentration instead of Mental Health? Can you explain the way those concentrations might differ?**

A: You can be both! Interpersonal Practice just means that you are working on a more micro based level. Mental health is one of our 5 practice areas that I recommend checking them all out here:  
<http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/concentrations>

**Q: Will switching concentrations put you behind?**

A: It completely depends when the change happens. If it's early it may not take any additional time to graduate. Field is tied to concentrations so a change sometimes means that you'll need a new field site also. Changes should be made sooner rather than later. Keep in mind you can take coursework in all of the concentrations so you are not limited to taking classes in one concentration.

**Q: Should I send some document if I want to change my concentration?**

A: Send an email to [ssw.oss@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.oss@umich.edu) as soon as possible to make any changes.

## **Field Placement Questions**

**Q: When does internship selection take place, and how difficult is it to get your first choice placement?**

A: Advanced standing and 20 month students apply for field in May before starting the program. 16-month students apply for field in October. You search the database and submit a resume and a goal statement. Students prioritize their top 6 options. Most get one of their top choices. You will have a chance to interview for your field site. It will be tied to your practice method and area.

**Q: What kind of support is provided for students, particularly in field placements they are unfamiliar with?**

A: There are plenty of support systems built into the program as well as ways for you to connect with peers outside of class. You are assigned a field faculty member who is your contact at the school who can meet with you at any time to discuss field. Your first semester you participate in a field seminar with a group of peers, led by your field faculty member and a student in the program who has gone through at least a semester of field. There, you will have the opportunity to process different aspects of the field experience and problem solve as well as ask logistics questions about assignments. All in all, there is always someone to talk to who can help you through the process!

**Q: Hi! Would you be willing to talk a little bit about how the field placement works? Is there just one (how long is it), and how much involvement do you as a student have in the process of obtaining your placement?**

A: Field placement options vary based on your track (16 vs. 20 month). If you are 16 month (Fall, Winter, Spring/Summer, Fall) then you will have one field placement that starts in January and ends in December. If you are a 20 month student (Fall, Winter, Summer off, Fall, Winter) then you will have two separate placements- one your first year, one your second. The process for obtaining your field placement is very interactive. You plug in your concentration and area into our database which then shows you all the possible field placements for that semester that meet those requirements. You then can choose your top 6 choices and submit your resume and goal statement to the Office of Field Instruction. From there, the

office will work on your behalf to secure you an interview with one of your top selections. You will then be able to interview. So throughout, you get to see what types of responsibilities you will have as well as go to the placement and meet your prospective supervisor and check out the environment

**Q: Rachel: What are your job responsibilities at your current field placement?**

A: My placement last year was at the Royal Oak Community Coalition and I was tasked with the responsibility of developing, coordinating, and implementing a Health and Wellness Expo for the city of Royal Oak. That was my major task; others included attending and preparing for community meetings, board meetings, writing grants, working with budgets, etc. Currently I'm at Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County which is a much bigger organization and my tasks reflect that. I look a lot at organizational structure and analyze the budget, go to community meetings, and create an employee engagement initiative. Most placements are keen to help you reach your professional goals and will accommodate what you want to learn in the context of the organization

**Q: Jessica, what is your role at the VA Hospital?**

A: I work with the Seamless Transition program, which helps to do case management, and benefits related services to OEF/OIF/OND combat Veterans.

**Q: I am interested in school social work so are there field placement opportunities available in schools?**

A: Yes, there are school placements. Generally, if you are getting your school certificate you would select the 20 month track so your placement would take place over the school year (16 month track takes you through the summer when school is not in session).

**Q: How much say do you have in your first year placement versus your second year placement?**

A: You have the same say in your placements from year to year. The process is that you go to our database and search for placements available that meet the requirements for your concentration and area. Then you select your top 6 choices and send them along with your resume and goal statement to the Office of Field Instruction who works on your behalf to secure an interview for you. From there, you will interview and get to meet your prospective supervisor and check out the environment of the placement.

**Q: Lidi- Was there any sort of lifestyle agreement/ spiritual background needed to partner with Holy Cross Children's Services?**

A: No, not at all.

**Q: How likely is it that one will get a field placement closer to home, if they are not living in Ann Arbor?**

A: The field placement process is interactive. We have affiliations with around 500 different agencies locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. Because of this, if location is a determining factor for you, when you go through the process you select your top 6 choices and the field office will work on your behalf to secure a placement in your top selections.

**Q: Jessica: What kinds of responsibilities do you have as an intern at the VA Hospital? What have you most enjoyed and found most challenging there?**

A: I work with the Seamless Transition program which provides case management services (among other things) to returning combat veterans. I also assist with the Post Deployment Clinic. I really love being there; the hardest thing so far has been becoming comfortable working with the computer systems, honestly.

**Q: Rachel: Please describe your role at your field placement?**

A: As a management student I am able to take on different administrative and executive tasks at my field placement. I'm able to write grants, analyze budgets, attend and participate in board meetings, community meetings, etc. I am able to take on a leadership role in the organization and pursue tasks that interest me

**Q: Lidi- What do you do at Holy Cross?**

A: I did individual and group therapy with adjudicated young men ages 12-17 from Detroit/Wayne County. I also worked on agency policy and performed Continuous Quality Improvement reviews at foster care, supervised independent living, and residential programs. Feel free to E-mail me at lidiearm@umich.edu if you have more questions!

**Q: Lidi is there a vast range of field practice locations for children related fields?**

A: Yes, there are many opportunities to work with children and youth! Community organizations, nonprofits, hospitals, schools, etc.

**Q: For the Advanced Standing, are you in field placement the entire 12 months?**

A: Yes. You are in field from September when you begin the program until August when you graduate.

**Q: Do students have a far commute to placements?**

A: Placements can be anywhere from right in town up to Lansing or down into Toledo. They are typically within 45 miles of Ann Arbor.

**Q: Do you determine where your field internship is or is it determined for you?**

A: the determination is a mutual process. You will select your top 6 from our database (narrowed based on your concentration and area) and then the field office works on your behalf to secure you an interview with one of your choices. From there you will interview with your prospective supervisor and get a feel for the environment at the placement.

**Q: How are the field placements in Ann Arbor? What type of people do you serve?**

A: Field placements are extremely diverse. We are affiliated with over 500 placements locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. Depending on your specific interests and professional goals, your placement can work to accommodate that learning. We have placements at public sector, nonprofits, hospitals, schools and others.

**Graduate Student Staff Assistantship (GSSA) Questions**

**Q: What is a GSSA?**

A: <http://ssw.umich.edu/admissions/msw/financial-aid/graduate-assistantships>

**Q: How competitive would you say the assistantships are? Is it worth applying even though it adds extra time to your curriculum schedule?**

A: You should certainly apply as the GSSAs cover tuition and provide health insurance and a monthly stipend. They are competitive. Be sure to highlight all experience that is similar to the duties listed on the job posting.

**Q: GSSAs: is the additional semester just spent working as a GSSA or are your classes and field work extended over that period?**

A: GSSAs take an extra semester to ensure that we have enough time to work 16 hours per week while also completing all of our coursework. For example, instead of taking the 16 credits per semester that most other students are taking, I am only taking 13.

**Q: Are GSSA positions available to incoming/new MSW students? How can we learn more about GSSA positions available?**

A: GSSAs are only available to incoming students. The deadline to apply is Feb 1st. You can see more info. here: <http://sww.umich.edu/programs/msw/financial-aid/graduate-assistantships>

**Q: Why is there an extra semester involved with the GSSA?**

A: This is required so you have the time needed to devote to the position. The course load is somewhat reduced. The cost of the semester is covered by the GSSA.

**Q: Lidi--did you have to pay for an extra semester in order to have your working position? How does that work with your placement?**

A: The GSSA tuition/fees stipend applies for all five terms. I was in field placement from January-December, so my first and fifth terms are without a field placement. I went to field two days in the winter term last year and four days over the spring/summer, and two again in the Fall.

**Q: Can we still apply to GSSAs if we have not received an acceptance letter?**

A: Yes. You just need to have a complete MSW application by Feb. 1st.

**Q: Is there a separate application to apply for the GSSAs**

A: The GSSA application information can be found here: <http://sww.umich.edu/offices/career-services/graduate-assistantships>

**Q: Would you all suggest a GSSA to a student that is dual degree Master's with the MSW?**

A: It's definitely possible. We could work with you to modify your schedule.

**Q: Do you have the same GSSA throughout your time in the program or do you apply to different roles according to semester?**

A: You have the same one. Career Services or OSS.

## **General Financial Aid, Scholarship Questions**

**Q: I just received my official acceptance today, when can I expect my financial aid package?**

A: You should receive your initial grant and scholarship decision in a few weeks. It will take a little longer to receive a decision on any special programs you applied to. In mid March you'll receive a decision on loans and work-study from your FAFSA application.

**Q: Are there any expenses that you did not anticipate prior to moving to Ann Arbor?**



A: I did not expect housing to cost as much as it does in Ann Arbor! That's really about it. It's not as expensive as my hometown, Los Angeles, but I heard a lot about how "Housing in Michigan will be SO much cheaper." I chose to not live with a roommate because I have pets, and many units closest to campus do not accept pets. However, there are many affordable housing options in the area, specifically in Ypsilanti and other surrounding communities.

**Q: Is it a requirement to have FAFSA filled out before I am accepted into the program? Or will I be able to do that afterwards still?**

A: We highly recommend submitting the FAFSA as soon as you can even if you have not yet received an admission decision.

**Q: As most students have applied to several different graduate programs and many require deposits relatively soon, about when can we expect UMSSW to offer financial aid packages?**

A: If you've been offered admission already you'll receive your grant and scholarship review soon. Special program decisions are made in the next month. Loan and work-study packages will begin in mid to late March.

**Q: Usually how many students get scholarship and how much scholarship can be provided for students? UM is top school but for me actually the scholarship is the biggest issue.**

A: 80% of our students receive some form of grant and scholars aid from the School of Social Work.

**Q: Only US citizens can apply for FAFSA, right?**

A: Yes, that's correct. You have to be a U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident to receive need-based funding.

**Q: Can you still take out Federal Grants for the summer semester required by Advanced Standing?**

A: Yes, you can have supplemental loans in the spring/summer term.

## **Special Programs Questions**

**Q: Are any of you a part of the special programs.. Such as National Community Scholars?**

A: I am a Child Welfare Scholar. Feel free to ask me any questions if you have anything specific.

**Q: How do the special programs (ex: certificate in child welfare) differ from having a minor?**

A: A minor is generally only two classes and some field experience in the area. A certificate in child welfare shows that you've received specialized and state of the art training in child welfare. Here's a link for you: <http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/specialization-and-certification-programs/child-welfare>

**Q: Have any of you considered the Global Scholars Program, or do you have friends a part of the program?**

A: I have had several classes with a woman who is a part of the Global Scholars Program. She is super excited to be going to South Africa this summer.

**Q: Are 2nd year students able to apply for the special scholarship programs?**

A: You are not able to reapply/apply to special programs in your second year.

**Q: Do you know any of the students who are doing the Peace Corps Masters International? How are they feeling about it?**

A: I do know someone who is a part of this and he is extremely excited! He has just found out his placement for the program and he is glad for the opportunity to be supported by the MSW program before going and have time to reflect afterwards.

## **Student Employment Questions**

**Q: What is the process of obtaining work study employment?**

A: If you receive a work-study award through the University, you'll need to apply for positions through this website: [https://www.studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX\\_FindAJob.aspx?ls=1](https://www.studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX_FindAJob.aspx?ls=1)

**Q: Is it unusual for students to work part-time during their pursuit of their MSW? Can anyone on panel speak to that? How difficult is it to manage?**

A: It is not uncommon to work while pursuing your masters. Most students hold some kind of part time employment (10-20 hours/week) and often you can apply for work study aid. I have been working throughout and I generally have 2 days at field, 2/3 days of class and work in the afternoons/mornings depending on when my class is.

**Q: Is it possible to work and do full time study as an advance standing student?**

A: Advanced standing students carry the same academic load as other students in the program (15 credits). We do not recommend working full time while completing our program. Students can usually work a max. of 20 hours while completing class and field requirements.

**Q: What are typical wage per hour range for work-study students? Research assistance?**

A: The range is \$10-15 per hour

**Q: Is it possible to have a part-time job as an MSW student outside of school work and field placement?**

A: Yes, many of our students hold part time employment (10-20 hours/week) while getting their masters.

**Q: Are there many opportunities available on campus for students looking for part-time jobs?**

A: We have an entire website devoted to job postings for students. It lists both work study and non work study postings. Check out this website:

[https://studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX\\_ChooseFundingSources.aspx](https://studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX_ChooseFundingSources.aspx)

**Q: What is the website dedicated to part - time jobs that we can go to?**

A: Most students use work-study positions for supplemental income but other positions are available too: [https://studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX\\_ChooseFundingSources.aspx](https://studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX_ChooseFundingSources.aspx)

**Q: When do we apply for work study? I remember I checked a box during my application that said I was interested, but are there any further steps needed at this point?**

A: You apply for work-study on the FAFSA. If given a work-study award you'll need to search for a job over the summer so you can begin the position in the fall.

**Q: Is work study option valid for only US citizens?**

A: US citizens and permanent residents. That is correct.

## **After Graduation Questions**

**Q: On average, how soon after graduating from the program does a student obtain employment?**

A: On average, our students find a job within 3 months of when they begin looking.

**Q: Jessica, are there opportunities to seek FT employment in the UM Health System after completing the program?**

A: Yes, there are several different fellowships that the UM Health System offers to graduating students. Also there is the UM Careers website that showcases all of the open positions within the hospital.

**Q: How prepared are students once graduated pass the licensing exam?**

A: Students are able to take practice exams and answer practice questions in the Career Center to help prepare you for the test.

**Q: Lidi or Jessica- Are either of you planning on taking licensure exams after graduation? If so, how has the SSW helped support you for that?**

A: I plan on taking the exam. We have a practice exam available in the career services office that you can take as many times as you wish to practice the questions. There are practice courses available for a fee, but self-study is a good way to do it. You can E-mail [ssw-cso@umich.edu](mailto:ssw-cso@umich.edu) if you have any further licensure questions!

**Q: What kind of jobs do students usually have after their graduation? Is there any chance to work as intern in an international agency like UN, UNICEF?**

A: Our students graduate and hold positions in a lot of different sectors. There would be an opportunity to connect with any alumni who are in these sectors/organizations and hear more about their path.

**Q: Is it hard for students to find jobs outside of Ann Arbor/Michigan? Do most students move post graduation?**

A: This definitely varies. The one thing to consider that is unique in our profession is that different states have different licensing exams/requirements. If you know ahead of time that you are planning to move, it would be good to check into those. Our students are competitive applicants anywhere in the country!

## **Housing Questions**

**Q: I live out of state. What is the most efficient way of obtaining housing in Ann Arbor prior to the start of school?**

A: There are a number of ways to find housing in Ann Arbor! There was recently a post about this in our wordpress blog, as well. Many students choose to live in our Graduate Student Housing, which is a part of our University Housing on North Campus. This is great if you have a family or partner. If this isn't something you're interested in, there are plenty of public housing options. People frequently use Craigslist to post and look for housing. I would specifically recommend looking in the Kerrytown or Old

West Side parts of town, as that is where many graduate students live. Another option is to look for housing in nearby Ypsilanti. Prices are much cheaper, and you can take a free bus onto campus. Over the summer, we will create a Facebook page for the new class of admitted students, so you can post about housing then if you're still looking!

**Q: When is a good time to start the off campus housing process?**

A: I would start looking for housing as soon as you know you will be living in Ann Arbor.

**Q: Do most graduate students live off campus?**

A: Yes, most find houses that are converted into apartments, or apartments or live in nearby Ypsilanti.

**Q: Can anyone recommend any apartments in Kerrytown or the Old West Side that allow pets?**

A: There are lots of places to live in both of these locations - I'd suggest checking out Craigslist to see what you can find!

**Q: What are some areas of Ann Arbor that are common for grad students to live in?**

A: Many grad students live in the Kerry Town or Downtown area. They also live in many off campus apartments.

## **Michigan Grad School Life & Ann Arbor Life Questions**

**Q: What tips/advice would panelists recommend for staying organized during our years at the UMSSW compared to undergrad?**

A: Staying organized is really important as a graduate student! I am a strong advocate of utilizing google. The university email is on a gmail platform, so you'll already be using that. You can also have tasks on your gmail to remind yourself of things to do. I also sync my Google calendar to my iPhone. One thing that I have found exceptionally helpful is scheduling in personal time and study time. If I don't block that time off, I will end up putting it off and not doing it. For emotional well-being, I always make sure to have organized times to take care of myself. You'll definitely have a lot to do between class and field, and if you decide to have a job there is another added layer. It is important to take care of your emotional health, otherwise focusing on the task at hand will be challenging!

**Q: What is one thing you wish you would have known before starting the program?**

A: I wish I had known exactly what the workload would have been like. It's harder than I had expected juggling field and full time course load.

**Q: Are any of you not from the north and can explain the weather transition.**

A: So, I moved here from the West Coast and found the transition to be a little tough at first. I have found that I actually like the "cold weather culture" - bundling up, extra blankets, and staying active at the on-campus Gym to keep my blood flowing! I highly recommend purchasing a winter coat and snow boots - there are many options of both to choose from at the stores here, so I would wait to buy them when you get here.

**Q: What is it like to live in Ann Arbor?**

A: Living in Ann Arbor is great! If you check out our Wordpress Blog (link will be posted at the end), there will be a post up in the next couple of days about Ann Arbor life. It is consistently ranked one of the top

college towns, most educated cities, and most livable cities. There are all different kinds of things to do such as kayaking, shopping, eating amazing food, watching sporting events, etc. It is also a walkable city, which I really love. It is a nice mix of college-town atmosphere combined with "townies" who have lived here forever. My favorite thing to do is to walk up to the Farmers Market on Saturday and sample all of the fresh produce before heading over to Zingerman's Deli for lunch.

**Q: How has the work/field placement/class balance been for you? Do you find it reasonable to be able to hold down a job (even part time) during your MSW?**

A: As long as you know your limits, and what you find manageable, it is doable. I take 16 credits, am in field 24 hours a week, and I work approx. 30 hours a week in other part time jobs. But you will be the best judge of if that is manageable for you.

**Q: How do you manage your academic load with your internships and still have a social life?**

A: This is definitely a common concern! It is really up to you to determine how you want to manage your time. It will be different for each person. I personally schedule in time every day for going to the gym, because that is something that positively impacts my physical and emotional health. I definitely have time to hang out with friends still, also. I do dinner with my Social Work friends once a week, which is nice because it is something scheduled that we all can plan for. So yes, the program is definitely time-consuming, but not so much so that you can't still go out and have a good time!

**Q: Are any of you guys from out-of-state? If so, how has your experience been at UM?**

A: I feel that being from out-of-state has been a really great opportunity. I feel that it has provided a unique perspective for learning about new communities and their various strengths and needs. I am also interested in policy, so learning how Michigan is similar and different to my home state has been very helpful. Moving from California was quite an experience, but I feel quite settled by this point! I am considering making Michigan my new home.

**Q: What is a typical day like as a UM MSW student? (Class all day/everyday? how often do you have classes vs field placement? etc.)**

A: Every day varies for me, but I'll give a brief overview of my week! On Mondays and Tuesdays, I have class in the morning and I work in the afternoon. I spend all day Wednesday in field, and then have class in the evening. On Thursdays and Fridays, I spend half of my time in field and half of my time at work. For me, this works out well because I stay busy, but still have most evenings free to do other things. I am currently in field 16hrs/week and have 13 credits of class.

**Q: What advice would you give to incoming students that you wish someone had told you?**

A: Make time to meet with your professors. Figure out which books will be actually needed. Figure out if those books will be offered on reserve at the library.

**Q: Are there any opportunities to being involved in research?**

A: Hi! Yes, there are definitely opportunities! Many professors will let students know in class, or might even send out an E-mail. I suggest you check out our faculty and see the areas in which they are conducting research and go from there. It never hurts to send them a note and ask if you can take part. Here's a link for you: <http://ssw.umich.edu/offices/research>

**Q: What are some of your favorite things about the MSW program?**

A: Probably the best thing so far has been the relationships I have made with my peers. The classroom experience here is really about learning from each other as well as learning from the faculty member. I've

built some really strong bonds with people from all over the country who I never would have met otherwise. I also really love that we are our own community here at the School of Social Work. In our building, we have all of the classrooms, all of the administrative offices, a mini-kitchen, lockers, and lots of study space, so it is impossible to spend a day without running into someone you know! One other thing I love is getting to know the amazing faculty. Everyone who works here is so passionate and so involved. We have world-renowned researchers, practitioners, and organizers here at this school. Being able to sit down and have coffee with people whose work has been used to shape the field is really great.

**Q: Are classes for MSW students close to each other? I am from a small liberal arts undergrad college and I need to adjust to a much bigger grad school! Thanks :)**

A: All of our professor's offices (Student Services, Field Instruction, Career Center) are located in one building with your classes. We are also located in the middle of campus so we are close to lots of restaurants, book stores, and coffee shops!

**Q: Do MSW students complete dissertations?**

A: No, you do not complete a dissertation for your MSW

**Q: Are the professors resourceful and engaging?**

A: The professors are really great. We have an excellent mix of those who are still out in the field working as well as teaching and of those who are more research focused. Many of them are also very willing to meet outside of the classroom.

**Q: How is the parking for commuters?**

A: Great question. Parking on campus is pretty expensive, so most students who commute take the bus. There is an actual commuter parking lot on S. State St. that you can park in for free, and then take the #36 bus up to campus for free. It runs regularly and drops you off right out in front of the School of Social Work. Check out [aata.org](http://aata.org) for more information. You can also look at the U-M transportation site for more information on student parking passes and the U-M bus system at [pts.umich.edu](http://pts.umich.edu).

**Q: What outdoor activities are offered in the Ann Arbor area? Are there certain activities and/or events that are unique to the area?**

A: Ann Arbor is great for outdoorsy things! I personally own a kayak and a road bike. I also love running outside here because it is a great mix of being in the city but also being able to look at the trees and nature. There is a river that runs through Ann Arbor where you can kayak, canoe, or tube. There are also a lot of bike paths, and the roads almost all have bike lanes. We also have intermural sports that a lot of students play. I've personally played IM soccer, softball, and broomball!

**Q: You mentioned earlier that Ann Arbor is an easy city to get around...did you all find it necessary to have a car though? (Especially those who have come from out-of-state!)**

A: I personally do have a car, but I only ever use it when I'm going to the grocery store and don't want to carry everything on my bicycle. I could choose to take the bus, though. Having a car is definitely nice if you want to go shopping or visit people who live in other cities, but it isn't necessary. All buses (campus and city) are free to students so it is easy to get around at no cost.

**Q: If any of you went to UM as an undergrad, how would you compare your undergrad and graduate experiences?**

A: I have a much closer relationship with my professors than I did as an undergrad. The classes are also much smaller.

**Q: Do any of you have children/families? If so, how has your experience been at U of M? If not, do you know where to find support for students who do?**

A: There are several different organizations that are designed for students with children to be there as each others support systems. They will get coffee or lunches together sometimes.

**Q: What is one thing that surprised you about the program that you didn't expect going in?**

A: The community. It truly has been great getting to know the interests of my classmates and build long lasting networks and professional connections moving forward. Everyone is extremely supportive.

**Q: Do you find U-Michigan to lean more heavily on research or direct practice?**

A: I would say that there's a good mix of both.

**Q: Is it challenging to manage your school work/field placement and assistantship/work-study? Are the class times offered diverse enough to allow students the ability to make their schedules manageable?**

A: The schedules are manageable. I've found that each semester the courses that I'm interested in are offered at various times on various days. Sometimes there is overlap and I have to postpone taking that course until another semester. Overall, the workload between field, courses, and work is manageable.

**Q: Does career services offer workshops or writing centers for the students?**

A: Yes both are offered here in the School of Social Work.

**Q: In your own opinions, what advantages are there by getting the MSW at UM?**

A: As one of the top programs, we are often a leader in making changes that will be implemented throughout all other programs before they may occur at other institutions.

**Q: Do you think that U-M has provided you with opportunities relevant to your individual interests?**

A: Absolutely. The great thing about UM is that you are not only a part of the SSW community but also the greater UM community. There are opportunities for graduate students to interact and engage around interests. There are also really supportive professors willing to connect you with opportunities and people they might know who have similar interests.

**Q: Did any of you take time off before your Masters?**

A: I took four years off between undergrad and coming to the School of Social Work. I did AmeriCorps for a year, and then worked full time at the University. It allowed me to save up some money and also to prepare myself mentally for getting back into the flow of school.

**Q: WOW. All of this sounds great! Is there anything that you don't like about Michigan?**

A: Tomorrow the high is going to be 2 degrees. Don't love that! But luckily I am inside for most of the day :)

**Q: I just tried to do some research regarding on campus parking but have no idea what all the different colors and zones are. Any guidance in this area would be appreciated!**

A: Students can purchase student yellow or student orange passes, or you can take the blue Michigan buses or the Ann Arbor buses for free. Otherwise paying for parking is really not fun. And expensive.

**Q: Would you say that the students within the MSW program have a strong bond? If yes, how so?**

A: Something great about UM SSW is that all of our courses and study space is located in one building. We see each other in classes, and studying, and in organizations all the time. The bond is definitely strong between students. Generally, in your first semester you may take courses with some of the same people and those relationships continue throughout.

**Q: Are there many MSW students who come from out of state and who did not go to UM for undergraduate?**

A: 40-45 % of the MSW class is from out of state. Many students in our program did not attend UM as undergrads.

**Q: How are relationships with advisors initiated and developed?**

A: When you enter the program you are assigned an advisor. That being said, you can always meet with any faculty member, professor, or advisor at any time. Our advisors are really open to meeting with students and if you have similar interests with someone who isn't your advisor; you can schedule a time to meet with them.

**Q: Can you give a general idea on background of current students?**

A: Here is last year's class profile: <http://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/2013-msw-class-profile.pdf>

**Q: Is there a way to get in contact with other students admitted for next fall?**

A: The Facebook page would be a great way to connect: <https://www.facebook.com/UMSSWProspective>

**Q: What is the graduation/retention rate for this program?**

A: 95-98% of students who begin the MSW program successfully complete it.

**Q: Is there anything we can do right now to prepare for the program about six months from now?**

A: You can definitely start by checking out classes and professors you might be interested in. Other than that, enjoy your time before the very busy schedule of the MSW program begins! Good luck!

**\*\*Unanswered during the session, now complete with answers\*\***

## **Application and Admissions Questions**

**Q: How many MSW students do they accept each semester?**

A: Last year, the admissions committee received about 1,500 applications for the MSW program. They offered admission to about 800 of those applicants. Of those admitted, about 370 students accepted the offer and chose to enroll in the program. These numbers show that last year's admission rate was around 55%.

**Q: Tell me about the MSW/PHD programs?**



A: Students can apply for both the MSW and PhD program simultaneously. It would be best to meet with an admissions counselor in the Office of Student Services (734-936-0961) to get more info.

**Q: Do you think coming from an area out of state with a diverse cultural background looks good when applying, is it something the program looks for?**

A: The review is qualitative and very holistic. Academics, experience, recommendations, supplementary statement, and personal characteristics are taken into consideration and about 40-45% of students are from out of state.

**Q: What would keep a student from being admitted into the MSW program?**

A: Academics, experience, recommendations, supplementary statement, and personal characteristics are taken into consideration. If an applicant is weak in one or more areas they may not be offered admission.

**Q: Thank you for taking the time to answer our questions. I have applied to the Joint PhD program in Social Work and Social Sciences (Psychology). All of my application materials were in on time and I have been notified by the University that they have been received. I am wondering: 1. If there will be an interview (usually with the Psych department), and if yes, when that interview will be. 2. When I can expect to hear an admissions decision. 3. How that decision will be delivered (email, formal letter in snail mail, etc.)?**

A: You should contact the Doctoral Office to get more information on the admission process: [ssw.phd.info@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.phd.info@umich.edu)

### **Track Questions (16-month, 20-month, Advanced Standing)**

**Q: If you are enrolled in the 20-month program are there any internship opportunities out of state during the summer break?**

A: You wouldn't be required to complete an internship over the summer, many people take that time to regroup, however if you are looking for internship opportunities you can utilize our Career Services office to potentially connect to alumni or organizations in a particular state. Sometime students complete special studies over the spring/summer term to receive academic credit rather than field credit for an out of state experience.

### **Concentration, Area, Dual Degree and Curriculum Questions**

**Q: I know that I will be concentrating on Community Organizing, but need to know if the courses focus on the administrative level?**

A: CO courses will have elements of macro and micro social work. You may talk about certain administrative functions within community organizations, but probably not as much as a management course would. That being said, if you are interested in administrative/management material, you can always take management courses as an elective.

**Q: Are there specific classes one should take if interested in becoming an LCSW?**

A: If you are interested in becoming a fully licensed clinical social worker, you should pursue Interpersonal Practice. You can see the course options for this method here: <http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/overview/interpersonal-practice>

**Q: Compare/contrast a class in the school of social work vs. a social science course during your undergraduate experience.**

A: Class is structured similar to how a seminar class is set up. It is very discussion based and professors may present material and then have you discuss it in the context of your experience, field placement, etc. It is very interactive and the classes are small so you can hear from many different people and perspectives.

**Q: Is there any one who can participate in global activities as an international student? And I choose my concentration as aging in family and method as social policy. Do you think I have to change my concentration as children, youth & families?**

A: International students can take part in the Global Activities Scholarship program and special studies options. These options fit with most practice methods and areas. The only option not available is Peace Corps Master's International. See this site for a full range of options:

<http://ssw.umich.edu/offices/global-activities>

**Q: Thanks Rachel! Follow-Q: What if I desire to work in all of the listed job arena's, specifically in the non-profit sector, or government agencies, is it best to concentrate in "systems" or children, since they're my desired population?**

A: If your desired population is with children and youth, it doesn't hurt to concentrate in that. You would be placed in an agency that you'd be able to work with that population. If you are interested in a community perspective, you could still be in an agency with affiliations/programs dedicated to children and youth, it just wouldn't be guaranteed in every placement you were considering. You can set up an appointment with the Office of Student Services to talk more about how your specific goals may match with certain elements of our program.

## **Field Placement Questions**

**Q: Is there a place to go to get more information on the different kinds of options for field placement in interpersonal practice (health)? Are most of the placements in case management work?**

A: Check out this website for the different placements. Keep in mind they are constantly changing (a lot will say 'closed' because we are in the middle of the semester and the positions are filled)

<http://archive.ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/ofi/slots/>. You can see what types of tasks you might be able to participate in (case management, direct client practice, needs assessments, etc.)

**Q: Hello Ladies! Do any of you know any other students who have placements in Detroit and how well they manage those placements?**

A: I do know quite a few who have placements in Detroit. I'm not sure what element you were referring to with managing, but overall students feel supported in all aspects of field placement, regardless of location. Many community organizations, non-profits, and other placements are located in Detroit.

**Q: Why do people do field placement out of state? If you do field placement out of state, how does that affect your class schedule?) Based off of a 16m plan.**

A: Some students participate in special programs with field options across the US or abroad. Others might want an internship in DC or another city because of a unique opportunity. If they want to complete a national placement in the Spring/Summer, 16-month student must start field in their first semester (rather than the second). You'll complete a Michigan-based placement and extra courses in the first two semesters. This will allow you to complete and intensive summer placement (no classes) in the Spring/Summer.

## **Graduate Student Staff Assistantship (GSSA) Questions**

**Q: What kinds of assistantships are available to students?**

A: Here is our website for our GSSA position: <http://ssw.umich.edu/admissions/msw/financial-aid/graduate-assistantships>

**Q: How many hours per week do you generally devote to GSSA work? Does it take the place of that part-time (10-20 hrs/wk) work that was mentioned as being a common thing for most students?**

A: School of Social Work GSSAs require 14-16 hours/week. Students do not typically work in addition to the GSSA position.

**Q: Is the stipend provided by the GSSA better than the potential income through work-study?**

A: Yes, GSSA receives full tuition, stipend, and health insurance. Work-study can make \$10-15 a week.

**Q: How many students are accepted for a GSSA position? How competitive is the selection process for GSSA's?**

A: The GSSA positions are very competitive. There are 3 positions available, 1 in the Office of Student Services, and 2 in the Career Center.

**Q: Should Joint PhD applicants fill out a GSSA application, or is that already considered as part of the PhD funding?**

A: PhD students cannot hold one of the Office of Student Services GSSAs because they are already fully funded. Applicants can apply though in case they are not accepted to the PhD program.

**Q: How many people apply for GSSAs each year? How many are selected?**

A: Approximately 250 apply for the GSSA position in the Office of Student Services and approximately 200 apply for the 2 positions in Career Services.

## **General Financial Aid, Scholarship Questions**

**Q: Can you explain the difference between work-study and an assistantship?**

A: A work-study student would hold a position on campus and receive ~\$10-15/hour. Check out this link for what a GSSA is: <http://ssw.umich.edu/admissions/msw/financial-aid/graduate-assistantships>

**Q: Are there a lot of expenses (beyond textbooks and health insurance) that pop up throughout the year that you didn't expect when budgeting for the program?**

A: There was nothing unexpected for me. Take a look at this budgeting sheet. It does a good job of laying out financial planning elements for when you come here.  
<http://ssw.umich.edu/admissions/msw/financial-aid>

**Q: When do scholarship decisions typically occur and when do students generally find out?**

A: You should receive your initial grant and scholarship decision in a few weeks. It will take a little longer to receive a decision on any special programs you applied to. In mid March you'll receive a decision on loans and work-study from your FAFSA application.

**Q: Any scholarships within the department? Any non-academic based scholarships?**

A: There are individual donor scholarships available to students once they begin the program. These become available for application in the Fall. All need and merit-based scholarships given to MSW students are offered by the School of Social work.

**Q: Does the School of Social Work provide reasonable aid?**

A: About 80% of our students receive some form of aid. You are always able to come to the Office of Student Services and set up an appointment to talk about your individual financial aid needs and questions.

**Q: Any stats on average amount of debt upon graduation?**

A: The average loan debt is \$41,000.

**Q: Is anyone having to live off of student loans?**

A: Many students utilize the Federal Direct and Perkins Loans to cover remaining tuition costs and living expenses.

## **Special Programs Questions**

**Q: Is the study abroad option only available for global scholars?**

A: There are some research opportunities abroad that are offered throughout the year. For more information on global internships, research opportunities, and placements you can contact our Office of Global Activities: [ssw.oga@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.oga@umich.edu)

**Q: How do requirements for the child welfare scholar differ from the regular program?**

A: There are specialized seminar courses and designated field options. You can view a course planning worksheet here: <http://archive.ssw.umich.edu/studentguide/course-planning-worksheets/>

**Q: Does anyone know anything about the peace corps masters program offered through the school? The website says you apply once accepted.**

A: With PCMI you complete your first year in the MSW program (focusing in Children and Youth) and then leave for 27 mos. of Peace Corps service. Once you're finished you return to the MSW program for one or two terms. You can see more info. here: <http://ssw.umich.edu/peacecorps/masters-international>

## **Student Employment Questions**

**Q: How many MSW students can have a position as research assistant? Is it also possible international student?**

A: All students have the opportunity to be a part of research. You would realistically have access to all research labs at the University. You can talk to individual professors and do research around their interests, look in other departments, or develop your own research project and have a professor supervise you for credit.

**Q: If students do not have a GSSA position, do they work elsewhere? Does the student workload affect the ability to hold a job outside of the school?**

A: Many students work anywhere from 10-20 hours a week outside of classes and field. Here is the website for student employment. Also restaurants and other campus stores are pretty flexible with student schedules. [https://www.studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX\\_FindAJob.aspx?ls=1](https://www.studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX_FindAJob.aspx?ls=1)

## **After Graduation Questions**

**Q: What students usually do after their graduation? Is there any action that the school provides for students?**

A: Students take a lot of different paths. On average, UM MSW students find a job in the field within 3 months of when they start looking. We have alumni in many different sectors: hospitals, schools, higher education, nonprofits, government agencies, foundations, etc. Our Career Services Office can connect you with alumni in a particular sector and/or geographic location that you are interested in for networking. Similarly, they host several networking trips each year: California, Chicago, and Washington DC. They provide cover letter and resume writing help, interview prep, licensing exam practice tests, networking lunches, and salary negotiation workshops.

## **Housing Questions**

**Q: How likely is it that a graduate student will get into the graduate housing? Is there usually not an issue of it getting filled quickly?**

A: University Housing is usually available to all graduate students who are interested in this option.

**Q: Do most MSW students live on campus together or with graduate students from other programs?**

A: There are a variety of housing options for grad students. There are some houses that have a bunch of MSW/other grad students living in them. There are co-ops, apartments, houses converted to apartments, etc. I would suggest checking out our Wordpress blog that talks a little more about different housing options. <http://umsswprospectivestudents.wordpress.com>

**Q: How do I find housemates/roommates? And where to live? (Since we are finding out admission so late) What is available?**

A: The Facebook page is a great way to connect with other incoming students and search for housing. Check out our wordpress blog about ways you can look for housing in Ann Arbor: <http://umsswprospectivestudents.wordpress.com>

**Q: Is there a website dedicated to off campus living for grad students?**

A: We discuss housing options on our Wordpress blog: <http://umsswprospectivestudents.wordpress.com>

## **Michigan Grad School Life & Ann Arbor Life Questions**

**Q: Hello my name is Lauren and I applied for the early December 1st deadline. What would you say makes University of Michigan most unique compared to other top graduate programs and what would you say has been the most challenging experience for you so far during graduate school?**

A: Admittedly, I'm biased. That being said, I believe the Michigan culture is unique. We have an incredible mixture of motivated, passionate, and diverse staff, faculty and students. Similarly, our field placements offer opportunities for us to both have a say in what we do and where we do it, but also our work is being

done in one of the most talked about cities in the country, Detroit. The most challenging part has been honing myself in, honestly. I'm a passionate person and the endless amount of opportunities can be amazing, and overwhelming at the same time. Really keying into the aspects of my professional development that I want to pursue has been both exciting and challenging.

**Q: How would you describe the culture of the MSW program? For example do students work well together or is it competitive?**

A: The School of Social Work doesn't have a competitive vibe. Students are extremely supportive of one another and there are tons of student groups that surround any given topic, interest, and identity.

**Q: Do the buses or the SSW ever close down due to weather?**

A: This has never happened. We recently had our first University snow day in 30+ years and the buses were still running.

**Q: What is the workload like? Is it manageable?**

A: The workload varies (some courses are more reading-heavy, some group work, some discussion based). Overall, you will get a feel for it in the first few weeks and be able to decide what is going to be the best schedule for you. Most courses will have a reading component, some kind of paper/cumulative project, and intermittent papers throughout.

**Q: How many foreign students usually enter the school and are there any special things can provided for international student**

A: Check out this profile of our class at SSW:  
<http://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/2013-msw-class-profile.pdf>. There are student groups, and advisors who are available for any support as well.

**Q: Is the school particularly known for its work in a certain area/populations?**

A: Our School has faculty who are experts in numerous areas of the field of social work. We offer both clinical and macro areas of focus. Most students can focus in their interest area at our School. UM is known for a strong focus on interdisciplinary partnerships. You can see faculty information here:  
<http://ssw.umich.edu/contacts/faculty>

**Q: Why did you choose Michigan over another school?**

A: I chose Michigan because I appreciated the diverse amount of unique opportunities I would have with the program. Placements are interactive and I was going to have a say in the type of sector and environment I would have my internship. Similarly, the professors are in the top of their field and I knew I would have access to their expertise. Also, Ann Arbor is one of the coolest cities and has been consistently voted as one of the best college towns in the US. I also appreciated that I could take courses in other departments as electives so I had access to other top graduate programs (Business, Public Health, Public Policy) as an added bonus.

**Q: For anyone, how do you manage your course load and work? Do you find it possible to work, do classes, and your internship?**

A: It was definitely a learn-as-you-go kind of process for me. I am 20 month so I started right away with courses, field, and work. 16-month students have their first semester with just classes (and potentially work). My schedule shifted a little but in general, I'm in field 2 days a week, in class 2/3 days a week, and since I work at the SSW, I work in the office either before or after my classes. I've found it's manageable and I generally am 'working' from 9-5 every day. Something to consider is that although field counts as 4 credits, it is like a job in that you probably won't have additional work to do after you are done.

**Q: If you don't have a car since you're coming from out of state, is it possible to get to school/internships?**

A: When you begin applying for field placement, there will be a question about whether you have access to a car. If you don't, you might take that into account when selecting a placement. There are bus lines that can get you pretty close to some placements in Ann Arbor, or if there are multiple students at one location you might be able to carpool.

**Q: How was your transition going from your undergrad programs to a graduate program?**

A: I felt really supported in my transition. There was a lot of orientation programming that allowed me to meet my peers and get to know my advisor, field faculty member, and professors. The classes were smaller for me so I was able to jump right in and make connections with other students and my professors. In your first semester you will be taking foundation courses that help to ground you in certain theories, principles, and practices that help inform your learning moving forward.

**Q: Can you describe the daily schedule as a first-year MSW student? In terms of hours spent in a classroom, field work, and studying?**

A: This depends on if you are 16-month, 20-month or advanced standing. Check out this website for a break down of where you time is spent, by semester, based on your track.

<http://ssw.umich.edu/faq/question/7351-what-is-the-difference-between-the-16-and-20-month-programs-how-do-i-decide-which-one-to-choose>

**Q: What is something you wish you would have known before becoming a MSW student? Suggestions?**

A: Some books you can borrow from the library and/or other classmates. Some books are important and relevant to have, others you might not want to have forever but would need for certain assignments and for those times, it is nice to borrow and not have to pay for every single book.

**Q: How is the workload compared to undergrad?**

A: There is probably more reading than in undergrad. Certain reading assignments are important because you come to class and will actually talk about them. The good thing is, there is less busy work and the assignments, readings, and projects are meant to be relevant and helpful for your professional development. Oftentimes professors will accommodate your interests if you want to shift a project to your interests.

**Q: What is the average age of MSW students at U of M?**

A: Check out the class profile at the SSW

<http://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/2013-msw-class-profile.pdf>

**Q: What professors would you recommend students to take?**

A: Honestly, each professor is unique in his or her delivery, and interests. I would recommend taking a look at our website and reading the bios for the professors. If there is one professor who has similar interests, it would be worth taking a course with them or setting up a meeting with them to talk more. Some faculty members are more specific to a certain concentration (IP, CO, Management, Policy) so you might see them for multiple classes throughout your time in grad school.

**Q: Can you talk about the student organizations available?**

A: This website has a list of student orgs and their contact information. Also, there is an opportunity to start your own if you have interests that aren't included on this list. <http://ssw.umich.edu/studentorgs>

**Q: Describe the course workload. What is the average week's worth of work like for a course?**

A: Courses meet once a week for 3 hours. This means you have an entire week to prepare for a course with readings, assignments, etc. Depending on the kinds of courses and the number of credits you are taking, you can generally expect some articles to read, maybe a reflection paper. There tends to be at least one cumulative project per class that you might be working on throughout the semester. These can be group or individual assignments.

**Q: What is a typical day like as a UM MSW student? (Class all day/everyday? how often do you have classes vs. field placement? etc.)**

A: You are typically in field 16 hours a week – or 2 full days. The others would be composed of classes and/or work.

**Q: How are the professors at the School of Social Work?**

A: In one word: diverse; both with their interests and their delivery styles. In another word, I'd say they are all extremely passionate and helpful resources. You are able to meet with any professor to talk about interests, career paths, goals, etc. They are extremely passionate about social work and are always willing to meet outside of class. They are in the top of their field, yet extremely approachable and are great resources for navigating the diverse world of what being a social worker means, looks like, and ultimately can do.

**Q: How far is Ypsilanti from Ann Arbor? As an international student do you recommend buying a vehicle? Are field placements typically within Ann Arbor and accessible via public transit?**

A: Ypsilanti is about 10 minutes from Ann Arbor. You do not need a vehicle, however it can be helpful sometimes for getting to a field placement, grocery store, etc. It is not something you need, however. That being said, the Ann Arbor bus lines are free to students and can take you around campus and around Ann Arbor. Many placements are located near bus lines.