



**Ask a Current Student Webinar Chat Log  
June 14, 2018**

**Q: As a non-traditional student, so I come with little to no support. I am trying to shy away from working fulltime but with the cost of living, I may have to. Are there any ideal jobs that work with a grad student's schedule?**

A: Mitch mentioned on a previous slide about GSI/GSSA positions. These are positions that generally come with a tuition waiver as well as a monthly stipend, but if you wanted to apply to those, I would look into them soon with a specific department before the semester begins.

**Q: What is your experience with field placement interviews - just received an email to set up my interview with Novel Response and wondered about any pointers/tips before setting up my appointment!**

A: I'd suggest preparing for a field placement interview just as you would any sort of job. In my experience, these organizations are hoping to find a good "fit," and they understand that you're there as a student as much as you are a "worker." I got caught off guard in my interview when they asked what I wanted to get out of an internship, and I didn't know what to say! "Ummm... learn things..." So maybe prepare some questions or ideas about your own passions and what you're looking for!

**Q: How do students typically get involved with research? Are there research fairs or postings by faculty?**

A: This is a great question. Often you could find faculty who is working on something you are interested in. Sometimes these professors will have money available through a separate fund that they could pay you for, they might have work-study positions, etc. (It depends on if you are looking for monetary compensation). Other research opportunities are found through the student employment website here: <https://studentemployment.umich.edu/> -- you can see various postings around campus and through the University. In addition there are often flyers/emails that go out when a professor is looking for someone. Hope this helps!

**Q: Does Michigan have open gyms? I love playing volleyball so I hope there are opportunities for me to distress.**

A: In regards to gym access, during any term that you're enrolled (i.e. taking classes) you have 3 on-campus rec centers that are free. This access includes cardio machines, basketball courts, and other gym facilities. Classes are offered at an additional fee, and there are intramural sports (including basketball, flag football, soccer, volleyball, and broomball) offered each term, also for a fee.

**Q: For national field placement, did you have to take extra credits in other semesters to be able to do the national field placement in the summer?**

A: The National Community Scholars program I am a part of is a program that exists in a structured way so that we do take more courses as seminars to prepare for the national placement, and we also begin field in the fall semester, whereas typically 16 mo. students begin field in the winter. To learn more about the program, you can visit the page under the Financial Aid section of the SSW's website:  
<https://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/financial-aid/national-community-scholars-program>

**Q: Wondered if you have just one field placement or you have an opportunity to do more than one, obviously in different semesters. And should I connect with the office of field placement now to find out more specifics.**

A: This depends! If you are a 20-month student you'll have one field placement for the 2018 to 2019 academic year, and then another one in the 2019 to 2020 academic year. If you are a 16-month or advanced placement student, you'll likely only have one field placement. However, there are some special programs that allow people to do two field placements.

**Q: Hello, thank you for hosting this opportunity for incoming students to ask questions. Are we allowed to take more than five classes for the first semester?**

A: You are able to take more than five classes, and in order to take more than 18 hours you need to fill out a form and get permission from your academic advisor. The form is on the SSW website, under the "Course-Related Forms" page. I would suggest waiting until after the first week of classes to officially decide how this will work with your schedule and course load!

**Q: How soon should I connect with an advisor to talk about classes that I need to register for?**

A: You can always be in contact with an advisor through OSS (734-936-0961), but you will be receiving information about course registration soon. Additionally, you can review the Registration videos in the [Orientation Toolkit](#) and refer to the [Course Planning Worksheets](#).

**Q: How would you compare the rigor and time management of your MSW to your undergrad experience? As a UofM graduate, I am familiar with the university's expectations but I wonder how they transfer.**

A: It sounds like you've had excellent preparation for a U-M graduate program... I did not, to be honest. The workload here is similar, but the rigor involved has been much more intense, in my opinion. Prepare for a lot of reading and a lot of participation. Some courses are more difficult/intense than others are, but it is definitely not an "easy" program in terms of classwork. Manageable, though!

**Q: May you please give me names on which professors I should look for? I know this is subjective but I am sure some professors have better reviews.**

A: It depends on your concentration and what your interests are. What specific classes are you thinking of taking? I suggest that you go to the course catalog here: <https://ssw.umich.edu/courses?keywords=catalog>. Every course has its description and professor listed there. And there are also bios of professors there. It has been really helpful for me to read that information and decide if the professors' areas fit into what I'm interested in. If you have more specific classes in mind, I can give you more inputs on the courses that I've taken. Hope this helps

**Q: For Commuter students, you talked about getting to use the buses for free using our student cards. If we don't have a card already when will we be able to get the card?**

A: You can get your MCard whenever you come to Ann Arbor! You can pick it up and take a photo at the Student Activities Building.

**Q: Do you know of any good websites for social Work scholarships or scholarships in general? Other than Michigan's page?**

A: The School of Social Work website has a lot of resources for scholarships (<https://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/financial-aid/grants-and-scholarships>). The NASW also has some national fellowships and scholarships. You can look into that more here: <http://www.naswfoundation.org/fellowships.asp>. There are some more general websites including fastweb.com and collegesource.com.

**Q: Might seem like a silly question, but can spouses get access to the free bus use? My partner will need to take the bus to work so I can use the car for field.**

A: No, spouses do not get free access for the buses. The only exception to this is if your spouse is affiliated with the University (for example via employment).

**Q: Hello! This question is for Liz. I'm going into the social policy and evaluation program and was wondering what you would recommend for someone going into that program, especially in terms of field placement.**

A: Hi Grace, awesome! Welcome to the SP&E family. The Office of Field Instruction will be helpful in determining your field placement knowing your track. Any field placement can benefit from program evaluation and policy recommendations, and you should be clear in your field interviews this is something you are looking to do and learn more about in your field education. I would also recommend taking a course related to evaluation in your first semester, if you can!

**Q: I also would like to know about the process, if any of the current MSW students have considered it, of dual degree applications? What were some of the resources or connections that helped you prepare for the process of potentially becoming a dual applicant?**

A: You'd want to talk to someone in the office of student services, and they'll be able to connect you to an advisor and/or current student! Phone: (734) 936-0961  
Email: [ssw.msw.info@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.msw.info@umich.edu)

**Q: Is it hard to get a job in a social work related position over the summer for 20 month students?**

A: Hi! I am a 20 month student working over the summer. Depending on what your specific area of interest in social work is, it will be more or less difficult to find a related summer job. It's certainly possible, but it's going to be more difficult to find work in a clinical setting over the summer. I'm here in the school of social work this summer, as well as working with a summer program in the School of Public Health.

**Q: Hi, as an international student I'd like to know if the student visa is extended until after the program to allow time to work to get licensed in the USA**

A: I am also an international student. Is this going to be the first time that you study in the US? So our F-1 Visa allows us to have a one-year period to do work that relates to our area of study (it is called OPT - Operational Practical Training). You can see more description about OPT here: <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/f1-students/opt>. Let me know if there are any other questions that you have! And you can always contact the International Office (<https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/>) for more questions related to the F-1 Visa.

**Q: I noticed that there are opportunities to earn certifications. I am a child welfare scholar and I would like to earn my certification in child welfare as well. How obtainable is that on a 16-month track if I need to add extra classes to get the certification?**

A: It depends. It is definitely possible, but certificates do take up extra electives. The Child Welfare Scholar Program requires an extra class for that program, and the certificate will be an extra few classes. It is definitely possible, but may require some creative thinking. It will also depend on if you have any exemptions from courses!

**Q: For 20-month students, are you aware of any abroad opportunities in the summer that work alongside the MSW program? I would love to incorporate my Spanish degree as I pursue a higher education as well.**

A: For 20 month students, you can take independent study that includes an international travel/studies component and travel abroad during the summer as part of those credits. Reach out to the Office of Global Activities for more info <https://ssw.umich.edu/offices/global-activities>

**Q: Hello, thank you for hosting this opportunity for incoming students to ask questions. Are we allowed to take more than five classes for the first semester?**

A: Yes, you are able to take more than 5 classes; however, you have to be mindful of how many credits you're attempting to enroll in. 18 credits and higher requires students to get permission from the Registrar's Office. On a personal note: I completely understand being excited and wanting to take advantage of all of our course offerings, but I would caution you not to overwhelm yourself your first semester. You'll be able to take interesting courses throughout your time here!

**Q: Is there a writing center housed in the School of Social Work or is that somewhere else on U-M campus?**

A: There is a Writing Coordinator within the SSW Career Services Office, but there is also a specific department called the Sweetland Writing Center for the broader university, too.

**Q: I'm doing IP, but have been waffling between MH and CSS - do you have any suggestions for how to determine which might be the best fit for my goals? Is there particular faculty for each concentration that I should reach out to? Or would it be better to talk to current students/alums? TIA!**

A: I would recommend talking to an admissions counselor in the Office of Student Services. They can be reached at 734-936-0961 M-Th 8-4:30 and Friday 8-12. You can also take a look at the courses here: [https://ssw.umich.edu/courses?keywords=course catalog](https://ssw.umich.edu/courses?keywords=course%20catalog)

**Q: What kinds of events and/or conferences on social work are there at U-M for MSW students?**

A: In short—a TON. One of my favorite parts about the SSW is that there are a lot of highly motivated students around here, and so that means if they want to learn about something, they find a way! Each year there is a symposium for students to present their work within the school. Also, there are opportunities for "lunch and learn" type of events almost daily! This includes outside speakers, as well as fellow students and professors. If there is anything in particular you want to learn about, you can reach out to the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, the Office of Student Services, or a particular student group within the SSW. If that's not enough, there are also a ton of opportunities around U-M. This year I attended one conference in the school of public health and one in the school of public policy because they were of interest to me and my career.

**Q: I am losing track on my questions and answers. Is there another way I can chat via email?**

A: This will be posted on the website by next week, and you will be able to look over the questions again. You will also receive an email with the link.

**Q: How do we find out who our academic advisor is?**

A: During Orientation week, you will receive a packet including the name of your faculty advisor. You'll also have an introductory group lunch with your advisor and their other student mentees. Their name will also be listed on your Wolverine Access account.

**Q: What kinds of student organizations are available for social work students, and where would we find them?**

A: Here's a link for all the student orgs at SSW: <https://ssw.umich.edu/studentorgs>. Feel free to read over them and contact the contact person listed if you have any questions about any org!

**Q: Where would you recommend buying textbooks from? Do you find many courses require additional materials that students need to buy for class participation, projects, etc.?**

A: Honestly most textbooks can be bought either from previous students or online (i.e. Amazon, Chegg, booksprice, etc.). Most group projects usually do not require that you buy extra supplies.

**Q: For the U-M bus service (aka, the magic bus), what are there general hours of operation?**

A: Each bus line varies slightly but generally speaking, the buses run until 10pm EST. One thing to be mindful of is that some lines don't run at all on the weekends or during game days. I'd recommend checking out their website: [www.theride.org](http://www.theride.org)

**Q: For the 16-Month track students, did you work (work-study or other employment) while taking courses and completing field each semester?**

A: The 16 month track is very intense, but I have been able to work throughout my time here. Finding a job on campus has been easier for me, because there is some understanding of student scheduling. I've worked about 10-20 hours a week.

**Q: You mentioned buying books from previous students, is there somewhere we can go to find a listing of these people selling their old books (like a forum), or is it just sort of word of mouth?**

A: There are lots of Facebook pages dedicated to buying/selling textbooks (among other things). Michigan has multiple Facebook groups, so you could definitely check out a buying and selling page to see if they have what you're looking for. Bookstores and Amazon also usually provide used versions of books for less.

**Q: Awww cyber hug! @Stephanie and the webinar staff! This webinar is truly resourceful and has cured some of my anxiety and fears. I will continue to reach out to my fellow wolverines.**

A: If you haven't applied already, I'd encourage you (and everyone viewing this webinar) to apply to the Mentorship Program for incoming students. You should have received an email about it earlier this week. It's a great way to connect with incoming students and Stephanie is one of our many wonderful mentors! :)

**Q: What are the best work-study jobs for 16-month students that do not add dense stress on the student?**

A: I worked as an academic mentor in the Athletic Department, and the hours were very flexible (I usually worked 6 hours/week). You can check out what some potential positions might look like here: [https://studentemployment.umich.edu/cmxc\\_content.aspx?cpid=27](https://studentemployment.umich.edu/cmxc_content.aspx?cpid=27)

**Q: If we'd like guidance on picking classes before registration are we able to get in contact with an advisor before who might not be the one advised to us in the fall?**

A: The best place to start is by reviewing the videos in the Orientation Toolkit about the registration process and the Course Planning Worksheets then we can set-up an advising appointment with an advisor in the Office of Student Services. Please give OSS a call at 734-936-0961.

**Q: Has anyone had to renounce their advance-standing status? If so, did you use your elective credits as a way to complete courses needed for certain certifications, such as school social work?**

A: There are people who renounce their advanced standing status, but we highly recommend connecting with an OSS advisor about the decision. Please give us a call at 734-936-0961.

**Q: What resources are available after completing the program in terms of preparing to take the board exam?**

A: It depends on the state you are taking the exam. You can take practice exams in our Career Services. I recommend you to make an appointment with the career services (<https://ssw.umich.edu/offices/career-services>) email: [ssw-cso@umich.edu](mailto:ssw-cso@umich.edu). They will give you more detailed information based on your situation.

**Q: Are classes usually offered during business hours, or are there evening and weekend courses too? Is there a list of mini-courses offered throughout the year, or do they come out each semester? Thanks!**

A: There are evening courses (6-9pm during the Fall/Winter semesters and 6-10pm during the Spring/Summer semester), but the majority of courses are during business hours. They are held once a week in 3-hour blocks to be mindful of field and work commitments. Mini Courses (1-credit elective courses) are frequently held on Fridays or Saturdays and they change every semester! Students, including myself, really enjoy mini courses! If you go to the SSW webpage under Course Catalog, you can view Mini Courses that will be offered, as well as ones that were offered in the past to get a sense of the topics. They are under SW 790, SW 796, and SW 799. Also, I will say don't feel pressured to take them during your first term--you'll definitely have time.

**Q: Thank You. I am really happy you are all doing this. I feel so much better and less stress. I would still love more input on which professors I should take as that can make a huge impact on my experience at Michigan.**

A: You are so welcome :) The recommendations of professors depend on the courses you are taking and the professional/career goals that you have. We will be contacting you directly to answer any other questions that you have!

**Q: Where is the Student Activities building?**

A: Here is the address for the student activities building: Students Activities Building 515 E Jefferson St, Ann Arbor, MI 48109. If you are looking to get your MCard, please make sure you have a valid photo ID to ensure you can get your card.

**Q: How is living in Ann Arbor? Is there a close relationship between the greater Ann Arbor community and the UMich community?**

A: I think that people have many different experiences with the greater community... but Ann Arbor kind of... IS U-M. This is a quintessential "college town." Getting involved in the community is easy; in my experience, the biggest challenge is making sure you

don't get overly committed or involved. It is definitely a "small city," and depending on where you're coming from, your experience might be somewhat different.

**Q: What else do you recommend to help prepare for the MSW, mentally and emotionally? There will be a lot of work to do but I am also excited about the program. I just want to stay as sane as possible through the process.**

A: I feel that on a profound level. Taking care of yourself is so important and something the SSW prioritizes students to do. If at all possible, it might be helpful to arrive in Ann Arbor prior to Orientation week so you're able to start familiarizing yourself with the area. Also, give yourself space to be social with folks those first couple of weeks as you settle in because people will be feeling similarly. Yes, you can expect a lot of work, but it's so intentional and will bring you closer to being a social worker. You worked hard to get here and you deserve it!