

Frequently Asked Questions

IS SOCIAL WORK THE RIGHT CAREER FOR ME?

The National Association of Social Workers has a comprehensive site which offers much information about the profession of Social Work. Additionally, informative issues are discussed regarding advocacy and a copy of the Code of Ethics is provided which you must be able to follow in practice. You are encouraged to review all these areas before deciding if Social Work is the right career for you. The web site address is <http://www.socialworkers.org>.

WHEN CAN I APPLY FOR THE PROGRAM?

A potential student can submit their application anytime. It is wise to submit it as early as possible, even before the priority date of February 3, 2012. **January 13, 2012** is the deadline for all advanced standing cohorts (graduates of BSW programs). Advanced Standing applicants are asked to please wait to submit your application until your fall grades are on your transcript if you have not yet graduated. **April 20, 2012** is the final deadline for all applicants other than advanced standing.

MY APPLICATION WAS SUBMITTED EARLY AND I STILL HAVE NOT HEARD. SHOULD I BE WORRIED?

No. The admissions committee reviews advanced standing applications first and then all other applications in order of starting dates. Many applicants will not receive a decision prior to mid-March.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO APPLY TO THE MSW PROGRAM?

The cost for a university graduate school application to the MSW program is currently \$60.00. This money is collected through the on-line application (eApp) process. This is the only fee for application.

DO I NEED TO SUBMIT MY GRE SCORES?

No, IUSSW does not utilize the GRE scores – they will not be viewed even if submitted.

WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT?

An official transcript is one that comes from the University which typically has a raised seal or some other documentation that denotes authenticity. Sometimes, a student will get an envelope that says “not official once opened.” Please do not let that stop you from opening the envelope – as long as it is officially from the University, there will be no problems with IUSSW accepting it as official. Many institutions are moving to electronic productions of transcripts. These are acceptable as long as they are the institution’s official transcripts. Please check with your registrar to verify before submitting with your paper application. The electronic transcript needs to be sent to you and printed to be included in your paper application.

WHAT IF MY GPA IS LOWER THAN 3.0? CAN I STILL APPLY?

Absolutely - IUSSW recognizes that every applicant has not necessarily enjoyed the same access to and opportunities of undergraduate education. However, it is necessary that an applicant address the issues that impacted their lower GPA in a written petition. Therefore, we have provided a form titled "Petition for Exceptional Consideration" in the Admission Application for use in this situation. It outlines the information needed in the petition. Please give a compelling argument about your ability to now be successful in graduate school. **An applicant with a GPA of 2.99 or below and no petition will not be considered for admission. It may be prudent for an applicant with a GPA of "near" 3.0 to submit this petition.**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ADMITTED TO THE MSW PROGRAM ON PROBATION?

If an applicant demonstrates limited scholarly writing skills, he/she may be admitted on probation with the addition of a 3-credit hour writing course that must be passed successfully prior to beginning MSW coursework. The writing class requirements will be explained in your acceptance letter.

AM I REQUIRED TO HAVE ALL OF THE PRE-REQUISITES COMPLETED BEFORE I APPLY TO THE MSW PROGRAM?

No, the pre-requisite classes, including statistics, must be completed before the start of your MSW coursework. There will be no exceptions to this requirement. An applicant can be admitted conditionally, based on the successful completion of the required pre-requisite course(s). If the conditions are not met by the required dates, the offer of admission will be withdrawn or delayed for a year.

IS THERE A MINIMUM GRADE FOR THE PRE-REQUISITE COURSES? WILL A LOW GRADE IN THESE COURSES NEGATIVELY IMPACT MY ABILITY TO BE ADMITTED?

While there is no minimum grade for each course, you must receive a passing grade. IUSSW wants each student to possess the knowledge/content of the course. An applicant that is unsure of their abilities is welcome to take the course on a pass/fail basis.

WHAT ABOUT REFERENCES?

DO NOT SEND INDIVIDUAL REFERENCE LETTERS DIRECTLY TO THE SCHOOL. Applicants are required to collect no more than three letters of reference using the Request for Reference Form included in the application. If four are included one will be randomly destroyed. All references must be current; one reference should be from either a current supervisor or academic professional, when available. For the remaining references, we highly recommend you use academic and/or professional (paid or volunteer) references when possible. IUSSW prefers that not all three references be from academic professionals or the same category. Not every applicant has a current professional affiliation with former professors. We encourage each

applicant to choose those persons who can best speak to their abilities to practice social work and succeed in graduate school. Please note that applicants should never use friends, neighbors, family members or significant others. Additionally, please carefully consider the use of clergy or counselors – sometimes these individuals are limited in their scope of answers due to confidentiality issues. It is never recommended to use an old reference letter as they do not provide the most current information regarding the applicant. Advanced Standing applicants need a 4th reference and there is a separate form for this faculty reference.

Please be sure to read the reference forms completely and fill out the sections you need to complete, including the waiver statement. When giving each of your referees this form to fill out, please be sure to provide them with a self-addressed stamped envelope for their use. Make sure that you note on the envelope somewhere that it contains a reference. References must be received in sealed envelopes with the referee's signature across the flap to be considered valid. You will also need to make all necessary arrangements to receive these sealed envelopes/references in time for you to include them in your admissions packet. You may need to follow up with your referee if the deadline is approaching and you have not received your reference form. Unsealed reference letters will warrant the application ineligible for review. **We do not accept faxed or emailed reference letters.**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN I SIGN THE REFERENCE WAIVER?

Once you submit your application to the IU School of Social Work, it becomes the property of the school and its content or copies of its content will not be released under any circumstances. This includes reference letters, even when you sign the waiver. The waiver only allows admitted students to read these letters. Therefore, we encourage you to make copies of your materials, when possible, prior to mailing your application to keep for your records and request additional copies of the reference letters if you wish to use them in future situations. Some referees and application reviewers feel letters written in total confidence are the strongest references possible.

I AM CONFUSED ABOUT THE ON-LINE UNIVERSITY APPLICATION PROCESS. DO I HAVE TO APPLY TWICE?

Every applicant on the IUPUI campus must submit an online university graduate school application, also known as the eApp, in addition to the MSW graduate school paper application. Do not write entirely in lowercase or caps when entering your application data. Please use correct punctuation. The eApp must be submitted prior to or concurrent with the paper MSW application. It is used for collection of demographic information and registration access to the IU computer system, as well as to collect the payment of the application fee assessed by the university. Your paper application to the MSW program will not be processed without completion of the eApp and payment of the online application fee. The eApp can be accessed by the following link: <https://uisapp2.iu.edu/sisad-prd/p/Guest.do?methodToCall=start&inst=IUINA&career=GRAD>.

WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FINANCIAL AID?

The majority of the resources for graduate students in the MSW program are in the form of student loans. All students are encouraged to search for individual opportunities for financial

aid. Utilizing internet sites such as www.fastweb.com or www.finaid.org can be helpful. Do not pay for any searches for financial aid awards. This information is free to anyone. More information about financial aid can be found in this application under “Financial Aid”.

DOES A FIELD PLACEMENT ABROAD DELAY GRADUATION?

Students interested in an international practicum need to understand that it may extend their graduation date because some classes are only offered in the spring when they may be abroad.

IF I AM HESITANT ABOUT MY WRITING SKILLS WHAT CAN I DO?

In Indianapolis, a 3-credit hour writing course (S400, Scholarly Writing for Social Work) is currently being offered in Summer I and Summer II semesters and anyone can enroll on a first come/first serve basis. It is an undergraduate course meant to help students improve their scholarly writing skills. If the writing course is your only pre-requisite for the program, you will not be able to receive financial aid due to the financial aid credit hour enrollment requirements.