

Assessing the Extent to which Students Meet the Admission Requirements for the Social Work Major (BSSW)

Introduction:

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the profession require that the Department assess student applications for the major. Students should work closely with their advisor to make sure that they are applying during the most appropriate semester and not before requirements are met. This applies to the entire curriculum to insure that students are not registering prematurely for other courses such as 412 and 469.

The following materials take the current admission requirements and identify levels of performance which **meet the requirements**, which require an **exception** to the requirements, or which do not meet requirements such that **delay** of admission or **denial** of admission is appropriate. The intent is both (1) to guide the Admissions Committee in decision making by identifying those students who are most eligible for admission versus those who have issues that may lead to their being delayed or denied admission, and (2) to help students and advisors anticipate the decisions that will be made by the Admissions Committee.

Current Admission Requirements (see the Student Handbook for more information):

- ❖ GPA greater than or equal to 2.8 (overall and SOWK)
- ❖ Completion of (or currently in) Foundation courses (Soc, KSP, Bio, Econ, PoliSci, EthnStu)
- ❖ Completion of (or currently in) 190/210/214/305
- ❖ Completion of (or currently in) Junior Fieldwork, 312, with at least “average” supervisor’s ratings
- ❖ Course Plan (minimum 75 total credits at application; appropriate plan for degree completion)
- ❖ Written & Verbal skills sufficient for professional practice
- ❖ Professional Behaviors & Attitudes conducive to professional practice
- ❖ Completion of General Education requirements (approved 1/10/08)

Enrollment Outcome:

Typically 25-30 highly qualified applicants enter Practice I each semester.

Meeting the Admission Requirements:

The Admissions Committee will evaluate applications based on (1) those with no “exceptions”, then (2) those with exceptions (sorted by how many exceptions they would require), and then (3) those with ratings of “denial/delay” (sorted by how many denial/delay’s they present).

The Admission Requirements:

GPA's

Meets Requirement: GPA’s (overall, SOWK) at least 2.8 or faculty recognition of extenuating circumstances (last 3 semesters greater than or equal to 2.8, ESL/ELL)

Exception: GPA does not meet the requirement but faculty find reason to believe student has the academic ability to continue in the program.

Denial/Delay: GPA does not meet the requirement and there is no reason to believe student can complete successfully the advanced courses.

Applicants currently repeating a course should factor in the original grade in their calculations of SOWK GPA, rather than just indicating a √ on the application form.

Foundation Courses

Meets Requirement: Student will have completed all of the Foundation courses prior to Admission or has only to take Statistics and is planning to take it with P1 prior to 469.

Exception: Student has at most one remaining Foundation course (beyond Statistics if that is not finished) and has a clear plan to take that course along with P1.

Denial/Delay: Student has more than one Foundation course (beyond Statistics) not yet taken.

Re-takes in any required course count as an exception. Students who have approved exceptions will need to document their successful completion of the course(s) before being allowed to move on in the Practice sequence.

Introductory/Other Social Work Courses

Meets Requirement: Student will have completed successfully all of the prerequisite SOWK courses prior to beginning P1 (190, 210, 214, 305, 312). Student must have a “C” or better in each course and at least “Average” ratings on all 312 evaluation categories.

Exception: Student is planning to take 312 along with P1.

Denial/Delay: Student is missing any other SOWK required course, or has a “D” or “F” in any other SOWK course, or has any ratings below “Average” on their 312 evaluation.

While other courses in the major (e.g., 255, 412, 469, electives) are not required for Admission to the Major; students must still maintain grades of at least “C”s in these courses. Receiving a “D” or “F” or IP/Inc will trigger a Denial/Delay rating. Students who have approved exceptions will need to document their successful completion of the course(s) before being allowed to move on in the Practice sequence.

Course Plan/Credit Load

Meets Requirement: Student submits a course plan that completes the major and the degree without the need for excessive course loads or extra semesters.

Exception: Student is using all available semesters/summers, but is still taking very high credit loads (over 16 credits per semester or over 6 per summer); however, their grade point suggests that they **may** be able to handle the workload.

Denial/Delay: Student will require extra semesters during the sequence or after P4/Practicum/Seminar to complete their degree, or faculty are **not** confident that they will be able to handle a high workload.

The applicant may present a rationale for why they believe that they need to take heavy loads or extra semesters. Students should have completed at least 75 credits the semester before they begin P1, including all of their General Education, and their Foundation & Introductory courses. The 75 comes from 3 full semesters of Practice sequence (16, 16, 15) plus 1 summer (6) equals 53 credits, subtracted from 128 equals 75.

A problem has been students submitting a course plan that works, then “needing” to change it later, for “problem” reasons such as failing/dropping statistics or “no problem” reasons like changing their elective from 415 to 419. Students will need to submit a revised course plan along with a letter explaining the change to the Chair, and for any change that would have triggered an exception (such as withdrawing from a Foundation course) faculty will consider how it will impact the student’s continuation in the Practice Sequence.

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The course plan should indicate that the student is ready for graduation upon completion of the Practicum semester. For some students being ready for graduation means delaying or breaking up the Practice Sequence to add in extra credits to get to 128; for other students this means completing a minor/double major either before or during the sequence. Each of these is an exception for which students would have to provide a rationale.

General Education

Meets Requirement: Student has completed their General Education requirements.

Exception: Student has one remaining General Education courses to be taken with Practice I. (Planning to meet GenEd Category 4 with SOC-202 Statistics taken with Practice I does not count as an exception toward this total as discussed above).

Denial/Delay: Student has 2 or more remaining General Education courses to take.

Written and Verbal Skills

Meets Requirement: Student has demonstrated competence in written and oral communication in prior coursework and in their Application essays. Competence suggests both technical skills and content compatible with the knowledge, skills, values, and ethics of the Social Work profession.

Exception: Faculty have concerns about the student's skills or their written or oral content but believe that referral to support services (Learning Center, Technical Writing course, Public Speaking course, Counseling Center, work with advisor) will enable student to continue in the major.

Denial/Delay: Concerns rise to the level that student is unlikely to succeed in the advanced courses, in Practicum or in professional practice. Student will need significant additional assistance to be reconsidered for the major.

Professional Behaviors and Attitudes

Meets Requirement: Student has demonstrated in coursework and fieldwork those behaviors and attitudes that are conducive to successful Social Work education and practice. Such characteristics include reliability, time management, consistency of performance, successful coping with ordinary personal responsibilities, a constructively critical openness to new ideas and experiences, self awareness, and appropriate interpersonal communication skills. In addition, students are expected to behave in a manner that is both legal and in compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics and MN Board of Social Work Standards of Practice.

Exception: Faculty have concerns about the student's behavior or attitudes but believe that referral to support services (Learning Center, Technical Writing course, Public Speaking course, Counseling Center, work with advisor) will enable the student to continue in the major.

Denial/Delay: Concerns rise to a level that suggests that the student is unlikely to succeed in the advanced courses, Practicum, or in professional practice. Student will need significant additional assistance to be reconsidered for the major.

Concerns about professional behaviors and attitudes have been used to deny/delay admission to the Major, especially when those behaviors/attitudes have involved flagrant irresponsibility or ethical issues or criminal violations. Faculty are empowered by the Student Handbook, required by the CSWE Accreditation Standards, and held responsible by the Social Work profession to make such assessments.