

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY™

Master of Social Work M.S.W.

Instructions for applying to the Master of Social Work Program

Please read carefully and follow all instructions closely

Mission statement

The Eastern Michigan University social work program is committed to the empowerment of impoverished, oppressed, vulnerable, and underserved populations; the creation of social welfare policy based on strengths perspective; the advancement of community problem solving; and leadership in organizations and communities.

Graduates of the program will be committed and able practitioners who can alleviate social problems and enhance the competence of individuals, groups and communities for engaging their environments to improve social functioning and provide opportunities. The social work program prepares students for culturally competent and gender-sensitive practice.

This information bulletin contains instructions for all items related to your application that may need additional information, clarification, or explanation. Please read and follow all instructions carefully. If you are having difficulty completing your application, please contact the staff of the M.S.W. Program at 734.487.6892, or attend one of our open house information sessions on the second Saturday of October, November, December and January at 10:00 a.m. in the Marshall Building.

Application process and procedures

The priority deadline for applications to the M.S.W. Program is Jan. 15. The Office of Graduate Studies and Research deadline for financial aid and scholarship applications is also Jan. 15. You are encouraged to apply earlier than this date, since applications will be reviewed as they are received.

The M.S.W. Program uses a rolling admission process. That is, beginning in the fall, completed applications are reviewed as they are received. Some qualified applicants may be offered admission to the program before the priority Jan. 15 deadline, thus applications received closer to the deadline will be competing for fewer available places. It is to your advantage to submit your application and all supporting

documents as soon as possible. We are a relatively small program, and able to admit a limited number of students each year.

Application Forms

This application packet contains all of the forms required for admission to the M.S.W. Program:

- Cover letter from the M.S.W. director/coordinator
- M.S.W. Program brochure
- Graduate School Application
- Employment and voluntarism record
- Three official recommendation forms
- Three envelopes for the letters of recommendation
- Instructions for Applying

If you are missing any of these items, please contact the School of Social Work to obtain replacements, 734.487.6892, or downloaded these forms from our Web site: www.emich.edu/sw/progMSW.html

Admission criteria

Applications are reviewed by a panel of social work faculty who carefully evaluate to what degree the prospective student's background, abilities and future plans fit with the program's mission statement according to the following:

- Demonstrated commitment to oppressed, vulnerable and underserved populations through your past work, volunteer experiences, course projects and the personal statement to be submitted with this application.
- Motivation and commitment to social work and social justice with, and on behalf of, oppressed, vulnerable and diverse populations.
- An undergraduate overall GPA of 2.75 or higher (note: this is higher than the minimum GPA required by the EMU Graduate School).
- Completion of a Baccalaureate degree by the date of beginning the program.
- Strong support letters of recommendation.

Part-time and full-time admission opportunities

Eastern Michigan University's MSW Program is primarily a part-time evening/Saturday program for workers currently employed in human services. There is an option for full-time study for a small number of applicants. Everyone who is accepted into the program is accepted on a part time basis and at that point has the opportunity to submit an application for full time study. This application includes documentation of working twenty hours or fewer per week. With this option, classes are still in the evening and Saturdays.

All Students, part and full-time benefit from having a flexible work schedule to meet the demands of graduate classes as well as daytime hours available for field placements.

- **Full Program, part-time;** 2 classes per semester, four years
- **Full Program, full-time;** 4 classes per semester, two years
- **Advanced Standing, part-time;** 2 classes per semester, two years
- **Advanced Standing, full-time;** 4 classes per semester, 1 year

Program eligibility

The EMU M.S.W. Program offers two different programs towards completion of a graduate degree in social work. The eligibility for these programs is determined by national accreditation standards, and no exceptions are allowed.

Applicants with a baccalaureate from a B.S.W. program accredited by Council on Social Work Education, who also meet our additional GPA requirements, will be considered for the advanced standing program (35 credits; two years part-time, one

year full-time). This program admits students only once a year in the fall semester, which begins in early September. The additional GPA criteria for this program requires an overall undergraduate GPA of at least 2.75, a 3.0 GPA during the last 60 credits of your undergraduate degree and B or better grades in social work courses.

For applicants with an undergraduate degree in an area other than social work or from an unaccredited B.S.W. program, applicants will be considered for the full program (63 credits; four years part-time, two years full-time). This program also admits students only once a year, in the fall semester, which typically begins in early September.

Conditional admission

In select cases, some applicants will be admitted on a conditional basis to the Full Program if they do not have the minimum overall GPA of 2.75. A limited number of exceptional applicants who have been working in social work for a substantial amount of time may be considered for conditional admission if:

- Undergraduate GPA was higher in the final two years of study.
- GPA of at least 3.0 earned in graduate-level course work (provide transcripts).
- Work experience, letters of recommendation and personal statement are excellent and highly congruent with the mission of our program.
- Demonstrated motivation and readiness for graduate education during a personal interview.
- Demonstrated graduate level writing skills during a writing exercise conducted at an on-site meeting.

Conditional students must earn a GPA of at least 3.0 in a designated and approved plan of study in the first year of the program in order to gain full admission.

Concentrations

The EMU M.S.W. Program provides the opportunity to become specialized in a particular field of practice. Our three fields of practice include: Child and Family Services, Mental Illness and Chemical Dependency (MI/CD), and Services for the Aging. You are expected at the time of application.

Students in the full program (four years part-time) have an opportunity during the first two years to change to a different concentration.

For advanced standing applicants, however, the selection of your concentration is an important decision at the time of application. Students in the advanced standing program take the advanced concentration courses within your first year of the program. Changing concentrations would significantly delay your progress.

For those applicants interested in school social work, it is necessary to select the child and family services concentration in order to have the required advanced

field placement in a child and family setting. By taking three elective courses, we also offer the course content mandated by the state of Michigan in order to be eligible to apply for school social work positions.

Preparing your application

1. Order official transcripts

You must submit an official transcript from every postsecondary institution you have attended, no matter how long ago or how many credits were earned. **Transcripts must be sent by the institution directly to the Office of Admissions**, Eastern Michigan University, P.O. Box 970, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Copies and faxes will not be accepted. Only official transcripts that remain sealed can be included in the final application packet. If you have completed any graduate credit or other graduate degrees, it is to your advantage to also include, or have sent, official transcripts documenting this as well. **It is not necessary to request transcripts from Eastern Michigan University if you have completed credits at this University.**

2. Obtain three letters of recommendation

Give a recommendation form and an envelope to three professionals who are able to evaluate your academic ability and skills, knowledge and experiences in human services. In addition, your recommendations should comment on your commitment to underserved populations and your ability to complete a graduate program successfully. It is best if at least one of the three recommenders has a M.S.W. degree. If you are currently employed in a human service agency, you are strongly encouraged to submit a recommendation from your direct supervisor. Recommenders should complete the form and be reminded by you to also attach a letter (preferably on letterhead) that discusses your ability to complete the M.S.W. program and your professional potential. Recommendation letters in addition to the form can substantially strengthen your application. Before giving the form to your recommender, complete the top portion of this form where you indicate whether or not you have waived your right to later review this letter. **Recommendations must be submitted on the official forms and returned in sealed envelopes, with the recommender's signature on the seal, even if you have not waived your right to review them. Letters that have been opened will not be accepted.**

3. Complete the Office of Graduate Studies and Research application

Respond to all items. Be sure to indicate that you are applying for a master's-level degree within the social work program. The codes will indicate the concentration you are selecting for your advanced courses. You **must** select one of the following codes:

- SWFS Family and Children Services
- SWMH Mental Illness/Chemical Dependency
- SWAG Services to the Aging

Note: The Admissions staff will determine if applicants are admitted as Advanced Standing or Full Program students. All students begin their program in the Fall.

Note: you must complete the personal statement according to the requirements of the School of Social Work instead of the instructions for the Office of Graduate Studies and Research personal statement (see below).

4. Write your social work personal statement

Your personal statement will be evaluated as a reflection of your writing skills, your ability to reflect and learn from your experiences, and as a narrative of your background, interests, and goals. You must be the sole author of this statement, but others may provide proofreading assistance and feedback.

Follow the following instructions for the social work personal statement (rather than those on the Office of Graduate Studies and Research application): work must be typewritten, double-spaced and four to five pages in length, with your name and Social Security number on each page.

Within your essay, please address the following:

- Why are you a "good fit" with the mission of EMU's M.S.W. program?
- In our society there are many types of privilege. Identify and discuss ways in your life in which you have been in a position of privilege, and how it might affect your work as a social worker.
- Discuss your reasons for why you selected your specific concentration (i.e., mental illness/chemical dependency, families and children, or services to the aging)?
- What are your mission-related career interests and post-graduation plans?
- Describe a situation where your attitudes about a particular stigmatized population (e.g., LGBT, people of color, persons in poverty, etc.) were challenged, and what you learned from that experience. In what ways are you ready to have your attitudes and social stereotypes be further challenged within an educational setting?
- What attracts you in particular to the M.S.W. program at Eastern Michigan University?

5. Complete the "Employment and Voluntarism Record"

As requested in the form, provide complete contact information about agencies, specifically describing the population you served in this setting by utilizing the

codes listed on the form. Please include the average hours/months/days of service at each position or volunteer experience. In our review of your application, it is to your advantage to provide detailed information about the number of hours per week, rather than leaving it blank or providing a range of hours.

6. If you are an international student on a F-1 Visa, complete the “Financial Statement for International Applicants”

7. If English is not your native language, submit documentation of English proficiency by:

- Achieving a score of at least 550 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or 213 on the computer version and a five on the Test of Written English (TWE), or;
- Achieving a score of at least 80 on the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB), plus 83 on the written essay.

Scores must be sent by the testing agency directly to EMU

8. Enclose a non-refundable check or money order payable to Eastern Michigan University for the application fee, according to the amount noted on the graduate application form

The application fee may vary from year to year. Please refer to the current application form for the amount for the current year. There are reduced fees for online application for the EMU Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

9. Make a copy of all application documents for your own files.

10. Send all completed application materials in one packet to: Office of Admissions

Eastern Michigan University
P.O. Box 970
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Make sure that you have adequate postage on the packet. Unsealed letters of recommendation and unofficial transcripts will not be accepted. Applications are not reviewed by the School of Social Work until all required documentation is received. It is to your advantage to have letters of recommendation returned to you directly in sealed, signed envelopes that can be included in your packet. We also recommend that you follow-up on your requests for transcripts, since that has most often delayed the completion of applications.

Notification

The review process is time intensive. Because we do not want to rush the process arbitrarily or unfairly, we can not guarantee a specific date for our written response. We will make every effort possible, however,

to expedite the application process. Final admission decisions can only be communicated in writing. If you are interested in checking on the status of your application during the review process, please contact the EMU Office of Admissions, 734.487.3400 or via e-mail graduate_admissions@emich.edu.

M.S.W. application packets and information

For master of social work application packets, and for further information about the M.S.W. program, please contact:

M.S.W. Admissions

Eastern Michigan University
School of Social Work
317 Marshall Building
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Phone: 734.487.6892

E-mail: mshw.program@emich.edu

M.S.W. application forms can also be downloaded at:
www.emich.edu/sw/programMSW.html

M.S.W. information sessions are held from 10 a.m. to noon every second Saturday of October, November, December and January (starting at 10:00 a.m. on campus in the Marshall Building). These sessions are free of charge and no prior registration is necessary.

For information about the status of your application, and for general information about the University, please contact:

Eastern Michigan University
Office of Admissions
P.O. Box 970
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Phone: 734.487.3400 or 800-GO-TO-EMU

E-mail: graduate_admissions@emich.edu

Homepage: www.emich.edu

To research financial aid information:

<http://www.emich.edu/finaid/>