

Questions and Answers for CMU Students Applying to the Social Work Program

Q: When should I apply for admission into the social work program?

A: Your social work advisor will tell you when to apply to the program, usually at your first advising appointment and based on your academic course sequence. Current CMU students typically apply during the spring semester of their sophomore year. Transfer students might be advised to apply the first semester they start at CMU if they have sufficient credits. Ideally, students will have at least 50 credits by the end of the semester in which they apply to the social work program. If you are uncertain about when you should apply, contact the social work program office for clarification and/or to schedule an advising appointment.

Q: What do I need to submit to apply to the program and when?

A: Submitting your application to the social work program is a process that takes place across one semester. Some items are due by the application deadline and others are due no later than the end of the semester. Refer to our [Application Checklist](#) for additional details.

- By Application Deadline (First Friday in March for Spring or 3rd Friday in October for Fall)
 - [Application](#) with your personal statement (as described on the application)
 - Social Work Related Experience [Approval Form](#)
- By the Semester End (Friday before Exam Week)
 - Two [Academic References](#) from non-social work instructors
 - [Social Work Related Experience Reference](#) form documenting at least the first 50-hours of experience (paid or volunteer)
 - Social Work Related Experience [Reflection Statement](#)

Submit materials as soon as they are completed and no later than the posted deadline. Materials may always be submitted early. The social work office retains all submitted materials in an electronic file for faculty review.

Q: What requirements must I meet to be admitted to the program?

A: Keep in mind that the social work admissions committee considers your entire application, including the application and statements you submit, the references received from instructors, your social work related experience, and your academic status. Not meeting specific criteria, such as a grade requirement, will not necessarily disqualify an applicant. Contact our office or consult with your social work advisor if you have any concerns about meeting the following requirements.

By the end of the semester in which they apply, applicants should meet the following academic requirements:

- 50 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher
- SWK 100 with a C or better
- SWK 205 credit in course (for students using the 2023-2024 bulletin and later)
- SWK 250 with a B- or better
- Minimum of 12 credits of major courses with a major GPA of 2.7 or better with no grade below a C in any required major course
- Completion of Math, Freshman English and Oral English Competencies

Note: It is recommended but not required that students complete SOC 200 or its equivalent with a C or better by the end of the semester in which they apply.

Q: Where do I access application forms?

The best place to access application forms and to get information about our program is through the CMU Social Work Program Blackboard shell. If you have been in for advising, you should have access to this shell. It might be listed near the bottom of the list with your older course shells, and you might want to make it a favorite so you can more easily access it.

You may also access materials through our website at class.cmich.edu/socialwork. All our application forms are available by clicking on the Social Work Admissions and Resources on the left navigation menu of our website.

And you may stop into our office in Anspach 034 to pick up an application packet when you are on campus.

Q: How should application materials be submitted?

You should submit all materials (except for reference forms as noted below) either by email to swk@cmich.edu or by dropping them off in our office in Anspach 034. As your materials are completed, turn them into the office as we will save and compile them into an electronic file for each student. It is unnecessary to wait to submit them all at once.

Academic reference forms and the social work related experience reference form must be completed and submitted directly by your referee via email to swk@cmich.edu or by mailing it to our office as indicated on the form. Reference forms should NOT be given to you to turn in unless it is in a sealed envelope and the referee has signed across the back flap of the envelope. The social work office will notify you via email when we receive your reference forms.

Q: What happens if I don't complete the first 50 hours of social work related experience or another component by the deadline?

A: This does not necessarily disqualify you from making progress toward your BSW. Contact the social work office or your advisor as soon as possible to let us know you have a concern and provide a brief explanation of the situation. You should also continue to complete as much of the application as possible on time given your circumstances.

Faculty understand that COVID restrictions and other life challenges have complicated life for students. As with any problem, the sooner you discuss it with us, the more helpful we can be, and the more options you will have. For example, faculty could allow you to begin classes (SWK 315/374) in the fall semester to stay on track with your degree progress with conditions about what must be completed and when for full admission status.

Q: When will I find out if I have been admitted to the program and what happens if I am not admitted?

A: Students are notified of their social work admission decision via email a few weeks after the semester ends. For spring applicants, admission decisions are usually distributed in late May. Fall applicant decisions are typically sent the week before spring semester begins.

It is rare for students who meet all the minimum requirements to not be admitted. If this happens, one of our faculty will contact the student to discuss the decision and will assist the student in identifying alternative courses to take. In some cases, students not admissible during one cycle might be placed on the wait list for the following year.

Q: If I am applying to the program, what SWK courses can I register for and when?

A: During the spring semester application cycle, students who submitted materials by the Semester Midpoint deadline (first Friday in March) can register for SWK 315/374 in the fall semester and SWK 321/375 for the following spring semester. In other words, you will not have to wait until you are admitted to register for

these courses. Simply beginning the application process will give you registration access for these SWK courses.

If your registration date is before the first Friday in March, you must submit at least the application form two business days before your registration time. When the completed application form is received, we will update the system so you can register for SWK 315/374 in the fall and SWK 321/375 for the following spring semester. The due date for your personal statement, approval form and academic references remains as the first Friday in March.

Staff in the social work office work closely with students who are applying during this time and will email detailed instructions about the registration process. Contact our office with questions and requests for assistance with SWK course registration.

Q: Who should I ask for an academic reference and when?

A: Applicants are required to ask two college-level instructors to complete and return the [Academic Reference Form](#) to our office. These should be instructors with whom you have had classes and can be from instructors at other colleges. CMU social work faculty should not be asked.

Applicants are encouraged to contact academic referees at the beginning of the semester in which they apply so that the form can be completed and returned to the social work office by the mid-point of the semester. If the student is currently taking a course with the instructor, the reference form may be submitted at the end of the semester.

Q: When are the first 50-hours of required social work related experience hours due?

A: The first 50-hours of social work related experience are due by the END OF THE SEMESTER in which you apply to the program. You must submit the [Approval Form](#) by the mid-point of the semester when your application is due, however, you have the entire semester to actually complete the first 50 hours.

You will be required to get an additional 50 hours of social work related experience (100 hours total) by the end of the fall semester in which you take SWK 315/374.

Q: What sites will qualify for social work related experience?

A: Consult our list of [local agencies](#) that typically qualify for guidance and remember you are encouraged to explore other options here in Mount Pleasant or in your hometown. Also review our [social work guidelines](#) and check with your social work advisor for assistance.

Q: How is the social work related experience documented?

A: Documentation for the social work related experience requirement is a two-step process. First, identify an agency or program and ask the agency coordinator or supervisor to complete the [approval form](#). You can submit this form via email or by turning in a hardcopy to our office. Social work advisors will review your approval form once received, and you will receive an email letting you know whether this experience will qualify. For applicants, this form is due by the mid-point of the semester in which you apply.

Second, when you have 50 hours finished, ask your agency supervisor to complete the [reference form](#). **The referee must submit this form directly to our office using the instructions on the form** (by email or mail). The reference form should NOT be given to you to turn in unless it is in a sealed envelope and the referee has signed across the flap of the envelope. For applicants, this form is due by the end of the semester in which you apply. The social work office will notify you via email when we receive your reference forms.

Q: Can my social work related experience be paid?

A: Yes. Both volunteer and paid experiences can qualify for social work related experience as long as your social work advisor has approved it. Consult our [social work guidelines](#) and check with your social work advisor for assistance.

Q: Can my social work related experience be from a past experience?

A: Yes. A past job or volunteer experience that you have had since you began college might qualify if it was with a human services agency or program. Consult our [social work guidelines](#) to see if this past experience seems like it might qualify and contact our office or contact your social work advisor for assistance.

Q: Can my social work related experience be with multiple programs or sites?

A: Yes AND no more than TWO different experiences can be counted toward the social work related experience requirement, with at least 35 hours in the shorter experience.

Q: Who do I contact for assistance with the application requirements and forms, or other program related questions?

A: Contact our office staff, Jacqui Pridgeon, in the social work office by calling 989-774-2690, emailing swk@cmich.edu or stopping by our office in Anspach 034. She is usually in the office from 8 am – noon and 1-5 pm during the week when CMU is open. She can answer most of your questions, and she knows how to reach our faculty to get an answer when needed.

You are welcome to schedule a meeting with your social work advisor through our [online booking system](#). And you may email your advisor directly with questions or requests for assistance:

- Dr. Susan Grettenberger – grett1se@cmich.edu
- Ms. Deana Hunt – pitts1dm@cmich.edu
- Dr. Lissa Schwander – schwa1l@cmich.edu

Q: What if I ask too many questions?

A: LOL. You can't ask too many questions! We are here to help you be successful. Don't be afraid to reach out to staff or faculty advisors. We prefer you ask us.