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Fall 2017 Master in Social Work Program Options

The University of Iowa School of Social Work has offered the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited MSW program continuously since 1951. Currently – three options to complete the MSW are available, depending upon the applicant's prior preparation. Applicants to any of these options, at any of our centers, complete the same application.

- 60 semester hour (s.h.) track – Regular Standing – designed for those who have completed a degree in a discipline other than a CSWE accredited social work degree program.

- 48 s.h. track – Advanced Standing – designed for those who have completed the BA in Social Work or BSW from a CSWE accredited social work degree program.

- 41 s.h. track- Accelerated Advanced Standing – offered in Iowa City or Des Moines, is designed for those who have completed the BA in Social Work or BSW from a CSWE accredited social work degree program and who meet additional criteria. Additional forms and requirements are part of the application.

Questions may be directed to kate-kemp@uiowa.edu, 319-335-1254.
For details and example of the structured sequenced programs.
I. Criteria for Admission, Fall 2017

Admission to the Master’s program at The University of Iowa School of Social Work is granted on a selective basis as determined by the merit of the total application. An applicant is expected to meet the following requirements:

A. Academic Background
   1. A bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university, (or an equivalent degree from another country as determined by the Office of Graduate Admissions), with a distribution of courses reflecting a liberal arts perspective, including courses in the humanities, as well as in the social, behavioral, and biological sciences.
   2. Competency with word processing and spreadsheet application on personal computers is expected.

B. Academic Potential
   A minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale of undergraduate study, (or foreign equivalent as determined by the Office of Admissions), or on 12 semester hours of graduate course work is required for the 48 s.h. and 60 s.h. MSW programs. The Accelerated Advanced Standing program (41 s.h.) requires a minimum 3.2 GPA overall, and 3.5 GPA in social work courses. Completion of the GRE exam is not required.

C. Proficiency in English
   Applicants from other countries whose first language is not English must have a score of 600 (written), 250 (computer-based test), and 100 (internet based test) on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Automatic waivers of the TOEFL requirement are granted for persons who have completed a bachelor’s degree (or higher) at an accredited university in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada (excluding French Quebec), Africa (English speaking), Australia, or New Zealand. For further information: http://www.ets.org/toefl/.

D. Appropriateness for Professional Social Work Education
   Applicants must provide evidence of a combination of personal qualities and values that are considered essential for the professional practice of social work: good intellectual capacity and analytical skills combined with an ability to work constructively with others, good communication skills, judgment, adaptability, sense of responsibility, resourcefulness, caring and compassionate qualities, and a personal commitment to social justice, empowering individuals, and serving vulnerable and under-represented groups. Employment or practice experience in social work related areas is highly valued. Applicants’ willingness and interest in addressing social justice issues that affect human beings as a consequence of oppression, poverty, marginalization and alienation because of the intersection of multiple factors, including those identified by CSWE: class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, sex, sexual orientation, and religious, non-religious or spiritual beliefs are fundamental to a successful experience in the School. These qualities are to be evidenced in the following completed application materials, all to be completed online:

   • The University’s Graduate College Application, apply and pay online.
   • A School of Social Work “Supplemental Data” Form.
Official Transcripts from all colleges attended, other than University of Iowa.
Applicant’s Statement of Purpose and essays.
Three completed recommendation forms, at least two of the three should be from people who
have known you in an academic or professional setting.
Resume including relevant employment and volunteer experience.
Additional materials for the Accelerated Advanced Standing track.

Please note: Applicants with a criminal history record may not be eligible for social work licensure. For more information, contact the Board of Social Work licensure in the state that you wish to reside and be licensed. A listing of boards by state is available online. In addition, applicants need to be aware that many social service agencies that meet our requirements for field/practicum placements now require background checks, some at the student’s expense. These are the policies of social service agencies throughout this area, not The University of Iowa or School of Social Work policy. A criminal history may limit or prohibit a student's ability to obtain a field placement as well as limit or prohibit employment in social service agencies following graduation with a BSW/MSW degree.

E. Transfer into the MSW Program
Applications from students seeking to transfer from another MSW program are processed if the applicant meets the following conditions:

- All admission criteria previously specified.
- Completed recommendation form from advisor and other faculty from previous school.
- Agree to complete at least 36 semester hours of coursework after admission to the MSW program at Iowa and agree to meet all requirements of the Iowa program.
- Timeline: Transfer requests may be made in any semester, but accepted applicants may only register for required courses when prerequisites have been met. This may mean a delay in matriculation.
- Transfer requests must be first directed to the School’s Admission Office: susan-dirks@uiowa.edu, so the School can notify Graduate Admissions that a transfer request is coming, and you will be informed of additional materials needed to assess your status. Graduate College deadlines for application are stated on the Graduate College Application.

F. Reapplication
Reapplication is required of students who:
- Withdraw from the program.
- Do not enroll in classes for two (2) consecutive semesters.
- Were admitted to the program but did not enroll in classes and did not receive written permission to defer enrollment.
- Submitted completed applications but were denied admission.
- Were dismissed from the program.

G. Deferment
If an applicant cannot enroll for the academic year accepted, a written request for delaying the enrollment date until the next academic year may be made. Granting of the request is at the discretion of the Program Administrator. Generally, such requests are granted only because of extenuating circumstances.
II. Application Process

Applications will be accepted starting September 1 for the following academic year. All applications must be completed, submitted online and received no later than February 1st for the 60 and 48 s.h. tracks of the MSW program, and January 4th for the 41 s.h. accelerated advanced standing track.

A. Applicants who meet the admission criteria will be notified by mail or email when the review process is complete. The entire pool of 48 s.h. and 60 s.h. applicants will be reviewed by the admissions panel in February/March and will be notified of their admission status no later than April 15, 2017. The 41 s.h. pool of applicants will be notified by February 15, 2017, at the latest.

B. An application is considered complete when the following items are received:
   - Graduate College application and fee, apply and pay online.
   - School of Social Work Supplemental Data form, completed online.
   - Undergraduate and graduate transcripts, submitted online (UI records provided automatically).
   - Statement of Purpose, submitted online.
   - 2 essays, submitted online.
   - Three completed recommendation forms, including at least one academic and one employment-based, if applicable, submitted online.
   - Resume, submitted online.
   - Additional items required for accelerated advanced standing track.

C. Completed applications will be reviewed with the timelines indicated in II.A. above. At least two members of the Admissions Panel will read each application and make recommendations to the Program Administrator. The Program Administrator will make the final recommendation to the Director of the School and to the Graduate College.

D. The School is limited in the number of students it can admit. Qualified applicants may be declined for lack of space in a class.

E. Social Work has a long history of dedication to social change and to the improvement of the well-being of oppressed groups. Oppressed groups include but are not limited to: African Americans, American Indians, Asian Americans or Pacific Islanders, Gays, persons with disabilities, Hispanics, Lesbians, Southern Appalachian Anglos, the poor, older adults, women and children. Effort will be made to assure representation in the class of persons from the above groups, and diversity will be sought from among persons of different ages.

F. Applicants will be notified in writing of the admission decision by April 15 for the Advanced 48 s.h., and Regular 60 s.h. tracks, and by Feb. 15 for the accelerated track. Admission is not complete until the applicant has received a written offer of admission and:
   1. Received, read, signed, and returned the Admission Agreement form confirming acceptance of admission center and practicum assignments.
   2. Further agreeing on same form to be bound by the cultural inclusion effort and the following policies:
      a) Student Advancement Policy
      b) Statement on Academic Honesty
      c) Code of Ethics of the National Association and International Federation of Social Workers
      d) Practica Structure and Process Policy Statement
G. Reapplication

1. For students who were never accepted to the program, application materials are kept on file by the Graduate College for 12 months and the School of Social Work for 36 months. All who wish to reapply must do so to both the Graduate College and the School of Social Work.

2. Applicants who are reapplying to the Graduate College within one academic year, contact Graduate Admissions, 319-335-1525, gradmail@uiowa.edu, to change your admission session (e.g.: fall 2015 to fall 2016). This reactivates your existing application in that office. If more than a year, the Grad College requires a complete new application. After two academic years, the School of Social Work requires a complete new application. Contact the School's Admissions Coordinator to request reapplication to the School of Social Work: susan-dirks@uiowa.edu.

3. If an applicant has a School of Social Work application on file at the time of reapplication, and it has been less than 2 academic years since the initial application, the following additional materials must be submitted for reapplication:
   a. A statement discussing the applicant's activities since the previous application and describing any changes in the applicant's personal situation which would affect program planning. You may opt to also rewrite your personal statement and/or essays if desired, according the current session instructions, page 5, III-D.
   b. A current completed recommendation form from the applicant's current employer and academic advisor (if formerly a student in the Iowa program).
   c. Transcripts for any coursework completed since previous application (other than UI).
   e. An interview and additional recommendation(s) may be required.

4. For students who were accepted, enrolled and became inactive, materials are kept for ten years. After one academic year of being inactive, reapplication is necessary to be considered for readmission and recommence the program.

5. Readmitted students must meet all requirements of the current MSW program. Readmission is not complete until the applicant has received a written offer of admission and:
   a. received, read, signed and returned the Admission Agreement form confirming acceptance of admission center and practicum assignments.
   b. further agreeing on same form to be bound by the cultural inclusion effort and the following policies:
      1) Student Advancement Policy
      2) Statement on Academic Dishonesty
      3) Code of Ethics of the National Association and International Federation of Social Workers
      4) Practica Structure and Process Policy Statement

III. Additional Information about Admission Criteria for the Application

A. Academic Background

1. Students entering the professional curriculum must be capable of thinking critically about society, about people and their problems, and about expressions of culture such as art, literature, science, history and philosophy. Students must have a liberal arts academic
background, including knowledge about social, psychological, and biological determinants of human behavior and of diverse cultures, social conditions, and social problems. This background is usually part of general education requirements in liberal arts programs. The School recommends that one of the science courses should be human biology. The University of Iowa provides course opportunities to students whose pre-professional work may require additional content in a certain area and the admissions panel reserves the right to recommend such course content as a condition of admission.

2. Students will be expected to demonstrate proficiency in basic word processing and spreadsheet applications prior to beginning the program.

B. Academic Potential

1. An undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale is required, or a minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate level courses at 3.0 or above for the 48 s.h. and 60 s.h. MSW programs. The Accelerated Advanced Standing track requires a minimum overall GPA of 3.2 and a 3.5 GPA in social work courses. The official admission GPA is calculated by the Graduate Admissions office, 107 Calvin Hall, Iowa City IA 52242. The GPA may be cumulative, or may be based on the GPA from the degree conferring school.

2. If the undergraduate GPA is below 3.0, and no graduate hours have yet been earned, an applicant may choose to enroll in graduate level courses as a non-degree student, earning 12 semester hours of letter-graded graduate work to become eligible for admission. Non-degree students are allowed to earn a maximum of 12 semester hours. Non-degree students are not eligible for financial aid. For assistance in calculating your admissions GPA, submit transcripts to the Graduate Admissions office, 107 Calvin Hall, Iowa City IA 52242.

3. In exceptional cases where the GPA is below 3.0, the admissions panel may determine that there is sufficient evidence of scholastic ability to request an exemption from the Graduate College. In this event, the Director of Admissions may opt to process a petition to the Graduate College Dean. Permission is granted only if there is sufficient evidence of the student's academic and/or professional achievement indicating his/her potential for success in a graduate program.

C. Proficiency in English

1. Non-native English speaking students who are admitted are required to pass the overall English Proficiency Composition exam administered by the University's Linguistics Department/ESL Program. Failure to pass this exam will result in an automatic transfer to the part-time program. If and when the exam is passed, the student may be reinstated to the full-time program in consultation with the Advisor and Program Administrator.

2. The course structure for international students may be individualized depending on English language proficiency, educational background, and professional experience.

D. Guidelines for Completing the Statement of Purpose, Essays, Recommendation Forms, and Resume

Evidence of a combination of personal qualities and professional experience will be provided through a statement of purpose, essays, recommendations, and a resume. You are asked to visit the NASW website and review the Code of Ethics.
1. **Statement of Purpose and Essays**
The statement of purpose is a significant part of the application materials. Part I and Part II combined may be up to 1500 words. Part III is only for applicants to the 41 s.h. accelerated track. In addition, there are 2 essays, as described in Part IV, for all applicants.
The statement of purpose should address the following qualities and competencies of the applicant:

**Part I:**
Discuss your motivation for, expectations regarding, and commitment to the program at The University of Iowa. Include particular assets that you would bring to the School and the profession, as well as areas in which you would most like to grow academically and professionally. Discuss any major challenges you have faced or are facing with regard to your choice of the social work profession and your readiness to undertake graduate study. Address how you intend to balance graduate study with other responsibilities you have. Identify your short and long term goals as a professional social worker and how you expect the University of Iowa School of Social Work’s curriculum and faculty will help you prepare to achieve those goals.

**Part II:**
Provide a description of paid, volunteer, practicum and life experience relevant to social work. How have those experiences influenced your decision to pursue a career in social work at the master’s level. Include a description of any experience relative to working with diverse populations and those experiencing oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as a consequence of difference.

**Part III:**
ONLY for applicants to the 41 s.h. accelerated advanced standing track, please address the following questions.
All other applicants proceed to Part IV.

This section, including all 4 items, may be a maximum of 750 words:

a. **Academic Readiness:**
   Provide examples of your readiness and ability to complete the 41 s.h. accelerated advanced standing program.

b. **Accelerated Advanced Standing Benefits:**
   In addition to reduced time and cost, what are the benefits to you of completing the MSW in three semesters?

c. **Research Experience:**
   Discuss your prior experience with research – include academic courses and field or professional practice.

d. **Research Informed Practice:**
   Discuss your interests in developing knowledge and skill for research informed practice.

**Part IV:**
Applicants to all MSW tracks provide an essay for each of the following. Each essay may be up to 750 words apiece:

a. **Essay A:** Describe a real or hypothetical professional situation in which social work values and your personal values have been or could be in conflict (identify relevant values). Discuss how Social Work values and ethics did or would guide your behavior to resolve the conflict. It is expected that you will consult and use the NASW Code of Ethics in your essay.
b. Essay B: Discuss a social change strategy you would recommend or have implemented to address a social problem about which you are concerned. Detail the factors that would contribute (or did contribute) to the success/effectiveness of this change strategy.

The Admissions Committee will review the statement of purpose with the following competencies in mind: communication skills, breadth and depth of experience, orientation to social work practice, social work values and ethics, ability to analyze and synthesize and emotional capacity and judgment. A demonstration of graduate level writing skills is expected.

2. **Recommendation Forms**

a. Recommendation forms will be examined for evidence of the same criteria as listed for the statement of purpose previously (section D.1. above). Completion of the form is **required**; however, a letter may also accompany the form.

Recommendation writers are asked to comment on the applicant's intelligence, maturity, sound judgment, compassion, self-awareness, adaptability, a sense of responsibility and resourcefulness, and their academic and professional promise within this context. The recommendation writer is asked for general comments as well as specific examples of the applicant's experiences as reflecting a desire and ability to enter the profession of social work.

The referee is also asked to rate and comment on the applicant relative to other students, employees, or people interested in social work that they have known, on the following qualities: Sensitivity and capacity for accepting differences in race, class, culture, lifestyles and ideas. Academic performance, intellectual ability, maturity/emotional stability, oral communication skills, written communication skills, openness to learning with capacity to change; ability to think critically, capacity for leadership, ability to work with others, attitudes and behaviors reflecting social work values and ethics, and interpersonal skills.

b. All applicants are responsible for providing email addresses and assuring that three completed recommendation forms are provided that show evidence of the applicant's potential for graduate social work education and practice. Recommendations from social work practitioners, allied professionals, and educators are preferred.

1) At least one should be an academic recommendation regarding the applicant's college experience.

2) If ever employed in social work or a related field, at least one of these recommendations should be provided from the applicant's most recent employer.

3) The applicant will indicate whether they have waived the right to review the recommendation. All recommendations are destroyed once an applicant has matriculated. Applicants not approved for admission have no access to their file.

Applicants to the 41 s.h. accelerated track are required to submit additional recommendation forms:

a. Applicants who have already graduated with BA in Social Work or BSW will submit a completed recommendation form from their **current social work employment supervisor**. This form addresses **different criteria** than the forms for general MSW admission, so it can be appropriate to have a recommender complete more than one form. If this is the case, please
inform your reference writer to expect more than one request, and that both forms need to be completed. This recommendation is not required if the applicant’s degree is still in progress. Contact Susan Dirks to request this form: susan-dirks@uiowa.edu, it is not provided in the online materials. When you email to request the form, please provide your name and state that you are applying to the Accelerated Advanced Standing program, and that you have graduated within the past 5 years.

Or:

b. Applicants who are currently completing a BA in Social Work or BSW will submit a recommendation form from the Program Director of their BA/BSW Program. This is not required if the applicant’s degree is already conferred and they are currently working in a social work position (see above). This form addresses different criteria than the forms for general MSW admission, so it can be appropriate to have a recommender complete more than one form. If this is the case, please inform your reference writer to expect more than one request, and that both forms need to be completed. Contact Susan Dirks to request this form: susan-dirks@uiowa.edu, it is not provided in the online materials. Please provide your name and state that you are applying to the Accelerated Advanced Standing program, and that you are currently attending a BA program.

For applicants who are currently completing a BA in Social Work or BSW, Admission will be contingent upon also submitting a recommendation form from the Field Director by April 15th. In addition, a copy of the final field evaluation must be provided by May 15th. Applicants who are offered admission will be contacted following the admission decision with the form and instructions for providing these additional documents.

You may direct questions regarding eligibility and requirements for the MSW Accelerated Advanced Standing track to Kate Kemp, Program Administrator and Admissions Director: kate-kemp@uiowa.edu. Questions regarding the application process to the Admissions Coordinator: Susan Dirks: susan-dirks@uiowa.edu.

3. **Resume**

Provide a resume which includes relevant employment and volunteer experience with dates and whether part-time or full-time.

E. **School of Social Work Departmental Supplemental Data Form – explanation of each item**

The following information is intended to clarify the items to which you must respond on the School of Social Work Supplemental Data Form:

**Item 1:** **How did you learn about our program**

List how you first heard about our program.

**Item 2:** **Criminal background**

Applicants with a criminal history record may not be eligible for practicum placement or social work licensure, see page 2, 1-D.

**Item 3:** **Cultural Identity** (optional)

Applicants are asked to provide optional information. If provided, this information will be treated confidentially, and may be used in an anonymous way to supply demographics to the CSWE and to the school.
Item 4: Related employment experience
Note your employment experience in Social Work or related field in full-time equivalence.

Item 5: Minimum hours required for the degree standing
Applicants who have completed a BA in Social Work from a Council on Social Work Education accredited program must complete a minimum of 48 semester hours for the MSW. Students who do not have a CSWE accredited BA in social work or BSW degree must complete a minimum of 60 semester hours of coursework for the MSW program. Students who qualify for the accelerated advanced standing track must complete a minimum of 41 semester hours for the MSW.

Item 6: Social Work Degree
Applicants who have completed a BA in Social Work from a Council on Social Work Education accredited program enter the name and location of the conferring Institution, or “NA” if degree major is not social work.

Item 7a: Choice of Center
The University of Iowa School of Social Work offers the MSW program in four locations: Iowa City, Des Moines, the Quad Cities and Sioux City.

a. On the central campus in Iowa City and in Des Moines (at the Iowa Center for Higher Education, 2500 Fleur Drive in Des Moines), both the full-time and part-time programs are offered.

b. In the Quad Cities and Sioux City Social Work Educational Centers, the program is offered in sequence every three years. This year the Quad Cities cohort is currently underway and we are not accepting applications at this time.

c. Students must enroll for courses in the semester in which they are admitted and must thereafter follow the structured sequenced program which has been designed for each center. The sequence of courses at each center requires enrollment during the fall, spring, and summer semesters.

d. Classes are usually held during the day and evening, Monday through Friday. Some courses are delivered using web-based technology.

Item 7b: Choice of Program
The University of Iowa School of Social Work offers the MSW degree on a full-time and a part-time basis.

a. The advanced standing and regular full-time program requires completion of the MSW five or six semesters.

b. The accelerated advanced standing track requires completion in three semesters.

c. The three-year program requires students register for an average of three courses each semester. In most cases, this qualifies the student for full time financial aid.

d. The part-time program requires completion of the MSW within 4 calendar years with a minimum registration of 2 courses in each of the fall and spring semesters. It is intended for students for whom full-time study would be a severe hardship due to
financial or family reasons. However, courses are not always offered during evening and weekend hours. Please be aware that there are times in the MSW program when students will find outside employment very difficult, if not impossible. These times are when students are fulfilling the requirements for the Foundation Practicum (30 days in the spring semester) and the Advanced Practicum (100 or 120 days in the fall and spring semester of the final year). Combining 3-4 days/week in practicum with course work hinders the possibility of continuing in full-time employment. Before registering in the MSW program, students should make plans to reduce or eliminate their outside employment while they are in Foundation and Advanced Practicum.

e. Joint Degree Applications (Iowa City Center)
   1) If you intend to pursue a joint degree, complete the application for each program and please indicate the name of the other department or college.
   2) Formal joint degree programs are possible with the School of Urban and Regional Planning and the College of Law. Students must be accepted into each department through its regular admission process. 10 to 12 semester hours in each program may be applied to the other.
   3) Informal joint degrees are possible as well with other Master’s programs in Liberal Arts or with other colleges.
   4) Joint degree applicants to the School of Social Work will be evaluated on the same basis as full-time applicants and the same admission procedure will apply.
   5) Joint degree applicants must have an interview with a faculty person or the Program Administrator regarding their program.

Item 8: Grade Point Average
Please note your CUMULATIVE grade point average on your most recent degree. If you are currently attending and not graduated yet, note your cumulative grade point average at the end of your most recently completed semester.

Item 9: Concentration
The family-centered practice concentration teaches specific knowledge and skills necessary for advanced social work practice with individuals and families. The integrated practice concentration teaches methods of advanced practice that empower organizational and community change at multiple system levels. Applicants are asked to indicate the concentration they are most likely to pursue, as well as their specialized interest areas. Concentrations are discussed at the Informational Meetings. Complete descriptions are found in the University of Iowa School of Social Work catalog.

Item 10: Primary curriculum interest(s)
For the purpose of matching interests with a faculty advisor, list primary interest(s).

Item 11: Practicum Location
The applicant’s preferences for a practicum location assist the School with planning. Practicum planning occurs in the fall semester for spring semester foundation practicum, in the spring for summer foundation practicum and in February for fall advanced practicum placements. Please see the practicum policy enclosed.
F. Additional Information – Financial Arrangements and Transcripts

Financial Arrangements
The School of Social Work may have a very limited number of research and teaching assistantships for MSW students. These cannot be applied for prior to April 15, after admission decisions are final. Faculty select applicants based on financial need, previous experience and interests related to the position. Admitted students will be directed to assistantship application materials on our web site. Visit the web for UI financial aid information including loans and student employment, contact: financial-aid@uiowa.edu or call 319-335-1450. Admitted students may also seek assistantships and awards offered in other departments outside of the School of Social Work: http://grad.admissions.uiowa.edu/finances

Additional Information about Transcripts
Official transcripts are required to be sent from all previous and current educational institutions to the University of Iowa Graduate Admissions Office, 107 Calvin Hall, Iowa City IA 52242-1396 USA. University of Iowa students and alumni need not supply University of Iowa transcripts to the graduate admissions office, as they are part of your permanent record and will be provided automatically. Official transcripts from all other colleges and universities must be submitted to the UI Graduate Admissions office. An exception to this is if you were an undergraduate student at UI and outside transcripts were previously submitted as part of your BA requirements. You are also expected to report if you are currently attending any outside institutions. You will have the opportunity to upload unofficial transcripts as a supplemental document in the online process. You may contact the graduate admissions office directly if you have questions or concerns about official transcripts from other institutions: gradmail@uiowa.edu, 319-335-1525.

Updated 8/16/16 for 2017sd
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
PRACTICA STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

I. Structure and Sequence

Practicum at the University of Iowa School of Social Work is composed of two levels of courses.

A. Foundation Practica Course. Students admitted to the M.S.W. program without a Bachelor's Degree with a major in social work from an accredited program are required to take Foundation Practicum: 210 contact hours during the spring semester of the first year for full-time students, during the summer semester of the first year for 3-year program students, or the spring semester of the third year for four year students. Three (3) semester hours of credit will be earned for successful completion of the Foundation Practicum.

B. Advanced Practica Course. All students admitted to the M.S.W. program are required to take the Advanced Practicum during the fall and spring of the final year. The minimum required 700 contact hours of Advanced Practicum will earn 10 semester hours of credit.

C. Co-Requisite Courses. Foundation Seminar for Foundation Practicum and Advanced Seminar I and II for Advanced Practicum.

II. Placement Assignment Process

Approved placement sites and agencies are within a 50-mile radius of Iowa City/Cedar Rapids, Quad-Cities, Des Moines, and Sioux City. The sites provide learning opportunities for the two concentrations and many fields of practice. Placements outside these practicum centers are permitted only in extraordinary circumstances and are contingent upon the ability of the practicum instructor and student to travel to the School of Social Work center for meetings with Field Coordinators.

A. Foundation Practica are assigned by either the Practicum Director or, in the Quad Cities, Des Moines, and Sioux City centers, by the Center Practicum Administrator.

B. Advanced Practica are developed during a process that starts in the first year. Failure to obtain a practicum after five interviews will result in reconsideration of the student's suitability for advancement in the MSW program.
III. **Employment While a MSW Student**

The School of Social Work is committed to part-time graduate social work education. The School endeavors to educate as broad a cross section of students as possible, including non-traditional students who are older, who must work to support families, and who therefore find it difficult to be full-time students.

Students must be available to attend classes when they are scheduled. Thus, employed students need to have made arrangements with their employers to flex their work scheduled sufficiently to attend class. In addition, it is often challenging to adjust their schedules when they are fulfilling the requirements for the Foundation Practicum (210 hours) and the Advanced Practicum (700 hours in the fall and spring semesters of the final year). Combining 3-4 days/week in practicum with course work will likely conflict with continuing in full-time employment.

**Before registering in the MSW program, employed students must make plans to flex, reduce or eliminate their outside employment while they are in Foundation and Advanced Practicum.**

Practica are designed to extend and integrate learning achieved in class with practice in the field. The student has an opportunity to employ social work interventions and ethical decision making processes with different client populations at multiple levels. A particular focus is the application of research to social work theory and practice, including the evaluation of interventions and outcomes. Because of the importance of practica to the overall preparation of students for the profession, as dictated by the Council on Social Work Education Accreditation Standards, work experience prior to admission into the M.S.W. program cannot meet the practica requirements.