DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Information and Instructions for Master of Social Work Program Application

The University of Northern Iowa Master of Social Work (MSW) Program offers both on-campus and distance education options. Two tracks are available: a two-year (five-term) foundation degree for students who do not have a bachelor’s degree in social work and a one-year (three-term) advanced standing program for those with a bachelor’s degree in social work from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited program*. All applicants must have an earned bachelor’s degree from a university that is regionally accredited.

We are now accepting applications for the two-year foundation program beginning Fall 2021 and the advanced standing program beginning June 2021. Applications will be accepted until December 20, 2020 for both programs. We are also accepting extended-enrollment (part-time) applications for these on-campus programs. Extended-enrollment students must be able to attend classes at the times offered (3 hr. blocks) and be available for the field practicum. Most practicums take place at agencies that operate during regular business hours (9 am to 5 pm). Extended-enrollment students must complete all requirements within seven years.

Additionally, we are accepting applications for the foundation, distance education program to begin Spring 2021. The deadline for these applications is August 1, 2020. Distance education is open to both Foundation and Advanced Standing students and is part-time, only. Our next advanced standing cohort will begin classes in Spring 2022.

Similar to extended-enrollment, distance education students must be able to attend classes at the times offered (3 hr. blocks) and be available for the field practicum.

The Department of Social Work is committed to the selection of applicants who demonstrate strong potential to successfully undertake graduate studies in Social Work, who will contribute to a culturally and ethnically diverse student body, who indicate commitment to the profession, and who have some liberal arts background.

*Both undergraduate and graduate social work programs at UNI are accredited by CSWE.

The University does not discriminate in access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status, or disability.

The Department of Social Work Admissions Committee reserves the right to deny an applicant’s admission to the graduate program based upon factors related to potential to become an effective social worker and make positive contributions to the field.
Application Procedures Checklist

The following admission credentials are required for admission to the program.

- Application for Graduate Study at the University of Northern Iowa (apply online)
- Resumé
- Professional Statement
- Application for Graduate Tuition Scholarship and Application for Graduate Assistantship Stipend (if applying for full-time program and if requesting a tuition scholarship and/or a graduate assistantship).
- The University Application Fee of $60.00, unless the applicant received her/his/their undergraduate degree from the University of Northern Iowa.
- Submission of official academic transcripts from all colleges and universities attended except from the University of Northern Iowa.

If the applicant desires to have the Admissions Committee consider the General and Written Tests of the Graduate Record Exam, the test scores are to be sent directly by the Educational Testing Service to the UNI Office of Admissions.

Application Deadline, Notice of Decision, Acceptance Process

All admission credentials must be received no later than 4:30 p.m. on December 20, 2020. Incomplete applications or applications received after the December 20, 2020 deadline will not be considered. All applicants will be notified of the M.S.W. Admissions Committee’s decision by approximately January 20, 2010. Applicants will be notified of one of four decisions on their application:

a) accepted,
   b) accepted with provisions,
   c) placed on a ranked alternate list, or
   d) not accepted.

If accepted to the program, an acceptance form will be sent to the applicant. It is important that the applicant reply by the deadline date listed in the form; otherwise, the offer may be given to an applicant on the alternate list. The ranked alternate list will be maintained in the event of withdrawals until the first day of classes in each program.

MSW Application and Requirements

To apply to the Master of Social Work program, students must complete the online University of Northern Iowa Application for Graduate Study. This application is located at https://admissions.uni.edu/apply

The online application will include the following items:

1. Resumé which should include education, work, and volunteer history
2. Professional Statement
3. Three References
Tuition Scholarship and Graduate Assistantship Position

If you are applying for our full-time, Foundations or Advanced Standing programs and wish to be considered for a tuition scholarship and/or a graduate assistantship, please be sure to complete the Application for Graduate Tuition Scholarship and/or Application for Graduate Assistantship Stipend forms and return with your application materials. These applications are located online at https://www.grad.uni.edu/prospective-students. The Applications for both items are at the bottom of the webpage under “Forms”.

Requirements and Instructions for Completing the MSW Application

I. Academic Requirement

✓ Official Transcripts are required from all postsecondary institutions attended with the exception of the University of Northern Iowa. The official transcripts are to be sent by the college or university directly to: University of Northern Iowa, Office of Admissions, Gilchrist 002, Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0018. Applicants will not be considered if the Office of Admissions has not received an official copy by the deadline for applications. We advise you to allow at least one-month lead time for requesting transcripts.

✓ Competence must be demonstrated in the use of basic statistical methods. This requirement may be demonstrated by having completed a statistics course from an accredited institution with a minimum grade of C. While not recommended, this requirement may be met after admission.

✓ Successful applicants must have a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00 (3.20 for advanced standing applicants) on a 4.00 scale. For those students who do not meet this requirement, the following criteria may be considered as an alternative:

✓ The Admissions Committee, at the request of the applicant, may consider the student’s GPA for the final 60 semester hours from the degree school. Nine semester hours or more of letter-graded graduate work may be used to replace the undergraduate GPA. Graduate level courses may be completed in the following areas: social work, psychology, sociology, family studies, political science, economics, and other areas that are related to the profession of social work. For graduate level courses to be considered, a minimum grade of B (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) is required for each course and an overall grade point average of at least 3.25 must be achieved. While successful academic performance is required, it does not guarantee acceptance into the Master of Social Work program.

✓ Students who do not meet this requirement and who demonstrate in their application other strengths or exceptional circumstances may be admitted on a provisional basis (provisionally admitted students will be required to achieve a grade point average of 3.00 in the first semester of course work).
II. Professional Statement

Being a social worker means working with individuals and their problems, issues, or concerns. Because social workers often assist those who are different from themselves, they must exhibit empathy and acceptance of all populations. Critical thinking skills and effective communication are necessary tools for effective social work practice. To help us identify your skills and abilities, applicants are required to submit a writing sample to demonstrate these skills and abilities. In no more than two, double-spaced pages, please respond to the following statements:

1. Explain why you are interested in obtaining an MSW degree, specifically from a program with a Trauma Informed Care Specialization. Highlight any experiences working with diverse populations, which include populations that are oppressed, impoverished, marginalized, or alienated because of difference.

2. Consider a time when your beliefs or values were challenged. Explain the situation and how you dealt with it.

III. Resumé

Include a copy of your resumé. To include all experience, both work- and volunteer-related, it may be necessary for your resumé to exceed one page in length.

IV. References

The applicant is responsible for providing three references that show evidence of the applicant’s potential for graduate social work education and practice. All references should be from educators, professionals, supervisors, and/or people in administrative positions. References from personal friends, coworkers, or relatives are strongly discouraged. At least one reference should be an academic reference regarding the applicant’s college experience. If the applicant has ever been employed in social work or a related field, at least one of these references should be provided from the applicant’s most recent employer. If applying for the advanced standing program, at least one of these references should be provided from the applicant’s Practicum/Internship Instructor or Director of Field Education. If applicant has not yet taken the field practicum, a reference from a practice instructor may be used instead.

VI. Graduate Record Examination (GRE)

Completion of the General Test of Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is optional. However, the GRE general test scores including the analytic writing score may be submitted in support of applications. If the GRE scores are to be considered by the Admissions Committee, the test should be taken as early as possible to ensure receipt of the test results by the Department of Social Work before the December application deadline. Information on the GRE may be obtained from the Educational Testing Service, Box 955, Princeton, NJ 08541 or call 800/GRE-CALL. The GRE test scores are to be sent directly by the Educational Testing Service to the UNI Office of Admissions.

V. Admission criteria will be based on the following:

- Grade Point Average 35%
- Experience 30%
- Personal Statement 25%
- References 10%