

M.S.W. Distance Option FAQs

Here are answers to some FAQs -- frequently asked questions -- about applying to our M.S.W. Distance Option.

When is the application deadline?

Complete applications must be post-marked no later than February 1, 2008 for the following Fall term. Late applications are not accepted.

How do I apply?

Applying to the School of Social Work's M.S.W. program is a two-step process. Applicants are required to submit separate and complete applications to: (1) the School of Social Work M.S.W. Distance Option and (2) Portland State University's Office of Admissions. See page 12 of the M.S.W. Application for Admission for a checklist for all application requirements.

What type of undergraduate education will best prepare me for the M.S.W. program?

You must have a baccalaureate degree with a liberal arts perspective from an accredited college or university to be considered for admission to the M.S.W. program. Applicants must have successfully completed 6 quarter credits (or 4 semester credits) from each of the following three curricular areas: 1) social and behavioral sciences; 2) natural sciences; and 3) humanities and fine and performing arts. In addition, the undergraduate degree must include a minimum of 50 quarter credits (or 34 semester credits) from any combination of these three areas.

Do I need to take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE)?

GRE scores are not required. For applicants who believe their undergraduate GPA does not represent their ability to do graduate level academic coursework, GRE scores may be helpful. If you choose to take the GRE, please submit scores to the M.S.W. program with the application packet

What does the Admissions Committee look at when they review an applicant's file?

Admission selection is based on:

- academic success - past performance (GPA) and future potential;
- relevant social work experience - extent and quality
- references - from academic and social service professionals who can attest to your ability to succeed in a graduate program and your suitability for the profession, and
- personal statement - expressing your values, beliefs, and personal congruence with the mission of social work.

When will I know if I've been admitted into the M.S.W. program?

Applicants will be informed in writing of the SSW Admissions Committee decision. Applicants are notified of decisions at end of April. Please note: Application packets must be complete before an applicant will be considered for admission.

How much credit can I get from graduate courses I've taken in the past?

Admitted students may take up to 6 quarter credit hours of graduate coursework from the School of Social Work prior to admission. Students should request the transfer of these credits during fall quarter of the first year of study after the student has consulted with his/her faculty advisor. Credits from a previous Masters degree cannot be applied to the M.S.W. program.

When are the M.S.W. classes scheduled?

The M.S.W. Distance Option is a three-year program. For the first year, students attend classes once a month -- Friday and Saturday -- on the main PSU Campus in Portland. During the second and third years of the program, students attend classes every Friday at each distance site. During your second and third years of the program, you will also be assigned a field placement. Two full-year field placements are required for the M.S.W. program. Most practicum sites observe an 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. work day, and students are expected to spend 16 hours each week at their field placements.

Can I select my own field placement?

The Field Education Office will select your field placement in consultation with you. First-year field placements are intended to provide a wide range of social work experiences. Second-year placement settings allow a student to focus on a more specialized area of practice interest.

How much is tuition?

- The tuition and incidental fees for in-state students taking 7 credit hours is \$2083.25 per term in 2007-08. There are additional fees all three years for students who enroll in the M.S.W. Distance Option.
- Out of state students taking 7 credit hours will pay \$3154.25 per term in tuition and incidental fees in 2007-08. Again, there are additional fees all three years for students who enroll in the M.S.W. Distance Option.

What computer skills do I need?

Online learning offers many resources and opportunities for distance learners. You will experience short bursts of face-to-face class meetings throughout the term, with the online course site serving as a distance connection to your instructors and other students in the program. Students must have unrestricted access to a computer with an Internet connection to login to the web-based course management system. Students are expected to have adequate computer skills before coming into the program, including word processing, posting to discussion boards and attaching documents.

How do I access Disability Services?

The mission of the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is to provide all enrolled PSU students with disabilities an equal access to education. To accomplish this goal, the DRC provides pre-admission counseling, academic planning, and a variety of academic accommodations. Academic accommodations the DRC provides includes: notetaking, priority registration, assistive listening devices, interpreting and captioning services, room changes for accessibility, alternate testing accommodations, taped tests and electronic texts (e-text) and furniture for special needs. The DRC also provides referral services for learning disabilities assessment, psychological disabilities assessment and assistive technology assessment. You can reach the DRC at 1-800-547-8887, ext. 4150 or TTY or Relay at 503-725-4178 or visit www.pdx.edu/uasc/drc.html.

What kind of jobs can I get with an M.S.W. degree?

Individuals graduating from the School of Social Work have the preparation to work with people of all ages in a variety of social work settings, including public, private and non-profit agencies. M.S.W.'s are employed in roles such as family counselors, medical social workers, school social workers, service providers for older adults, community organizers, case managers in adult and juvenile corrections, child welfare workers, mental health therapists and program planners.

How easy is it to find a job after I graduate?

Ninety-five per cent (95%) of our students report finding jobs in the field of social work within six months of graduation. Many students are offered employment prior to graduation through contacts they have made during their enrollment in the M.S.W. program.

How can I become a Licensed Clinical Social Worker?

After receiving the M.S.W., social workers can begin the licensing process. The process requires two years of post-M.S.W. supervision and a state board examination. For details, contact the Oregon State Board of Clinical Social Workers at 3218 Pringle Road SE, Suite 240, Salem, OR 97302-6310 or call 1-866-355-7050 or visit www.oregon.gov/bcsw.