

## **Online MSW: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q. What is the application deadline?**

**A.** Applications for the online MSW program must be received no later than April 15th. The priority deadline is February 1<sup>st</sup>. Students who apply by the February 1<sup>st</sup> deadline will be eligible for School of Social Work scholarships. The program is a fall only start.

### **Q. What are the admissions qualifications?**

**A.** To be considered for admission students must have an undergraduate or graduate GPA of 2.75 or higher, 3.0 preferred. Students with an overall GPA below 2.75 may be considered for provisional admission based on a review of the applicant's transcript(s) and the strengths of the other elements on the application. Applicants will need to complete an online application and submit the following documents: official transcripts, resume, three letters of recommendation, and their admissions essay. Full guidelines are found here: <https://socialwork.wvu.edu/students/msw/admissions-requirements>

### **Q. Is there an application processing fee?**

**A.** Yes, applicants will need to pay a \$60.00 application fee to apply to WVU before the online application can be submitted.

### **Q. How long does it take to complete the program?**

**A.** The online MSW is offered on a part-time basis only. Advanced standing students finish in the summer after two years of class and field work. Regular standing students finish in the summer after their third year of classes and field work.

### **Q. What is the difference between advanced standing and regular standing?**

**A.** An Advanced Standing student is someone who already has a BSW from an accredited university within the last 8 years. They skip the foundational courses and their generalist placement and go straight into higher level courses and their advanced field experience. Regular Standing students hold a bachelor's degree in something other than a social work degree. They first take foundational social work courses and complete their generalist field placement and in their second and third year move on to higher level courses and the advanced field placement.

### **Q. What is the curriculum like?**

**A.** The advanced integrated practice curriculum provides an integrative approach to social work where students are prepared for both direct practice and administrative roles. This curriculum prepares WVU MSW graduates to be well-rounded advanced practitioners who can respond to the complex realities of practice in a variety of roles and settings. Students also need to complete field placement hours. Regular standing students complete 300 general field placement hours and 600 advanced placement hours. Advanced standing students complete 600 advanced placement hours. Students will be matched and supported by our Field Placement Director according to their interests and area of residence. For more details, look through our Student Handbook found here: <https://socialwork.wvu.edu/students/msw>

### **Q. Will I be eligible to pursue licensure in my state?**

**A.** Graduates of the WVU MSW program are eligible to pursue social work licensure at their degree level in all states of the United States. Additionally, they are eligible to work towards a clinical license after graduation if desired. For information about state-specific licensing, please see the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) licensing and regulation website: <https://www.aswb.org/licensees/about-licensing-and-regulation/social-work-regulation/>

### **Q. Is there a residency requirement?**

**A.** No. All courses are offered online and are asynchronous.

### **Q. What is an "asynchronous" online course?**

**A.** An "asynchronous" course refers to an online course that is conducted without any synchronous (or real time) activities. No campus visits are required, and the instructor and students are not required to be logged into the course at the same time. Much like a face-to-face course or synchronous online course, an asynchronous online course includes significant structure, deadlines and course learning outcomes that must be met in a set period of time as outlined on the course syllabus. These courses also include substantive instructor-initiated interaction with an among the students.

### **Q. How is an asynchronous course different from a correspondence course?**

**A.** Correspondence courses are typically self-paced, have little to no student-to-student interaction and have limited interactions between the student and instructor. Interaction with instructor in correspondence courses is usually initiated by the student. An asynchronous online course, however, is not self-paced and includes substantive instructor-initiated interaction with and among the students. Courses in the Online MSW program are **asynchronous**. However, MSW Orientation, Advising Meetings, and Field Placements CANNOT be completed asynchronously.

**Q. How much does it cost?**

**A.** Tuition is paid by the credit hour. All students are eligible for in-state tuition no matter their state of residency. Most students take 2-3 courses (6 to 9 credit hours) a semester. For the 2021-2022 school year, 1 credit hour costs \$643 (fees included). Detailed tuition costs can be found here: <https://tuition.wvu.edu/graduate>.

**Q. Is there any financial assistance available?**

**A.** Yes. There are a number of School of Social Work scholarships available to online students. They can be found here: <https://socialwork.wvu.edu/students/financial-resources>. Students must apply by February 1<sup>st</sup> to be eligible for scholarships. Online students are also eligible to participate in the Child Welfare Training program provided they are prepared to do their field placements in West Virginia and work within the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources following graduation.

Finally, students can apply for Financial Aid by completing their FAFSA application by the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. WVU's Federal Code is 003827. For more details on completing the FAFSA visit here: <https://financialaid.wvu.edu/applying-for-aid/fafsa>

**Q. Can I transfer into your program?**

You can transfer a maximum of 12 credits. The applicant will need to first be accepted into the program and then will need to submit a syllabus and course transcript for each class taken. The committee will review the documentation and make a decision.

**Q. How do I balance full-time work and school?**

Our Online program is designed with fulltime work in mind. All the classes are asynchronous and 100% online. The field placements, however, are completed in person, near your place of residence. We recommend sharing your graduate school plans with your employer as you will likely need some flexibility once you start your field placement hours. It's always helpful to have their support.

**Q. Can my employer also be my field placement site?**

Maybe. Requests for Employer-Based Placements are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and, must meet specific criteria to assure that the placement site will satisfy both the CSWE and Division field instruction curriculum requirements. Two specific criteria are that the placement activities must be different from the current employment duties and responsibilities, regardless of the length of time the person has been in the job, and the current work supervisor may not serve as the placement task supervisor or field instructor. Employer-Based Placement Applications are submitted as part of the Student Field Placement & Interest Application.

**Q. Does my master's degree in psychology, counseling, childhood development count towards credits?**

No. Your graduate degree will certainly prepare you well for the MSW program, however, the course requirements are different and do not transfer.

**Q. Do you offer any specializations?**

No. However, students have opportunities to focus on a topic or population of interest to them, through their field placements, electives, and class assignments.

**Q. Do you offer any dual programs?**

Currently, we do not offer any organized dual programs for the Online MSW. If students are interested in doing a separate online program, they can find options here: <https://online.wvu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/?level=graduate-degrees>

**Q. How do I register for classes?**

This site breaks it down nicely for you: <https://wvu.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/KB/ArticleDet?ID=8587>

**Q. I am a veteran. Can I use my GI Bill to pay for my MSW?**

Yes! You can contact the [WVU Center for Veteran, Military and Family Program](#) online or at this number: 304-293-8825. We really appreciate the knowledge and experience veterans bring to our program.