

Self-Assessment Activity

Are you ready for graduate studies in the School of Social Work?

At the graduate level, students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and for the planning of their individual program of study. Based on feedback we've received from current and former MSW students, taking time to consider your readiness BEFORE you begin your application process to the School of Social Work may help you prepare for what lies ahead.

Have you considered your abilities, in relation to intellectual engagement, scholarly practice and time management, as you look ahead to your role as a graduate student?

Take a few minutes and consider the following:

Being a graduate student requires commitment...and time...lots and lots of time...

- Most graduate courses require about 9 to 12 hours per week per course – time management skills are essential. These hours are allocated differently for each course, but you can count on about to 3 hours per week preparation time for each course plus time spent preparing and participating in weekly on-line original postings and discussions. Work required for course assignments is additional to these basic requirements. Scholarly practice requires that you set aside the time for reading and reflection on the course content. You may find the readings for our courses more challenging or complex than you anticipated. Think ahead in terms of planning on how you might dedicate sufficient time and how you will balance this *additional responsibility* to your current work/family/life responsibilities.
- Undertaking a practicum usually requires some readjustment to your work and/or family schedule for at least one term. The Foundation Year practicum (required for the non-BSW entry MSW program) requires you to complete 450 hours in a faculty approved placement. These hours are similar to a full-time job over the course of 3 to 4 months.

Sometimes we think about distance education as simply a convenient way of pursuing educational opportunities however it involves much much more...

- Distance education learning requires that you have a computer and access to the internet, e-mail, Microsoft Office and Adobe for the duration of your program. A high speed internet connection is highly recommended. Some courses require that students participate in synchronous learning sessions (on line classes in real time). Some group work might require meetings via Skype or teleconferencing. Do you have the technology that

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will allow you to participate in web-mediated courses, on a regular and consistent basis?

- In addition to reading and reflecting on course materials, on-line learning requires time spent on the computer. Moodle is the online “Course Management System” used at UVIC. It is, in essence, your virtual classroom. Have you ever participated in on-line learning before? Some people find that, if they are used to an on-campus learning environment there are some adjustments to be made.

Our distance programs require some on-campus presence...

- Included in the flexible learning platform is a mandatory one-week on campus institute offered at the beginning of the first term of study for the non-BSW entry MSW program, the MSW Advanced program and the MSW Indigenous Specialization program. This on-campus institute provides students with the opportunity to visit campus and to meet face-to-face with faculty, staff and students, and to begin a SOCW course. Are you able to attend the mandatory institute?
- In addition to the on-campus institute at the start of the MSW Indigenous Specialization program, the MSWI may have a second on-campus component (the summer term one year later).
- Faculty of Graduate Studies requires students to come to campus for their oral defense of their thesis. Have you considered this additional on-campus requirement that will take place at the end of your program?

We hope this self-assessment tool is useful to you as you begin the application process to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and School of Social Work.

Best wishes!

MSW Admissions Committee

School of Social Work

MSW Admissions 2013

Useful link for prospective graduate students:

<http://web.uvic.ca/gradstudies/students/prospective.php>