

# MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

## SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY



### ARE YOU READY FOR GRADUATE STUDIES?

At the graduate level, students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and for planning 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 will help you decide if you are ready for graduate education, and 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?

### CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

- **TIME MANAGEMENT:** A general guideline for graduate education is that each course requires about 9-12 hours a week. Graduate course work cannot be done *off the side of your desk*, students generally need approximately 3 hours of preparation time per course, per week, in addition to class participation. Participation is either in person or through online learning modules, postings, and discussions, as well as, additional work related to course assignments. Scholarly practice requires that you set aside the time for reading and reflection on the course content.
- **FIELD PLACEMENT:** Undertaking a field placement practicum requires readjusting your work and/or family schedule for at least one term. The Foundation practicum (required for the first year of the MSW Foundation program), Advanced practicum (required for course-based completion of the MSWA program), and Indigenous Specialization practicum (required for the course-based of the MSWI program) require 450 hours in a School-approved placement. These hours are similar to a full-time job over the course of 3 to 4 months, or one term.
- **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS:** Do you have the technology (including a high speed internet connection) that will allow you to fully participate in web-mediated courses, on a regular and consistent basis? **Brightspace** is the online "Course Management System" used at UVic. It is, in essence, your virtual classroom. Have you ever participated in online learning before? Students who are used to an on-campus learning environment

sometimes find on-line learning challenging. If this is true for you, please consider whether you have the time to learn the technology, in addition to learning course content.

- **ON-CAMPUS INSTITUTE ATTENDANCE:** All of our programs have some mandatory on-campus time scheduled.
  - **MSW ADVANCED & MSW INDIGENOUS SPECIALIZATION:** students are asked to attend an on-campus institute, for approximately one week, at the beginning of their program. This time is usually scheduled in August. We include the on-campus institute so that students have the opportunity to visit campus, to meet face-to-face with faculty, staff and other students, and to begin a SOCW course. Are you able to attend the mandatory institute?
  - **MSW FOUNDATION:** requires full time on-campus study for the first year. Attendance during this first year is non-negotiable. Our MSWF students move through their core courses as a cohort.

Our application for admission requires prospective students to concretely explain how they will dedicate sufficient time and energy to their graduate education and how they will balance this additional responsibility, given their current work/family/life responsibilities. We hope this self-assessment tool is useful to you as you consider whether you are ready for graduate education, and as you begin the application process to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the School of Social Work. Please see our **Admission Guide** for further information about our admission processes and application requirements.

## QUESTIONS?

Contact the **MSW Program Assistant**

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