

## **SOCIAL WORK ADMISSIONS APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

May 2018

Dear prospective Social Work student:

We welcome your interest in our Bachelor of Social Work Program. The Social Work program offers a professional degree that requires students to apply to be accepted into the major. This is a process that is different and separate from admission into Western Illinois University. Attached is information about the Social Work application process. Please review the material carefully. We encourage you to meet with the Social Work advisor and/or faculty members to discuss your interest in the social work profession. If you decide to apply, please pay careful attention to the requirements and deadlines.

Information and updates about the application process, as well as required forms and instructions for the major application, are located on the Department of Health Science and Social Work's website at: [http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/health\\_sciences/program\\_admission.php](http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/health_sciences/program_admission.php)

Make sure you provide a current mail and email address in your application. Also, please ask questions in advance of the application deadline to assure that your application is complete and received on time. Do not jeopardize your anticipated graduation date by turning in a substandard application. Incomplete applications are not reviewed; late applications will not be accepted.

If you have any questions about the application process, do not hesitate to contact the Social Work Advisor, Cindy Dadello, C-Dadello@wiu.edu, (309)298-1438. Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

Karen Zellmann, MSW, LCSW  
Chair, Social Work Admissions Committee

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

### Advising

Students are required to complete a Planning Conference with the Social Work Advisor. The purpose of the conference is to determine readiness to apply to the major and should occur as soon as the student has completed SW 100 with a C or better. Transfer students, and WIU students who are changing their major to Social Work, should meet with the Advisor as soon as possible. Out of town students may request a phone Planning Conference. Please call the Advising Center at (309) 298-1438 to schedule an appointment. Social work advising is located in Horrabin Hall 91.

### Admission to the University

Transfer students must be admitted to Western Illinois University as a Pre-Social Work major (PSW) to be eligible to apply to the Social Work major. If you have not applied to the university, do so at ([www.wiu.edu/admissions/apply\\_now](http://www.wiu.edu/admissions/apply_now)). If you are not currently located in Macomb, you will be allowed to mail your application.

### Email

Please make sure your WIU email is activated and you are checking it regularly. Your WIU email account is the main mode of communication for you to receive information about your application. All offices on campus use email, so make it a habit to check email at least once per day.

### Submitting Your Application

- Print out all the materials from the Admission Application Forms link.
- Assemble the materials in the order listed on the application checklist sheet.
- Carefully review to avoid missing information or forms.
- Place **all** application materials in a manila envelope large enough to avoid folding the application. Please do not use binders, folders or other covers.
- Applications must be turned in by 4:30 pm to the Health Sciences and Social Work Office, Stipes 402, on or before the due date.
- Applications must be time stamped by an office employee.
- If you are located out of town and prefer to mail your application, applications must be postmarked on or before the due date. Mail to:  
Dept. of Health Sciences and Social Work, Social Work Admissions Committee  
Stipes 402  
Western Illinois University  
1 University Circle  
Macomb, IL 61455
- **Students who do not fully comply with the Application Instructions will be informed that their application will not be accepted for review by the Admissions Committee. The student will have the opportunity to resubmit their application the next semester.**

## Application Timeframe

Fall Semester 2018

<b>Application Workshop</b>	<b>Application Deadline</b>	<b>Personal Interview</b>	<b>Notification of Admission Status</b>
September 5 at 3:00 Place TBA	September 21	Complete by October 24	November 2

Spring Semester 2019

<b>Application Workshop</b>	<b>Application Deadline</b>	<b>Personal Interview</b>	<b>Notification of Admission Status</b>
Jan 30 at 3:00 Place TBA	February 15	Complete by March 27	April 5

## **Instructions for Application Forms**

### **Cover Page**

The cover page is the first page in the Application Forms document. Print the cover page and then check off each part of the application when it is completed. Your submitted application should have all boxes checked.

### **Application and Eligibility Form**

Contact Information: complete all parts of this section.

1. Required Components: Use your transcripts from all current and previous academic institutions to complete the academic eligibility section. Admission to Social Work major requires a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better and completion of Social Work 100 with a grade of C or better.

2. Academic Progress: There are four general education courses that provide an important foundation to course work in the major and should be taken prior to social work courses whenever possible. Follow the instructions to indicate if the courses are completed, in progress, or when they will be completed.

English 180 (3 hrs.)

Biology 100 (4 hrs.)

Psychology 100 (3 hrs.)

Sociology 100 (3 hrs.)

### **Personal Narrative**

The purpose of the personal narrative essay is to give you an opportunity to express your interest in and commitment to the social work profession as well as demonstrate your writing and critical thinking skills. Your paper should be carefully and thoughtfully prepared.

Papers are to be formatted using 12 point, Times New Roman font, double-spacing, and one-inch margins. Essays should be five to six (5-6) pages.

Please address each of the following questions in your essay:

1. Discuss what you consider to be one of the most pressing social problems facing the country. In your opinion: What is the cause of the problem? What does the social work profession have to offer toward the solution of this problem? What qualities, skills, and attributes do you have that would contribute to the solution of this problem?
2. Summarize your volunteer and employment history. What did you learn from these experiences that helped solidify your decision to become a social worker? What strengths did you bring to these experiences? What challenges did you encounter during these experiences?
3. What are important values in your life? Provide examples illustrating how these values are present in your life. How will these values help or hinder you in your professional work? Discuss how your personal values are congruent with the NASW Code of Ethics.
4. Provide any additional information that you feel would strengthen your application or is important for the Admissions Committee to consider when reviewing your application.

### **Volunteer/Work Experience Verification**

Social work students are required to complete 100 volunteer or paid work hours in a human service setting. The hours must be completed and documented on or before the student's first class meeting of SW 440, Pre-Practicum. Students will not proceed in planning a Practicum if the hours are not correctly documented and turned in by the deadline. Please read the FAQ for information regarding approved settings and documentation.

#### Purpose of Requiring Social Work Students to Volunteer in Human Service Agencies

1. Learn about working in a human services agency
2. Learn about working with individuals who are in need of assistance
3. Enhance self-awareness
4. Develop interpersonal skills
5. Develop professional behaviors
6. Demonstrate commitment to the core values of Social Work:  
Service – Social Justice – Dignity and Worth of the Person -  
Importance of Human Relationships – Integrity – Competence

## **Frequently Asked Questions for Volunteer/Work Experience Verification**

*What is a human service setting?*

Any professional setting or organization that provides services to individuals, families or communities.

*What type of human service settings are acceptable?*

Nursing homes, youth camps, day care centers, and after-school programs. Any professional setting or program that works with people in need. Up to 50 hours may involve activities through campus or community organizations that do not take place in a human services setting. Ex.: SWSA, Sexual Assault Training.

*How are the hours documented?*

The Volunteer/Work Experience Verification Form is located in the application packet. The form must be filled out correctly and signed by the supervisor who monitored your hours.

*I was a peer counselor my senior year in high school. Do the hours count?*

Yes, if the hours were completed within three years prior to applying to the major, and you are able to have the person who supervised you sign the completed Volunteer/Work Experience Verification form.

*What if I have hours from more than one human service setting or organization?*

For each human service setting or organization, you must have a completed and signed Volunteer/Work Experience Verification form. Without the form, the hours are not valid.

*When should the hours be completed?*

All 100 hours must be completed by the first day of class for SW 440, Pre-Practicum.

*What happens if I do not have my 100 hours completed by the first day of class for SW 440?*

100 hours are required to fill out the SW 480 Practicum application. Incomplete hours or improper completion/missing Volunteer/Work Experience Verification forms may lead to dropping SW 440 and a delay in graduation by at least one semester.

*When should I start my hours?*

As soon as possible. Volunteering is a good way to find out what career path you want to pursue in social work.

*I am not sure my hours I have completed or want to complete fit the criteria for a human services setting or organization.*

Contact Karen Zellmann, BSW Program Coordinator at [KT-Zellmann@wiu.edu](mailto:KT-Zellmann@wiu.edu)

## **Reference Forms**

Two (2) reference forms are required with your application. References may not come from relatives or friends. The reference forms are found in the application and are different forms.

- 1 Academic Reference Form
- 1 Professional Reference Form

Your academic reference must be from a college professor willing to speak to your academic abilities. The professor can be from any college or university *except* the Social Work Program at WIU. References from high school teachers will not be accepted.

Your professional reference must be from a work or volunteer supervisor. This can be from *any* job you have held (past or current) or *any* volunteerism hours you have completed. The professional reference must speak to your ability to work with people.

Steps to ensure your reference forms are accepted:

1. Make sure you choose the correct individuals for your references.
2. Complete and sign the top part of the reference form.
3. Provide each person the correct reference form and a self-addressed envelope (include a stamp if the person is located off-campus). Give your person enough time to make sure you have the form back by the application deadline.
4. Request that the reference form be filled out completely, placed in the envelope, seal it, sign their name across the seal and mail/give it back to you.
5. **DO NOT BREAK THE SEAL!** Reference forms that have been opened will not be accepted.
6. Place the unopened letters with the rest of your application materials.

## **WARD Report or Unofficial Transcripts**

If you have sent all transcripts from each university or college attended to WIU, and the transcripts have been evaluated, you may submit the WARD (Western's Audit of Requirements of Degrees) report. You will find the WARD report through your STARS account under "Print WARD". If you are a new transfer student, please include the transcript from your last attended college/university that indicates your current GPA.

If you do not have a WARD report yet, you may print out your unofficial transcript in whatever form your school provides. Official transcripts are not required for application to the major, but you will need to send official transcripts to WIU to become part of your academic record from each college or university you have attended.

## **Policy on Student Problematic Behavior, Ethical Misconduct, Impairment, and Incompetence**

Read the document and sign to indicate you understand this policy. During your interview a faculty member will review this document with you.

### **Code of Ethics Statement of Understanding**

Read the National Association of Social Work Code of Ethics. Initial each of the four statements or leave statements blank that you would like to discuss with a faculty member during your interview. The NASW Code of Ethics can be accessed online at <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>

### **Background Information Statement of Understanding**

The social work program does not conduct formal background checks at the time of admission. You may be required to complete a formal background check to secure a practicum placement. Responses on this form do not automatically disqualify you for admission to the major. Background information will be discussed at your interview to determine if there are concerns about your eligibility to become a licensed social worker.

### **BSW Program Student Handbook Statement**

Read the BSW Program Student Handbook. Initial each of the three statements or leave the statements blank if you would like to discuss with a faculty member during your interview. The BSW Program Student Handbook is available on the Department of Health Sciences and Social Work website [www.wiu.edu/coehs/health\\_sciences/undergraduate\\_programs/BSW%20Handbook.pdf](http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/health_sciences/undergraduate_programs/BSW%20Handbook.pdf)

**Admission to the Social Work Major is a prerequisite for enrolling in specified Social Work classes. Students who do not successfully submit the application in the correct semester may be unable to complete these specified courses in a timely manner. This may delay the student's graduation date. Each student is responsible for meeting with the Social Work Advisor to determine the correct semester in which to submit the application.**

**Students who do not fully comply with the Application Instructions will be informed that their application will not be accepted for review by the Admissions Committee. The student will have the opportunity to resubmit their application the next semester.**

## **After the Application**

### **Faculty Interview**

Approximately one (1) week after the application deadline, *you will receive instructions via email to arrange a faculty interview*. The faculty interview deadline will be noted in your email and your interview must be completed by that date. You must contact your assigned faculty member directly to schedule your interview.

**Failure to schedule and/or attend your interview will result in the denial of your application.** Please communicate with the social work advisor if you are having difficulties following through with the faculty interview.

**Future Transfer Students:** If traveling to your interview is difficult because of distance or class schedules, these factors can be accommodated. Please include a note with your application to indicate any special needs. If you are outside of the region, specify how far you will need to

travel and a member of the faculty will contact you to make other arrangements.

Formal attire is not required. However, you should take your interview seriously and dress appropriately for your meeting with a faculty member. For example, dressing as you would for dinner out with your family (nice jeans or pants, etc.) is acceptable. Saturday morning loungewear is not. Also, holes, tears, stains, wrinkles, clothes with unprofessional pictures or words, etc. would not be appropriate. Be prepared to discuss all items in your application packet as well as why you are interested in the social work profession.

### **Admission Letters**

After completion of the application process, you will receive one (1) of the following admission letters:

**Formal admission:** All social work admission requirements have been met and you have been accepted into the program as a full social work major. Students fully admitted will receive a Declaration of Academic Program form which must be signed and returned to the social work advisor. Your major change from pre-social work to social work will not become official until the form is returned and processed.

Note: Current students at WIU will become full BSW majors as soon as the Declaration of Academic Program form is processed. Applicants who are NOT currently enrolled will be admitted to the university as pre-social work majors; there is no option to apply as a full social work major. During the first week of classes, transfer students should bring their completed Declaration of Academic Program form to the Advising Center, Horrabin Hall 91.

**Denied Admission:** If faculty have concerns regarding your readiness for the major or you do not meet the minimum admission requirements, you may be asked to reapply after addressing these concerns; **or** faculty may determine that you are not suitable for the profession of social work.

Students who are denied admission to the Social Work Major may appeal the decision. We strongly recommend that students reflect on the reasons for the denial. Appeals must be based on new information or clarification of information.

Students may appeal the denied admission up to the Social Work Major application due date of the semester following the denial. At that point student wishing to pursue admission to the Social Work major may submit a new application.

## **Appeals Process**

Students wishing to appeal a denied admission should:

1. Complete the Social Work Program Denial of Admission Appeal Policy Form.
2. Schedule an appointment with the Chair of the Department of Health Sciences and Social Work.
3. Submit the Form to the Chairperson at the scheduled meeting.

The admissions denial appeal form may be found at

[http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/health\\_sciences/undergraduate\\_programs/Denial%20Appeal%20Form.pdf](http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/health_sciences/undergraduate_programs/Denial%20Appeal%20Form.pdf)

To schedule an appointment with the Chair of Health Sciences and Social Work, Dr. Lorette Oden, please call (309) 298 – 1071.

Students are encouraged to meet with the Social Work Advisor to discuss questions about the denied admission and the appeal process.

Advisor: Cindy Dadello

C-Dadello@wiu.edu

(309)-298-1438