**MSW/MPA Frequently Asked Questions**

**Is this a dual degree program?**

No, you earn the MSW degree and then the MPA degree as a second degree. The MPA program provides credit for some of your MSW courses if you follow the prescribed curriculum.

**As an MSW student, when is it a good time to apply to the MPA program?**

You MUST apply and be accepted into the MPA prior to graduating from the Social Work program. Many students apply after completing their first or second semesters in the MSW program.

**What are the eligibility criteria for being admitted to the MSW/MPA program?**

You must separately apply and be accepted to both programs. See the programs’ websites to determine eligibility criteria.

**What is the expected credit load?**

12 credit hours is considered a full load in the MSW program.

9 credit hours is considered a full load in the MPA program.

**I’m taking MSW courses, when should I start taking MPA courses?**

Although it is ultimately your decision, most students complete at least a semester or two in the MSW program before taking courses in the MPA program. Most students like to nearly finish the MSW before focusing on the MPA program and there are two reasons students like to do so. First, students like to begin the social work licensure process (LLMSW) while completing MPA courses and in order to do so one must have graduated from an accredited MSW program. Second, the foci of the programs are different and students have sometimes found it challenging when they simultaneously take courses in both programs.

**Are there MSW courses that substitute for MPA courses or vice versa?**

Yes. The following courses count for either program.

* SW 690: Social Research I counts as PA 611: Research Methods and vice versa.
* SW 660: Grant Writing and Resource Development counts as PA 535: Grant Writing and vice versa
* PA 661: Nonprofit Management Practices counts as SW 678: Human Services Administration but NOT vice versa

Please note, if you take the PA course instead of the MSW course you won’t have an earned MSW degree until the MSW and MPA degree requirements are both fully met (please see the earlier point about the delay in licensing).

**Do I need to complete both a MSW Field Education Placement and a MPA internship?**

The MSW Field Education Placement will meet the internship requirement for both graduate programs. In order to ensure that the MSW Field Education Placement provides learning opportunities that will support the knowledge, skills, and competencies for the MPA program, the field education placement is required to be a “macro” focused field placement.

Some students will request a field placement that provides both macro and micro opportunities equally. While GVSU provides an Advanced Generalist program and field sites are expected to provide exposure to all levels of social work (micro, mezzo, and macro), availability of placements that will provide a “50/50” combination of micro and macro learning opportunities are limited and availability is not guaranteed. In the instance that such a placement is not available; an MSW/MPA student will be matched to a macro focused field placement.

**Can I do both the school social work certificate and the MPA program?**

No, these options are not compatible in terms of coursework or internship requirements. Please consult with your advisor and/ or the program director. We typically advise students to complete one option as an MSW student and the other post-graduation.

**Who do I seek for advising?**

Please consult with the MSW Director, Dr. Paola Leon as of 8/24/2020, for the MSW advising. The graduate program director of the MPA program advises for the MPA requirements. The contact information is provided on the MSW MPA combined degrees advising sheet.