



Professional MA in Social Innovation (SI)
Student Handbook 2021-2022

Welcome to the Professional MA in Social Innovation Program at Grand Valley State University! This handbook contains important information about the program's requirements, structure, and policies. The handbook includes different sections and several forms that you will find useful in planning. In addition to this handbook, please read and review the Graduate School's student guidebooks: www.gvsu.edu/gs/guides-for-graduate-students-70.htm.

Take time to explore the resources available to graduate students at: www.gvsu.edu/gs/graduate-student-resources-30.htm.

If you have questions, we encourage you to check these resources first, and if you have further questions, please connect with your faculty advisor or the Graduate Program Director (GPD).

The Social Innovation (SI) Program is housed in Grand Valley's Integrative, Religious, and Intercultural (IRIS) Department. This handbook is available on the department's SI Program homepage: www.gvsu.edu/iris/si.

You will be notified in writing of any policy changes/additions that occur during the academic year. Do not hesitate to ask questions about policies and procedures. It is important that you are aware of and understand the contents within this document.

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Section 1: PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
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Mission Statement:

The Professional Master of Arts in Social Innovation (SI) Program at Grand Valley State University prepares students to be innovators, practitioners and organizational change agents across for-profit, non-profit, and government sectors.

Vision Statement:

The PMA in Social Innovation Program at Grand Valley State University provides students with the critical skills needed to work collaboratively with key stakeholders across sectors to address complex social problems in local, regional and even global organizations and communities. The SI program fosters a dynamic community of interdisciplinary professionals who will work collaboratively to critique, challenge, and advance the study and practice of social innovation.

Values supporting the program:

We believe that:

1. Cross-sector innovation grounded in deep humanistic understanding, in-depth research theories and methodologies, and stakeholder involvement, are critical to addressing complex social problems.
2. Interdisciplinary training is critical to developing student skills for cross-sector innovation including responsible conduct of research, civic engagement, and sustainable community partnerships.
3. Inclusive excellence and intercultural training are central to collaborative problem solving and are reflected in classroom teaching, program curricula, and student learning.
4. Community partnerships are reciprocal, mutually beneficial and inclusive, and sustainable communities require engaged and responsible partnership across sectors.
5. Cross-sector innovation requires consultation and collaborative problem solving to meet the changing context of local, regional, national and global concerns.
6. Students learn most effectively when academic learning is interwoven with involvement in applied and experiential learning. Faculty collaboration with community partners is essential to support student engagement and active learning.
7. Supportive, collaborative relationships between faculty and students within a rigorous learning environment are core features that foster student and program success.

Program Outcomes - Upon completing the program students will be able to:

1. Identify appropriate interdisciplinary research methods, approaches and theories to creatively address complex social problems.
2. Apply interdisciplinary research methods and analysis (including integration, multiple method approaches, and assessment of critical frameworks) to promote sustainable human communities.
3. Design problem solving strategies using collaborative, iterative processes and involving multiple stakeholders.

4. Integrate theory and practice within social innovation frameworks broadly, and in their specialized project areas.
5. Identify and critically evaluate structural inequalities, implicit values, and power relationships across sectors (for-profit, non-profit, and government) which shape the communities with whom they are engaged.
6. Develop communication skills in order to build relationships with diverse community stakeholders using a variety of forms (such as digital media, research reports, white papers, collaborative interviews, community meetings etc.)
7. Demonstrate creative engagement with diverse communities, including familiarity with various models and methods of community engagement.

Section 2: GENERAL INFORMATION

For general information about the university, please see the graduate school policy and procedures manual:

www.gvsu.edu/gs/policies-and-procedures-58.htm

PROGRAM ADMISSIONS

In addition to Grand Valley's admission requirements, all students seeking a Professional Master of Arts in Social Innovation (SI) must also meet the following:

- A Grade point average of 3.0 (B) on a 4.0 scale for the last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework.
- **Submitting a GRE score is not required.** However, applicants who have neither a 3.0 GPA for the last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework or five years of professional experience may consider submitting a GRE score to strengthen their application.
- A personal statement of career goals and background experiences, including an explanation of how this program will help achieve educational and professional objectives.
- Recommendations from at least two individuals who are in positions to attest to the applicant's successful completion of the program.
- An official transcript from each undergraduate and graduate institution.
- TOEFL test scores (Test of English as a Foreign Language), or IELTS (International English Language Testing System), or MELAB (Michigan English Language Assessment Battery) for applicants whose native language is not English. The following minimum scores are expected: TOEFL is 80, IELTS is 6.5, and MELAB is 77.

Admissions may request additional information or request a personal interview. The Admission committee is looking for evidence that a candidate will be successful if admitted into the program and considers each applicant as a whole student.

COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE PROGRAM

Email is the primary method of communication within the program. Please be sure to check your university email address on a regular basis (i.e., daily). We also have a program Blackboard site. The Blackboard site will contain the program handbook and resources.

ADVISING

You will first be assigned to the Graduate Program Director (GPD) as your initial advisor. By the end of your first semester you will be reassigned to a PMA in Social Innovation graduate faculty member as your primary advisor. The role of your advisor is to assist you with program planning, provide career mentorship, and to serve as your primary contact for program related issues. Although your advisor will provide you with assistance, it is the student's responsibility to be aware of important deadlines and policies in the program, graduate school, and university.

It is important that you keep in regular contact with your advisor. You should meet with your advisor a minimum of one time per semester, if not more frequently. Each year, you should schedule a meeting with your advisor during the first two weeks of class.

Changing Advisors

Although it is expected that the majority of advisor/student pairings will be successful, it is possible for students to request to change their advisor. Changing advisors should only be pursued if the advisor/student relationship is not able to be maintained. In order to change an advisor, the following steps must be completed:

1. Talk to your current advisor about your decision. Your advisor must agree to the switch. If you are uncomfortable talking with your current advisor about this decision, you may meet with the Graduate Program Director to discuss the situation.
2. Talk to a potential advisor about your desire to switch. This individual must agree to become your advisor.
3. If all parties agree, complete a change of advisor form, obtain signature from your current and future advisor, and submit to the program director.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

As a student in the SI program, you represent the program, the department, and the university. You should behave in a professional manner when working in community settings as a part of internship, research, or any other activities. Below, we provide several professional behavior expectations. This list is not comprehensive (i.e. there are several expectations that may not be included below). You should also refer to the [Faculty-Student Program Expectations document](#) in the supplemental materials section of this handbook. This document will be reviewed and signed in your first semester of the program by you and your faculty advisor.

Our expectations include:

1. Respecting the community partner's schedule. Arrive on-time and remain at the site for the entire planned time period. In addition, do not show up to sites unannounced.
2. Your communication with professionals in the field should be formal and professional. When communicating electronically, avoid using abbreviations and slang. Be sure to check your messages for spelling and grammatical errors. It is preferred that you use email (instead of text messaging), unless the professional indicates that they would like you to use text messaging.
3. Dress appropriately for your setting. The majority of sites require business casual attire. Be sure that your attire is conservative, and appropriate for the work that you will be doing (e.g. wear outdoor attire if you are working at a community park of CSA).
4. Be responsive to professional's feedback. You will be receiving feedback on your performance from a variety of professionals in the field. Some feedback will be positive, and some may be critical. When you receive critical feedback, avoid arguing or becoming defensive.
5. Remember, you are a guest at the specific site. Be polite to all individuals you encounter and avoid causing any interruptions.
6. Do not engage in any practices that you have not received training in or are uncomfortable with your level of competence. It is likely that a site supervisor may request you to engage in activities before you have received adequate training. When this occurs, always say that you must check with your university supervisor first.

POSITIVE PROGRAM CLIMATE

A positive climate within the program is critical for student development and well-being. Faculty strive to maintain a collaborative, professional, and supportive environment for all students. Faculty hosts two social events (fall and spring). In addition, we encourage students to work collaboratively with each other. This program seeks to cultivate an active community of learners with collaboration as a core value and learning outcome. Below are strategies for maintaining a positive environment within the program.

We encourage you to contact faculty if there are any concerns regarding program climate.

OBTAINING DEGREES

Master's Degree

You should apply for "graduation" with your M.A. degree prior to the last semester of enrollment. There is no fee for applying to graduate. The easiest and fastest way to apply is through myBanner. After logging into myBanner, select Student, then Student Records, and Apply to Graduate. Paper applications (www.gvsu.edu/registrar/applying-to-graduate-5.htm) may also be submitted to either of the Student Assistance Centers (150 Student Services in Allendale or 115C DeVos in Grand Rapids). If you fail to apply for graduation, your graduation date may be postponed. Note that the degree will not be conferred and listed on your transcript until after semester grades are finalized and processed.

FINANCIAL AID

If faculty know of available graduate assistantship positions that would be appropriate for students, they will pass on the information to students. Otherwise, it is the *student's* responsibility to secure financing to pay for the program's required credits. GVSU does offer financial aid for students who qualify. Information about aid, current tuition rates, and payment can be found online: www.gvsu.edu/financialaid/. Students who do not pay tuition bills by the semester deadlines are dropped from their courses.

Currently, students are not eligible for financial aid during semesters in which they *only* take 3 credits and should plan accordingly. Deferment plans allow students to split the cost of credits for a semester into four payments for a reasonable fee:

www.gvsu.edu/studentaccounts/deferment-plan-30.htm.

Section 3: DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Students admitted into the graduate program in Social Innovation must complete 36 semester credit hours including internship, project design, and project.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: 36 credits

The M.A. degree consists of a minimum of 36 credit hours of coursework. Students must meet with an advisor upon entry into the program to develop a study plan.

View course descriptions in the [2021-2022 Graduate Catalog](#).

The program's Core includes six courses, as follows: 18 credits

- SI 600- Cultures of Social Innovation (credits: 3)
- SI 610- Research Methods for Social Inquiry (credits: 3)
- SI 620- Case Studies in Social Innovation (credits: 3)
- SI 630- Engaging Diversity through Social Innovation (credits: 3)
- SI 650- Place and Environmental Justice: Integration Towards Innovation (credits: 3)
- PNH- 660 Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector: History and Ethics (credits: 3)

Students must select three Application Courses (relevant to project) : 9 credits

- EDF 633- Race, Class and Language (credits: 3)
- EDF 635- Survey of Urban Education (credits: 3)
- EDF 675- Cultural and Educational Foundations of Ecological Issues (credits: 3)
- EDF 676- Introduction to Place-Based Education (credits: 3)
- EDL 700- Educational Leadership and Change (credits: 3)
- EDL 705- Organizational Behavior, Ethics and Decision-Making (credits: 3)
- EDL 715- Data-Based Decision-Making and Technology (credits: 3)
- MGT 672- Creativity and Social Entrepreneurship (credits: 3)
- PNH 661- Nonprofit Management Practices (credits: 3)
- PNH 662- Nonprofit Financial Management (credits: 3)
- PNH 663- Nonprofit Organizations, Advocacy and Public Policy (credits: 3)
- PNH 667- Fund Development (credits: 3)
- SW 600- Cultural Competency for Social Work (credits: 3)

- SW 631- Social Work: U.S. Community-Based Service Learning (credits: 3)
- SW 660- Grant Writing and Resource Development (credits: 3)
- SW 676- Community and Social Planning (credits: 3)

Students must complete three Synthesis Courses: 9 credits

- SI 661- Social Innovation Internship (variable credits: 1-6)
- SI 690- Social Innovation Research Design (credits: 3)
- SI 693- Master's Project in Social Innovation (variable credits: 1-3)

Students might have the option to take a course that is not listed above if other courses become available and are approved by the graduate program director.

Waivers

Students who possess a Master's degree or who have previously taken graduate courses MAY be able to substitute up to 12 credits in the PMASI Program. In order to substitute a required class, the student must provide (1) a copy of the syllabus from the course that will be used as a substitute, and (2) a copy of your transcript that indicates the grade that you received. Program faculty will review the course and determine its equivalency to current GVSU courses.

MASTER'S PROJECT

All students must complete a data-driven Master's Research Project. Topics of Master's Projects will vary by student but at a minimum demonstrate your ability to use principles of research to solve applied problems. Options include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Independently Selected Student Research
- 2) Community Partner Collaborative Research Project
- 3) Faculty/Student Collaborative Research Project
- 4) Sponsored Research Grant Projects
- 5) Other projects with the approval of faculty

Your project should be developed in conjunction with your project advisor. You also must consider the feasibility of the project given the context of the setting (e.g., internship). If you need to obtain IRB approval for your project, you must begin this process *very* early as it can take a *significant* amount of time to obtain approval.

Typically, the student's assigned academic advisor will serve as the primary supervisor of the project with two additional committee members selected by the student to provide feedback and evaluation. The final evaluation will be provided by the primary supervisor in consultation with the other two reviewers (one of which may be a community partner or other external reviewer).

Project Requirements

- Meetings with Project Advisor:
 - You should meet with your project advisor *at least once per month* during the semester. Project advisors may require you to meet more often or provide updates via e-mail.
- Proposal:
 - All students will be required to submit a project proposal. This proposal will take the form of a structured outline of key project information including topic, research

question(s), design, (anticipated) participants, intervention, procedures, and data analysis plan.

- **Final Products:**
 - **Paper** in a brief report format- You will write a brief report style paper (approximately 10 - 20 double-spaced pages) which includes a *concise* literature review, methods, results, and a brief discussion of findings, outcomes, and/or recommendations. Project advisors may require you to submit multiple drafts of various sections throughout the semester.
 - **Oral Presentation**- You will create a 15-20 minute PowerPoint presentation about your project that will be presented to all faculty and other students. This presentation should include a brief introduction, methods, results, and discussion section. You should allow an additional 15 minutes for questions. These presentations are typically scheduled during Finals Week of the semester in which you complete the project.

Project Evaluation

Your project will be evaluated by all members of the project committee. Faculty evaluations will be based on your work with your project advisor throughout the semester and your final products. Faculty will determine whether you will earn a (1) did not pass, (2) passed, or (3) passed with distinction for the course. In order to earn a “pass with distinction,” a student must exceed expectations in all or most areas on the rubric including the oral presentation. Students who do not pass must meet with their faculty advisor and develop a remediation agreement. This remediation agreement may require substantial revisions to the project's final products, collection of additional data, or the completion of a new project. The faculty’s evaluation will be based on the following rubric:

	Exceeds Expectations	Pass	Does Not Meet Requirements
Meeting Deadlines & Organization		Responsible and consistent in meeting deadlines; sets up and attends monthly advisor meetings; prepared and organized for meetings	
Purpose, Literature review, & Research Questions		Purpose is meaningful and reasonable; research questions appropriate for given purpose; purpose and goals clearly stated; purpose and research questions are informed by a sufficient review of the literature	
Research Design		Design demonstrates understanding of research principles; fits given purpose and research questions; data collected appropriate for evaluating outcomes outlined	
Data Interpretation and Discussion		Data presented clearly and accurately; interpretation and implications reasonable and meaningful given the data collected to examine research questions	
Paper Quality		Well-formulated, organized, and professional; uses consistent APA, MLA or other agreed upon style correctly; almost entirely free of spelling and mechanical errors	
Presentation Quality		Well-formulated, organized, and professional; communicates clearly and effectively	

Section 4: UNIVERSITY POLICIES

In addition to the program policies, you must also follow all policies from the graduate school and university. Below, we have listed several policies that are relevant to your success in the program. Please note, there are several more university policies. Please review the policy manual: www.gvsu.edu/gs/policies-and-procedures-58.htm

Academic Performance (minimum GPA)

1. All graduate students are expected to maintain a minimum 3.0 graduate program grade point average at all times. All graduate courses must have an earned grade of “C” or better.
2. The academic review process will be conducted by the appropriate graduate program director for degree-seeking graduate students or by the Office of Graduate Studies for non-degree graduate students. Academic review is applicable to a graduate student:
 - a. who earns in the previous semester
 - i. a grade of D or F,
 - ii. or the second or subsequent grade of C or lower in graduate courses in the student’s program,
 - iii. or the second or subsequent grade of NC in graduate courses in the student’s program;
 - b. whose performance is evaluated as unsatisfactory in a required clinical experience, internship, or practicum;
 - c. whose semester or cumulative program grade point average is less than 3.0;
 - d. who has not met the conditions of a previously imposed academic probation with the time limits imposed;
 - e. who at the end of the semester has more than two unresolved grades of I (Incomplete) that were assigned in a previous semester.
3. Academic review may result in an academic warning, academic probation, or dismissal.

Graduate Dismissal

1. A graduate student **shall** be dismissed from a graduate program who:
 1. earns a second or subsequent grade of **F** in any graduate course, including repeated courses;
 2. has less than a 3.0 graduate program grade point average **AND** has accumulated nine or more hours for which a grade less than a **B-** was earned.
2. A graduate student who has been dismissed from a GVSU graduate program may not be admitted to a different graduate program and may not enroll in graduate courses without the permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Appeals of Action Taken Under this Policy

1. A degree-seeking or certificate-seeking graduate student may appeal an action taken under this policy using the graduate program's published process for appeals of academic decisions. If the program does not have a published appeals process, the appeal shall be to the dean of the college in which the graduate program is housed. The student may appeal the decision of the dean of the college and to the provost or the provost's designee. The result of each appeal shall be reported to the dean of graduate studies.
2. A non-degree graduate student may petition the dean of graduate studies for reconsideration of a decision. If such reconsideration is unsuccessful, the student may appeal the decision to the provost or provost's designee.

Effect of Grade Change

If a review of the student's record or dismissal from graduate study is based on a grade that is subsequently changed, the student may appeal or re-appeal any adverse action taken.

Timing of Decisions

All parties to the decision to take action under this policy shall act expeditiously to arrive at and communicate a decision to the student as soon as practicable. However, in order to afford due process and full consideration of the graduate student's record and circumstances, a decision to dismiss a student under this policy may occur in the semester after the student's performance or actions warranted dismissal. If the graduate student is enrolled in graduate courses at the time of the dismissal, the decision shall have the effect of a withdrawal from Grand Valley State University.

University Grievance Procedures

Academic grievances are generally defined as those (a) involving procedures, policies, and grades in courses, (b) those involving major, minor, or program (graduate or undergraduate) degree requirements, (c) those involving general undergraduate university graduation requirements such as general education, total credit, or residency requirements, or (d) graduate degree requirements such as total credit or residency requirements. Filing of a grievance is required by the end of the following regular semester after notification of grade or receipt of adverse decision. Appeals of decisions must take place 30 days after receipt of notification.

a. Resolution of an academic grievance involving procedures, policies, and grades in individual courses. The resolution of academic grievances is based on two principles: first, that the resolution of a grievance should be sought at the lowest possible level, and second, that pathways for appeal exist for both faculty members and students. Resolution should be pursued as follows:

1. An appeal to the instructor.
2. If the grievance is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, a further appeal could be made to the unit head who may request that the appeal be put in writing. Both the student and the faculty member will be notified in writing of the unit head's decision.

3. If the disposition by the unit head is not acceptable to either party, an appeal, in writing, may be made by either party to the dean of the college. If the dean feels that there is some merit in the written grievance, he or she shall establish a committee to review the grievance and make a recommendation within 60 days to the dean. Such a committee shall include a representative of the dean's office, a faculty representative from the college of the course under appeal, and a student representative. Upon receiving the committee's recommendation in the latter procedure, the dean shall rule on the grievance. Both the student and the faculty member will be notified in writing of the dean's decision.
4. If the disposition by the dean is not acceptable to either party, an appeal, in writing, may be made to the provost. The provost's review and judgment in the case will be final. Both the student and the faculty member will be notified in writing of the provost's decision.

In cases where the faculty member in question also serves as the unit head, the dean shall appoint a suitable faculty member from the college to function as unit head for purposes of grievance. In a similar fashion, if the faculty member in question also serves as dean, the provost shall appoint a faculty member to act as the unit head for purposes of grievance. If an appeal is sought in this latter case, it will go directly to the provost.

b. Resolution of an academic grievance involving fulfillment of program, major, or minor degree requirements should be pursued as follows: An appeal to the unit head or graduate program director. If the grievance is not resolved to the student's satisfaction at this level, an appeal to the dean of the college would be possible, in the same manner as outlined in (a). Finally, a further appeal could be made to the provost as described in (a) above.

c. Resolution of an academic grievance involving fulfillment of general undergraduate university requirements, such as general education, total credits, and residency requirements should be pursued as follows: A written appeal to the director of the Student Academic Success Center. If at this point the grievance is still not resolved to the student's satisfaction, a further written appeal could be made to the provost. In this case, the provost shall establish a committee to review the grievance and make a recommendation within 60 days. Such a committee shall include a representative of the provost's office, a faculty representative related to the student's major, and a faculty representative from outside the student's college. Upon receiving the committee's recommendation, the provost will render a final judgment in the case.

d. Exceptions to institutional graduate degree requirements sought by individual students will be determined by the dean and the provost.

The student filing the grievance may have an observer from the Dean of Students Office or a person of his/her choice attend any meeting at which the student appears. The faculty member involved in the grievance may have an observer of his/her choice attend any meeting at which the faculty member appears.

Responsible Conduct of Research Training for Graduate Students (RCR)

All GVSU graduate students are required to complete Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training prior to engaging in any research activities. Please check with your advisor or graduate program director to determine which RCR Training program is required. (Only graduate students who completed all of their degree requirements and graduated at or prior to the end of the Fall 2016 semester are exempt from this requirement.) GVSU supports the online CITI RCR training program. CITI provides a flexible online course that uses videos and a blended learning environment to involve learners in the learning process. Additional information can be found here: www.gvsu.edu/gs/responsible-conduct-of-research-requirements-88.htm

Leave of Absence Policy

1. A graduate student may request a leave of absence for a maximum of two years from a graduate program for good cause. Examples of cause include, but are not limited to, medical issues, caring for family members, non-optional military commitments, maternity, and work requirements.
2. The graduate student shall explain in writing to the graduate program director the reason for seeking a leave of absence and must specify the period for which the leave of absence is sought. The graduate student may provide materials supporting their request (e.g., military orders) if it is deemed necessary.
3. The graduate program director shall review the graduate student's written explanation and supporting materials, relevant circumstances and documentation, academic performance, and history in the program. After considering the results of this review, the graduate program director shall recommend to the Dean of The Graduate School whether a leave of absence should be granted and the terms and conditions for return to the program.
4. The Dean of The Graduate School shall render a decision after reviewing the graduate student's written request and the recommendation of the graduate program director. The decision by the Dean of The Graduate School shall be final.
5. If the student is granted an immediate leave of absence, it shall have the effect of a course withdrawal for all courses in which the student is enrolled. Requesting a tuition reimbursement must be completed following University policy.
6. The student shall follow the graduate program and catalogue requirements in effect at the time of reenrollment.
7. At the discretion of the Dean of The Graduate School, a leave of absence may be extended beyond the original time granted at the written request of the student. A student who does not enroll in classes or requests an extension at the end of the leave of absence may be required to reapply for admission at the discretion of their desired graduate program.

8. A leave of absence does not extend the eight-year time limit for the applicability of a graduate course toward a degree. Requesting an extension of the time limit must be completed following University policy.

9. A student in the dissertation or thesis phase of their graduate program is not required to maintain continuous enrollment in any semester for which a leave of absence has been granted.

10. Students who wish to take a semester away from their program and are not part of a cohort or structured program may not need to complete a Leave of Absence request and should contact the Graduate Program Director prior to completing the request.

Incomplete Grades

This is a temporary grade given for work that is lacking in quantity to meet course objectives. It may be assigned when illness, necessary absence, or other reasons generally beyond the control of the graduate student prevent completion of the course requirements by the end of the semester. This grade may not be given as a substitute for a failing grade or withdrawal. A graduate student is expected to complete course requirements according to the following schedule: fall semester incompletes, end of winter semester; winter and spring/summer incompletes, end of fall semester. Instructors are required to file a change of grade form or request an extension of the I grade at the end of each semester. A student cannot graduate with an I grade on his/her record.

Section 5: SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I learn more about the Social Innovation Master's at GVSU?

You can check out our department's [Professional MA in Social Innovation](#) page or contact the Graduate Program Director, Dr. Azfar Hussain, at hussaina@gvsu.edu

2. What can you do with a Master's in Social Innovation?

Graduates of the Professional MA in Social Innovation Program will work as change agents who will foster and lead innovation throughout their organizations, businesses and communities. Graduates may work in a variety of industries across sectors including, but not limited to: Civic Leadership, Education, Health and Human Services, Non-profit Organizations, Municipal Government, Sustainability, and Urban Planning.

3. What are the admissions requirements for the SI Program?

Requirements are listed on the SI Program's Admissions page:
www.gvsu.edu/acad/social-innovation-ma.htm

4. Are there any specific degree requirements or list of undergraduate courses required to apply for the SI Program?

No, students with virtually any undergraduate degree may apply for the Professional MA in Social Innovation Program. Students will need to write a personal statement of career goals and background experiences, including an explanation of how this program will help achieve educational and professional objectives.

5. **What is the relevance or importance of the word "professional" in the program title?**
 "Professional" signifies to prospective students that this master's program is not geared towards preparing students for doctoral work- it is a terminal degree in itself. PMA SI is an applied master's degree preparing students for careers in cross-sector (for-profit/non-profit/government) professions. Further, the program title differentiates from Professional Science Master's (PSM) degrees. Grand Valley's Social Innovation Program is a PMA, Professional Master of Arts degree. This is a best practices designation for these programs, as delineated at cgsnet.org/pma-initiative.
6. **Is there financial aid available for graduate students?**
 Yes, please visit GVSU's Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships at www.gvsu.edu/financialaid/
7. **Are there graduate assistantships available for SI Graduate Students?**
 A list of Graduate Assistantship (GA) opportunities is available on GVSU's Graduate School site at www.gvsu.edu/gs/graduate-assistantships-students-information-and-resources-11.htm
8. **Are Career Center resources available to SI Graduate Students?**
 Yes, please visit www.gvsu.edu/careers/ for more information.
9. **Is there a graduate student orientation?**
 Yes, information about the New Graduate Student Orientation may be found at www.gvsu.edu/gs/virtual/
10. **Where are SI classes offered?**
 Classes for the Social Innovation Master's Program are offered online and on the Robert C. Pew Grand Rapids Campus. SI prefix courses are offered in the evenings in hybrid/hyflex format to accommodate working professionals.
11. **What transportation options are available for accessing GV campuses?**
 Students attending Grand Valley may ride The Rapid bus for free with their GVSU-issued ID card. Students may also purchase parking permits through www.gvsu.edu/parking/
12. **What Disability Support Resources are available to SI Graduate Students?**
 Students in need of support or accommodations should contact [Disability Support Resources](mailto:dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu) at dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu or (616) 331-2490.
13. **What if I have trouble with registration or need assistance with permits?**
 Contact the IRIS Department at irisdept@gvsu.edu or 616-331-8020, or reach out to the SI Graduate Program Director, Dr. Azfar Hussain at hussaina@gvsu.edu.
14. **What other resources are available to graduate students at Grand Valley?**
 The [Graduate Student Resources](#) page is packed with useful information, including housing, health insurance, graduate student life, writing resources, and tips for online learning.
15. **What are the guidelines for the required Master's Project?**
 2020-2021 guidelines for the culminating master's project are available [here](#). Additional resources are accessible to students on [The Graduate School](#) site.

Professional MA in Social Innovation (SI)

Faculty-Student Program Expectations

This document is meant to serve as a guide regarding program expectations. This document is also meant to facilitate an initial conversation between a faculty advisor and student advisee. It outlines what faculty can expect from students and what students can expect from faculty to help the student successfully complete the Social Innovation graduate program.

Students should:

- Make the program your priority. You are allowed to have a job outside the program so long as you schedule your job around your class schedule and field experiences (not the other way around).
- Be engaged in classes and online activities. Listen and participate in discussions rather than looking at your phone or non-class related websites.
- Maintain a minimum 3.0 graduate GPA. Otherwise, avoid focusing on numerical grades and points; instead, focus on developing your competencies and understanding.
- Be respectful with your internship supervisors and sites. Be on time. Maintain professional communication and a consistent schedule. Dress appropriately. Protect confidentiality.
- Be supportive, respectful, and collegial with other students in the program.
- Be humble. View yourself as a life-long learner. You don't know everything now, and you won't know everything 20 years from now. We are all still learning.
- Take advantage of additional learning opportunities (conferences, trainings, research).
- Use social media respectfully and cautiously. Think about the persona you present.
- Make yourself available to schedule appointments on days other than class days when necessary.

Faculty should:

- Be available to meet during office hours or other scheduled appointments. Alert students in a timely manner if office hours or appointments need to be rescheduled.
- Provide clear and constructive feedback.
- Utilize feedback from students and supervisors to improve courses and the program.
- Support students' interests.
- Consider requests for assignment extensions if the circumstances warrant.
- Provide mentoring, research support, and opportunities to facilitate student learning and success.

BOTH faculty and students should:

- Check email regularly.
- Be prepared and on-time for class.
- Be inclusive and collaborative with others.
- Use discretion and respect confidentiality.
- Know your strengths and areas of growth.

Together, faculty and students will:

- Maintain communication. Students and advisors should meet in-person at least once per semester and as often as necessary.
- Discuss and explore opportunities for student skill development (Master's projects, additional trainings, etc.).
- Assess and reflect on student progress towards meeting program learning outcomes.

Signatures below indicate that the faculty member and student reviewed this information together and discussed any questions/concerns.

Faculty Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Please forward the signed Faculty-Student Program Expectations form to the
SI Academic Coordinator, Justine Kibet, at kibetjus@gvsu.edu.*