



Online MSW Exemption Information

MSW online advanced standing students may pursue an exemption from SW 505: Engaging Social Justice, Diversity and Oppression in Social Work via an SSW online exemption request system. [The exemption process is web-based and student-initiated](#). We encourage students to request exemptions as soon as possible as it may affect course selections.

Online advanced standing students are able to pursue an exemption from SW 505 if they have already covered the material and demonstrated the relevant competencies in course work completed within the past six years with grades of "B" or better (see details below).

Exemption Criteria

- Receiving an exemption from SW 505 does not lower the number of credit hours needed for graduation. Online advanced standing students receiving the exemption will still need to complete 45 graduate credit hours. Receiving the exemption will increase the amount of elective credits for eligible advanced standing students by 3 credits.
- An exemption from SW 505 will be granted when students have prior undergraduate or graduate course work comparable to the content of SW 505. Students need to have completed at least two relevant undergraduate courses or one graduate course to be eligible for an exemption from SW 505.
- The course(s) utilized for exemption review must have been completed within the six years prior to enrollment in the MSW program with a grade of "B" or better.
- Courses that are graded by narrative evaluation will also be considered for exemption review. When completing the exemption request form, if the course was not graded, but included a narrative evaluation, please indicate the grade as "narrative" in the appropriate box.
- Courses graded as Pass/Fail, Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, or other evaluative scales cannot be utilized for exemption review.
- Prior work experience is not a basis for exemptions.

Exemption Process

1. Go to the exemption request form at ssw.umich.edu/assets/exemption-request/
2. Select the relevant foundation course from the drop down menu (SW 505).
3. Review the course statement and description to better understand the content covered in the relevant foundation course.
4. Upload the syllabus for the first course previously completed to be utilized for exemption review. Include any supporting documents that illustrate the relevance of this course. Provide a rationale for why the completed course contributes to the content and competencies of SW 505.
5. Repeat the process for the second previously completed course to be considered for the exemption review. Upload a syllabus and supporting documents for the second course and the rationale for this course being considered.

6. It is optional to add a third course, but sometimes it is necessary to cover all the areas in the foundation course. Follow the same format for this third course.
7. Complete the web-based form and submit the request.

A faculty Exemption Consultant will review each submitted exemption request.

Students will receive an email regarding the outcome of the exemption review. Students will be informed if an exemption request has been denied and if there is additional information needed.

The School will review official transcripts to verify that a grade of "B" or higher was received for any course listed for an exemption request. Once the grade is verified, the exemption will be made official.

Students who do not receive an exemption for SW 505 may pursue approval for a substitution for the requirement. Substitutions may be granted for students wishing to take a graduate level SW course or a graduate-level course given in another unit of the University of Michigan as a substitution for a required course. Students interested in pursuing a substitution for SW 505 should discuss this option with the Online Program Director, Professor Barb Hiltz, at the earliest date possible. Substitutions require approval of a student's faculty advisor and the Online MSW Program Director.

Course Planning Assistance

Prior to the start of the term, after reviewing course planning and registration information, you are welcome to schedule a course planning meeting with Antuan Featherstone, Online MSW Program Manager. Feel free to contact Antuan at adfeathe@umich.edu with questions or should you wish to schedule an individual course planning meeting.

Welcome to the University of Michigan School of Social Work! We look forward to seeing you online soon.