

SJSU SSW Online/Hybrid MSW Program FAQ

(Updated as of 4/9/25: Information Subject to Change and University Confirmation)

SJSU's School of Social Work Master of Social Work (MSW) degree program was founded in Fall 2016. This is an online/hybrid program that is fully accredited by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE). The School of Social Work offers the regular two-year program and the advanced standing one-year program. In the Online/Hybrid MSW program, academic courses are completed online (via asynchronous sessions and synchronous sessions, usually held on weekday evenings), and field education is traditionally completed in-person. The two-year program requires continuous enrollment for two academic years. The one-year advanced standing program requires continuous enrollment for one academic year with bridge classes starting in the summer. Average enrollment is in 2 to 3 academic courses and field education concurrently throughout the program. **It is a requirement to be living in California while completing the program.**

Table of Contents

What are the Key Resources at SJSU?.....	2
What are the key requirements for graduation?.....	2
What is involved in online learning?.....	2
What is the overall philosophy of the curriculum?.....	3
Courses in the foundation year.....	3
Courses in the advanced/final year.....	4
What special certificates or credentials are available to Online/Hybrid MSW Students?.....	4
What are the differences between the on-campus program and the online/hybrid program?.....	4
How is Field Education taught?.....	5
Internship.....	6
Internship Agencies.....	6
What is the Final-Year Special Project (SCWK 298)?.....	7
How to remain connected with the School?.....	7
How to be involved with the Social Work Graduate Student Association (SWGSA) and other student activities and efforts?.....	8
What SJSU Campus services and resources are available?.....	8
Where do I need to go when I have financial aid related questions?.....	8
Where can I find information about enrollment, fees, and textbooks?.....	9
Textbooks.....	10
When and where will the Graduation commencement be held?.....	10
Am I eligible for licensure in other states upon graduation?.....	11

What are the Key Resources at SJSU?

The SSW MSW Student Information and Resource Center (SIRC) Canvas site, the SJSU Catalog, MySJSU, Graduate Admissions and Program Evaluation (GAPE) Office, and School of Social Work (SSW) web sites are good resources to help familiarize yourself with the University and our MSW Program, as well as common policies and procedures. Also, most updates and major announcements will be posted on our *MSW SIRC* Canvas site. Please note the following web addresses:

SJSU Catalog: https://catalog.sjsu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=2&poid=729&returnto=96

MySJSU: <https://one.sjsu.edu/>

Graduate Admissions and Program Evaluations Office (GAPE): www.sjsu.edu/gape/

SJSU Registrar's Office: <http://www.sjsu.edu/registrar/>

SJSU College of Professional and Global Education (CPGE): <http://www.sjsu.edu/cies/>

SJSU SSW Website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/socialwork/>

Student Information and Resource Center (SIRC): <https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1246532>

- Incoming students are only able to access the **SIRC Institution Public** page because the Institution Public page does not require an invitation. Once the Fall semester begins, we will send invitations to the regular SIRC page and students will then be able to access the regular MSW SIRC page.

What are the key requirements for graduation?

Key Requirements for Graduation

- Complete at least 60 units and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0
- Pass all letter-graded classes with a "C" or better grade
- Pass all field practicum courses with a credit "CR" grade
- Pass the Writing Competency requirement of SJSU in SCWK 200W
- Complete a "Capstone project" (the "298 project") in your final year
- Fill out the "Candidacy" Form and submit it to GAPE: The School will make an announcement about this and assist you throughout the process
- Apply for graduation through your MySJSU account after receiving your eligibility message in your MySJSU account.

For other requirements, please see the MSW Student Handbook located in SIRC.

What is involved in online learning?

Online learning can be quite different than learning in a traditional classroom setting. To be successful as an online student you should be able to answer "yes" to the following questions:

1. Strong time management skills

You will be responsible for completing assignments on time. Use of a calendar and a pattern of consistent work are necessary for success.

2. Strong organizational skills

The student organizes most of their own learning time, which requires strong organizational skills.

3. Self-motivated

Due to the flexibility and convenience of online learning it is often easy to put off class work until the last minute. Self-motivation is key to staying current on assignments and completing class work in a timely manner.

4. Enjoy working independently

The majority of your work will be completed on your own. There is little or no face-to-face contact with faculty or other students. Online learning requires greater than average self-discipline to be successful.

5. Have adequate equipment and comfortable working with technology

All online/hybrid students should have a fast and reliable internet connection, web-camera, and headphones with microphone. Students should have a proper place to attend synchronous sessions (i.e., a quiet and private room) and should expect to have their cameras turned on during these sessions. Students should participate and treat online classes in a professional manner as if you were meeting in-person and accountable to your professors, colleagues, and/or clients.

All assignments and correspondence with faculty are conducted 100% online. The ability to correspond via e-mail and to send, receive, and view documents via your access to a reliable Internet connection is mandatory.

6. Enjoy a challenge

Online learning requires most students to spend more time per week per class than they would typically spend in a traditional classroom setting. The very nature of learning online requires more in-depth study and interaction with faculty and class materials than what is traditionally required. **It is expected that students spend a minimum study time of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.**

What is the overall philosophy of the curriculum?

The School of Social Work envisions a just and equitable world in which diverse individuals, families, and communities thrive. The curriculum in the School of Social Work at SJSU is guided by a **transcultural perspective for social work practice**. The transcultural perspective is infused within all of the courses in the School of Social Work. This model includes five elements: 1) cultural knowledge, 2) cultural competency, 3) power, privilege and oppression, 4) positionality and self-reflexivity, and 5) respectful partnership.

We are an advanced generalist program, as opposed to a “clinical” or “macro-focused” program.

Courses in the foundation year

The MSW curriculum includes a foundation year in which students develop competencies within five content areas, which include:

- o Field education

- o Human behavior in the social environment
- o Social policy
- o Social work practice
- o Social work research

Courses in the advanced/final year

In the advanced year, students will focus on developing advanced competencies. Students may choose a practice class based on their interests.

Electives Courses

* Not all electives are offered, depending on interest and available resources *

- o Please see our catalog of classes here:

https://catalog.sjsu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=2&poid=729&returnto=96

What special certificates or credentials are available to Online/Hybrid MSW Students?

We offer the Spanish Counseling Competency. This is for students demonstrating advanced levels of Spanish language proficiency and social work practice skills.

We also offer a Title IV-E Child Welfare Program that is limited to specific regions and to only current county employees. Please contact the Title IV-E coordinator for additional information at amy.lebichuck@sjsu.edu.

We offer the Pupil Personnel Services Credential (PPSC) for students interested in working in schools and becoming School Social Workers. Additional information can be found here: <https://www.sjsu.edu/socialwork/programs/cert-cred.php>

What are the differences between the on-campus program and the online/hybrid program?

	On-Campus Program	Online/Hybrid Program
Curriculum	Foundation year: 5 core curricular areas	Foundation year is the same as on-campus program: 5 core curricular areas
Format of academic courses (NOT field education)	In-person class format at the SJSU campus with some hybrid and online course offerings.	Online with a combination of <i>synchronous sessions</i> (i.e. all students log in from their computer at one time for a class session with professor) and <i>asynchronous sessions</i> (i.e. students can complete certain class sessions on

		their own time with a specified due date). Classes are usually held on weekday evenings. Students are advised to keep Monday through Thursday evenings available for classes. Classes are held after 6:00pm and may end at 9:30pm.
Length of field education	1,200 hours (total minimum) required 480 hours in year 1 (16 hours minimum a week) 720 hours in year 2 (24 hours minimum a week) *Any changes to the above will be announced through the Field Office	1,200 hours (total minimum) required 600 hours in year 1 (16 hours minimum a week) 600 hours in year 2 (16 hours minimum a week) *Any changes to the above will be announced through the Field Office *Agencies often require more than the minimum of 16 hours per week, especially in the final-year
In-person field education typically required?	Yes	Yes
Training programs, credentials and certificates offered	Pupil Personnel Services Credential (PPSC) Spanish Language Counseling, Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Program	Pupil Personnel Services Credential (PPSC) Spanish Counseling Competency Title IV-E is only for eligible students who are current County employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Standing students are not eligible for Title IV-E
*As 6/25/24	Please see SJSU Bursar's website for latest update for on-campus fees	2-yr MSW program: 60 total units; not including books and other expenses 1-yr AS MSW program 37 total units; not including books and other expenses Cost per unit can be found here

How is Field Education taught?

- o The curricular design for field education includes a field instructor who provides weekly supervision and works with the Faculty Field Liaison who is an instructor with the School of Social Work. The Faculty Field Liaison communicates with the Field Instructor and the student to develop and monitor the student's learning goals. The Faculty Field Liaison also facilitates field seminars for students in their first year of field education (monthly for on campus students and bi-weekly for students in the online/hybrid program) and 1 field seminar per semester for students in their final year of field education. The seminar schedule for the final year students in the online/hybrid Program has not been finalized but will likely include bi-weekly seminars.

- o In both years of field education, the placement provides learning experiences in direct service delivery to individuals, families, couples, and/or small groups. This may include counseling, crisis intervention, case management, and/or assessment.
- o Field education also includes indirect practice interventions that offer students an opportunity to utilize community social work interventions. This may include social work administration and staff development, community organizing, legislative work, policy formulation, advocacy, and/or program development.
- o The final year of the MSW program builds upon foundation content attained in the first year. The final year curriculum prepares students for practice from a transcultural multi-systems perspective. Because the mission of the MSW program has a special emphasis on meeting the needs of Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and other marginalized, oppressed and disenfranchised populations, families and communities are seen as critical nurturing and sustaining systems as well as important focal points for the problem-solving process.

Internship

- First-year internship is a **minimum** of 16 hours per week and requires a total of 600 hours by the end of the Spring session.
- Second-year (final year) internship is also a **minimum** of 16 hours per week and requires a total of 600 hours by the end of the Spring session.
- A minimum of 1,200 field internship hours are needed in order to graduate in this program.
- Agencies often require more than the minimum of 16 hours per week, especially in the final year
- Using an employment site as an internship site must be requested and is not guaranteed to be approved.
- Summer internships are not available at this time and students do not participate in internships during the summer.
- Some agencies prefer final-year students who can intern 24 hours per week, so if students have that flexibility, they might have more options for final-year internship placement.

***Please note that if there are any changes to the number of required hours, the Field Education Office will notify students.**

***The vast majority of internships occur between 8 AM to 5 PM during regular business hours. Weekend only and evening only internships are rare and should not be expected. Students should expect to complete at least 16 hours of internship per week between Mondays and Fridays.**

Internship Agencies

Students may propose agencies for internship sites. The process is to provide the agency name, location, name of agency representative and contact information so that the School can assess whether this is an appropriate internship site. Please contact the Field Education Office for additional details.

For any field-related questions and inquiries, please contact the Field Education Office by contacting socialworkfieldeducation@sjsu.edu.

What is the Final-Year Special Project (SCWK 298)?

The 298 project is the Capstone experience required for all MSW students. It is an independent research project conducted usually with the support of your internship agency and your supervising SCWK 298 professor. Some projects are non-internship related.

Students are encouraged to think about what topics or issues they would be interested in when they take the SCWK 240 research course.

It might be helpful to have a discussion with your professor who is teaching the research classes.

Currently, faculty-led research project opportunities for Online/Hybrid MSW students (i.e., as research assistants) are very limited.

How to remain connected with the School?

All MSW students have access to faculty via class sessions, office hours, and appointments. Student colleagues network in various ways, including in-person and online. All students are welcomed to attend University and School events, and occasionally there are activities away from SJSU, i.e., Lobby Days in Sacramento, for which students might want to travel.

Please read the news and announcements, especially from SIRC, to learn about activities, scholarships, employment and career growth opportunities, and co-sponsored activities with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Social Work Alumni Association (SWAA), student organizations, and the School.

Important: Please start checking and using your official SJSU email address if you have not already done so. Please note that if you forward your emails from your official SJSU email inbox to your personal third-party email inbox, you increase your risk for a data breach. Official emails will be sent to your SJSU email and Canvas messages and Canvas announcements will be sent to your SJSU email address. Please keep your email address and contact information current; students are responsible for maintaining current contact information and checking communication and emails regularly.

Although Online/Hybrid students do not meet in-person for classes, it is highly recommended to network with and get and provide support to peers in the program through group projects, study groups, and other forms of communication.

Students may take initiative to coordinate social events and invite others in the program to join.

Previous ideas for support and networking include gathering by geographic region, if possible.

Students are encouraged to participate in other social events organized by the University, School, SWGSA, and On-Campus students.

How to be involved with the Social Work Graduate Student Association (SWGSA) and other student activities and efforts?

All MSW students are automatically part of SWGSA. We encourage students to be involved with activities and leadership as time and opportunity allow. There is a formal position called “**Online/Hybrid MSW Program Student Liaison**” on the SWGSA leadership.

- o Students are encouraged to make sure they receive notifications from and check the “Announcements” section of the MSW Student Information and Resource Center (SIRC) and the Online/Hybrid MSW Program Information Center (PIC) on Canvas regularly.

What SJSU Campus services and resources are available?

Please check the following link: <https://www.sjsu.edu/learnanywhere/campus-resources/index.php> and this link: <https://www.sjsu.edu/professional/resources/index.php>

- [Career Center](#)
- [ECampus](#) and [IT](#) are available to students
- Health Benefits: *Registered Special Session and Open University students may access SHC services during any school term/session/intercession by paying a fee per visit. To set up an appointment, call (408) 924-6122 or stop by the SHC appointment desk in room 106 of the Health Building.* <https://www.sjsu.edu/studenthealth/>
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#): Educational counselors are available to assist enrolled students.
- [Accessible Education Center \(AEC\)](#): Comprehensive services for students with disabilities.

All Online/Hybrid MSW students are considered Special Session students. Please note that Special Session students are eligible to receive a SJSU Tower ID Card. However, students must first become a member of Associated Students (AS) by paying the Student Association fee. For detailed information, please check the following link: <https://www.sjsu.edu/bursar/students-parents/tower-card.php>.

Where do I need to go when I have financial aid related questions?

Please contact the [Financial Aid and Scholarship Office \(FASO\)](#) directly for all financial aid related questions. Financial planning is very important throughout the program. It is very important that students know how many units they need to take and pay for during winter and summer sessions, so they can plan ahead and may accept higher amounts of student loans offered during the academic year.

- **Federal Direct Loan Unsub Stafford 1 (Federal Student Aid)**
Tuition fee deferrals are automatically assigned to a student's MySJSU once all requested financial aid documents are received and file noted as complete.

The tuition fee deferral is viewed under "Other Indicators" located on the right hand side of the Student Center page on MySJSU. Select "Details" to view the semester that corresponds to your tuition fee deferral.

- ***"Pay out of Pocket" - Students must pay attention to due dates according to MYSJSU. If you are not able to pay on-time, consult with FASO for payment plan options. If payments are not made or addressed, students will be dropped from classes. Pay out of Pocket" is defined as funds coming from personal sources, or non-federal or non-SJSU related financial aid (i.e., bank loans, credit cards, private/family loans, etc.)***
 - o *On-Campus students might also receive California state grants according to income criteria, but **Special Session students (i.e., Online/Hybrid MSW Students) are not usually eligible for these state grants.** A state grant is money students receive but do not need to pay back.*

If students need to take out more loans than what is offered during the academic year, Federal Grad PLUS loan can be an option for those who meet credit eligibility requirements. More information can be found here: <https://www.sjsu.edu/faso/>

It is highly recommended for students to apply to as many scholarships as possible if finances are a concern. There are a number of Campus Based Scholarships available. More information can be found here: <https://www.sjsu.edu/faso/>. The School will also share scholarship opportunities on MSW Student Information and Resource Center on Canvas.

School of Social Work Scholarships are usually announced in January and are available to all MSW students. A few Online/Hybrid MSW students have been recipients of these scholarships.

Where can I find information about enrollment, fees, and textbooks?

Students should pay close attention to School email announcements regarding class schedule and enrollment dates. Please also check your MYSJSU account and see registration, enrollment, and fee due dates when the schedule is announced each session.

Please note that On-Campus and Online/Hybrid class schedules are different. Online students will often see On-Campus classes posted earlier than Online/Hybrid classes.

In general, **fee due dates are 3 days from the date of enrollment.** Please review [the Professional and Global Engagement](#) (PaCE) FAQ page for all questions including "Registration", "Financial Aid", "Tuition due dates," and etc for special session students

For the 2024-2025 AY, the cost of the program is \$600 per unit. Starting from the Fall of 2025, there will be an annual fee increase of 5% for each subsequent academic year. This increase will be applied to the entire year, from Fall through Summer. *Fee increases are planned as follows:

Fall 2024 to Summer 2025: \$600 Per Unit

Fall 2025 to Summer 2026: \$630 Per Unit
Fall 2026 to Summer 2027: \$662 Per Unit
Fall 2027 to Summer 2028: \$695 Per Unit
Fall 2028 to Summer 2029: \$729 Per Unit

**Fees are expected to increase by 5% in each subsequent academic year starting in Fall 2025. SJSU makes every effort to keep student costs to a minimum; however, fees listed in published schedules may need to be increased to maintain the high quality of education we offer and are subject to change upon approval by the Board of Trustees, the Chancellor, or the campus President, as appropriate. The above fees may change. The above fee schedule is current as of June 2024.*

Textbooks

Textbooks are assigned by the School and respective professors for each class. Often there are online purchasing options or instructions for text rental/purchase specific to each class. There are also sometimes e-book options that professors will use. Check Amazon and other websites for pricing information.

Students may ask if anyone is selling their used books on “**SWGSA**” Facebook page. Also there are books in the back room of the SSW Office.

When and where will the Graduation commencement be held?

SJSU sponsors the official University Commencement each year in May. This event has been free to all students and their guests, although limited tickets are available depending on venue size. Master degree “hooding” and ceremonial diplomas are awarded at the SJSU event; these aspects are not in school or department ceremonies.

The School of Social Work Convocation is organized by SWGSA and students (Graduation Planning Committee). Please contact your SWGSA representative for additional information regarding graduation planning.

Students are highly recommended to get involved if they can. It is important to be informed of the graduation-related updates and announcements by checking the MSW Student Information and Resource Center on Canvas regularly.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, graduation ceremonies are no longer held in person until further notice.

If you have any questions, please contact the School at SocialWork@sjsu.edu and put "MSW Program Inquiry" in the subject line.

Am I eligible for licensure in other states upon graduation?

Students are advised to determine, prior to enrollment, whether the program meets licensure requirements in the State or Territory if the student decides to practice outside of California. Each state may have multiple requirements that must be met. Because licensure requirements are subject to change, all prospective licensees should visit the social work regulatory website of the states they plan to practice on a regulator basis.