

SMITH COLLEGE SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL WORK
Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL ADMISSION

When is your application deadline?

Applications are accepted beginning September 1. While the deadline for filing applications is February 21, early application is strongly encouraged. Non-Binding Early Admission and early review of field placement requests will be given to those who submit a complete application on or before the Non-Binding Early Admission deadline of January 5. In addition, those applying for Non-Binding Early Admission will receive notification of their admission decision, geographic location of their field placement and the preliminary financial aid (award from Smith) by early February.

How long after completing my application will I hear about your decision?

Once all materials are received, it takes about 4 -6 weeks to review and decide on an application.

What is the average length of the autobiographical sketch required in the application?

As the autobiographical sketch is a very personal statement, the length of this assignment varies by individual. The average sketch, however, ranges from 6 – 10 pages (double spaced).

I have a BSW. Will I receive advanced standing?

The Smith BSW Advanced Standing program (AS) is designed for students who have completed their BSW from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. The BSW AS program allows students to complete their MSW in 18 months (June through the following December) rather than the full 27-month program for non-BSW graduates. The AS program includes two on-campus academic summer sessions (10 weeks each) and one ongoing 15-month internship. This unique design complements the skills gained in a BSW program, while at the same time providing opportunities for a rich clinical internship experience.

Is an interview required?

Interviews are not required. On occasion, the Admission Committee may request an interview if they feel one would be helpful to them in the assessment of your application.

What is the size of your entering class?

Our entering class varies from year to year but tends to range from 110 to 130 students.

What is the average age of your students?

Last year's entering class included students ranging in age from 21 – 63 with the average age being 30.

NON-BINDING EARLY ADMISSION

Is Non-Binding Early Admission at the SSW the same Early Decision at undergrad schools?

No. Non-Binding Early Admission was developed at the SSW to help give students for whom the geography of their field placement or financial aid are deciding factors in their application to Smith. The goal of the program is to provide students with all of the information they need to make an informed decision. Those who apply by Jan. 5 will receive an admission decision by the first week in February. Those accepted will also receive notification about the geographic location of their field placement and a preliminary financial aid award letter (funds from Smith only, not external resources.)

Are there any reasons why I shouldn't apply Non-Binding Early Admission?

Yes. If Smith is your first choice, by all means, apply for Non-Binding Early Admission. If, however, Smith is one of several schools you are considering, it is not to your advantage to apply during Non-Binding Early Admission. Because of our calendar, Non-Binding Early Admission candidates will receive their admission decision well before they hear decisions from other Schools for Social Work. Once you receive our acceptance, you will be asked to accept or decline our offer within 2 weeks; you will not have heard from most other schools during this time period.

Is Non-Binding Early Admission Binding?

No.

If I don't go Non-Binding Early Admission, do I jeopardize my financial aid?

Not at all. There is no financial advantage or disadvantage to applying Non-Binding Early Admission; all financial aid applicants are reviewed based on their need.

If I get accepted through Non-Binding Early Admission, can I defer my decision to the Regular Decision Deadline?

No, you must accept or decline your offer of admission within two weeks.

Are there limited slots in Non-Binding Early Admission?

Yes, a limited number of slots are reserved for early admission. You could receive one of three decisions through Non-Binding Early Admission : accept, decline, or defer to regular decision. In the later, your application is moved to the regular decision pool and re-reviewed after the final application deadline.

FIELD WORK INTERNSHIPS

When will I hear about my field placement assignment?

Provided a student has completed his/her field placement form and has submitted their tuition deposit, decisions about the geographic area of a student's field assignment will be made by early-February (for those who have applied by the Non-Binding Early Admission acceptance date of January 5) and by April 30 (for those who have applied by the final February 21 deadline.)

Can I be placed close to home?

The process of assigning field placements is a careful and thoughtful one designed to match each student's educational needs with a specific agency. Although the School is unable to guarantee a particular geographic area for field placement, students are asked to identify their preferred geographic choices. The School is committed to taking into account the personal circumstances of students when making placement decisions and works with students to respond to these circumstances while at the same time meeting their educational needs.

How likely is it that I will be placed in my first geographic choice?

The vast majority of students receive their first or second choice of field placement. (Recent statistics show that between 80-85% of get their first choice and another 5-10% get their second choice.)

Can I stay in the same area for my second year?

Generally, students are placed in a different agency in the second year but it can oftentimes be in the same city if that's what you wish. Many students who are able to move find that the opportunity to work in two different geographic areas is a real asset; for those who are not able to move, the School has a good mix of agencies in each area so it is often possible to stay in an area across the 2 years.

TUITION AND FINANCIAL AID

When are financial aid awards announced?

Financial aid packets will be mailed to all applicants by the end of December. We encourage applicants to complete and submit financial aid materials as soon as possible - even if you have not yet heard about your acceptance decision. If you apply during Non-Binding Early Admission and submit a Preliminary Financial Aid form by January 5, you will receive information on your preliminary award by early February. Final financial aid award letters (which confirm preliminary awards) begin to go out the end of March for those who file promptly. The final deadline for financial aid consideration is April 1.

What is the range of financial aid awards?

Financial aid awards range from \$1,000 - \$15,000 per year. (This refers to Smith aid only, not to funding sources outside of Smith.)

What is the average financial aid award?

The average financial aid award from the SSW is about \$7,000; the first \$1,000 of which is in the form of a low interest loan.

MISCELLANEOUS

What can social workers do?

Social work has been listed as one of the occupations with the largest projected job growth in the country at least through 2006 (U.S. News and World Reports). Graduates from the School for Social Work take on varying roles in different settings including, but certainly not limited to: schools, private practice with children, adults or families, hospitals, street work with gangs, oncology units, prisons, campus mental health offices, mental health agencies, adoption agencies, battered women's shelters, eating disorders programs, juvenile detention support programs, and much more.

Do you have a Career Placement Office?

We have an excellent field placement program which offers a wide variety of services dedicated to helping students find a job after graduation. Experienced staff members provide resume and cover letter review, on-campus workshops during the summer academic sessions, and individual career counseling both on and off campus. The Office also houses individual reference files, a career resource library, and the Smith College Career Advisory Service, a computerized network of 15,000 college and social work alumni who have volunteered to advise other smith students and alumni about their work and post-Smith studies. Services are free to students and to graduates for two years following graduation.

What is the average starting salary of your graduates?

In 2006, the average starting salary for graduates who responded to our inquiry was \$38,729. The vast majority was able to secure a job in 3 months or less.

Where can I find information about social work licensing in my state?

For information on licensing by state, please visit: http://www.aswb.org/lic_req.shtml