

Financial Aid Information for MSW Students¹

We encourage all MSW students to pursue grants and loans available at the Office of Financial Aid on campus. This list below is intended to help you in your search for funding for the MSW Program. The reality is that most of our graduates finish the program with loan debt. The possibility of loan forgiveness exists after working in the public sector for many years. More information on loan forgiveness can be found at the following link:

<http://www.socialworkers.org/loanforgiveness/default.asp>

The resources on this list may or may not fit social work and your particular circumstances but you have to start somewhere. The way to find funding, both for individuals and agencies, is to cast a very wide net to start with. There is no standardized application form that can be used for all scholarships, and the due dates for applications depend on the source of the scholarship.

Please note that in most cases you cannot seek funding until you are admitted, and sometimes not until you start the program. Student loans are an exception to this generalization.

1. UNCC Office of Financial Aid:

<http://finaid.uncc.edu/>

ScholarshipSearch – the University has a scholarship database you can use.
<http://finaid.uncc.edu/ScholarshipSearch.asp>

2. Scholarships through the College of Health and Human Services

Our CHHS website lists some scholarships for social work students. MSW students are eligible for a \$3,500 Ed Chapin Memorial Scholarship which is awarded each academic year to a BSW or MSW student. See

http://www.health.uncc.edu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=40&Itemid=76

¹ This handout includes numerous websites where you can find helpful resources. Websites change fairly often and you might not be able to find what you're looking for. We apologize in advance for this common problem and invite you to notify the Department at this email address: rmezell1@uncc.edu.

3. Scholarships through the Graduate School

The UNC Charlotte Graduate School's website lists various scholarships for which MSW students may apply. Scholarships such as Zonta Club of Charlotte Fellowship, Joanna R. Baker Memorial Graduate Fellowship, and Faye Jacques Memorial Graduate Fellowship are possible sources of funding for MSW students.

- "Funding a Graduate Education" (<http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/funding/overview.html>) has useful information about residency requirements, tuition and fees.
- The Graduate School has a web-page, "Financial Aid," with information on state and federal aid, grants, loans and scholarships:

<http://finaid.uncc.edu/ScholarshipSearch.asp>

- Graduate School Philanthropic Awards:

<http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/funding/philanthropic-awards.html>

- Externally Funded Awards and Fellowships:

<http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/funding/externally-funded-awards.html>

4. HRSA scholarships for Disadvantaged Students

For the past several years, the MSW Program has received grants from the federal government's Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to use for Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students. For 2010-2011, our program received more than \$168,000 which was used to fund tuition and fees for eligible MSW students who applied for the funds. Scholarships were for approximately \$3,400 per semester. Students qualify based on having an adjusted gross income that is less than 200% of the federal poverty line, as justified by your tax return. There is no guarantee that the program will be funded again, but it has been for the last 5 years. Once students are accepted into the MSW program, they are contacted about the HRSA scholarship application process and qualification rules. We are optimistic we will continue to be able to channel these federal funds to our students. For summer session 2011, the Department will solicit applications from new Advanced Standing students.

5. Child Welfare Collaborative Scholar/Waiver Students

MSW students who have an interest in working within Child Welfare in North Carolina are eligible to apply to the Child Welfare Collaborative as a "waiver" student or if funding is available may apply to be selected as a Child Welfare scholar student. If selected, students receive in-state tuition and a stipend for the academic year. MSW waiver or scholar students must complete the following:

- A. Child Welfare course (SOWK 7090) which must be completed with a grade of “B” or better prior to their field placement; and
- B. A Field Placement at a NC County DSS working within Child and Protective Services; and
- C. Complete Transfer of Learning Activities: Upon successful completion of the Child Welfare course and Field Placement, “waiver students” and Child Welfare Scholars will receive a certificate indicating they have successfully completed the Pre-service Training competencies and may be hired at a NC county DSS with one year of social work experience.
- D. “Waiver” students are not obligated to work in a county DSS upon graduation. CWC Scholar students must seek employment within Departments of Social Services Departments throughout North Carolina upon graduation and complete the required employment as per their Repayment Agreement. If the CWC scholar does not complete this requirement all funds received by the scholar must be repaid as per their signed agreement.

6. Graduate Assistantships

The Department of Social Work offers a limited number of Graduate Assistantships (GA) where students provide administrative or research support to faculty and staff in the Department. They receive an hourly wage for their work. Once accepted to the MSW Program, if you are interested in applying for a GA position you may complete the application form found at the website below and direct it to Ms. Nohra Nunez, Administrative Support Associate to the Chair. The Chair makes selection decisions based on the applicant’s qualifications and the MSW Program needs for the upcoming year. Selections are generally announced during the summer prior to enrollment.

<http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/images/stories/forms/AsstAppl.pdf>

Because we have limited funds for Department of Social Work GA positions, we encourage MSW students to also apply for GA, RA (research assistantships), and TA (teaching assistantships) elsewhere on campus. You can contact departments across campus directly to inquire about openings or check departmental websites. The Graduate School collects postings of GA positions they are aware of and posts them here:

<http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/funding/54.html>

Assistantships vary in rate per hour, in number of hours per week, and in length of duration (per semester or academic year). MSW students are encouraged to remember that the MSW Program itself is very time consuming with classes, practicum, projects, papers, and reading. Our successful MSW students generally try to keep outside work hours to 10 or fewer per week. GA positions are awarded to the Department during the late spring.

7. Foundation for the Carolinas

The Foundation manages numerous scholarship funds. Visit the following website to check your eligibility. <http://www.ffc.org/Page.aspx?pid=691>

8. The Foundation Center

<http://www.foundationcenter.org/>

Scroll down the page at the following website to find a good interactive tutorial, “Finding Foundation Support for Your Education.”

<http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/faqs/html/finaid.html>

Foundation Grants to Individuals This is the primary resource for finding scholarships. You have to pay to use the online version, however. Free searches are available at The Foundation Center’s Cooperating Collections. These are libraries to which the Center disseminates their materials all over the country. Find a library close to you by going to the following site:

<http://foundationcenter.org/collections/>