



2026 MASTER OF ARTS IN SOCIAL WORK (MSW)

PERSONAL STATEMENT PROMPT

PERSONAL STATEMENT GUIDELINES

The Personal Statement provides you the opportunity to share your qualifications and competencies. This Personal Statement will be used to evaluate your critical thinking, self-reflective capacities, creativity, and advanced writing skills, as well as help us determine your appropriateness for the program and the profession. Failure to follow these guidelines or answer all of the questions will impact your overall rating score.

INSTRUCTIONS: Your Personal Statement must meet the following criteria:

- It must be written by you.
- It must be typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, and 4-6 pages in length.
- It must address each of the questions below.
- You have the option to write a narrative/essay or answer each question in order and number your responses to match the question you are answering (do not include the prompts/questions in your Personal Statement).
- In answering these questions, make sure not to use names or information that might violate the confidentiality of the individuals you decide to use in your descriptions.
- The document will be uploaded via Cal State Apply as part of your MSW application to the School of Social Work in Quadrant Four.

QUESTIONS:

1. How did you become interested in social work? What motivated you to choose social work as a profession?
2. Describe some traits and abilities that make you particularly suited for the profession of social work.
3. Specify your career objectives as a professional social worker.
4. Describe your professional social work activities. If you do not currently practice in social work, describe how your work or volunteer experience relates to professional social work activities. Please be as specific as possible in detailing the similarity to social work activities.
5. Describe a situation in which you were confronted with an ethical conflict. How did you

resolve it?

6. Our School of Social Work has a strong critical consciousness emphasis and values diversity, inclusion and self-reflection. Please describe your work and/or lived experience with diverse individuals and/or communities (differences can include age, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, physical or mental abilities, sexual orientation, etc.). Discuss how these experiences have:
 - Shaped your identity and self-awareness
 - Broadened your understanding of the role of social work in society
 - Influenced your understanding of and commitment to social justice
7. Discuss a social justice issue of interest to you. How do you envision a social worker's role in addressing the issue?
8. Please read the information about our MSW program below and describe your plan to accommodate the class and practicum education internship requirements and expected demands of our MSW program.

Our MSW program is rigorous and requires a significant commitment of time and resources from students. In order to answer Question #8, be sure to review the course schedule requirements for the program plan(s) for which you are applying that are posted on our website. In addition to coursework, students complete 16 hours per week in practicum education internship during weekday, regular agency hours. The exact schedule is determined by the student and the agency at the time of placement. Most students complete two full 8-hour days; however, at the discretion of the agency, some students may be permitted to complete the 16 hours in an alternate schedule of one 8-hour day and two 4-hour days.
9. Is there anything else you would like us to know as we consider your application? Please describe.
10. **Advanced Standing Applicants Only:** Please explain why you think you are a good fit for the Advanced Standing (AS) program. In addition to meeting the minimum requirements for the AS program, what do you believe has prepared you to succeed in this accelerated program?