



MSUSM
DENVER

Master of Social Work

Department of Social Work

Summer/Fall 2023 Master of Social Work Program Admissions Essay Requirements & Prompts

The Admissions Essay must be written and saved to the applicant's computer as a **Word or PDF file** prior to being uploaded to the application checklist. You will upload your essay **after** you submit your MSU Denver graduate application. The essay is a requirement for all applicants (both Regular Program and Advanced Standing).

Submission Requirements

The submission requirement is an **academic essay** which helps the admissions committee to evaluate your capacity and readiness for graduate education and advanced social work practice.

The admissions essay is a critical part of your admissions application and will be the basis for evaluating your writing skills, critical thinking skills, and capacity for self-awareness and personal growth. Be sure to include all required elements in an academic essay, using academic sources where appropriate (your ability to use and cite appropriate sources is an indicator of critical thinking) and follow [APA 7th Edition style](#). We strongly encourage applicants to thoroughly review and edit their submission prior to upload.

While some personal information is required in the essay (e.g. your strengths), you should be judicious in the use of self-disclosure. You are not expected to disclose intimate details of your life; however, if you choose to do so, you should do so only briefly and make it clear how the issue has been resolved so that you may now succeed in the program and the profession.

The maximum length of the entire essay is **no more than six pages** (12 pt. font, double spaced, title page and/or reference page do not count towards the page limit). This is not short answer and should not be bullet-pointed; you should address and arrange the required information in a coherent, well-structured essay. An abstract is not required.

Admissions Essay Prompts

Your essay should incorporate the following information:

1. the alignment of your personal philosophy and values with that of the profession;
2. your understanding of and commitment to diversity and social justice;
3. your professional experience;
4. your career plans and focus in the field of social work versus another helping profession (i.e., why social work?);
5. your strengths and weaknesses that are relevant to the social work profession;
6. describe a time you were given critical feedback – what was your reaction and how did that experience inform your development?;

7. how the MSU Denver MSW Program is best suited for your educational and professional goals; and
8. how you will manage the rigorous demands of graduate education.

The arrangement of this information is up to you; all must be addressed, but the order in which you do so should be guided by your writing style. Overall, we are looking that you understand the profession, are committed to it, and are ready for graduate-level work.

Writing Center Support and Feedback

Due to the large number of applications the MSW Program receives, the Department of Social Work regrettably cannot provide feedback on your admissions essay prior to submission.

However, the [MSU Denver Writing Center](#) does provide support for MSW Program applicants – please [visit their website](#) for more information and to schedule an appointment. When looking at available appointments, make sure to limit to “MSW applications” to get paired with a team member who can assist with graduate-level writing. When scheduling, make sure to select the following options:

- What is your standing at MSU Denver? **MSW program applicant**
- What type of appointment do you want? **Writing consultation** (if individual) or **group writing consultation** (if going as a group of 2-4 applicants)
- Course the writing is for (department): **Social Work – MSW**
- What department is your major? **Social Work**