



MSUSM
DENVER

Master of Social Work
Department of Social Work

**Summer/Fall 2024 Master of Social Work Program
Application Walkthrough**

Important Dates and Deadlines	2
Priority Consideration Deadline Overview & Requirements	2
Step One: MSU Denver Graduate Application	3
Application Fee Waiver Opportunities	3
Information on Recommendations	3
Step Two: Submit Transcripts.....	4
What transcripts need to be submitted?.....	4
Special Circumstances (international degrees, MSU Denver graduates, and previously submitted official transcripts)	5
Official and Unofficial Transcript Submission	5
Step Three: Upload Application Materials	6
Application Material Instructions	7
Personal Statement Requirements & Prompts (All Applicants)	7
Case Study Requirements & Prompts (Advanced Standing Applicants ONLY)	8
Petition for Advanced Standing (Advanced Standing Applicants ONLY).....	9
Optional: Supplemental Items	10
Is My Application Complete?	11

Important Dates and Deadlines

The MSW Program at MSU Denver has one admissions cycle annually. The application typically opens in early September, with a priority consideration deadline in late October and a final deadline in mid-January.

The application for a Summer/Fall 2024 start opened on **Tuesday, September 5, 2023**.

The priority consideration deadline for a Summer/Fall 2024 start will be **Monday, November 6, 2023 at 11:59 PM** (Mountain Time). You can read more about the priority consideration deadline below.

The final application deadline for a Summer/Fall 2023 start will be **Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 11:59 PM** (Mountain Time).

Please note: Application processing and review takes 7-9 weeks after the deadline to complete (*not from application submission*), and applicants are notified of their decision via email. The Office of Social Work Student Services will stay in close contact with you throughout the entire process. If you have any questions as you navigate the application process, please contact us at socialwork@msudenver.edu.

Priority Consideration Deadline Overview & Requirements

Applicants who submit all their materials by the **priority consideration deadline** of November 6 will have their application reviewed during the fall and early winter by the MSW Admission Committee. Those ranked in the very top of the pool of applicants will receive their admissions decision early, granting them a head start on:

- Preparing to start the program
- Securing a field placement
- Registering for classes

All other applicants who submit their application by this deadline will have their application rolled forward and will receive their admission decision after the final application deadline review period.

Although only a select few will receive priority admission, we encourage you to give it a try, submit your materials early, then sit back and relax.

Step One: MSU Denver Graduate Application

[ACCESS THE GRADUATE APPLICATION PORTAL](#)

Your entire MSW Program application will be completed through this application system. No materials will be submitted via other methods or platforms. **Note:** you do not have to complete the entire application in one sitting – you can save and come back at a later time. You will not be able to upload your admissions essay and/or case study until after submitting the graduate application.

To submit your graduate program application, you will need to:

- Fill out all required information;
- Enter 3 references for your **Recommendations**;
 - You will not be able to submit your application until you have entered three recommenders into the system.
 - Recommendations will all be completed through the online system. You should not collect or submit any physical letters of recommendation.
 - More information on the recommendation process can be found in below
- Pay the **\$50 graduate application fee**
 - If paying the application fee is a financial hardship, please see the information below regarding Colorado Free Application Days and the Application Fee Waiver Request form.

Application Fee Waiver Opportunities

This fall, Colorado Free Application Day\$ is back! The sixth-annual state-wide initiative will be held from **Tuesday, October 17 through Thursday, October 19, 2023**. If you **submit** your graduate application on one of those three days, your application fee will be automatically waived – no fee waiver code required! Do not click the “Finalize Application and Pay” button until Free Application Days, otherwise an application fee will be placed on your account.

If you are not able to submit your application during Free Application Days and paying the \$50 application fee is a financial hardship, you can fill out the [MSW Program 2024 Application Fee Waiver Request Form](#). **If you are requesting an application fee waiver, please do not click the “Finalize Application and Pay” button on the review page of your application until you hear back from us.** Fee waiver codes can only be entered on the “Signature” page of the application, and once that button is clicked you can no longer enter a fee waiver code.

Information on Recommendations

How many recommendations are required?

Three recommendations are required for application to the MSW Program at MSU Denver. Each recommendation is individually evaluated by the Admissions Committee. The committee can only evaluate three recommendations per application. Therefore, if you enter more than three recommenders into the system, it is your responsibility to exclude the recommendations you do not want reviewed by the committee prior to the deadline.

If you need assistance excluding recommendations, please email socialwork@msudenver.edu. If you have not excluded any recommendations from review, our office will take the first three

recommendations completed for review. You must have three completed recommendations by the application deadline for your application to be considered complete and eligible for review.

Who should my recommenders be?

Recommenders **should** be professional and **should not** be family, friends, and/or personal therapists. Professional recommenders include faculty, employment/volunteer supervisors, and professional colleagues.

It is strongly recommended that at least one recommendation come from a faculty member (when possible – the committee understands that applicants who have been out of school for some time may not have faculty able to provide recommendations) and one letter from a supervisor (employment or volunteer based).

Professional colleagues may serve as adequate recommenders if need be but use caution that the Admissions Committee highly values faculty and supervisor letters.

Recommenders should be able to speak to your academic and/or professional abilities as well as comment on your potential to succeed in graduate school and/or the field of social work. When considering your recommenders, think about who can write a strong recommendation for you.

Advanced Standing Applicants ONLY: you are required to have at least one recommendation from someone associated with your undergraduate social work program. This could include a faculty advisor, field director, field instructor, field liaison, or program director.

How will my recommenders complete the request?

As soon as you enter your recommenders into the system, they will receive an email with a unique link to complete their recommendation. Recommenders can start work on completing the recommendation as soon as they are entered in the system, even prior to you submitting your application!

What does the recommendation form look like?

Recommenders are asked to fill out two sections: a quantitative evaluation of the applicant's strengths and then written short answer responses for their personal evaluation of the applicant. You can [download an example of the recommendation form](#) to share with your recommenders. Recommenders will not upload a written narrative or letter of recommendation.

Step Two: Submit Transcripts

We can accept both official and unofficial transcripts during the admission process. Applicants must submit a transcript (official or unofficial) from each college or university attended for their application to be eligible for review. We encourage applicants to upload unofficial transcripts during the application process – official transcripts will only be required if accepted to the MSW Program. All transcripts should be submitted using one of the options outlined below. Please do **not** submit any materials to the Office of Admissions at MSU Denver. Failure to submit using one of the options below may result in a delay in processing your application.

What transcripts need to be submitted?

We require the submission of transcripts from **all** higher education institutions (colleges and universities) attended before we can review your application. ***Even if you later transferred the coursework to another***

school, we still need the transcript (official or unofficial) from the institution you originally took the courses at.

You do **not** need to submit high school transcripts as part of the MSW Program application process.

Special Circumstances (international degrees, MSU Denver graduates, and previously submitted official transcripts)

- If you **attended a college or university outside of the United States**, you must have your transcripts evaluated by either [WES](#), [ECE](#), or [SpanTran](#). Please make sure to request a **course-by-course evaluation**. We cannot accept un-evaluated transcripts for review or for admission to the MSW Program. Once your transcript has been evaluated, you will have it submitted directly following the official transcript instructions below.
 - If you only attended a college or university outside of the United States for a study abroad experience, an evaluation is **not** required **if** your U.S. transcript displays the course names, credits, and grades received for each course taken abroad. If your U.S. transcript does not contain this information, then you will need a WES, ECE, or SpanTran evaluation.
- If you **obtained an undergraduate degree from MSU Denver**, your official transcripts will automatically be associated with your application. This process may take up to 10 business days after application submission. Any transcripts you previously submitted to MSU Denver do not need to be re-submitted, however if you have taken coursework since graduation at another institution you will need to submit those transcripts.
- If you have **previously submitted official transcripts to MSU Denver**, they will be associated with your application after submission. This process may take up to 10 business days after application submission. If it has been more than 10 business days and a transcript that you previously submitted is not showing as received, please email socialwork@msudenver.edu with your full legal name, any former names, student ID # (if known), and date of birth so we can track down your transcripts.

Official and Unofficial Transcript Submission

Unofficial Transcripts

Unofficial transcripts can be uploaded to your admissions application either prior to submitting the application (on the Academic History page) **or** after submitting the application (via your Application Status/Checklist page)

Unofficial transcripts should show 1) credits received, 2) GPA, and 3) any degree awarded (including degree date). If you are currently enrolled in undergraduate studies, your current transcript does not need to show a degree awarded.

If you choose to upload unofficial transcripts and are accepted to the MSW Program, you will be accepted with the requirement that you submit official transcripts from all institutions attended prior to the start of MSW Program courses.

Official Transcripts

If you choose to submit official transcripts for admissions, please follow the instructions below. Transcripts must be submitted directly by the college or university or dropped off in their original sealed envelope to be considered official. Once transcripts have been opened by a student, they are considered unofficial. For an electronic transcript to be considered official, it must be sent directly by the college or university. Any transcripts emailed or uploaded by an applicant are considered unofficial.

Note: Due to the volume of transcripts received by the Office of Graduate Studies, it can take up to 10 business days from when an official transcript is received to get it processed and marked received in your application checklist.

- Submit Official Transcripts Electronically (Preferred Method)
 - Request official transcripts be sent electronically to gradtranscripts@msudenver.edu.
 - We can only accept electronic transcripts as official when they are sent directly by the college or university. Any electronic transcripts emailed by an applicant are considered unofficial.
- Submit Official Transcripts by Mail
 - Request official transcripts be sent by mail to:
Metropolitan State University of Denver
Office of Graduate Studies
PO Box 173362, Campus Box 48
Denver, CO 80217-3362

Important Note About Ordering Official Transcripts:

If you are ordering your transcripts and select to send them to a school, you may be forced to choose from a list of schools and will not be able to enter the gradtranscripts@msudenver.edu email or mailing address. If this is the situation, **do not** select MSU Denver as this will have your materials sent to the MSU Denver Office of Admissions and will delay processing. Instead, you should **select to send the transcripts to a third party** at which point you should be able to directly enter our information. Sending to a third party and directly entering the email or physical address you want them sent to should be an option at all institutions. We have had transcripts from all schools in Colorado and from schools across the U.S. sent to us via the gradtranscripts@msudenver.edu account and Office of Graduate Studies mailing address.

Step Three: Upload Application Materials

After submitting your MSU Denver Graduate Application, you can [log into your application account](#) at any time to check your application status page and upload any remaining required materials. Please note that you do not have to upload all materials at once.

For your application to be considered complete and eligible for review at the deadline, the following items must be marked as “received” or “received copy” in your application checklist:

- Transcripts from all institutions attended (see Step Two for details)
- Personal Statement (prompts and requirements below)
- Case Study (Advanced Standing applicants ONLY) (prompts, case, and requirements below)
- 3 Complete Recommendations

To re-send notification emails to your recommenders, visit the recommendations page (linked below your application checklist), click “Edit”, and then click “Send Reminder”. This is also where you can exclude a recommender and/or enter a new recommender if needed.

If you are applying to the Advanced Standing Program and your undergraduate social work degree was awarded/conferred from December 2013 to November 2017, the **Petition for Advanced Standing** will be added to your checklist after verification of degree date. You must also complete this form prior to the deadline for your application to be considered complete and eligible for review.

[CHECK YOUR APPLICATION STATUS](#)

Application Material Instructions

Personal Statement Requirements & Prompts (All Applicants)

The Personal Statement must be written and saved to the applicant's computer as a **Word or PDF file** prior to being uploaded to the application checklist.

The submission requirement is a **series of short answers in a single document** (Word or PDF) which helps the admissions committee to evaluate your readiness for graduate education and potential to succeed in advanced social work practice. We have provided a template you may use for crafting your submission that uses APA 7th edition formatting. When citing sources, please use [APA 7th edition citation methods](#). All personal statement short answers should be contained within one document and should comply with the listed word limits. Your document should be saved as a Word (.doc) or PDF (.pdf) file prior to upload.

You can download the personal statement template [from our application website](#). Please make sure to save it as a new file with a unique document name and delete the template instructions prior to uploading your response. For more information about formatting in APA 7th edition, visit the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) and download their [APA Sample Student Paper](#).

The personal statement is a critical part of your admissions application – this is how the admissions committee will get to know you and be able to evaluate your writing skills, your critical thinking, and your capacity for self-awareness, reflection, and growth. We strongly encourage applicants to thoroughly review and edit their statement prior to upload.

Be sure to fully answer each of the required prompts in your submission! While these are being submitted as short answers, we still expect full sentences and paragraphs, please do not use a bulleted list.

While some personal information is required in the essay (e.g. your past experiences), 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 you are in a place to succeed in the program and the profession.

Personal Statement Prompts

Please answer the following prompts:

- 1. Past Experiences and Why Social Work (250 word limit):** What professional and personal experiences have inspired you to pursue social work and social justice (versus another helping profession)? Please highlight any skills, professional work, volunteer work, and/or lived experiences that you see adding to the diversity of the MSU Denver MSW Program community and the field of social work. Please also include any experiences in which you've exercised leadership and/or responsibility.
- 2. Values and Alignment (250 word limit):** Describe your understanding of the social work profession, its core values, and code of ethics. How do your personal and professional values align with the social work values? Are there any potential value-based or ethical conflicts you might experience? If so, how do you plan to address or reconcile these conflicts?
- 3. Strengths and Growth (250 word limit):** If admitted to the MSW Program at MSU Denver, what would be the greatest strengths you bring with you to graduate study and the field of social work? What would be your greatest areas for growth?
- 4. ADEI and Anti-Opressive Practice (750 word limit):** The 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the accrediting body for the MSW Program at MSU Denver, charges programs to "integrate anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) approaches across the curriculum". The Master of Social Work Program at MSU

Denver is seeking students who are committed to ADEI work in their education and professional practice. To that end, this prompt has three parts that we are asking you to address:

1. How do you define each of these terms in your own words: anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion? (250 word limit)
2. How do oppression and other issues related to ADEI impact the communities you intend to serve as a social worker? (250 word limit)
3. How have you worked to develop awareness of oppression and other issues related to ADEI and what are areas where you'd like to grow in your awareness during your time in the MSW Program if admitted? (250 word limit)

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**

Case Study Requirements & Prompts (Advanced Standing Applicants ONLY)

The Case Study should be completed by Advanced Standing applicants and must be written and saved to the applicant's computer as a **Word or PDF file** prior to being uploaded to the application checklist.

The case study is an important part of your application because it reflects your ability to think critically about a situation and indicates your level of knowledge about social work. The case study is assessed based upon its level and quality of comprehensiveness, appropriateness, clarity, and academic writing.

Your essay must incorporate the following:

- not to exceed 4 double-spaced pages, using one of the following fonts: 11-point Arial, 11-point Calibri, 10-point Lucinda Sans Unicode, 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Georgia, or 10-point Computer Modern;
- be written from the perspective of the hospital social worker;
- provide the Admissions Committee a clear picture of your ability to construct a cohesive, academic essay that demonstrates your readiness for graduate-level work;
- synthesize your foundational social work knowledge and combine academic sources to support your rational (references are expected and [APA 7th Edition style](#) should be followed); and
- provide the information requested below in a well-formed essay (that is, incorporate the required information into an essay) and NOT in short answer form.

Case Study Prompts:

1. Describe your understanding of the current situation and how things are the way they are.
2. How do you explain the problem, the dynamics, the strengths, and the challenges this family faces? Your explanation should be supported by scholarly sources.
3. Develop an action plan. Describe your action plan to address the issues presented.
4. What are the cultural considerations for working with this family? Support with scholarly sources.
5. How do the macro systems impact the way you serve this family? What changes would you like to see in these systems and how would you go about creating change?

Case:

Ab is a 94-year-old Hmong female living alone in a house she owns in Denver. Her son, Teeb, and his partner, Zoov, check in on her each day, give her medications and prepare her meals for the day. Each week, they come in to clean the house. Ab has dementia and takes medications for mood, mental functioning, and high blood pressure.

Ab has had a series of physical injuries stemming from falls over the past few months. Her son, Teeb, entered the house two weeks ago and found Ab laying on the floor. She had fallen out of bed and sustained a hip injury making her unable to get up and call for help. She had been on the floor for 20 hours.

Teeb called for an ambulance and Ab was eventually placed in a rehabilitative facility. At the facility, Ab refused to take her medication which triggered dementia related aggression. She was transferred to a local hospital where she was treated and stabilized.

When Ab is on her medication, she is calm and receptive to treatment. When Teeb's partner, Zoov is around, he appears to have a calming influence on Ab and she more readily complies with taking medication.

At the hospital, Ab was assigned a room with a male nurse on duty. Ab indicated she needed to use the restroom; the nurse insisted, in accordance with hospital protocol due to the nature of Ab's injuries, on physically assisting her to the bathroom. Ab became agitated and struck the nurse several times with her cane when he refused to "leave her alone."

Ab stayed in the hospital for a few nights, was stabilized on her medication, and her medical team was ready to release her since she was able to walk 200 feet without assistance. The hospital staff told Teeb that although Ab is not fully recovered, she was fine to return home. You, the social worker, contacted the rehab facility and found out they would not accept Ab back due to her being labeled as aggressive.

Teeb and Zoov are concerned about Ab's ability to be at home alone. Ab is insisting that she go home and she refuses to go to a nursing home. Teeb and Zoov live in a small one-bedroom house. They both work full time, have a modest income that covers their expenses and are unable to provide the level of care that Ab needs.

Ab has stated several times that she does not want to be a burden. She has threatened suicide in the past, but she also states that she would never fully go through with it as she is Catholic and that is against her religious beliefs.

Petition for Advanced Standing (Advanced Standing Applicants ONLY)

The Petition for Advanced Standing is built into the application checklist and will be completed there if required.

This form is only required for individuals whose bachelors degree in social work is more than 6 years old.

The Advanced Standing Program is reserved for those who have earned a bachelors in social work from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited program within the last 6 years as of the start of MSW Program courses in June 2024. However, applicants with a degree older than 6 years, but still less than 10 years old as of June 2024, may petition the MSW Program to review their eligibility for Advanced Standing. Eligibility is determined upon the applicant's extent and level of current professional activity and development in the field of social work. Applicants whose bachelor's in social work degree is older than 10 years must apply to the Regular Program.

- If you earned your bachelors in social work between **December 2017 and present**, you do **not** need to submit the Petition for Advanced Standing
- If you earned your bachelors in social work between **December 2013 and November 2017**, you **must** submit the Petition for Advanced Standing as part of your MSW Program application if you want to be considered for Advanced Standing.
- If you earned your bachelors in social work degree in **November 2013 or earlier**, you are not eligible for Advanced Standing and may submit the Regular Program application.

Optional: Supplemental Items

Applicants may upload supplemental items to their application checklist. This is **not** a required step in the application process. There is no guarantee that the Admissions Committee will review any uploaded supplemental materials. As such, if an uploaded document is a critical component, applicants are encouraged to refer to the document in their admissions essay. Items uploaded as supplemental items are not evaluated as part of the formal review, but may serve to answer some questions or paint a more comprehensive picture of the applicant.

Is My Application Complete?

Your application is considered complete and eligible for review if:

- You have submitted your graduate application, including either paying the \$50 application fee, having it waived on Free Application Days, or entering a fee waiver code;
- Your transcripts from all previously attended institutions have a green checkmark on your checklist;
- You uploaded your written materials (personal statement and case study if applicable) and they have a green checkmark;
- Three letters of recommendation have a green checkmark

All four items listed above **must** be complete by the application deadline for your application to be eligible for review.

The only item on your list that can be incomplete at the deadline is the “UGD Degree Conferral” items if you submitted unofficial transcripts or if your undergraduate degree is still in progress (official transcripts will only be required if accepted). Even if your undergraduate degree shows as complete on your unofficial transcript, the “UGD Degree Conferral” item will remain incomplete until after we receive official transcripts showing its completion – this is fine and allowed at this point in the admission process!

Your application checklist will help you keep track of your journey to a complete application. We encourage you to check it whenever you have questions about your application status. If you are unsure of your status after reviewing your checklist, please email socialwork@msudenver.edu.