



MSUSM
DENVER

Master of Social Work
Department of Social Work

Summer/Fall 2024 Master of Social Work Program Personal Statement Requirements & Prompts

The Admissions 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. You will upload your responses **after** you submit your MSU Denver graduate application. The personal statement is a requirement for all applicants (both Regular Program and Advanced Standing).

Submission Requirements

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-Oppressive 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:
 - a. How do you define each of these terms in your own words: anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion? (250 word limit)
 - b. How do oppression and other issues related to ADEI impact the communities you intend to serve as a social worker? (250 word limit)
 - c. 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**