



MSUSM
DENVER

Master of Social Work
Department of Social Work

Summer/Fall 2026 Master of Social Work Program Personal Statement Requirements & Prompts

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 uploading.

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 Essay Questions

1. **Past experience & why social work (250 word limit):** What specific professional and personal experiences have inspired you to pursue social work (versus another helping profession)? How have these experiences prepared you for working in the field of social work, which focuses on social justice?

2. **Values & alignment (250 word limit):** Describe an ethical dilemma or values conflict you had in the past and how you dealt with it? How does this experience prepare you for addressing the ethical principles of social work?
3. **Strengths & Areas of Development (250 word limit):** If admitted to the MSW Program at MSU Denver, what strengths—such as personal qualities, lived experiences, skills, or knowledge—would you bring to your graduate studies and to the field of social work? Describe how you would apply ONE of your strengths as a social work practitioner. What areas of personal development (personal qualities, lived experience, skills, or knowledge) do you most need to strengthen as you prepare for a career in social work?
4. **Commitment to ADEI (250 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.

Discuss an experience you have had with engaging in anti-racist, diversity, equity or inclusive practice (this could be a personal lived experience). What specific role did you play in engaging in this work? As you think about your own personal and professional development of ADEI practice, in what specific areas do you need to develop greater depth of experience and knowledge?

5. **Personal Essay additional prompt:** Briefly describe (1-5 sentences) whether you used Generative AI in the process of writing your personal statement and if so, how you used this tool and the prompts you used.