

School of Social Work

University of Missouri- St. Louis

The Master of Social Work Program

Application Information

This packet includes information about:

- Admissions requirements of the school
- Probationary Admission: Restricted student status
- The Graduate School Application form
- The MSW Program Application form
- Information on submitting transcripts
- Instructions for securing references, with forms
- Writing your personal statement

A. Admissions Requirements:

1. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. The undergraduate education must reflect a sound liberal arts foundation, including courses in the humanities, the social and behavioral sciences, and the physical sciences, including a course in human biology (or evidence of content in human biology from another course) and research methods or statistics.
2. An undergraduate cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale and 2.75 or better for major field. Transcripts must be sent from the institutions directly to the Graduate Admissions office, UM- St. Louis, 217 Millennium Center, One University Boulevard, St. Louis MO 63121-4400.
3. Three references from persons who can address the applicant's ability and potential for graduate education and professional social work practice. If you have graduated in the past five (5) years, at least **two** (2) of your references must be from professors in your major field of study who taught you and the third from an employer or work supervisor who is unrelated to you. If you graduated more than five (5) years ago, please include at least **two** (2) references from an employer or work supervisor who are unrelated to you. References from family or friends will not be accepted. Reference Forms are provided in this packet.
4. Three short essays which address (1) your career goals; (2) life experiences which have contributed to your commitment to the profession of social work; and (3) your reflections on oppression and discrimination of persons in our society. Instructions for writing these essays are contained in this packet.
5. Completion of the Graduate School application enclosed in this packet.
6. Completion of the MSW application form, mental health and criminal history statement, and NASW Code of Ethics certification enclosed in this packet.

7. A non-refundable application fee of \$35: personal check, bank check, or money order.

The first application deadline is February 15 for all students (full or part-time) seeking admission for the Fall semester. A second deadline, April 15, will be used if the class is not filled after the first deadline. All materials, including transcripts and recommendations, must be received in the Graduate Admissions office at UM- St. Louis by this deadline.

B. Probationary Admission to the Program:

Students with an undergraduate cumulative GPA of 2.50 to 2.74 may be admitted as a Restricted graduate students if there is strong supporting evidence in other areas: work in major field, strongly supportive letters, sharp improvement in undergraduate work, previous successful graduate work or evidence of academic maturity following completion of the undergraduate degree.

The courses in which such a student enrolls will apply to a degree or certificate program. However, a student may acquire no more than 12 credit hours on Restricted status. Consequently, any student admitted to the MSW program as a Restricted student will only be admitted as a part-time student and allowed to take 6 hours in each of their first two semesters. Shift from Restricted to Regular status requires (a) no less than a B grade in any course taken; (b) a positive recommendation from the MSW program director, and (c) approval from the Graduate School.

C. Graduate School Application Form:

Complete the online Graduate School application form available on the Graduate School home page, <http://www.umsl.edu/divisions/graduate/prospective/apply-online.html>.

D. MSW Program Application Form:

Complete the MSW application form, included in this packet. Please type. The application asks you to identify your desire for full or part-time student status, your history of paid and volunteer experience, and the name of the references you will be contacting to submit recommendations on your behalf.

E. Instructions for Submitting Transcripts:

Contact the Registrar of all schools beyond high school where you have taken undergraduate and graduate courses. Ask them to send an official transcript directly to the Graduate Admissions office of UM-St. Louis. Hand-carried credentials are not accepted. Ask that your transcripts be sent as soon as possible since they must be received by the Graduate School no later than February 15 to consider your application to the MSW program.

F. References:

You are responsible for obtaining three references from the following sources:

1. You are strongly encouraged to secure one reference from one of your undergraduate professors; preferably one in your major area of study.
2. If you are applying for Advanced Standing, you are strongly encouraged to secure a reference from a former field practicum supervisor.
3. Your work supervisor if you are currently employed or past supervisor if you are not currently employed.

4. The supervisor of a program in which you did volunteer work.
5. A professional social worker who has knowledge of your aptitude for graduate work and commitment to the values of the profession.

Please give each of your references one of the three recommendation forms and a self-addressed envelope provided in this packet. Ask them to complete the form and send it to the Graduate School as soon as possible. Complete the top part of the Recommendation Form. Please tell your references that the form must be received in the Graduate School by February 15.

G. Writing your Personal Statement

A typewritten statement must accompany your application. There are three sections to this statement. Each should be labeled as follows:

ESSAY #1 CAREER GOALS
ESSAY #2 LIFE EXPERIENCES
ESSAY #3 OPPRESSION AND DISCRIMINATION

Each of these essays has a page limitation. The page limit of Essay #1 is one page. The page limit of Essay #2 is two pages. The page limit of Essay #3 is three pages. The essays should be double-spaced with one-inch margins on both sides and top/bottom. Please use 12-point size type.

Please prepare your essays carefully. Your choices on content and your skill of presentation are equally important.

Essay #1: Career Goals

The first essay should address your career goals and how admission to the MSW program at UM-St. Louis will help you to achieve those goals. Included in this essay should be information about how one of the concentrations offered in this program (i.e., Family Practice; Gerontology, or Organization and Community Development) matches your career interests. This essay is limited to one page.

Essay #2: Life Experiences

The second essay should address one or more of your life experiences and how they contribute to your interest in social work. Included in this essay should be information about how you used those life experiences to prepare for a career in social work. This essay is limited to two pages.

Essay #3: Oppression and Discrimination

The third essay should address the problem of oppression and discrimination in our society. Using professional references, describe your understanding of the causes and consequences of oppression and discrimination in our society. Discuss values you hold that will assist you in working with people of diverse backgrounds. Also discuss your biases and prejudices, how you have worked to overcome them, and what issues regarding diversity you still need to work on. This essay is limited to three pages.

University of Missouri-St. Louis School of Social Work

I. MSW Application Form

(Please print or type all information)

Name: _____ Social Security # _____

Date of Application: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone #: _____ Work phone #: _____

Missouri Resident: Yes { } No { } Non-resident (state or country): _____

Program desired: (Circle one) Full-time program Part-time program
(Please note! Degree must be completed within 4 years.)

Education:* Includes all academic education beyond high school. Start with the most recent education.

Name of Institution & Location	Major field of study	Month & Year	Degree/Year

** Please submit official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended.*

Do you have a *B.S.W.* from an accredited Social Work Dept/School within the last five years? Yes No

If not, have you had a general biology or human *biology course*? Yes No *Statistics Course*? Yes No

Note: *If you answered "no" to either, you will be required to complete the course(s) in your first semester.*

Advanced Standing: Based on an undergraduate degree in social work or previous graduate education in social work completed in the last six years, will you be seeking admission with advanced standing? Yes No

Relevant Paid Work Experience. Most recent first. (You may attach your resume)

Name of Employer & Location	Position	Dates (mo/year)	#hrs/wk
		From: To:	
		From: To:	
		From: To:	

Relevant Volunteer Experience. Most recent first.

Name of Agency & Location	Responsibilities	Dates (mo/year)	#hrs/wk
		From: To:	
		From: To:	
		From: To:	

Relevant Field Placement(s). Most recent first.

Name of Agency & Location	Responsibilities	Dates (mo/year)	#hrs/wk

Extra-Curricular Activities while in college and/or Community Service Activities:

Collegiate and/or community honors received:

References. Please list the names of three (3) persons from whom you have requested references. If you have graduated in the past five (5) years, at least **two** (2) of your references must be from professors in your major field of study who taught you and the **third** from an employer or work supervisor who is unrelated to you. If you graduated **more than five (5) years ago**, please include at least **two** (2) references from an employer or work supervisor and a **third** from a professional colleague, all unrelated to you. References from family or friends will not be accepted.

Name of Reference	Relation to Applicant	Address

To which other schools of social work are you applying?

II. Mental Health and Criminal History

Mental/Emotional History*

Are you currently receiving, or have you ever undergone, counseling/psychotherapy? (Including support/self-help programs)

Yes _____ No _____

If you answered "yes" to the above question, describe without detail, the nature of the issues/problems for which you have sought counseling/psychotherapy.

Drug and Alcohol History*

Are you currently receiving or have you ever undergone counseling for an alcohol or drug-related problem? (Including support/self-help programs such as AA or NA)

Yes _____ No _____

Have you ever been suspended from a course of study or a job because of an alcohol or drug related incident?

Yes _____ No _____

If you answered "yes" to the above question, describe without detail, the nature of the issues/problems for which you were suspended

Criminal History*

Have you ever pled guilty to or been convicted of a crime?

Yes _____ No _____

If you answered "yes" to the above question, please list the charge and provide relevant explanation.

I certify that the above information is correct and acknowledge that failure to answer completely and truthfully constitutes grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. I further certify that I have never been convicted of a sex offense against a child in Missouri or in any other jurisdiction outside of Missouri.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

***NOTE:**

Acknowledgement of criminal activity, mental/emotional problems, or drug and alcohol abuse is not automatically grounds for denial of the application. The program fully realizes that many people enter fields such as social work after facing and addressing their own personal life issues. The purpose of this section is to ensure that students admitted to the program are not actively dealing with the above issues or exhibiting behaviors that would impair their abilities to (1) succeed in such a rigorous program as social work, (2) work with people as effective, helping professionals, and/or (3) conform to the standards and expectations of the profession. *The Admissions Committee may request a written appraisal or evaluative statement from an appropriate professional attesting to the current readiness and fitness of the applicant to enter the Master of Social Work Program.*

III. NASW Code of Ethics-Summary of Principles

- I. The Social Worker's Conduct and Comportment as a Social Worker
 - A. *Propriety*- The social worker should maintain high standards of personal conduct in the capacity or identity of social worker
 - B. *Competence and Professional Development*-The social worker should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions.
 - C. *Service*-The social worker should regard as primary the service obligation of the social work profession.
 - D. *Integrity*-the social worker should act in accordance with the highest standards of professional integrity. [This includes but is not limited to refraining from acts of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism.]
 - E. *Scholarship and Research*-The social worker engaged in study and research should be guided by the conventions of scholarly inquiry.
- II. The Social worker's Ethical Responsibility to Clients
 - F. *Primacy of Client's Interest*- The social workers primary responsibility is to clients.
 - G. *Rights and Prerogatives of Clients*- The social worker should make every effort to foster maximum self-determination on the part of the clients.
 - H. *Confidentiality and Privacy*- The social worker should respect the privacy of clients and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of professional services.
 - I. *Fees*- When setting fees, the social worker should ensure that they are fair, reasonable, considerate, and commensurate with the service performed and with due regard for the client's ability to pay.
- III. The Social Worker's Ethical Responsibility to Colleagues
 - J. *Respect, Fairness, and Courtesy*- The social worker should treat colleagues with respect, courtesy, fairness and good faith.
 - K. *Dealing with Colleague's Clients*- The social worker has the responsibility to relate to the clients of colleagues with full professional consideration.
- IV. The Social Worker's Ethical Responsibility to Employers and Employing Organizations
 - L. *Commitments to Employing Organizations*- The social worker should adhere to commitments made to the employing organizations.
- V. The Social Worker's Ethical Responsibility to the Social Work Profession
 - M. *Maintaining the Integrity of the Professional* - The social worker should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession.
 - N. *Community Service* - The social worker should assist the professional in making social services available to the general public.
 - O. *Development of Knowledge*- The social worker should take responsibility for identifying, developing, and fully utilizing knowledge for professional practice.
- VI. The Social Worker's Ethical Responsibility to Society
 - P. *Promoting the General Welfare* - The social worker should promote the general welfare of society.

I hereby certify that have read, understood, and agree to abide by the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics. I acknowledge that failure to abide by this code may result in discipline and dismissal from the program.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Checklist

*It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the file is complete by the application deadline. Incomplete applications **will not be processed**. Please ensure your application contains all materials listed below. You may phone the Graduate School at 314-516-5458 to ensure all materials have been received.*

- Graduate School Application
- MSW Application
- Personal Statement (3 essays)
- Mental Health and Criminal History form
- NASW Code of Ethics form
- Recommendations (3 total)
- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended
- Application Fee

RECOMMENDATION FORM

University of Missouri- St. Louis School of Social Work Master of Social Work Program

Instructions to the Applicant: Print your full name, social security number, and the name of your reference on this form and give it to your reference along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Address the envelope to: University of Missouri-St. Louis, Graduate School- MSW Admissions, St. Louis, MO 63121-4400. Please advise your reference that they must submit this recommendation no later than February 15 (first deadline) or April 15 (second deadline).

Under the provisions of the Family Educational and Privacy Act of 1974, and applicable state law, you (if admitted and enrolled) will have access to information provided below unless you waive such access.

I hereby waive my right of access to the information contained in this recommendation.

Signature of Applicant

Date

If you do not sign the above line, this evaluation will be treated as non-confidential.

Applicant's name: _____ Social Security #: _____

Recommender's name: _____

To the RECOMMENDER: The person above is seeking admission to the MSW Program at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Please reflect on the academic and personal qualifications of this individual as you complete this form.

EVALUATION

1. How long have you known this applicant? _____

2. In what capacity have you known the applicant? _____

3. Please indicate your evaluation of this applicant's abilities by placing an "X" in the appropriate category.

Characteristics	Exceptional Upper 10%	Very Good Next 20%	Average 20%	Below Average 50%	Cannot Rate
Intellectual capability					
Leadership skills					
Sense of responsibility					
Ability to work with people					
Integrity					
Ability to adapt to new situations					
Ability to make sound judgments					
Ability in oral communication					
Ability in written communication					
Concern for well-being of others					
Motivation for chosen field					

