**PERSONAL STATEMENT PROMPT**

The CSUSM Department of Social Work application must include a personal statement (maximum of 3 double-spaced pages; 12-point font with one-inch margins), discussing each of the points listed below. The personal statement is an opportunity for applicants to share personal and professional experiences that have prepared them for graduate school in social work. The personal statement will also be used to evaluate the applicant’s critical thinking, self- reflective capacities, and advanced writing skills.

Please address the questions **in order** and include all headings in your narrative, (e.g. Personal Information). **It is imperative that all questions are answered in detail. Any questions not addressed will affect the evaluation of your statement.**

**Personal Information**

1. Why do you want to pursue a career in social work? Describe personal characteristics, work, volunteer, or life experiences and/or people that influenced your decision to pursue a master’s degree in social work.
2. Discuss a challenging or difficult situation you encountered in a volunteer, professional, or educational context. How did you handle the situation? What did you learn from it? What would you do differently in the future? Please maintain the confidentiality of others.
3. What do you believe is the role of the social work profession in working towards greater social justice? Give an example of an experience that raised concerns for you about diversity and social justice. What were your thoughts/reactions?

**Educational Plan**

MSW programs are rigorous and demand a great deal of time and attention. In addition to the time spent in classes, students are expected to spend a minimum of 2 hours outside of the classroom reading, studying, completing assignments, etc. each week for each unit of course credit (i.e., a minimum of 6 hours a week of outside of class effort for each 3 credit hour class).

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Program Type | In-Class Hours | Work Outside Class \*per 3-Unit Class | Field Practicum | Total Hrs/Week each semester |
| 2-Year (1st Year) | 15 hrs | 6 hrs (x 5 classes) | 16 hrs/week | 61 hrs/week |
| 2-Year (2nd Year & Adv. Standing) | 15 hrs | 6 hrs (x 5 classes) | 20 hrs/week | 65 hrs/week |
| 3-year (1st Year) | 6 hrs | 6 hrs (x 2 classes) | -- | 18 hrs/week |
| 3-year (2nd & 3rd Year) | 9 hrs | 6 hrs (x 3 classes) | 16-20 hrs/week | 43-47 hrs/week |

1. Given the demands of the program, what do you anticipate will be your strengths and limitations in managing the rigors of a professional graduate program? What can you do to augment and enhance these strengths?

**NASW Code of Ethics**

Review the six National Association of Social Workers (NASW) core values in the *Preamble* and *Ethical Principles* sections of the NASW Code of Ethics <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>.

1. In the social work profession, you will adhere to the six NASW core values and commit to embracing the values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. Please explain how you have applied one of these core values in a challenging situation that you have encountered in your work, education, or personal life.

**Additional Information (please only respond if applicable)**

**\*Please be prepared to successfully pass drug (including marijuana) and background screenings as part of the internship application process, which begins soon after acceptance to the program.**

1. Please use this space to address the below items if applicable:
   1. If your cumulative **GPA is under 3.0 for the last 60 semester units or 90 quarter units**, discuss the factors which contributed to this GPA and your plan to improve your academic performance.
   2. If you have been **unable to obtain a letter of reference** from an academic source, explain the situation. In this case, please submit a third professional reference.
   3. If you have a **criminal record,** please disclose any and all prior criminal records (including DUIs that occurred within the last 20 years). Describe the circumstances of the conviction(s), year of conviction(s), and how you will deal with the conviction(s) in terms of planning for a professional career in the human services. Most field agencies require background checks for student interns. While a criminal record will not necessarily prevent admission to the MSW program, it may restrict the availability of potential practicum placements and future employment prospects.
   4. Is there anything else that you feel is important to share regarding your application?