



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
**FULLERTON**

## **Application Instructions for Fall 2010**

### **Admission**

Admission to the Master of Social Work (MSW) program is limited to the Fall semester only. Application materials may be submitted after October 1, 2009. The MSW program offers a full-time, two-year program and a part-time, three-year program. Each MSW program also offers students two direct service specialization options: Child Welfare and Community Mental Health. The Child Welfare concentration focuses on services in the child welfare system, such as child protective services, foster care, and adoption assistance. The Community Mental Health concentration prepares students to work with various client populations across the mental health system.

### **Criteria for Admission**

The selection process includes an evaluation of each applicant's demonstrated and potential abilities as a student, practitioner, and leader in the field of social work. Admission decisions are based primarily on an evaluation of an applicant's previous academic work, experience in the social services, letters of recommendation, personal statement, and writing competence. The most qualified applicants will be invited for a personal interview prior to a final admission decision. Invitation to a personal interview does not guarantee admission to the MSW program. Applicants for admission to the MSW program are expected to meet the following criteria:

1. Completion of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution no later than Spring 2010.
2. A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 for the most recent 60 semester or 90 quarter units completed. Applicants who do not meet the GPA requirement may demonstrate academic competence by taking the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). The GRE is not required for admission to the MSW program; however, it may be used in lieu of a substandard GPA.
3. Applicants are required to have an educational foundation in liberal arts/social sciences. Any graduate of a California State University or University of California automatically meet this requirement. Applicants with baccalaureate degrees from other institutions are required to demonstrate an educational foundation in liberal arts/social sciences.
4. Paid, volunteer, or internship experience relevant to the field of social welfare or an activity closely related to the social services. This may include direct services, or activities such as teaching, mentoring, tutoring, counseling, program administration, advocacy, social activism, community organizing, research, and program evaluation. Paid employment in public agencies providing formal social services (e.g., case management) is the most valued type of experience.
5. Intellectual and personal qualities likely to lead to successful roles and careers within the social welfare system. This includes a commitment to engaging in social work roles that involve social welfare programs and services designed to have an effect on major social problems, as well as the most economically and socially disadvantaged groups in our society.
6. Personal qualifications considered essential to the successful practice of social work, such as a genuine concern for the needs of others, emotional maturity, adaptability, creativity, integrity, good judgment, good interpersonal skills, good oral and written communication skills, and the ability to think critically.

## **Application to the University as a Graduate Student**

There are two separate application processes that must be completed for admission to the MSW program. First, the applicant must apply and be accepted to the University as a graduate student. This can be done online at [CSUMentor](http://CSUMentor). Be certain to select **Social Work** as your academic objective. An applicant must be accepted to the University as a graduate student to be accepted to the MSW program.

## **Application to the Master of Social Work Program**

The second application process for admission to the MSW program is applying directly to the Department of Social Work. This can be done online at <http://hhdapps.fullerton.edu/socwappl/>. The MSW program application must be completed in its entirety. Prior to beginning the application process, applicants will need all information related to previous academic work, including GPA for their last 60 semester or 90 quarter units, GRE and TOEFL scores (if applicable), and transcripts from all post-secondary educational institutions. Applicants not graduating from a California State University or University of California must also complete the Educational Foundation in Liberal Arts/Social Sciences section. Prior to beginning the application process, applicants will need all information related to past social service experiences, certificates and awards, a completed personal statement, and a previous academic or professional writing sample. Ideally, the applicant's transcripts, personal statement, and writing sample are available in electronic format so they may be attached to the online MSW program application. See below for a complete description of these items. Any MSW program application requirements not included by the applicant in the online application can be sent directly to the Department of Social Work office (see address below).

## **Educational Foundation in Liberal Arts/Social Sciences**

Applicants applying for admission to the MSW program must have an educational foundation in liberal arts/social sciences. The purpose of the liberal arts/social sciences perspective is to prepare students for the intellectual and practical challenges they will encounter in their social work education, as well as throughout their social work careers. To help assess your academic preparation in the liberal arts/social sciences, you are required to identify coursework related to a number of educational domains. These domains, broadly defined, are human diversity, human behavior, human development, communication, social policy, and research methods. Applicants who do not list at least one course in each area may only be admitted on a conditional basis and will be required to complete liberal arts/social sciences coursework prior to becoming a classified graduate student.

**Note: If you have a baccalaureate degree from a California State University or University of California, you meet the liberal arts/social sciences requirement and do not have to complete this section.**

## **Transcripts**

Include transcripts of all coursework taken at all post-secondary educational institutions. The University graduate student application requires official transcripts; the MSW program application requires only copies or unofficial transcripts. All applicants must provide separate transcripts to the University and the Department of Social Work.

## **Social Service Experience**

Applicants are required to list all social service or related experience since graduating high school. This experience can be paid, volunteer, or in the context of an internship or field practicum. A minimum of one year social service experience is required for admission to the MSW program.

## **Certificates and Awards**

Applicants are required to list any professional or educational certificates and awards they have received. They are also required to provide the date the certificate was achieved or the award was presented.

## **Letters of Recommendation**

Three (3) letters of recommendation are required for admission to the MSW program. One letter must be from an academic source (e.g., professor, instructor); one letter must be from a professional source (e.g., supervisor, program or agency director); and the final letter can be from either an academic or professional reference. Personal references are unacceptable and will not be considered by the admissions committee. We suggest that you submit evaluations from persons who have been directly responsible for assessing your social welfare-related work/volunteer/internship experience and academic performance. Recommendation forms must be submitted in a sealed and signed envelope. More comprehensive instructions are included on the Recommendation Form. Recommendation forms can be downloaded from the MSW program application. Letters of recommendation following the online application must be received prior to the MSW program application deadline.

## **Personal Statement**

This statement must be submitted with the MSW program application packet. The quality and content of the writing will be evaluated. Provide a 3-5-page, double spaced statement that addresses the following four topics:

1. Discuss your personal and professional background and how it has influenced your decision to pursue a career in social work. Please include any educational, social, economic, cultural, familial, or interpersonal challenges or hardships you may have overcome on your academic and professional journey.
2. Discuss how your personal, intellectual, and professional qualifications make you a good candidate for graduate studies in social welfare.
3. Describe what you plan to accomplish after attaining an MSW degree. How will you impact underserved and marginalized populations with your degree?
4. The social work profession ascribes to a number of core values, such as respect and dignity for all individuals, integrity, social justice, and service to vulnerable and disadvantaged populations. Describe an instance in your personal or professional life when you have demonstrated a commitment to social work values.

## **Writing Sample**

Submit with your MSW program application packet a copy of an academic paper that you have written and submitted during the course of your previous educational experience. This paper must be written in an approved academic format, such as APA. Applicants who do not have access to previous academic materials may submit a sample of professional writing from their current employment. Applicants with neither an academic nor professional writing sample must write an original 3-5-page, double-spaced essay on a social problem of their choice, including citations and references in APA format.

## **International Applicants**

International applicants must include Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores with their applications. Unofficial transcripts submitted with the MSW program application must be translated copies. In addition, the University will require the following: financial affidavit signed by your financial sponsor, a bank statement from your sponsor's bank showing funds for at least \$25,000, and a copy of your current I-20 or I-94. Please contact International Education & Exchange at [iee@fullerton.edu](mailto:iee@fullerton.edu) or (714) 278-2787 for complete information regarding admission as an international student.

## **Reapplication**

Previous MSW program applicants who were denied admission, were accepted but declined admission, or were admitted but failed to enroll in any courses must follow regular application procedures to reapply for a future term. If your previous MSW program application is still on file, you are not required to submit additional copies of your transcripts. However, applicants are required to submit transcripts for additional academic work completed since their last application, one additional relevant supporting letter of recommendation, and a new personal statement in addition to the MSW program application. Applicants will be held to the admission criteria of the term for which they are reapplying.

## **Application Dates**

Completed MSW program application packets must be in the Department of Social Work office before 5:00 pm on March 1, 2010. Late or incomplete MSW program applications will not be considered. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their application packets as early as possible. The University graduate student application should also be completed by March 1, 2010.

## **Submission of Application Materials**

All application materials not included in the online MSW program application should be mailed or delivered to:

**Admissions Committee  
Department of Social Work  
California State University, Fullerton  
P.O. Box 6868  
Room EC 207  
Fullerton, CA 92634-6868**

Any questions regarding the MSW program application process can be addressed at the Department of Social Work office (EC 207) or by calling 657-278-7125.