Application Instructions for Fall 2013

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, 2012. The full-time (2 year) MSW program at the Fullerton campus is administered by the Department of Social Work; all classes are conducted on Fullerton’s main campus. The MSW program (3 year) at the satellite campus is administered through University Extended Education (UEE); all classes are conducted at either Fullerton’s Irvine or Garden Grove campus (to be determined).

The two-year MSW program at the Fullerton campus offers students two direct service specialization options: Child Welfare and Community Mental Health. The Child Welfare concentration focuses on services in the public 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 care system, with opportunities to specialize in adults, children and families, health, or aging. Courses in the two-year MSW program are offered weekdays only.

The UEE MSW program at the satellite campus offers students an identical curriculum to the full time program with the ability to complete the MSW degree in 3 or 4 years. Courses in the UEE program are offered in the evening.

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. Admission to the MSW program is highly competitive.

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 2013.

2. A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 for the most recent 60 semester or 90 quarter units completed; transcripts are required by both the University and the Department of Social Work.

3. An educational foundation in liberal arts/social sciences. Any graduates 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; a form for demonstrating an educational foundation in liberal arts/social sciences is provided in the online application.

4. Paid, volunteer, or internship experience relevant to the field of social work 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. Personal and academic qualifications considered essential to the successful practice of social work, such as a genuine concern for the needs of others, emotional maturity, professional demeanor, adaptability, creativity, integrity, good judgment, good interpersonal skills, good oral and written communication skills, and the ability to think critically. A commitment to working with disadvantaged, vulnerable, and marginalized populations is also strongly desired.

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 application is available online at CSUMentor. For the two-year program on the Fullerton campus, applicants must select Social Work as your academic objective; for the self-paced program on the Garden Grove campus, applicants must select Social Work- ExEd.

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. To complete the MSW program application process, applicants will need all information related to previous academic work, including GPA for their last 60 semester or 90 quarter units, 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 complete the Educational Foundation in Liberal Arts/Social Sciences section. Applicants will also need all information related to past social service experiences, certificates and awards, and a completed personal statement.

Ideally, an applicant's transcripts and personal statement will be available in electronic format so they may be attached to the online MSW program application. See below for a complete description of these items. Applicants may begin the online application process, stop and save their work, and return to the application at a later date. Any MSW program application requirements not included by applicants in the online application can be sent directly to the Department of Social Work office (see address below); however, electronic submission of admission materials is strongly preferred.

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.

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 the Educational Foundation section.

Transcripts
Include transcripts of all coursework taken at all post-secondary educational institutions. The University graduate student application (CSUMentor) requires official transcripts; the MSW program application requires only copies or unofficial transcripts.

**All applicants must provide transcripts to both 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 of social service experience is suggested 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 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 work-related work/volunteer/internship experience and academic performance.


Recommendation forms and accompanying letters of recommendation must be submitted in sealed and signed envelopes. Letters of recommendation may follow submission of the online application; however, all letters must be received by the Department of Social Work prior to the MSW program application deadline. Do not send letters of recommendation to Graduate Studies; send all letters of recommendation directly to the Department of Social Work.

**Personal Statement**

A personal statement outlining your qualifications for a graduate education in social work is required. In this statement, include the following information:

1. Describe how your personal background and life experiences have influenced your decision to pursue a graduate education in social work. Please include any challenges or hardships you may have overcome on your journey.

2. Discuss how your personal, intellectual, and professional qualifications make you a good candidate for graduate studies in social work.

3. Why do you want to pursue an MSW degree? What do you plan to accomplish following attainment of your MSW degree?

4. What characteristics of the social work profession do you find most attractive? How do your personal values and beliefs synchronize with those of the social work profession?
The personal statement should be 4-5 double-spaced pages. The quality of the writing in the personal statement will be evaluated, as will the applicant’s ability to answer the questions outlined above.

**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 or (657) 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 the previous MSW program application is still on file, the applicant is not required to resubmit copies of transcripts or letters of recommendation, provided no additional academic work has been completed since his or her last application and the letters of recommendation are not more than two years old. All other application materials must be resubmitted. 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 February 1, 2013. 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 February 1, 2013.

**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  
207 Education Classroom Building  
California State University, Fullerton  
P.O. Box 6868  
Fullerton, California 92834-6868

Any questions regarding the MSW program application process can be addressed at the Department of Social Work office (EC 207) or by calling 657-278-8452.