



**Program: Master of Social Work**

**Document: Document Guidelines and Additional Applicant Guidance [v5.0]**

## How to Compose and Format Your Application Documents and Additional Applicant Guidance

During the application process, you will be asked to submit a Personal Statement and Work Experience Summary (resume). To help you prepare these documents, please use the following instructions. Additional guidance regarding the MSW Ethics & Program Participation Agreement, guidelines for applicants about recommendations, and **additional requirements** for applicants **who previously attended another graduate social work school/program** are also included in this document.

### 1. Instructions for Uploading Your Personal Statement:

**Personal Statement Content:** Each applicant is required to answer the supplemental questions, which will be used for the purpose of evaluating your application to the MSW program. Applicants should use this opportunity to highlight your lived experiences. We want to get to know you! General formatting requirements: re-type each question; 12-point font; double-spaced; 1-inch margins; no more than 5 pages.

1. Describe how your identit(ies) (e.g., gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, ability, religion, etc.) have affected:
  - a. Your personal life?
  - b. Your professional experience?
  - c. Your decision to pursue an MSW?
2. Structural racism, oppression, and discrimination exist in society and are experienced by historically marginalized populations. Tell us why you think you will be a good fit for the anti-oppressive, anti-racist focused MSW program at CSUN.
3. Self-reflection is a key component in graduate social work education. Take a moment to self-reflect on how you are socialized to perceive the world. What do you want to unlearn about your own biases and privileges as you matriculate through the program?
4. With the understanding that Social Work is grounded in relationships, how will you:
  - a. Build relationships and community within the program?
  - b. Create space for diversity and inclusion with others who are different than you?

**NOTE:** Please include any additional information you would like to bring to the attention of the MSW Admissions Committee.

**\*\*\*Please note that you are encouraged to write on topics that matter to you, and while this can elicit writing and reflection that may be deeply personal, please be aware that if you disclose a situation involving any sexual misconduct, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and/or stalking while you were a CSUN student, university policy (based on state and federal law) requires that the admissions officer inform the Campus Title IX Coordinator to ensure you are advised of your rights and options. The admissions officer is obligated to provide the Title IX Coordinator with information regarding details of incident, including individuals involved, so that you can be aware of resources and options that are available to you. Please know that you can contact the Campus Care Advocate at (818) 677-7492 who is a confidential resource or the Title IX Coordinator directly at (818) 677-2077 for assistance and options for moving forward.**

**Personal Statement Formatting:** Please use the following guidelines to properly format your response.

- 12 point font; double-spaced; 1-inch margins; no more than 5 pages
- Include your full name and the page number at the top of each page (e.g. Matty Matador 1).
- PDF or Word file formats only

## **2. Instructions for Uploading Your Work Experience Summary (Resume):**

**Resume Content:** Each applicant is required to submit a resume to showcase their paid and/or volunteer experience. For each volunteer and/or paid experience, include **dates (MM/YY-MM/YY)**, **hours per week** worked at each position, and the **total number of hours** worked for each position. For your current employment, total the number of hours as of the end of the week prior to submitting your application. The resume is an opportunity for an applicant to showcase their paid and/or volunteer experience with an emphasis on any work that has been done in the field of social work. While experience in the field of Social Work is not required to gain admission to the MSW program, it is helpful.

**Your resume should include the following:**

- **Work Experience** - Please describe your current or most recent paid employment. Include the following details: company name and location, job title, dates of employment, your tasks and responsibilities, and **the number of hours you worked each week, and total number of hours for each position**. This can include work experience that is not explicitly social work related.
- **Volunteer Experience** – Please describe any volunteer work you have done. Include the following details: company name and location, job title, dates of employment, your tasks and responsibilities, and **the number of hours you worked each week, and total number of hours for each position**.
- **Leadership and/or Advocacy Experience** – Please indicate any leadership and/or advocacy experience you have gained. Include the following details: organization/community/agency name and location, length of time, the number of hours you contributed to the activity, **total number of hours for each activity**, your personal tasks and responsibilities, and the overall activity description.
- **Additional Information** – Please indicate any professional organizations of which you are a member and/or information on any honors or recognitions (professional or academic) you have received.

**Required Resume Formatting:** Please use the following guidelines to properly format your resume.

- Two page maximum with 1-inch margins and 12pt or larger font.
- File naming convention: last\_name\_first\_name\_resume (ex. Smith\_John\_Resume).
- PDF or Word file formats only.

**Sample Excerpt:**

**Intern**, CSUN Pride Center  
Northridge, California

September 2015 to May 2016  
20 hours/week, Total = 640 hours

- Provided mentorship to undergraduate staff one-on-one
- Co-facilitated Tuesday Talks student discussion group with one other staff member
- Collected and inputted data for version two of the Campus Pride Index

**Click on the links below to view resume samples:**

- [Strong Resume](#)
- [Resumes not meeting criteria](#)

**3. MSW Applicant Agreement**

All applicants to the CSUN MSW Program are required to thoroughly read and confirm their understanding of the responsibilities outlined in the MSW Ethics & Program Participation Agreement, before commencing their application. The link to the current Agreement is linked under STEP 1 on the Application Instructions webpage and here at the following link: [https://tsengcollege.csun.edu/sites/default/files/programs/MSW\\_Agreement.pdf](https://tsengcollege.csun.edu/sites/default/files/programs/MSW_Agreement.pdf)  
A question in the online application will ask you to upload the signed form.

**4. Additional Requirements for Applicants Who Attended Another Graduate Social Work Program**

Applicants who have attended another graduate social work school/program must be prepared to supply a letter of good standing from the director of the social work school/program and a recent field placement evaluation, upon request from CSUN staff at any point during the application process.

**What If I Have Content Questions or Technical Issues?**

For help with content: Please contact The Tseng College Office of Graduate and Professional Education (GPE) at (818) 677-3332 / [programs@csun.edu](mailto:programs@csun.edu) (Mon-Fri, 8AM-5PM).

If you need technical assistance, please review our "[Helpful Tips](#)" page if you encounter any problems while completing the online application. If you are still having problems, you may email [collexl@csun.edu](mailto:collexl@csun.edu) and a staff member will assist you (Mon-Fri, 8AM-5PM).