

## MSW Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

1. What is the difference between the MSW (Master of Social Work) and the MFT (Marriage and Family Therapy, formerly known as the MFCC Marriage, Family, Child Counseling)?
  - As an MSW you are prepared to provide clinical, administrative, community organization, case management, research, and policy development services. The MSW offers flexibility in the job market and is also an older and more established degree than the MFT. The MSW degree is nationally and internationally recognized where the MFT may not be recognized in another state or country.
  - The MFT is a license awarded by the State of California. This license may be given to individuals from various fields. The degree prepares you to work with directly with individuals, couples and families.
2. What is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)? Can I use my MSW field practicum as hours toward attaining my LCSW?
  - The LCSW is the license for the social work profession. This is a separate process apart from the MSW degree and is obtained by accruing supervised hours post MSW, taking additional courses in child abuse/domestic violence, drug/substance abuse, human sexuality, and AIDS. To become an LCSW you will also need to pass two written examinations. The State of California requires that the process of licensing can only take place after one obtains the MSW degree. Therefore, all internship hours will not be counted towards your accrual hours for your LCSW. For additional information please visit the Board of Behavioral Sciences website at: [www.bbs.org](http://www.bbs.org)
3. What is the salary of an MSW graduate?
  - Average salary for a beginning MSW in California ranges greatly from \$40,000 to \$60,000 depending on experience and the agency. Public agencies are usually at the higher end of the salary scale while non-profit agencies are usually at the lower end.
4. Can I use my work or volunteer experience before entering the program as credit or units toward my field practicum?
  - Life experience and previous work experience cannot be used toward credit or units for field practicum or the MSW degree.
5. What is the Institution Code and the department/school code for the GRE?
  - The CSULA Institution Code is **4399** and the social work department/school code is **5001**.
6. Can I change my option from the two-year program to three-year or vice versa?
  - No. Students will remain in the program they applied for and were admitted. The cohorted nature of our MSW program does not permit a switching curriculum
7. Can I change my concentration while I am in the program?

- No, for the same reason listed above.
8. Can I take courses in the MSW program ahead of time?
- No, only currently admitted students into the MSW program may enroll in the courses. Because classes are cohorted, there are only spaces available to currently enrolled students.
9. The School will not accept auditing of any of the prerequisites. Applicants must complete prerequisites with a grade or credit/no credit basis before starting the program.

10. Whom does the School of Social Work consider to be an ideal applicant for the MSW program?

Applicants are accepted on the basis of their academic preparation, breadth of background and professional experience and evidence of promise in the field of social work. Applicants should have a demonstrated ability to successfully complete graduate-level academic work and the ability to the following:

- Write clearly and professionally.
  - Locate, absorb, categorize and use information from disparate sources.
  - Critically analyze theoretical concepts.
  - Apply human behavior and social environment theories to social work practice.
  - Applicants should be intellectually able, emotionally mature, interested in working with people and potentially capable of assuming the significant responsibilities inherent in professional social work practice.
  - **Meeting the academic requirements alone does not guarantee admission to the graduate program in social work;** maturity, experience and professional promise are equally important. Professional promise includes social consciousness and commitment to the values of the profession and the specific mission of the program, personal readiness, motivation and ability to relate as an effective person to individual, organizational and societal needs.
11. Whom do I call for questions?
- Please attend the information meetings for more information about the profession and our graduate program. You may contact the MSW Admissions Office at by phone (323) 343-4684; via email at [msw@cslanet.calstatela.edu](mailto:msw@cslanet.calstatela.edu) or the MSW Info Line at (323) 343-5612 for an overview of the program and the application process.

We look forward to seeing your application for Fall.

Sincerely,  
MSW Admissions Office  
School of Social Work  
California State University, Los Angeles