



California State University, Los Angeles

School of Social Work

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)?
 - The MFT is a license awarded by the State of California. This license may be given to individuals from various fields. The training prepares you to be a counselor and you will be working directly with clients on a one to one or group basis only. 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.
- 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, 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 a written and oral examination. 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.
- 3) What is the salary of an MSW graduate?
 - Average salary for a beginning MSW in California ranges greatly from \$27,000 to \$50,000 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?
 - No, life experience cannot be used toward credit or units for field practicum or the MSW degree.
- 5) What is the last date I can take the GRE?
 - The GRE Testing Centers offer the GRE often. You can take the GRE via the computer which takes two weeks to process. Scores must be submitted with your application in order for your file to be reviewed. For GRE exam information, contact the GRE Center at (800) GRE-CALL or visit them at www.gre.org.
- 6) 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.
- 7) I am disabled; can the GRE be waived for me?
 - Disabled students are permitted additional time and other assistance when taking the exam, but are not exempt from taking the GRE.
- 8) Can I change from full time status to part time or vice versa?
 - An MSW student is allowed to change from full time status to part time status within the same concentration with permission of the School; however, students cannot change from part time status to full time status.
- 9) Can I change my concentration while I am in the program?
 - An MSW student is allowed to change from the CYWF concentration to the AF concentration with permission of the School, however, a student in the AF concentration cannot change to the CYWF concentration, once they are admitted into the program.
- 10) Can I take courses in the MSW program ahead of time?

- No, only persons who are admitted into the MSW program may enroll in the courses. This allows students who are enrolled in the program the ability to get the classes they need and to graduate on time.

11) For the Human Biology prerequisite, is a lab required?

- Lab is not required but applicants should get permission from the professor of the class to be sure they can still get credit or a grade for the class if they do not attend the lab. In addition, the School will not accept auditing of any of the prerequisites. Applicants must complete prerequisites with a grade or credit/no credit basis.

12) What kind of applicants does the School of Social Work take for its 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, including the ability to:
 - Write clearly and professionally.
 - Locate, absorb, categorize and use information from disparate sources
 - Critically analyze theoretical concepts
 - Ability to merge theories with practice

Applicants should be intellectually able, emotionally mature, interested in working with people and potentially capable of assuming the significant responsibilities which are 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.

13) Whom do I call for questions?

- Please attend the information meetings for more information about the profession and the graduate program. Due to the high volume of calls received by the MSW Admissions Office, it is difficult to return calls in a timely manner. You may contact the MSW Admissions Office at (323) 343-4684 or the MSW Info Line at (323) 343-5612 which gives you an overview of the program and the application process.

We look forward to seeing your application for Fall 2006.

Sincerely,

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