Personal Statement

The CSULA School of Social Work application must include a personal statement of approximately six to eight (6-8) double-spaced pages, (one-inch margin all around, 12-point font) in essay format discussing each of the points listed below. The personal statement is an opportunity for applicants to share personal and professional experiences that have prepared them for graduate school in social work. The personal statement will also be used to evaluate applicants’ critical thinking, self-reflective capacities, and advanced writing skills.

Answer the questions in order. Please do not copy/paste the questions but instead provide the headings (e.g., Professional Information). Failure to address any question or adhere to the instructions stated above will affect the evaluation.

Professional Information

1. Describe and explain how your work history and experiences have prepared you to pursue a master’s degree in social work.

2. Describe how your personal characteristics (strengths and limitations) may influence your development as a professional social worker.

Personal Information

1. Why do you want to pursue a career in social work at this time? Describe experiences and/or people that influenced your decision to pursue a career in Social Work.

2. What goals and specific objectives have you developed for a professional career in social work? What is required from you to achieve these goals and objectives; how will our graduate program help you attain your goals?

3. Which client population (Aging; Children, Youth and Women; or Forensics) are you most interested in working with and learning about in your advanced year of study? Please provide a detailed explanation as to why you have selected this specific client population.

4. Our school has a strong cross-cultural emphasis and values diversity. What attributes do you possess that enrich our school’s cross-cultural orientation? Describe experiences you have had with people from cultural and/or ethnic groups other than your own (travel, volunteer, work and other cross-cultural experiences) and how these experiences have influenced you and your world view.

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Educational Plan

Our program is rigorous and demands a great deal of time and attention. In the two year program, students spend an estimated 52 total hours per week for their studies (which includes 12 hours of classes, 16 hours of field internship, and 24 hours of reading, studying, and preparing class assignments). In the three year program, students spend an estimated 24 total hours per week in the first year, and 37 total hours per week in the second and third years. (Please note these are estimates and a student’s hours may be higher or lower).

What is your plan for managing your responsibilities with such a rigorous graduate program? Please consider financial and time-management issues.

Vignettes/ Case Illustrations

Draw from your own work and/or personal experience to illustrate how you would manage the situations described below. Do not use names or information that might violate the confidentiality of the individuals you decide to use in your descriptions.

Please be sure to respond to both 1 and 2.

1. Discuss a situation in which you were confronted with a value or ethical conflict. How did you resolve it? What were some of the factors you considered in making your decision? How was the client and/or other individual affected by the situation?

2. Discuss a difficult or dangerous situation you encountered in working with a client or patient. How did you handle the situation? What would you do different in the future? How would you expect advanced training to promote your development in managing a similar situation?

Additional Information

Describe any additional information, not reflected in the enclosed forms that might enhance your application. For example, you may include achievements, publications, awards, and professional presentations, or other relevant information.