



# School of Social Work

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## Master of Social Work (MSW) and Advanced Standing Program (ASP) Admission Requirements

Admission to the Master of Social Work (MSW) program is highly competitive and based upon both the minimum academic qualifications established by the College of Health and Human Services and a holistic evaluation of each applicant's potential for advanced professional practice in social work. Meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee admission; applicants are encouraged to present credentials that demonstrate academic excellence, professional readiness, and commitment to the values of the profession.

### 1. Academic Background

Applicants must hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university. A degree in liberal arts or a related field is preferred, though not strictly required, provided that the applicant can demonstrate adequate preparation in the social and behavioral sciences and humanities. The liberal arts foundation is broadly defined as coursework that cultivates critical thinking, cultural awareness, and an understanding of human behavior. Examples of relevant disciplines include, but are not limited to social work, human services, psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, economics, history, ethnic studies, and women's studies. Applicants from technical or applied fields may be considered, depending on the depth and relevance of their academic preparation.

### 2. Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirements

- **Advanced Standing Program (ASP):** Applicants must hold a Bachelor of Social Work (BASW) degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) with a cumulative GPA of **3.0 or higher**.
- **Traditional Two- or Three-Year MSW Programs:** Applicants must have a minimum GPA of **2.75** in the last 60 semester units (or 90 quarter units) of graded coursework. This requirement pertains to the most recent academic performance rather than the overall cumulative GPA. Applicants whose institutions utilize non-traditional grading systems (e.g., pass/no pass) should submit their narrative transcripts early to allow for GPA evaluation.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that coursework completed after the initial GPA calculation does not lower the final GPA below the program's stated minimum.

### 3. Prerequisite Coursework

Applicants are required to complete three prerequisite courses prior to starting the program:

1. One course in **Research Methods and Statistics**.
2. Two **upper division (refers to junior or senior level classes) social science courses** (; 6 semester or 8 quarter units), in disciplines such as social work, psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, or history.

A grade of **C or higher** (or "credit/pass" in a pass/fail system) is required. Applicants may apply while still completing prerequisites, provided at least two prerequisites are completed at the time the application is submitted, and formal documentation is provided for the completion of the remaining course. All prerequisites must be completed no later than **August 1<sup>st</sup>** prior to program entry. The program does not permit completion of prerequisites concurrently with MSW coursework.

#### **4. Prior Graduate Standing**

Applicants who have previously enrolled in a graduate program must be in **good academic standing** at the last institution attended. Those previously admitted to an MSW program must provide documentation from that institution verifying good standing in both academic coursework and practicum performance.

#### **5. Transfer Credit Policy**

The MSW program does not accept direct transfer students from other MSW programs. Applicants with prior MSW coursework must apply as new students. If admitted, they may petition for transfer of selected credits upon submission of course syllabi and/or field evaluations for review by the MSW Graduate Director.

#### **6. Professional and Work Experience**

Although not a formal requirement, relevant professional experience in social services or human services is strongly preferred. General work experience is also considered as part of the admissions review. Applicants to the Advanced Standing Program must demonstrate readiness for advanced field placement, typically through successful completion of a BASW internship or equivalent experience.

#### **7. Standardized Test Requirement**

The **Graduate Record Examination (GRE)** is **not required** for admission to the MSW or ASP programs.

**Tip for Applicants:** A profile with **strong GPA + relevant work/internship experience** is more competitive than one with only the minimum GPA and limited experience.