

Master of Social Work

Application Instructions

Enclosed in this packet are the forms and instructions needed to apply to the Master of Social Work program at Augsburg. If you have questions about the application process, please contact Graduate Admissions at 612-330-1101 or mawinfo@augsborg.edu.

Application Components

All MSW applicants must complete and submit an admission file that includes:

- Completed and signed application form (four pages)
- \$35 application fee
- Official transcripts from ALL post-secondary schools attended
- Three signed recommendation letters with signed checklists (enclosed)
- Typed personal statement (and GPA explanation, if applicable)

Application Deadline

MSW applications are reviewed once a year. If admitted, you will begin the following academic year. The application deadline is January 15, 5 p.m. All application components must be postmarked or hand-delivered to our office by this deadline. In the event a deadline falls on a weekend, materials will be due the following Monday. If you complete your application file by December 1, 5 p.m., and are admitted to the program, you may be considered for a \$200 tuition voucher.

Admission Requirements

In order to be considered for MSW admission you must have:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited liberal arts college or university
- A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Completed liberal arts courses in the social sciences (four classes), humanities (three classes), biology (one class), and statistics (one class)

Although experience is not a requirement, we give strong preference to applicants with prior human service experience, either work or volunteer.

Admission with Advanced Standing

Advanced standing is an application category open to those who have earned a bachelor's degree in social work that is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. Advanced standing applicants may seek waivers for a maximum of six MSW courses and from the generalist ("foundation") field internship. To receive a waiver for an MSW course you must have achieved a grade of B (3.0) or higher in a BSW course that is equivalent in content. See the BSW course equivalency checklist in the application for further explanation. If all six courses and the internship are waived, advanced standing students will begin their MSW program the following Winter term (January), one year after application.

How to apply for admission

First, we recommend you start your application process by filling out the application form and submitting it to the Graduate Studies Admissions Office. If you discover you are lacking more than two liberal arts prerequisite courses, you

will need to complete one or more prior to application. It is permissible, however, to have two courses pending at the time of application. Next, we suggest you request your transcripts and your recommendations, as these are difficult for you to control in terms of timeliness. Lastly, write your personal statement. You'll want to give yourself plenty of time for this task so you can compose thoughtful answers and write to the best of your ability.

Transcripts

Contact each postsecondary institution you have attended (colleges, universities, vocational/technical schools, Post Secondary Enrollment Options) and request one official academic transcript be sent directly to the Graduate Studies Admission Office. Please note: if you have your transcript(s) sent to yourself, we must receive it from you in a sealed, university envelope in order to consider it official. Also, you will need your own set of transcripts (unofficial) at home to complete the liberal arts section of the application form. For transcripts from schools outside of the U.S. please refer to the "International Applicants" section of these instructions.

Recommendations

Select three individuals whom you feel can give an assessment of your professional and/or academic abilities and your readiness and aptitude for social work graduate education. Ideally, you should submit one academic reference from a professor or adviser and two professional references from supervisors or other colleagues familiar with your skills and attributes related to human services. In the absence of an academic reference, all three should be professional references.

Please do not use a personal friend, family member, or employee as a reference. Provide each recommender (evaluator) with the enclosed Recommendation Checklist and ask her or him to complete the form and attach a supporting letter. The evaluator must sign both the letter and the form. You must submit three recommendations, each with the checklist and a letter, for your file to be considered complete. You may wish to have the recommendations sent to you, rather than us, so you know they are done and can submit them in a timely manner. If you waive your right to review the recommendation, the envelope must remain sealed when submitted with your application. If you reserve your right, you may open it before sending.

Typed Personal Statement

Please write a Personal Statement that responds to each of the following questions.

- The mission statement of the Augsburg social work department is: "To develop social work professionals for practice that promotes social justice and empowerment towards the well-being of people in a diverse and global society." Please elaborate on what this mission statement means to you.
- What principles and values would guide your social work practice?
- "Practitioners should know that unwillingness to challenge and address oppression in large societal systems is akin to aiding families to adjust to their oppression" (Kilpatrick & Holland, *Working with Families: An Integrative Model by Level of Need*, 2003, p. 37). Please relate an example or two in your own life when you have observed in yourself or others unwillingness to challenge social injustice. What could be done differently?
- Think about your employment, life, and/or volunteer experiences and describe the skills and interests you have developed from these experiences. Explain how these skills are relevant to a career in social work.
- How do you anticipate the MSW degree will facilitate your career development?

Tips: Your Personal Statement should be well written. It should be comprehensive yet concise. A typical statement is three to five pages in length, double spaced. We recommend using Strunk and White's *Elements of Style* as a writing reference. As mentioned above, editing suggestions and feedback from another person can be helpful, but the ideas and writing should be your own. Also, we highly recommend you use spell check!

Explanation of GPA

Our faculty are willing to review the file of applicants whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0; however, know the comparative standard remains 3.0 or higher. A small percentage of applicants not meeting the GPA prerequisite may be admitted if otherwise qualified. If your GPA is below 3.0, you must include a brief explanation by responding to one or both of these questions:

- Were there extenuating circumstances contributing to the GPA? If so, have those circumstances been resolved?

- Were there limitations that affected your GPA that still remain today? If so, what is your plan to address these limitations?

Pending bachelor's degree

Our faculty are willing to review the files of applicants whose degrees are pending provided there is only one semester or two trimesters pending at the time of application (January 15). Make sure your Fall grades (from your most recent term) are posted to your transcript before your school prints and sends the transcript.

International Applicant

For those applicants who have completed course work from an institution outside of the United States, official transcripts should be sent directly to a credential evaluation service. Do not send transcripts directly to our office. The credential evaluators will send us (and you) a report. You should ask for three things: a degree equivalency evaluation, a GPA calculation, and a course-by-course analysis. There are two credential evaluation services we recommend: Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc.: <http://www.ece.org>, or World Education Services: <http://www.wes.org>.

In some instances, it is advisable to also have your Upper Secondary records sent to the credential evaluators—for example, if your bachelor's degree program was only three years long. In order to be considered for MSW admission the credential evaluation report we receive must indicate your degree is equivalent to a four-year bachelor's degree from the U.S. Start this process early! Requesting your transcript and having the evaluation done can take several weeks, even months in some cases. Credential evaluation reports are due in our office by the January 15 deadline.

If you are a non-resident alien of the United States, you will be required to submit additional documents beyond those described in our Application Components section. Please contact our office for additional assistance on this process at 612-330-1520 or msswinfo@augsborg.edu.

If English is not your primary language, or if you received your bachelor's degree from an institution outside the U.S., you may be asked to take the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). Contact our office to find out if you will be required to take the test. For the TOEFL, the required minimum scores are: paper-600 and Internet-100. Please visit the TOEFL website at <http://www.toefl.org> for more information on the test.

To apply for Financial Aid

Financial aid applications are managed by Augsburg's Enrollment Center. Instructions for submitting a financial aid application are available at <http://www.augsburg.edu/finaid>, by calling 612-330-1046, 1-800-458-1721, or e-mailing enroll@augsborg.edu.

Return the application and related materials to:

Graduate Admissions Office
CB 65
Augsburg College
2211 Riverside Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55454