The essay is one of the most critical elements in the admission review. Current knowledge of the social work profession is assessed by the applicant's use of illustrations and examples from their social service background as described in the admissions essay.

Each of the two sections should be clearly titled. The maximum length of the entire essay (both parts combined) should not exceed four to six pages, typed and double-spaced. Please utilize font sizes 11 or 12.

I. AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT (2 - 3 PAGES)

Write an autobiographical statement explaining why you would like to be a social worker. Your response could reflect important family and community influences, as well as a description of characteristics that distinguish you as a potential candidate for the Master of Social Work degree. The admissions committee is interested in evidence of your:

- Commitment to social justice
- Leadership abilities
- Notable achievements/accomplishments (academic, work or volunteer)
- Persevering in the face of adversity
- Persevering in the face of oppression/discrimination
- Significant experience in diverse communities
- Bilingual skills (including ASL)
- Disadvantaged background
- International experience (including First Nations)

It is important to show how you have grown from these experiences, what you have learned and how these experiences will affect your approach to your social work education and practice. Comment on the factors which led to your choice of social work education and why are you making this choice at this time. Please discuss your career goals and what you expect to be doing in five years and ten years.

II. SOCIAL PROBLEM ANALYSIS (2 - 3 PAGES)

Describe a social problem that you consider to be significant. Please discuss it with regard to the following four areas:

1. What are the societal contributions to the origin and maintenance of this problem?
2. Why, in your opinion, does this problem deserve public attention and resources?
3. If relevant, include any personal experiences that have contributed to your identification and understanding of the problem.
4. Describe possible ways of addressing the problem, including leadership roles you might undertake.

To submit: The admissions essay should be saved as a PDF document and uploaded via the UW Graduate School application in the space indicated for ‘writing sample or essay.’