

# APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK | UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON TACOMA

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## INTRODUCTION

The application instructions serve as a guide for applying to the UW Tacoma MSW Program. Careful attention to the description of standards of behavior, application materials, requirements and information, should facilitate the entire process. Please be certain to use only current year application materials to avoid following outdated guidelines.

The UW Tacoma MSW Program seeks to enroll well-qualified students with diverse backgrounds. We especially seek applicants who are committed to work with diverse populations. Admission to the MSW Program is selective and is based on academic performance and potential, clarity and appropriateness of career objectives, understanding of social issues, knowledge of diverse populations, and relevant practice experiences. Academic credit toward the MSW is not given for previous employment or life experience.

Washington State law requires that all individuals who have access to children under 16 years of age, persons with developmental disabilities, and vulnerable adults such as older people, disclose background information concerning crimes and offenses against these populations. These include crimes against children or other persons, certain civil findings related to abuse of vulnerable populations, and crimes relating to financial exploitation. The law requires background checks concerning these offenses. Please note that offenses such as traffic violations are not part of the required background check. Since successful completion of practicum credits may involve service to these populations, we require all admitted students to complete a comprehensive background check. The MSW Program will require that all newly admitted students use a contracted vendor to obtain required background checks. Please be aware that there is currently fee for this service.

See our website for more information.

The University of Washington Health Sciences Program requires that its students show documentation of protection against a number of vaccine-preventable diseases. Students within the UW Tacoma MSW Program fall under the umbrella of UW Health Sciences and therefore all new and continuing MSW students must comply. For more information regarding this requirement, please visit: <https://www.ehs.washington.edu/workplace/health-sciences-immunization-program-hsip>

Our commitment to diversity is elaborated upon in the document entitled “Essential Skills, Values and Standards of Professional Conduct”. This document outlines the qualities and professional behavior expected of students and can be found at [https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/uwt/sites/default/files/2021-07/2021-22\\_university\\_and\\_social\\_work\\_program\\_policies.pdf](https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/uwt/sites/default/files/2021-07/2021-22_university_and_social_work_program_policies.pdf). All applicants should carefully review this document before completing the MSW admissions materials.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

This section covers the materials that applicants submit for review by the Admissions Committee. All admission materials will be submitted online unless otherwise noted.

Please note the appropriate application date for the program(s) to which you are applying. All application materials must be submitted on or before this date to be considered for priority admission. **It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all application materials, including references, are submitted on time.**

## APPLICATION FORMS

You are required to apply to the UW Graduate School, submit your application fee, and all MSW application materials electronically at <https://grad.uw.edu/admission/apply-now/>. Fee waivers are available to applicants who qualify for financial need. Applicants may apply for the fee waiver as part of the online UW Graduate School application. The fee waiver process must be submitted at least 7 business days prior to the priority application date or deadline. The fee waiver process takes a minimum of three business days after submission for approval or denial. Once approved, you will be instructed to return to the application and complete the submission process. **Answer all questions on the application forms and adhere to all deadlines. Please keep a copy of all submitted materials for your records.**

If you are planning to apply for the three-year MSW program as well as the Advanced Standing MSW program you must submit two separate applications and corresponding fees to the UW Graduate School. Please submit all application materials by the stated deadlines. Advanced Standing applicants are strongly encouraged to submit an updated transcript, résumé and social service experience form by June 30 to ensure the admissions committee has the most accurate information on file.

### **ADMISSIONS ESSAY**

The admissions essay is a two-part essay and is one of the most critical elements in the admission review. Each of the two sections of the essay should be clearly titled. The maximum length of the entire essay (both parts combined) should not exceed six pages, typewritten and double-spaced. Please utilize font sizes 11 or 12. The essay questions are available on our website.

### **TRANSCRIPTS AND THE GPA**

Transcripts from each undergraduate and graduate institution attended must be submitted with the online UW Graduate School application, including community college transcripts. If you do not have copies of your transcripts, please contact the registrar's office at your previous institution(s) for assistance. Unofficial transcripts are accepted during the application screening process. Admission to the UW Graduate School is contingent upon completion of all undergraduate requirements and conferral of a bachelor's degree. If you are accepted to the MSW program, an official transcript from the institution that granted your baccalaureate degree must be submitted to the UW Graduate School. You will be asked to enter your GPA for your most recent 90 quarter credit hours or 60 semester hours as part of the online application to the UW Graduate School. Please refer to page 4 for instructions on how to calculate your GPA. A 3.0 GPA is the standard for admission. If your institution does not issue a GPA, you may note this on the online application.

**NOTE:** All Advanced Standing applicants must have received a BASW/BSW from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. A copy of your school's BASW/BSW degree requirements may be requested.

### **FOREIGN DEGREE TRANSCRIPTS**

The following procedures apply to applicants residing in the United States who are not here on an educational visa (international student visa) such as the F-1 or J-1 visas.

During the admission process, applicants must upload foreign transcripts with degree statement, including date of graduation and title of academic degree awarded as part of the online UW Graduate School application for admission. All coursework with grades issued for each year completed must be submitted for proper evaluation. All international records are considered official if they have been certified or attested and must be submitted in the original language accompanied by an official English translation. Translations must be literal, complete versions of original records, and the documents must be translated by a university, a government official, or an official translation service. You may not do your own translation.

A review of your foreign transcripts will take place only after a UW Graduate School application and application fee are submitted online via the web application. Please note the review process can be lengthy, often taking months to complete.

Proficiency in English is required for graduate study at the University of Washington. Therefore, every applicant whose native language is not English must demonstrate English proficiency. No waivers of this English proficiency requirement will be given. When requesting official TOEFL scores from ETS, use institution code 4854 for the University of Washington. For more information on the English proficiency requirement for the UW Tacoma MSW program, visit: <https://grad.uw.edu/policies-procedures/graduate-school-memoranda/memo-8-graduate-school-english-language-proficiency-requirements/>

### **RÉSUMÉ AND SOCIAL WORK AND HUMAN SERVICE EXPERIENCE FORM**

You must include a current professional résumé as part of your application materials (maximum two pages in length). Both social service and non-social service positions should be listed on your résumé. Your volunteer or paid work

experience in the areas of social or health sciences is of interest to the admissions committee. Please provide a complete history on the Social Work and Human Service Experience form. The “total hours in this position” column must be completed.

## REFERENCES

You are asked to submit three references only. If you have graduated within the last two years from an undergraduate college, one of the three references is required to be an academic reference. If you have been out of school for more than two years, the three references may be in any combination, from either academic or professional experiences. If you are currently employed or volunteering in a social service agency, it is important to include a reference from your direct supervisor. Members of your own family or personal friends are not appropriate references.

**When you complete the Designate Recommendations area of the application, the person you designate is immediately notified via email to submit a recommendation on your behalf. Please do not designate an individual until you are ready for them to be contacted.** You are encouraged to consult with potential recommenders before completing the Designate Recommendations area of the application. You can designate recommendations before and after you have submitted your online application - up until the application deadline. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the designated references respond in a timely manner.

Please read the statement regarding Public Law 93- 380 in the 'Designate Recommendations' area of the application. Check the appropriate box if you wish to waive your right to review the reference. It is important for the person writing the reference and for the Admissions Committee to know what decision you have made regarding this right of review.

## AUTHORIZATION FOR REPEAT BACKGROUND CHECKS AND DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS / HSIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORMS

Washington state law requires that individuals who have access to children under 16 years of age, persons with developmental disabilities and vulnerable adults such as older people disclose background information. During your education in the MSW program, you will come into contact with members of the above-mentioned populations. If you have been offered admission, a completed fee-based comprehensive background check will be required.

The University of Washington Health Sciences Center requires that its students show documentation of protection against a number of vaccine-preventable diseases. The University of Washington Seattle School of Social Work falls under the umbrella of UW Health Sciences and therefore all UW Tacoma MSW students must comply. New students admitted to the MSW Program must submit appropriate documentation within a specific timeframe. New students will be advised of specific submission deadlines upon admission, but generally all documentation must be supplied prior to entering the MSW program.

Please complete and sign the form where noted and upload it to the application.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS

Since the UW Tacoma MSW Program is a part-time program, **international students who need a UW sponsored student visa are not eligible to apply.** International Students holding an F-1 or a J-1 student visa may apply to the UW School of Social Work at the Seattle campus as there is a full-time program available there. International applicants must begin the application process by consulting the UW admissions information online at <https://grad.uw.edu/admission/understanding-the-application-process/international-applicant-information/>.

### RE-APPLICANTS

Applicants who have previously applied to the UW Tacoma MSW Program and wish to re-apply must submit updated application materials with a new application. Please email [swcj@uw.edu](mailto:swcj@uw.edu) if you have questions regarding re-application.

## TRANSFER APPLICANTS

Students who apply after completing part of the requirements for an MSW degree at another MSW program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education may satisfy some of the program's requirements. As part of the application, transfer students must submit a graduate program bulletin, course syllabi, course numbers, titles and descriptions of courses, reading lists and a transcript providing evidence of having passed social work courses with a 2.7 (B-) grade or better as part of their application materials. This documentation should be submitted prior to applying for a particular quarter. After faculty review of syllabi occurs, applicants will be instructed further on application requirements. Contact the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice office for more information.

Students seeking credit for TSOCW 524: Generalist Practicum must also provide a copy of their graduate practicum evaluations. Transfer students must complete a minimum of 36 credits of which 18 credits must be numerically graded in order to graduate from the UW Tacoma MSW program. Transfer applicants must complete all application forms for the current application year.

## CALCULATING YOUR GRADE-POINT AVERAGE

For your reference, you may compute your GPA using the following instructions.

To compute your GPA, total the number of grade points given for each course, and then divide by the total number of graded credits.

$$\frac{\text{Total number of grade points}}{\text{Total number of graded credits}} = \text{GPA}$$

Grade points are determined by multiplying the point value for a grade in a class by the credit given for a class. Use the following point value for grades to assist in determining your grade points.

A..... 4.0	C+.....2.3	D- .....0.7
A- ..... 3.7	C.....2.0	E ..... 0.0
B+..... 3.3	C- ..... 1.7	F ..... 0.0
B..... 3.0	D+ ..... 1.3	
B- ..... 2.7	D.....1.0	

For example, a 3-credit class that was graded a B+ would be: 3 x 3.3 = 9.9 grade points for that class.

Base your total number of graded credits on the most recent 90 quarter credits or 60 semester credits. Usually this consists of the last two years of fulltime course work. Applicants should base the GPA on as close to 90 quarter credits without going over that total. Do not include ungraded courses such as incomplete or credit/no-credit classes in the formula.

For example, the most recent graded credits on review of the transcript equals 87. The total grade points from evaluating each graded class are 269.7.

$$\frac{269.7 \text{ grade points}}{87 \text{ graded credits}} = 3.1 \text{ GPA}$$

If you have taken a combination of quarter credits and semester credits within the last two years of full-time classes, then conversion to quarter or semester credits for the total must take place with similar conversion in determining grade points. Quarter credits are converted to semester credits by multiplying by  $2/3$  (two thirds or 0.66). Semester credits are converted to quarter credits by multiplying by  $3/2$  (one and one-half or 1.5). For example: 50 quarter credits  $\times 2/3 = 33.3$  semester credits. And 30 semester credits  $\times 3/2 = 45$  quarter credits.

If you have earned graded quarter credits or graded semester credit since completing your bachelor's degree, you will need to include the post-baccalaureate credits in your computation of GPA.

### FINANCIAL AID

If you need to apply for financial aid, obtain the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Scholarships, grants, loans, and work-study opportunities are available from public and private sources for qualified students. Most public funding is based on the needs assessment prepared from the FAFSA. Submitting the FAFSA is independent of an admission decision and does not require notice of admission. Forms are available in October and must be received by January 15 to be considered an "on-time" applicant. **The institutional Title IV code for the University of Washington is 003798.** Please use the address "Seattle, WA" when entering UW school information. Please contact the Office of Student Financial Aid at 253-692-4374 or [uwtfa@uw.edu](mailto:uwtfa@uw.edu) for additional information.

Please note that financial aid funding for part-time graduate students is typically limited to student loans and scholarships. The UW Tacoma MSW program is a part-time program of study. **No full-time MSW option is available at UW Tacoma.**

### MSW APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Admissions Committee wishes to give all applications as prompt and thoughtful consideration as possible. The following steps help to make this possible:

- Submit all completed application materials by the application deadline. No action can be taken until all essential materials are received.
- Review all application forms and materials for completeness and accuracy of all items before submitting them. It is to the applicant's advantage to submit the strongest possible materials (carefully selected references and a thoughtfully written admissions essay that follows the guidelines).
- Keep copies of all materials submitted for consideration by the Admissions Committee. All materials submitted for admission consideration become property of the UW Tacoma MSW Program and will be retained per the University of Washington's records retention policy schedule. Materials submitted cannot be reused for future application.
- Select references immediately and identify them in the 'Designate Recommendations' area of the application. Ask them to respond promptly. If a reference is unwilling or unable to respond, withdraw their name and identify an alternative reference to designate.
- Notify promptly, in writing, the UW Tacoma MSW program and the UW Graduate School of any change of address or of a withdrawal from consideration.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to update transcripts if applying while still in school.
- Make sure that you complete materials for the year in which you intend to apply to ensure that the correct application procedures are followed.