

Berkeley Social Welfare

Preparing Your MSW Admissions Application Statements

Two written statements are required as part of your application for admission to the Berkeley MSW Program:

- A Statement of Purpose
- A Personal History Statement

Prepare both statements according to the following guidelines and instructions. **All written statements must be uploaded as PDF files to your online graduate admissions application.**

General Guidelines for Written Statements

1. Your admissions application written statements are one way of assessing your writing and critical thinking skills. As such, we do recommend that you **communicate clearly and concisely** in your essays.
2. Statements should follow general APA Style Guidelines. They should be **typed, double-spaced** on standard-sized paper (8.5" x 11") with 1" margins on all sides. Please use a clear font that is highly readable. APA recommends using 12 pt. Times New Roman font.
3. **Do not exceed the page limits** noted below for each statement.
4. **Proofread your statements** for spelling, grammar and punctuation errors before uploading them to your online application.

Preparing the Statement of Purpose

Page Limit Guideline: 3-5 typed, double-spaced pages

Your Statement of Purpose should accomplish all of the following in sufficient detail, within the page limit guideline:

- 1) Describe your aptitude, motivation and preparation for graduate study in the field of social welfare; your future career goals in the profession of social work; and achievements that demonstrate your professional promise and leadership potential as a social worker.
- 2) Describe your academic and professional areas of interest in social work, including your chosen area(s) of specialization.
- 3) Demonstrate your understanding of contemporary issues and challenges in the professional practice of social work by posing a question or identifying a relevant problem/current issue you would like to explore, and how you might address it from the perspective of a master's-level social worker.

Review the Graduate Division's essential tips for "Writing the Statement of Purpose" online at <http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/statement-purpose/>.

Preparing the Personal History Statement

Page Limit Guideline: 1-2 typed, double-spaced pages

Your Personal History Statement should describe how your personal background and experiences have informed your decision to pursue a graduate degree in social work:

- Present a compelling image of you as a person, and your potential for success as a member of the Berkeley Social Welfare graduate academic community.
- Highlight your understanding of or experiences with a non-traditional educational background, or groups historically under-represented in higher education.
- Direct readers' attention to the evidence of your promise for higher education, and address any potential deficiencies in your academic record.

Review the Graduate Division's essential tips for "Writing the Personal Statement" online at <http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/personal-statement/>.