



Portland State University MSW Statement of Purpose

Please write a short essay for each of the four questions listed below. They should be a minimum of 250 words, maximum 300 words. Essay questions are scored based on content and quality of writing. A well-written answer is clear, concise, and coherent. Use examples and descriptions to “show, not tell.” Be sure to proofread for grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

You will also need to submit one Reference List for all the citations in questions 3 and 4. Use APA Style, examples can be found here: <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples>

In writing your statement, please think about the following:

The mission of the Portland State University MSW program is to educate students for advanced leadership and practice that recognizes and dismantles systems of oppression; builds racial equity and social, political, and economic justice; and advances the well-being of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and tribal nations. We endeavor to deliver a social work education that is critically informed, theoretically driven, empirically supported, reflexive, ethical, vigilant and resistive to colonial, heteropatriarchal, classist, and white supremacist agendas.

1. PSU's MSW Program prepares social workers for practice and leadership with diverse individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations. Why do you want to be a Social Worker? Include:
 - Significant factors influencing your decision to pursue a Master of Social Work degree at Portland State University, at this time in your life and experience.
 - Information regarding personal, academic, and past human service experiences that will contribute to your success as a graduate student and Social Worker.
 - Discuss an area of social work practice that currently interests you. What skills and knowledge would you like to obtain in the MSW program to support your career objectives?
2. How do your identities inform your understanding of social justice and its role in social work? Include the following:
 - How have you demonstrated an ability to engage in, explore, and reflect on social justice practices that work towards the liberation of all oppressed peoples?
 - What are your areas for growth?
3. Describe a specific social issue that interests you, and its importance. In your answer include key contributing factors and the impact on individuals and communities. Please include citations that include at least two references, using APA Style.
4. Discuss ways the social work profession could respond to this issue. Include:
 - plausible solution(s)
 - challenges likely to surface in seeking a solution
 - possible steps for implementation
 - any roles you might play in addressing the issue.

Please include citations that include at least two references, using APA Style.