

Master of Social Work (MSW) On-Campus Essay Prompt

The Montclair State University MSW faculty have the responsibility of evaluating your application. You will be submitting a variety of evidence concerning your ability to successfully undertake a graduate program in social work. We want to learn more about you, your interest in social work, and your ability to successfully complete a clinical social work graduate program. Therefore, we ask that you only use AI tools in managing the grammar and structure of your essay. The content is about you so we do not want you to use AI tools to write content about yourself and your experiences. **Please keep your essay to 1000 words.**

Who you are:

As a social worker, you form relationships with others as part of the helping process. These relationships are the foundation upon which you provide clinical services and advocate for justice. It is imperative that you know yourself and be able to communicate with others.

- Tell us about who you are and how you identify yourself.
- Share a time that you felt you were privileged and a time when you felt oppressed.

Social work as your career goal:

The Montclair State University MSW program educates students to engage in anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice.

- Name two ways that you have stepped outside of your comfort zone when advocating for populations different than yourself.

The Montclair State University MSW program educates students to advocate for justice and to engage in clinical social work practice with children, youth, and families.

- Why is this program the best fit for you and your career goals?

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Your experience as a student:

MSW students are required to read textbooks and articles and to synthesize material from multiple sources into content for papers, presentations, and skills demonstrations. This is different from the level of preparation you needed to have as an undergraduate student.

- How will you ensure that you succeed academically in the MSW program?
- Name an academic challenge that you experienced and explain how you overcame it or what you would do differently in graduate school.
- If your overall undergraduate GPA is below a 3.0, please explain what happened and what you will do differently in graduate school.

Your time commitments:

The program is academically rigorous, emotionally challenging, and time consuming because we are preparing you to work with people who are depending on you to be an ethical, competent, culturally sensitive, and responsive social worker. You should plan to spend at least 3 hours per week on each course in addition to your other responsibilities. Courses in the in person, on campus MSW program are 15 weeks in length and meet for 150 minutes each week. You have the option of completing the program in 2, 3, or 4 years. Courses are offered in fall and spring with some elective options in the summer. Advanced standing students can complete the program in 1 year, with a summer start, or 2 years.

You will complete two practicum experiences during the program, almost all of them require you to be in person at a social service agency. You must have weekday availability for 15 hours across two-three days to complete your first practicum experience and 21 hours across three-four days to complete your second practicum experience. There are very few evening and weekend practicum placements.

- How do you plan to manage your time and commitments to successfully complete the program?
- If you are expecting to be employed while in the program, how will you ensure that you have weekday availability for 15 hours across two-three days to complete your first practicum experience and 21 hours across three-four days to complete your second practicum experience?