



Pacific Lutheran University Master of Social Work

PERSONAL STATEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

The Personal Statement: Answer the relevant questions in the text boxes. Regular standing (2-year) students answer all the questions. Advanced standing students (non-PLU graduates and PLU BSW graduates who graduated more than one year) should only answer question 4. Current PLU BSW students applying for advanced standing do not need to answer any of the questions.

The statement will be used to evaluate your knowledge of your career choice, your availability to complete field hours, and your commitment to the social work profession. Please be sure to make sure you've addressed all the relevant prompts thoroughly. Please note that the word counts below are maximum guidelines - fewer words are acceptable.

1. What experiences and/or relationships have influenced your selection of social work as your professional career (e.g., family, education, volunteer work, paid employment, recipient of social services, etc.)? (250 words maximum)
2. Discuss your understanding of the values intrinsic to the social work profession and how these are reflected in your personal values, attitudes, belief system, and/or world view. (250 words maximum)
3. Describe your experience with people of diverse backgrounds, cultures, and lifestyles, and what have these experiences taught you about human diversity and its implications? (250 words maximum)
4. Draw from your own paid employment, volunteer work, or personal or practicum experiences to provide examples of how you handled situations as noted in (a) and (b) below. Make sure not to use names or information that might violate the confidentiality of the individuals you decide to use in your descriptions. For both (a) and (b), be sure to explain how you may have grown or learned from the experiences you describe.
 - a. Clearly describe a situation where you were confronted with a value or ethical dilemma. How did you resolve it? What were some of the factors you considered in making your decision? If you have never confronted a value or ethical dilemma, on what knowledge would you consider relying to help you address and resolve one? (250 words maximum)
 - b. Discuss a difficult or dangerous situation you encountered. How did you handle the situation? What would you do differently in the future and why? Are there any situations in which you would feel particularly vulnerable as a student? How would

you expect the social work program to assist your education and skill building concerns in order to handle that type of situation? (250 words maximum)

5. Practicum Plan: Students entering their first year (2-year program) of fieldwork are required to be in their field practicum a minimum of 320 hours per semester (~ 21 hours per week) during spring semester. Students entering their second year of fieldwork are expected to complete a minimum of 320 per semester (2~1 hours per week), 640 hours for the year. Students must be available for field placement during regular business hours M-F 8:00-5:00. Securing an internship outside of regular business hours is often not possible and isn't guaranteed so students must plan to have two days per week available for their foundation year field placement. (If Field Plan responses are not adequately addressed, it may impact acceptance into the program). Be specific on responses.

- a. What is your plan for completing the practicum/internship in your foundation year (~21 hours a week) and advanced year (~21 hours a week)?
- b. How will you balance work, school, family, etc. when required to intern a minimum of 21 hours per week?
- c. Do you work full-time or part-time during the week? If yes, what is your plan to meet the minimum hour requirement for internship, which will take place 2-3 days a week, Monday through Friday?