MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
School of Social Work

MSW Application Guidelines – Personal Background Statement

Mission
The mission of the School of Social Work is to prepare urban social work leaders committed to the alleviation of human suffering and the improvement of the quality of life for urban residents. Because African Americans make up a substantial percentage of the urban population, and are also over represented among urban residents facing unrelenting social and economic problems, School of Social Work programs focus on preparing its graduates to address systematically and strategically; socioeconomic disadvantage, interpersonal and community violence, substance abuse and mental health problems, social injustice and discrimination.

Prospective students must complete a Personal Background Statement as a part of their application for the MSW program. The Personal Background Statement is an opportunity to communicate your reason for pursuing a graduate degree in social work, your career goals, relevant personal history that has contributed to your decision to become a professional social worker, and demonstrate your writing skills and abilities.

The Personal Background Statement should be at least 2, but no more than 4 double-spaced pages in length, and include the following:

1. What personal, academic, volunteer or professional experiences led you to seek a graduate social work education at this time?
2. How do your professional interests and goals relate to the mission of the Morgan State University School of Social Work?
3. Describe a social issue of importance to you. Why is it significant and how could you influence or make an impact on this issue as a professional social worker?
4. Briefly discuss your strengths and challenges. What qualities do you possess that are essential for success as a social work professional?

The Personal Background Statement is a critical component of the application and it is closely reviewed by the School of Social Work Admissions Committee. The application must be submitted to the Morgan State University School of Graduate Studies along with the application form, letters of recommendation and official transcripts.

You may also wish to include a writing sample in your application. This writing sample should be no more than 5 double-spaced pages, and may be uploaded into your application packet. The writing sample is optional. If included, it should address a societal, ethical, behavioral or moral challenge or dilemma and reflect an analysis or viewpoint that you wish to share with the Admissions Committee. It may be a document that you had already prepared for another purpose, or you may develop a new document – either is acceptable, as long as it meets the specified parameters.