

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY**

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

**APPLICATION INFORMATION
FALL 2027 ADMISSIONS
ACADEMIC YEAR 2027-2028**

**A Council on Social Work Education
Accredited Program Since 1991**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
NMSU SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM	4
Our Vision	4
Our Mission	4
Our Values	4
Our Goals	4
Our Program Focus	4
PROGRAM OPTIONS	4
Main Campus MSW	5
Main Campus Advanced Standing MSW	5
NMSU Global Online MSW	5
NMSU Global Advanced Standing Online MSW	5
Practicum Placement and Affiliation Agreements	5
IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ONLINE PROGRAM APPLICANTS	5
State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA)	5
Disclaimers	6
TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL STUDENTS	6
ADMISSION CRITERIA AND VALUES	7
TRANSCRIPTS	7
ENTRANCE EXAM REQUIREMENT	7
ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT	7
APPLICATION PROCESS	8
Steps to Apply	8
Dual MSW/MPH Applications	8
REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL MSW APPLICATIONS	9
PERSONAL STATEMENT	9
Instructions	9
Additional Tips	10
Personal Statement Questions	10
ADDITIONAL ADVANCED STANDING ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	10
Reference Letter Requirement for Advanced Standing Applicants	11
Practicum Evaluation Requirement for Advanced Standing Applicants	11
Case Analysis Requirement for Advanced Standing Applicants	11
The Case: Referral Information	11
The Case: First Contact	12

Prompts.....	12
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT APPLICANTS.....	12
International Transcript Evaluation Requirements.....	13
Important Notes	13
GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS.....	13
APPLICATION AND REVIEW TIMELINE.....	13

NMSU SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Our Vision

To be a leader in culturally responsive and inclusive education, applied research, community engagement, and interdisciplinary and international collaboration.

Our Mission

To foster optimal health and well-being, equal human rights, and a just society rooted in ethical, culturally responsive, and evidence-informed social work practice in the United States Southwest, nationally, and internationally.

Our Values

- Student-centered education
- Collective empowerment
- Cultural responsiveness
- Social and economic justice
- Community engagement
- Data-informed and ethical practice

Our Goals

The specific goals of the MSW Program are:

1. To prepare graduates for advanced generalist social work practice that is responsive to rapidly changing environments.
2. To prepare graduates for multidimensional social work practice through the integration of theoretical perspectives, empirical evidence, and professional experience.
3. To prepare graduates who are committed to social justice and to ethical practice in complex settings.
4. To prepare graduates who are committed to continuing their professional development, developing autonomy and leadership within practice settings, and contributing to the knowledge and skill base of the profession.
5. To prepare graduates who employ a strengths-based, culturally humble approach to practice with populations and communities of the Southwest.

Our Program Focus

The MSW program has an advanced generalist program focus. This collaborative practice approach promotes skills and knowledge for focused interventions with individuals, groups, families, neighborhoods, communities, organizations, and public policies. The NMSU program rests on the use of critical thinking skills and the differential application of advanced social work knowledge, theories, skills, values, and ethics in the assessment of and intervention with micro, mezzo, and macro level systems. The Advanced Generalist Concentration prepares social work practitioners to exercise the professional autonomy, leadership, and creativity necessary for multidimensional contextual and ethical practice in rapidly changing social environments with populations of the Southwest.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

All program options require some synchronous class attendance and completion of a practicum.

Main Campus MSW

The School of Social Work offers the MSW program in Las Cruces, New Mexico, in two-year and three-year options. Courses combine face-to-face classes, hybrid classes (part face-to-face and part web-based), and some online classes. The dual MSW/MPH program is also available.

Main Campus Advanced Standing MSW

The one-year Advanced Standing option serves students who hold a recent BSW degree and meet the admission requirements. Advanced Standing students apply for a summer start date and complete 3 credits during the summer term before joining the fall cohort. Because the program holds a limited number of Advanced Standing spaces, the committee awards these spaces competitively and gives preference to applicants with two or more years of practice experience. Courses combine face-to-face classes, hybrid classes, and some online classes.

NMSU Global Online MSW

The online program offers two-year and three-year options.

NMSU Global Advanced Standing Online MSW

The one-year Advanced Standing option, also available online, serves students who hold a recent BSW degree and meet the admission requirements. Advanced Standing students apply for a summer start date and complete 3 credits during the summer term before joining the fall cohort. Because the program holds a limited number of Advanced Standing spaces, the committee awards these spaces competitively and gives preference to applicants with two or more years of practice experience.

The online programs deliver all courses through the Canvas learning management system. Courses may be synchronous (the class meets online on set dates and times) or asynchronous (no scheduled online meeting). Practicum seminars and roughly half of the required coursework are synchronous. Students complete practicum in person within their home community. Applicants should weigh the synchronous requirement carefully when choosing this option.

Practicum Placement and Affiliation Agreements

All admitted students must contact the Practicum Director to begin the placement process. Students should start this process as soon as possible and should expect it to take at least three months.

To secure a practicum placement, the agency must be a university approved site, which means that NMSU and the agency have an executed affiliation agreement. An affiliation agreement is a legal document that takes at least three (3) months to process. NMSU cannot guarantee a practicum placement.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ONLINE PROGRAM APPLICANTS

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA)

If you live outside New Mexico and you are enrolled in or planning to enroll in a distance education program at NMSU, the following state authorization information applies to you.

Recent amendments to the Higher Education Act of 1965, along with established consumer protection laws, require institutions that offer distance education to students in other states to hold legal authorization from the regulatory bodies in those states. NMSU seeks authorization in as many states as possible in order to maximize access to its distance education programs and courses.

In May 2015, the National Council for SARA recognized New Mexico as a State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) state. In June 2015, NMSU became a SARA institution. NMSU also works with state agencies to obtain the authorizations and exemptions that individual state laws require. Because securing and maintaining authorization in every state is an ongoing process, NMSU updates its state authorization status as circumstances change.

Students hold responsibility for understanding the requirements in their state of residence for taking distance education offerings from out-of-state providers. Visit Check Your State on the NMSU Distance Education website to review NMSU's authorization status in your state. The MSW online program is currently not available to residents of Delaware or Massachusetts.

Disclaimers

The NMSU School of Social Work may not be able to admit applicants from states where NMSU cannot deliver the full program. State law may also prevent NMSU from executing a memorandum of understanding or affiliation agreement with the agency in which an applicant wishes to complete practicum. NMSU shares the information it has about applicant eligibility. Applicants hold responsibility for reading and understanding the information above and for determining whether they can complete the online program and all of its requirements as a resident of their state.

Applicants who have lived experience with the criminal justice system before or during their BSW or MSW program should disclose this information proactively. Arrests and legal convictions may carry implications for practicum placement, professional licensure, and professional employment. This disclosure does not affect academic standing. The School of Social Work Administrative Team receives this information so that it can provide students with effective guidance. Applicants should also know that some state boards of social work examiners, including New Mexico's, may refuse to issue a license or certificate of registration to a person convicted of a felony in this or another state.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL STUDENTS

All correspondence with students is electronic. Every student entering the program must therefore meet the following technology requirements, which ensure that students can engage successfully in online coursework.

1. Access to high-speed internet connectivity.
2. A laptop or desktop computer available during both day and evening hours. Students must hold administrator rights on this computer so that they can download the programs that webcam learning systems require. Zoom, for example, requires the installation of a small client file.
3. A laptop or desktop equipped with speakers, microphone, and webcam. These may be built in or added as separate components. A USB audio headset with a microphone boom works well for synchronous video sessions.
4. MS Office for Windows and Mac OS, available free of charge to all registered students. Students must install MS Office and use it for their assignments.
5. The Chrome and Firefox browsers, in addition to the browser that comes with Windows or Mac OS. Both are free downloads from google.com and mozilla.org. Microsoft browsers work poorly with several of our online management systems.
6. Tevera, the electronic database that practicum requires. Students purchase the software after they attend the practicum orientation in the spring semester following their acceptance of admission. The price ranges from \$200 to \$300.

ADMISSION CRITERIA AND VALUES

Social work is a profession committed to serving individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities that represent intersectional and diverse lived experiences. Systemic oppression means that marginalized and intersectional populations do not always appear in higher education and the workforce. The School of Social Work therefore emphasizes inclusion and equity within its student body and promotes innovative thinking rooted in social justice. Diversity in the student body encourages students to listen to the lived experiences of others and builds the perspective they will need in practice. The School encourages applications from students who represent marginalized communities and from their allies, so that NMSU can foster a multidimensional student body and an inclusive social work perspective.

The MSW Admissions Committee considers the applicant's GPA along with cross-cultural experiences, references, volunteer work, the personal statement, and the resume. Admission to the MSW program rests on the following criteria:

1. An assessment of the student's capability to meet program academic and behavioral standards successfully.
2. A value base consistent with professional social work values and ethics.
3. The student's interest in and commitment to the profession of social work.

Members of the Admissions Committee rate applications individually and then recommend acceptance or denial. A rating rubric guides the committee's appraisal of whether the applicant meets admission standards for the three criteria above. As professional social workers, committee members appraise grades and coursework and also exercise professional judgment about the applicant's overall fit and suitability for the profession.

TRANSCRIPTS

Your Graduate School and MSW application must include one transcript from each college or university you attended. You may upload unofficial transcripts to the application for eligibility purposes. The School of Social Work cannot review your application until it receives all transcripts.

Admitted students must arrange for official transcripts to be sent registrar to registrar from each university attended to the NMSU Graduate School. The NMSU Graduate School cannot grant admission without an official transcript showing receipt of a bachelor's degree. Allow ample time when you request transcripts.

Send transcripts under your current name. Transcripts may be lost when the name does not match the name on the application. If you have academic work in progress when you file the application, request that the institution send a final transcript when you complete the work.

International applicants must submit transcript evaluations so that the School of Social Work can conduct a comparative review of academic credentials.

ENTRANCE EXAM REQUIREMENT

The NMSU School of Social Work does NOT require an entrance exam. We do not require the GRE, the Miller Analogies Test, or any other standardized admission test.

ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT

Applicants who have difficulty completing the application because of a learning or physical disability or a medical condition should contact Disability Access Services. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) govern disability accommodations. Students who

have questions or who need a classroom accommodation should contact the office below. All medical information remains confidential.

Disability Access Services
Corbett Center Student Union, Room 204
575-646-6840
das@nmsu.edu

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. All applicants submit a single electronic application for admission to both the NMSU Graduate School and the NMSU School of Social Work. There are not two separate applications. Use the "APPLY NOW" button on the NMSU Graduate School website at <https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/> or the School of Social Work application page at <https://socialwork.nmsu.edu/graduate-program/msw-application-process.html>.
2. Use the Graduate School website, <https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/>, for all current information related to your Graduate School application. The Graduate School charges a \$40 application fee.
3. International applicants will find additional information and the international student application at NMSU International Student and Scholar Services, <https://iss.nmsu.edu/>. You may also contact the Graduate School at gradinfo@nmsu.edu or (575) 646-5746.

Steps to Apply

All applicants apply to the MSW Program through the Graduate School. The Graduate School application site allows you to submit your graduate application, your unofficial transcripts, and the required MSW application documents together.

Indicate on the Graduate School application which program you are applying for:

- Main Campus
 - 2-year
 - 3-year
 - Advanced Standing 1-year
- NMSU Global Online
 - 2-year
 - 3-year
 - Advanced Standing 1-year

Dual MSW/MPH Applications

Applicants who wish to pursue both the Master of Public Health (MPH) and the Master of Social Work (MSW) should note the following:

- Separate applications. Submit separate applications to the MPH program and the MSW program.
- Program option. On the MSW application, indicate your intention to enroll in the Three-Year MSW Program at the site you have selected.
- Notification. After you submit both applications, email the MSW Program Coordinator, Dr. Sterling Brown, at shbrown@nmsu.edu to confirm your intent to enroll in the dual degree program if both programs admit you.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL MSW APPLICATIONS

Both the Regular MSW and the Advanced Standing applications require the following:

1. An earned bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. All applicants must show prerequisite coursework in basic statistics or research methods. Applicants with a non-liberal arts major must also show coursework in humanities, natural science, and behavioral and social science content.
2. A minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. The School of Social Work will consider a GPA of 2.75 to 2.99 for provisional admission. Applicants admitted provisionally because of a GPA below 3.0 may enroll in no more than 9 credits during their first semester and may be required to enter the three-year program. Students admitted on provisional standing must maintain a 3.0 GPA in the first semester to continue in the program.
3. A completed MSW Program Application form.
4. A copy of transcripts from all previous colleges or universities attended.
5. A current resume.
6. Two (2) letters of reference. These letters should come from individuals who can speak to your academic abilities, professional experience, and potential for success in a graduate social work program. Applicants transferring from another social work program must submit at least one reference letter from a faculty member or professional within that program at their previous university.
7. A personal statement that responds to the questions below.

Appropriate references include:

- Professors, especially those who taught you in relevant social work or related courses and can assess your academic skills and potential.
- Supervisors or managers, current or former, who can speak to your work ethic, interpersonal skills, and professional growth.
- Volunteer coordinators or supervisors, particularly if you hold significant volunteer experience in the social service field.
- Professional mentors or colleagues who know you well professionally and can speak to your character, strengths, and commitment to social work.

Please note: Letters from family members or personal friends do not count as professional references and should not be submitted.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

The Admissions Committee reviews your personal statement of 3 to 5 pages to assess your written communication skills, your critical thinking, and your adherence to instructions. Your statement should reflect your motivation for pursuing social work, your preparedness to work with diverse populations, and other relevant qualifications.

Instructions

1. Respond to each question thoroughly and thoughtfully. Demonstrate graduate-level writing by articulating your ideas coherently, using abstract thinking, and following proper grammar and syntax.
2. Follow APA 7th edition format for all citations and references. Include a reference page for any professional literature you quote or paraphrase. To refresh your knowledge of APA style, consult

the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed., 2019) or a reputable online APA style guide.

3. Provide a thoughtful but concise response to each of the questions below.
4. Number your responses clearly so that each corresponds to a question.

Additional Tips

- Proofread carefully. Make sure your statement is free of errors and reflects your best writing.
- Focus on your strengths. Highlight the experiences, skills, and perspectives that make you a strong candidate for the MSW program.
- Be authentic. Let your commitment to social work and social justice come through.
- **The personal statement must reflect your own writing and insights. If you use AI in any capacity, include an attribution statement that identifies the AI tool and describes how you used it.**

Personal Statement Questions

1. Describe how your interest in social work developed, your career goals, and their alignment with the NMSU School of Social Work's mission.
2. Discuss how your professional goals and your personal values align with the values in the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>). Applicants may address different values in their statement, but every applicant should address the values of social justice and of the dignity and worth of the person, exploring their preparation to work with diverse populations and their commitment to challenging social injustice.
3. Discuss how you will navigate the significant responsibilities and commitments of completing the MSW program, including the expected course and practicum requirements.
4. (Optional) If your application indicates past involvement in the criminal justice system or a history of academic concerns, address these in your final paragraph. These issues do not prohibit admission. The committee does need to understand how you have addressed them.

ADDITIONAL ADVANCED STANDING ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Advanced Standing program serves highly qualified applicants who received a BSW degree within five years of the start of the Advanced Standing program. Each program option holds a limited number of Advanced Standing spaces, spaces are competitive, and the program begins in the summer term. To be considered for admission, an applicant must meet the following criteria:

1. A completed Bachelor of Social Work degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), earned within five (5) years of the first semester of the Advanced Standing program.
2. A copy of the last practicum final evaluation, submitted with the application packet. Applicants in a program in which they are currently completing practicum may submit a mid-term evaluation.
3. An overall cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 with a minimum GPA of 3.5 in all required BSW coursework. The Advanced Standing program offers no provisional admission on the basis of GPA.
4. A basic statistics or research methods course. Document on the MSW Application Form that you have taken a beginning statistics course at an accredited university, online or face to face. You must

satisfy this requirement before the MSW program begins. If you have not taken the course when you apply, provide your plan for completing it before the program starts.

5. Two years of experience in a social work related setting, which the committee prefers but does not require. Experience may include employment, volunteer work, or other service and leadership learning activities. Document this experience on the resume you submit.
6. All requirements listed under "Requirements for All MSW Applications" above, including the reference letter requirement described below.
7. A completed Case Analysis. See the section below.
8. Availability to begin coursework in the summer term, which includes 3 credits before the fall cohort begins.

Reference Letter Requirement for Advanced Standing Applicants

At least one of the two required letters of reference must come from a social work faculty member, field liaison, or field instructor from your BSW program who taught, supervised, or advised you. This letter should address your readiness for graduate-level social work education. The second letter may come from any appropriate professional reference described under "Requirements for All MSW Applications" above.

Applicants who cannot obtain a letter from their BSW program should contact the MSW Program Coordinator before the application deadline to discuss an alternative.

Practicum Evaluation Requirement for Advanced Standing Applicants

Advanced Standing applicants are required to submit a complete and signed evaluation of their performance in their BSW practicum experience. Applicants who are currently completing their practicum experience may submit a mid-term evaluation but may be admitted provisionally pending a final evaluation.

Case Analysis Requirement for Advanced Standing Applicants

The School of Social Work requires evidence that an Advanced Standing applicant is prepared to enter the MSW concentration year. Advanced Standing applications require submission of a Case Analysis document described below.

Instructions

1. Read the case below and respond to the four prompts that follow.
2. Write 600 to 900 words in total. Number your responses to match the prompts.
3. Write in your own voice. Formal citation is not required. If you refer to the NASW Code of Ethics, name the standard.
4. The response must reflect your own writing and insights. If you use AI in any capacity, include an attribution statement that identifies the AI tool and describes how you used it.

The case below is fictional. It does not describe any actual client.

The Case: Referral Information

You work as a social worker at a community health center that serves a rural county in southern New Mexico. The nearest hospital is fifty miles away. Your center offers primary care, behavioral health, and case management.

The high school counselor refers Marisol Ortega, age 38, after her daughter accumulated 24 unexcused absences this semester. The counselor's referral note states that Marisol agreed to "talk to someone" and

that a teacher recently overheard the daughter say she is "the one who keeps everyone alive at home." The counselor has asked you to let her know how the meeting goes.

The Case: First Contact

Marisol arrives fifteen minutes late to the appointment and apologizes twice. She tells you the following over about thirty minutes.

- She lives with her daughter Ana, age 15, her son Beto, age 8, and her mother Estella, age 71. Estella moved in fourteen months ago after a fall. Estella now needs help dressing and sometimes does not recognize Beto.
- Marisol works mornings at a school cafeteria and evenings at a convenience store. She lost her health coverage when the cafeteria cut her to part time. She has not been to a doctor in two years.
- She went to the emergency room twice in the past six months for chest pain. Both times she was told her heart was fine. She says she does not sleep much and describes lying awake "running numbers."
- Her partner Daniel moved back into the house four months ago after eight months apart. When you ask about the separation, Marisol says things are "better now" and changes the subject. She later mentions she keeps her paychecks in a separate account.
- She says Ana is "a good kid" who watches Beto and helps with Estella. She does not know why Ana is missing school and has not asked her directly. She says she does not want the school "in her business."
- She stopped attending a women's group at her church about a year ago because of her schedule. She says she misses it.
- When you ask what she wants help with, Marisol says, "I just need Ana to go to school so they stop calling me."

Prompts

1. What would you want to understand about this situation, and why? Organize your response so that the committee can see how you think about the person and the environment together. Include what you see as strengths and resources in this case and what needs you would prioritize and why.
2. What do you not know? Identify the most important gaps in this information, explain why each one matters, and describe how you would go about learning more.
3. Identify one ethical issue this case raises for you. Name the relevant NASW Code of Ethics standard and describe the first step you would take to ensure ethical practice in this case.
4. Name at least one thing from your BSW practicum (and post-BSW social work practice experience if relevant) that prepared you to work with a family like this one, and at least one thing you would want supervision or further learning on. Be specific about the practicum experience you are drawing on, how it has prepared you, and how you could enhance your preparation to serve this client system.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT APPLICANTS

International applicants should begin at NMSU International Student and Scholar Services, <https://iss.nmsu.edu/>. Applicants must submit a Certificate of Support (GS Form 00) and a TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score if they attended a university where English is not the language of instruction. Contact International Student and Scholar Services at iss@nmsu.edu or (575) 646-2834.

- International students are admitted to the Main Campus Three-Year MSW Program.
- A limited number of Graduate Assistantships is available.
- Students who do not secure a visa before August 1 may need to defer admission.

International Transcript Evaluation Requirements

The School of Social Work requires specific documentation from applicants who attended institutions outside the United States so that the Admissions Committee can fully understand their academic credentials.

Credential evaluation services. Applicants must submit an in-depth evaluation of their international transcripts that establishes course equivalency and overall academic standing.

A certified English transcript evaluation must accompany every international transcript not issued within the United States system. A professional translation service or a recognized credential evaluation agency should complete the evaluation. A list of participating members appears at <https://www.naces.org/members>.

Submitting your transcripts. Upload your official transcripts and your certified transcript evaluations within your application.

Important Notes

- The evaluation process can take several weeks, so plan accordingly.
- Applicants with questions about international transcript requirements should contact the Student Program Coordinator, Maribel Lopez, at mkeeper@nmsu.edu.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

The School of Social Work offers a limited number of Graduate Assistantships. Graduate Assistantship information, the application form, and the reference forms appear at the bottom of the MSW application page, <https://socialwork.nmsu.edu/graduate-program/msw-application-process.html>.

APPLICATION AND REVIEW TIMELINE

The MSW program admits a new cohort of students every fall. The timeline below applies to students who hope to join the Fall 2027 cohort. Applicants should apply as early as possible for best consideration.

- **Application Opens Online:** September 15, 2026
- **Application Reviews Begin:** October 15, 2026. Decisions are typically sent within 8 weeks.
- **Priority Application Deadline:** January 15, 2027. Apply by this date to ensure review.
- **Late Application Window:** January 15, 2027 to March 15, 2027. The program accepts applications during this window but does not guarantee review.
- **Online Application Closes:** March 15, 2027

The School of Social Work holds a limited number of seats. Applicants should submit a complete application as early as possible to ensure full consideration. The committee begins reviewing complete applications in mid-October. Applicants typically receive a decision within 8 weeks of submitting a completed application. Early applicants may begin the enrollment process and the practicum placement process sooner.

The committee reviews every applicant who submits a complete application before January 15. The program offers available spaces to students recommended for admission in the order in which they applied. Applicants who apply before January 15, who are recommended for admission, and who apply after all seats are filled join a wait list pending the decisions of earlier applicants.

The committee reviews applications received between January 15 and March 15 only if space allows. Applications received after January 15 that the committee does not review because of space limitations will be denied, and those applicants may reapply in the following cycle. Submit all materials for both the Graduate School and the School of Social Work, including letters of reference, before the priority deadline. The committee does not consider incomplete applications.