

Admission Information

Applicant Qualifications

- The graduate program in social work seeks candidates whose baccalaureate preparation, scholastic achievement, professional experience, interest, motivation, and references point to the potential and capacity for success in the MSW program and professional development in social work.
 - *GPA* - Completion of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university, with a GPA of 3.0 or above in undergraduate study and a student's major; Applicants can apply to the program while finishing the bachelor's degree, but, if accepted, enrollment will be conditional upon its successful completion.
 - GPA of 3.0 or above in any previous graduate work in social work;
 - *Test scores – none required.*
 - Course work: In addition, the MSW Admissions Committee will review each applicant's undergraduate coursework to determine whether any one or more of the areas specified below are under-represented:
 - At least 18 credit hours in liberal arts such as literature, math, history, philosophy, performing arts, and humanities,
 - At least 6 of the 18 credits must be in the social sciences, preferably, psychology and sociology, and
 - A statistics course
 - Applicants who lack the above liberal arts courses but are otherwise qualified may be accepted into the program conditionally. The expectations for meeting the conditions will be explained in the acceptance letter.
 - *Advanced Standing:*
 - For advanced standing students, applicants must submit their previous final field evaluation received from a BSW program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. For students currently enrolled in accredited BSW programs, mid-year evaluations must be submitted with the applications or as soon as they are received. Acceptance into the MSW program will be conditional upon the receipt of the final field work evaluation.
 - *Applicants with a BSW degree from a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education may apply for advanced standing within 7 years of completing a BSW degree.*

Application Procedures and Required Materials

- **Application Deadlines:**

On-Campus Regular and Advanced Standing Program: October 15 for fall admission

- All application materials must be received by the Office of Admissions by October 15 for admission to the program in the following September. Applications are reviewed by the School of Social Work Admissions Committee during the fall semester and decisions are typically finalized in December with decision letters mailed during January. Because application review is not guaranteed after the deadline, applicants should be sure to submit all application materials on time. Acceptance in the graduate program is competitive.

Low-Residency Program: This is an online cohort with 2-3 scheduled face-to-face campus meetings each semester. Each cohort completes a three year program and new cohort will be admitted after that three year cycle. Please check the School of Social Work or Graduate Admissions website about the next planned admission cycle.

Applicants are required to provide the following materials:

- Application: [Online Application](#)
- Application fee: Waived for all applicants
- Transcripts: Official transcripts from all colleges or universities attended, excluding the seven campuses of the University of Maine System (UMS transcripts are accessible to USM). A transcript is official when sent directly from the institution.
 - International College transcripts: In addition to an official copy of the transcript, an official evaluation of college-level transcripts from a NACES (National Association of Credential Evaluation Services) approved transcript analysis agency is required
- Resume: Submit a resume or CV that outlines professional, volunteer, and community experience.
- *Essay:* Personal statement of no more than 750 words addressing the following questions:
 - What are the reasons you want to be a social worker?
 - How do the mission and goals of the M.S.W. program at the University of Southern Maine School of Social Work fit with your career goals?
 - Describe your experiences with diversity, discrimination, and/or oppression.
 - What social issue is of particular concern to you, and why?
- *Letters of Recommendation:* Three recent (within two years) professional or academic letters of reference reflecting on both academic achievement and paid or volunteer work experience relating to social services. Recommendations should be from individuals who are qualified, through direct experience with your academic or professional work, to comment on your ability to undertake graduate study and your chosen profession.
- *Standardized test scores: None required*
- *TOEFL or IELTS:* Students whose first language is not English are required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and submit official scores as part of the application process. See additional information below regarding test scores.

International Applicants

In addition to the standard application materials, international students must also provide the following materials:

- College transcript evaluation: official course-by-course evaluation of college-level transcripts from a NACES (National Association of Credential Evaluation Services) approved transcript analysis agency
- Declaration of Finances form accompanied by the appropriate financial documentation
- International students whose first language is not English are required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and submit official scores as part of the application process. Only applicants with TOEFL scores of 79 or higher on the internet-based test 550 or higher on the paper-based test, or 213 or higher on the computer-based test; or IELTS scores of 6.5 or higher will be considered for admission to a graduate program.

English Proficiency Test Scores

Official English proficiency examination scores are required from international applicants and/or applicants whose primary language is not English, unless the applicant has received a degree from an English-speaking institution. The University of Southern Maine accepts the following score reports sent directly from the testing agency. TOEFL scores of 79 or higher on the internet-based test, 550 or higher on the paper-based test, or 213 or higher on the computer-based test; or IELTS scores of 6.5 or higher will be considered for a graduate program.

Where to send transcripts and application materials

Official transcripts and other supporting documents can be sent to:

Application Processing Center

University of Maine System

P.O. Box 412

Bangor, ME 04402-0412

Colleges and universities that participate in electronic submission of transcripts can send official transcripts to edocs@maine.edu. Resumes, essays, and other documents can also be sent to edocs@maine.edu.

For a transcript or recommendation to be considered official, it must be sent by the institution or the person writing the recommendation.

Once your application is submitted, it is important to make sure that all required documents have been received by the Office of Graduate Admission by the deadline to ensure you are considered for admission.

Admission Appeals

Applicants may appeal an admission decision by submitting a written appeal to the School of Social Work Director within 10 business days. Further information on the admission appeal process can be found at [USM Admissions](#).

Transfer Students

Matriculated students who have earned graduate credits in a Council on Social Work Education accredited MSW program may transfer up to 30 credits. To transfer credits, students must enroll in the graduate program at USM within 7 years of initially earning credits from another MSW program. In order to transfer credits, the student must have maintained a GPA of 3.0 or above.

Admissions Committee Decision and Applicant Response Timeline

Once applicants are notified of acceptance, they will have two weeks from the date on the acceptance letter to respond to the Graduate Admissions Office about attending. To secure a seat in the program, a \$200 deposit must be submitted with the notification form and sent to the Graduate Admissions Office. It is the responsibility of the applicant to respond within this time period and submit a deposit in order to reserve a seat in the program.

Deferment

While students are encouraged to matriculate for the year of acceptance, it is recognized that personal circumstances may require a delay in matriculation. Admitted applicants may defer enrollment for up to one year without re-application to the program.

Learn More

For more information about courses and credit hours, [view our Program Requirements](#).