Dear Prospective Student,

Thank you for your interest in the Master of Social Work program at the University of Alaska Anchorage. In our distance-delivered MSW program, students from rural and urban communities in Alaska join together in a highly engaging, rigorous learning environment to develop the social work practice and leadership skills needed to address the most complex social challenges in Alaska. Courses are delivered through a combination of weekly synchronous web-conference classes and online asynchronous learning activities, which give students multiple opportunities to develop deep and meaningful relationships with faculty and other students.

The MSW program at the University of Alaska Anchorage is a truly unique program. We have an excellent faculty with social work practice experience in Alaska and in rural communities. Students experience small class sizes and individualized instruction. Each student works closely with an MSW academic advisor and with the MSW field coordinator, who assists with arranging MSW field practicum placements in communities. Finally, students have opportunities for leadership with the MSW Student Coalition, whose mission is “to establish and foster connection between MSW students, the community, and future students.”

If you are interested in making a difference in your community and in Alaska, I encourage you to apply to the UAA MSW program. Please review this book to learn more about the UAA MSW program, the curriculum, the application, and the admissions process. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are happy to talk with you and answer your questions.

Sincerely,

Mary Dallas Allen, PhD, MSW
Associate Professor and MSW Program Coordinator

The mission of the UAA Master of Social Work (MSW) program is to prepare advanced generalist social workers who address health and social issues in Alaska. Alaska’s unique and rich multicultural populations, geographic remoteness, and frontier status allow the real potential for skilled social work professionals to make a profound impact on social, economic, and environmental injustice in our state.
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MSW PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

MSW PROGRAM
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
The MSW program prepares advanced generalist social workers who:

• Are leaders who assume multiple practice roles to address health and social issues in Alaska.
• Engage in practice consistent with the values and ethics of the social work profession.
• Demonstrate attentiveness, sensitivity, and respect for people from diverse backgrounds.
• Intervene differentially with, and on behalf of, populations at risk or who experience discrimination, economic deprivation, and/or oppression.
• Develop and conduct research to inform practice.
• Develop and evaluate social policies that promote social, economic, and environmental justice.
• Engage in planned change using theory and evidence-based practice processes to provide competent and effective services across system sizes.
• Integrate contextual knowledge into the development, implementation, and evaluation of social work services in Alaska.

MSW PROGRAM ACCREDITATION
The UAA School of Social Work Master of Social Work program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The program will seek reaccreditation in 2018.

MSW PROGRAM OVERVIEW
The UAA School of Social Work Master of Social Work program is a distance-delivered advanced generalist MSW program. The advanced generalist concentration is the ideal curriculum model to meet the significant and complex needs spanning across remote, rural, and small metropolitan community needs of Alaska. Social workers in Alaska are required to assume multiple roles and responsibilities in their work, frequently serving as the only social worker in their agencies, and quite possibly, the only social worker in their geographic region. As a result, an advanced generalist social worker needs to be able to perform multiple roles in the direct, organizational, and community practice arenas.

The MSW program curriculum is divided into the generalist curriculum and the advanced generalist curriculum, and it includes five course sequences across the curriculum: social work practice, policy, human behavior in the social environment, research, and field practicum. The generalist curriculum prepares students to engage in generalist social work practice, and the advanced generalist curriculum prepares students to engage in leadership and advanced social work practice.

Generalist MSW Curriculum
The UAA MSW foundation curriculum design, including the goals, objectives, and course outcomes, provides students with a generalist perspective for social work practice. Generalist social work practice prepares social work students who can: assume multiple roles in their work; intervene on multiple levels to enhance human well-being; address the needs of Alaskans in distress due to poverty, oppression or other forms of social or economic injustice; and demonstrate a commitment to the values and ethics of the profession.

The generalist curriculum consists of the following courses, which must all be completed before advancing to the concentration curriculum:

• SWK 607 Social Work Policy and Services
• SWK 624 Foundation Research Methods
• SWK 630 Practice I: Individuals
• SWK 631 Introduction to Practice
• SWK 632 Practice II: Families and Groups
• SWK 636 Practice III: Organizations and Communities
• SWK 642 Human Behavior in the Social Environment
• SWK 643 Human Diversity in Social Work Practice
• SWK 644 Social Work Practicum I
• SWK 645 Social Work Practicum II
Advanced Generalist MSW Curriculum
The advanced generalist curriculum provides advanced content in the curricular areas introduced in the foundation curriculum, addressing it in greater depth, breadth, and specificity. Thus, the advanced generalist concentration provides a continuum of knowledge based upon the liberal arts foundation and generalist practice knowledge from the foundation curriculum. The continuum moves entry-level practitioners to an autonomous level of practice, with leadership, innovation, and creativity at the core of advanced generalist practice. The intent of the advanced generalist curriculum is to prepare students for independent practice and leadership roles in the community. The UAA MSW concentration curriculum design, including the goals, objectives, and course outcomes incorporate elements of the definition of advanced generalist practice to prepare graduates for advanced generalist practice:

- SWK 608 Social Policy for Advanced Generalist Practice
- SWK 628 Program Evaluation
- SWK 629 Advanced Generalist Practice I: Individuals
- SWK 633 Advanced Generalist Practice II: Families and Groups
- SWK 634 Advanced Generalist Practice III: Organizations and Communities
- SWK 635 Advanced Generalist Integrative Seminar
- SWK 638 Practice Evaluation Lab
- SWK 646 Advanced Generalist Practicum I
- SWK 647 Advanced Generalist Practicum II
- SWK 698 MSW Research Seminar

UAA MSW PROGRAM DELIVERY
The MSW program is distance-delivered and is accessible to students who physically reside in Alaska. The courses are delivered using a variety of synchronous and asynchronous educational technologies, including Blackboard Learn, Blackboard Collaborate, teleconference, and video conference. Through distance education technology, students and faculty are highly engaged in a community of collaborative learning.

The required MSW courses require students to attend regularly scheduled distance-delivered class sessions each week, which are scheduled from 5:00 – 6:45 pm and 7:00 – 8:45 pm. All students are required to attend two mandatory MSW program intensives on the UAA Anchorage campus, although advanced placement students are only required to attend one. The first intensive, which provides an orientation to the program and to the generalist curriculum, takes place in August of the first semester of generalist year. The second intensive provides an orientation to the advanced generalist curriculum, and it takes place in August of the first semester of the concentration year (2nd year of the full-time program and 3rd year of the part-time program). The intensives take place over two days, and they are typically held over a weekend (Friday – Saturday). Students are required to provide their own transportation, meals, and lodging for the intensives.

The MSW program is offered full-time, part-time, and advanced placement:

**Full-Time Program (2 years)**
Full-time students attend classes during summer, fall, and spring semesters for two years. Full-time students complete the foundation curriculum during the first year, which includes an intensive in Anchorage at the beginning of fall semester, followed by the concentration curriculum during their second year, which also includes an intensive in Anchorage at the beginning of fall semester. Full-time students complete two field practicum placements in their home community: one is completed in the first year during fall and spring semesters and one is completed in the second year during fall and spring semesters. The full-time program requires a course load of 3 credits each summer, and 13-16 credits each fall and spring semester.

**Part-Time Program (4 years)**
Part-time students attend classes during summer, fall, and spring semesters for four years. Part-time students complete the MSW program in four years with the foundation curriculum completed during the first two years and the concentration curriculum completed during the second two years. Part-time students attend an intensive in Anchorage during the fall semester of the
first year and an intensive in the fall semester of the third year. They complete two practicum placements in their home community: one is completed in the second year during fall and spring semesters and one is completed in the fourth year during fall and spring semesters. The part-time program requires a course load of 3 credits during the summer and 6-7 credits each fall and spring semester.

Advanced Placement Program (1-2 years)
Students with a BSW degree from an accredited social work program who are admitted with advanced placement enter the MSW program during the concentration curriculum, and they may attend full-time or part-time. Full-time and part-time advanced placement students complete one intensive at the beginning of the first fall semester of the advanced placement program. Advanced placement students complete one practicum placement in their home community during fall and spring semesters. The part-time advanced placement program requires a course load of 3-6 credits during the summer and 6-7 credits during fall and spring semesters. The full-time program requires 3-6 credits in the summer and 15-16 credits during fall and spring semesters.

DUAL DEGREE, MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK / MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH
The Master of Social Work/Master of Public Health (MSW/MPH) dual degree provides academic training in order to maximize the impact of both public health and social work practices. This dual degree develops expertise at the nexus of public health and social work. The goal of this program is to train leaders who have the skills and competencies to address many of the social and public health problems facing the state of Alaska, this nation, and the world.

Admissions requirements: Students must apply separately and meet the admission requirements of both the MSW and MPH programs. See below for the MSW program admissions requirements.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS
UAA MSW Students must be able to access the internet, navigate web pages, check and respond to email, and attach files to email. Students need access to word processing software (such as Microsoft Word), presentation software (such as Microsoft PowerPoint), and media playing software (YouTube, Windows Media Player, etc.) as courses often use these programs to complete assignments. Many courses use web conferencing, such as Blackboard Collaborate, for the synchronous class meetings. To participate in the UAA MSW program, students will need a web camera, speakers, and a microphone (or a headset with a built-in microphone).

MSW TUITION INFORMATION
TUITION
Tuition at UAA is determined by the number of course credit hours, the level of the course, and the student's residency status. All MSW courses are graduate 600-level courses. For detailed information about tuition, fees, and residency status, please visit the UAA Registrar Office website: http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/students/financial-aid/cost-of-attendance.cfm.

WESTERN REGIONAL GRADUATE PROGRAM
The Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) makes high-quality, distinctive graduate and healthcare-related programs available to students of the western states at the resident tuition rate. As part of the Student Exchange Program of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, WRGP helps place students in a wide range of graduate programs, all designed around the educational, social, and economic needs of the West. States involved in the program include: Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. Through WRGP, students are eligible to enroll in available programs outside of their home state at resident tuition rates. Applicants
need not demonstrate financial need. Information about WRGP and an application can be found on the UAA Admissions website: http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/admissions/wue.

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID
The Office of Financial Aid is located in the UAA University Center and can be reached by phone at (907) 786-1480 or online at https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/students/financial-aid/

SCHOLARSHIPS & STIPENDS
The UAA Office of Financial Aid has information about sources of grants and scholarships. Social work students should inquire about the following:

- The Dove Kull Memorial Scholarship, which offers up to $1500 per year at the MSW level.
- The NASW Alaska Chapter scholarship of $500-$1000 to a UAA MSW student who is a member of NASW.
- The Ella Craig/NASW Alaska Chapter Scholarship which offers awards of $500-$1000 at the MSW level.
- Teaching and research assistantships through the academic deans and Office of Academic Affairs.
- College of Health Administrative Scholarship and Book Stipend allotted for undergraduate and graduate social work students.
- Scholarships and stipends offered by community based social service organizations.
- Graduate assistantships through the School of Social Work (limited in number).

MSW ADMISSION INFORMATION

APPLYING TO THE MSW PROGRAM
Applications to the MSW program are accepted and reviewed once a year. Applications to the MSW program must be submitted online at the UAA Office of Admissions website by January 15. Paper applications will not be accepted. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed until all application materials have been submitted. Late applications may be accepted at the discretion of the MSW Admissions Chair.

TRANSFER CREDITS
Up to 9 semester credits not used toward an undergraduate degree may be transferred to UAA from an accredited institution and counted toward a graduate degree. Up to 9 graduate credits may also be transferred in the case of a second master’s degree, although doctoral degree credits may not be used toward an additional master’s degree unless that degree is in a distinctly different field. Acceptance of transfer credit toward graduate program requirements must be approved by the individual program faculty, college dean, and Graduate School.

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO THE MSW PROGRAM

- Bachelor’s degree with a sound liberal arts foundation from an accredited college or university (or the equivalent if degree was earned outside of the U.S.). The liberal arts baccalaureate should include a minimum of 45 semester credits or 68 quarter credits which reflect the following liberal arts classes:
  - Two university courses in the humanities (history, philosophy, languages, literature or similar disciplines);
  - Two university courses in the social sciences (political sciences, sociology, anthropology, psychology or similar disciplines; see note below concerning human development);
  - One university course in the fine arts (music, theater, art appreciation or similar disciplines);
  - One university course in the natural sciences and/or mathematics (biology, chemistry, physics, geology, astronomy or similar disciplines; algebra, calculus, trigonometry, statistics or similar disciplines; see notes below concerning human biology and statistics); and
  - 3.0 cumulative undergraduate GPA (The MSW Admissions Chair may make exceptions, taking into account special circumstances based on a review of the entire application packet).
• Three prerequisite courses (completed with a grade of “C” or better):
  o Human Biology (Appropriate courses include: Human Biology; Introductory Biology; Human Anatomy and Physiology; Fundamentals of Biology. The UAA courses that will satisfy this requirement are BIOL 100 Human Biology; BIOL 102 Introductory Biology; BIOL 111 or 112 Human Anatomy and Physiology I or II; BIOL 113 or 114 Lectures in Human Anatomy and Physiology I or II; BIOL 115 or 116 Fundamentals of Biology I or II)
  o Lifespan Development (Appropriate courses include Human Development Across the Lifespan; Developmental Psychology; Human Lifespan Development. The UAA course that will satisfy this requirement is PSY 150 Lifespan Development)
  o Applied Statistics (The UAA courses that will satisfy this requirement are: STAT 252 Elementary Statistics or PSY 453 Application of Statistics to the Social Sciences).

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO THE MSW PROGRAM WITH ADVANCED PLACEMENT
All applicants must meet the following criteria for advanced placement without exception. Applicants who do not meet the criteria for Advanced Placement may apply to the full MSW program.
• BSW degree completed within the past five years from a degree program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.
• 3.0 cumulative undergraduate GPA
• 3.5 GPA in BSW program core courses (course work in human behavior, policy, research, practice, and practicum)
• Grade of “A” or equivalent in each field placement course
• Three prerequisite courses (completed with a grade of “C” or better):
  o Human Biology
  o Lifespan Development
  o Applied Statistics

ADMISSIONS DECISIONS
The UAA MSW Admissions Committee, which is composed of faculty of the UAA School of Social Work and members of the professional social work community, reviews all complete applications to the MSW program. Only complete applications will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed until all application materials have been submitted. The Committee determines admission based on a combination of factors, including:
• Undergraduate grade point average. While a minimum GPA of 3.0 is desired, exceptions may be made taking into account special circumstances based on a review of the entire application packet, particularly if the grade point average in the last 60 credits is above 3.0.
• Assessment of the applicant’s understanding of and commitment to social work and their capacity for the profession as evidenced by the applicant’s resume, letters of reference, personal statement, and writing sample.
• Letters of reference.
• Demonstration of critical thinking and writing ability based on the personal statement and writing sample.
• Diversity considerations.

NOTICE OF ADMISSION DECISIONS
Applicants to the UAA MSW program will receive a written notice of the admission committee’s recommendation from the UAA School of Social Work by April 1. Applicants will also receive a formal written admission decision from the UAA Office of Admissions. At the time of admission, students are assigned an MSW advisor.

TYPES OF ADMISSIONS DECISIONS
Admitted – All admissions requirements are met and the applicant is selected for admission to the MSW program. An Intent to Enroll form is enclosed with the UAA School of Social Work notice of admission, and applicants must return this form to the School of Social Work by the date specified in the letter in order to confirm their seat in the MSW program. Students admitted to the full-time program will be required to provide field education placement information with the Intent to Enroll form.

Admitted with provisions – Applicants who show potential for success in the MSW program
but do not meet all the admission requirements may be provisionally admitted. For example, applicants who are enrolled in the last semester of their undergraduate program or who have not completed the three prerequisite courses will be given a provisional admission. Provisions must be completed by the date specified in the letter of admission. If the provisions are not met within the specified deadlines, the student may be removed from graduate degree-seeking status. An Intent to Enroll form is enclosed with the UAA School of Social Work notice of provisional admission, and applicants must return this form to the School of Social Work by the date specified in the letter in order to confirm their seat in the MSW program. Students admitted provisionally to the full-time program will be required to provide field education placement information with the Intent to Enroll form.

Waitlisted for admission – Each year we receive more qualified applicants than space available. A small number of applicants may be selected for a waitlist. If space becomes available before May 1, applicants will be removed from the waitlist and offered admission. If space does not become available, then applicants on the waitlist must reapply to be considered for admission in subsequent years.

Denied admission – Unfortunately, each year we receive more applications than space available, so we must deny admission to applicants. Applicants who are denied admission may reapply in subsequent years.

DEFERRING ADMISSION
Applicants who are admitted or admitted with provisions to the MSW program may request to defer admission to the MSW program for one year. The MSW Admissions Committee reviews all requests for deferral of admission. Applicants may submit a request for a one year deferral of admission by completing the following steps:

• Submit the Intent to Enroll Form to the School of Social Work by the date specified indicating a request to defer admission for one year. Enclose a written request for deferral that is addressed to the MSW Admissions Committee. The written request should describe the reasons for requesting a one year deferral.
• If a deferral is granted, applicants must complete and submit the UAA Graduate School Change Application for Graduate Admission by May 1. MSW program approval is required for this form.

NON-ATTENDANCE
Admitted applicants who cannot attend should indicate their decision on the Intent to Enroll form that is sent with the letter of admission. The Intent to Enroll form should be returned to the School of Social Work by the date specified in the letter of recommendation.

Admitted applicants who fail to submit the intent to enroll form and who do not enroll in the required summer semester MSW course by the end of the add/drop period for summer semester will be removed from the MSW program. Accepted applicants removed for non-attendance who wish to pursue the MSW degree must reapply for admission.

FIELD PLACEMENT NOTIFICATION
The UAA MSW Program requires MSW students to complete two years of field placements (480 hours each year). Many field agencies require students to complete a criminal background check, drug screening, or communicable disease screening before accepting a student into the agency. Having a criminal record or being unable to pass drug or communicable disease screenings could impact the ability of the UAA School of Social Work to place a student in a field placement, which may result in the student being unable to complete the field instruction sequence as planned or possibly prevent a student from completing the MSW program.

FELONY POLICY
The School of Social Work MSW Admissions Committee will, at its discretion, deny an applicant for admission if the committee finds that the applicant’s history of felony or misdemeanor convictions make the applicant unfit for social work practice. The committee will consider the number and recency of any convictions, and the relationship those convictions may
have to license eligibility and social work practice. Notwithstanding the above, a person who has been convicted of a felony crime against a person, described in AS 11.41, within the ten years before the date of application, is unfit for admission to the MSW Program and will be denied.

**NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION**
The University of Alaska is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and educational institution. The University of Alaska does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, physical or mental disability, status as a protected veteran, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, parenthood, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, or other legally protected status. The University’s commitment to nondiscrimination, including against sex discrimination, applies to students, employees, and applicants for admission and employment. Contact information, applicable laws, and complaint procedures are included on UA’s statement of nondiscrimination available at www.uaa.alaska.edu/about/equity-and-compliance.

**COMPLETE A UAA MSW APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION**
All applicants to the UAA MSW program must complete an online application for admission, which includes a non-refundable $75.00 fee. Apply online at https://university-alaska.force.com/UAA/Portal-Login. The application includes the following documents:

**Professional Resume** – The resume will be uploaded to the online application. At a minimum, the resume should include:
- Work Experience: Prior employment history with name and location of the organization, title, position held, duties performed, and dates of employment;
- Volunteer Experience: Prior volunteer experience with name and location of the organization, tasks performed, and dates of service;
- Awards / Honors: Highlight relevant activities and honors, such as academic awards and scholarships, membership in organizations, leadership positions, and work-related awards or honors. Provide dates of award or involvement.

**Personal Statement** – The personal statement should be typed, double-spaced, and should be no longer than four (4) pages total. The personal statement will be uploaded to the online application. Please respond to each of the following:

1. Explain how your personal, volunteer, education, and professional experiences have broadened your understanding of the role of social work in society.
2. Explain how your personal, volunteer, education, and professional experiences have shaped your self-awareness and influenced your understanding of and commitment to social, economic, and/or environmental justice.
3. How will earning a Master of Social Work degree prepare you to achieve your professional goals?
4. Graduate social work education requires a major time commitment to meet program demands. Describe your plan to achieve a balance between the courses and field practicums required of a part-time or full-time student and other aspects (e.g., personal, work, family, and community responsibilities) of your life.

**Writing Sample** – The writing sample should be typed, double-spaced, and no longer than three (3) pages. The writing sample will be uploaded to the online application. Please respond to the following in essay format:
- Identify a social problem of great concern to you and relevant to the practice of social work.
- Discuss the key factors contributing to the social problem.
- Share ideas for how the problem may be addressed.
- Discuss leadership roles you might undertake as a social worker in addressing the problem.
3 Professional Letters of Reference – Three professional reference forms will be submitted through the online application. Do not send letters of reference directly to the School of Social Work.

• Please select professional references from your work, educational, and volunteer experiences who can best speak to your qualities that make you suitable for a career as a social worker. Please do not use relatives or friends as references.
• A UAA School of Social Work Letter of reference form will be electronically emailed to each of the references you provide. Your references should complete the form and electronically return it as instructed in the email.
• Applicants with a BSW who are applying for advanced placement: One of the three professional references must be provided by a BSW faculty member who can address the applicant’s readiness for advanced placement, such as the BSW program coordinator, the BSW field coordinator, or the student’s academic advisor.

Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended – Provide official transcripts reflecting completion of all baccalaureate or master degrees as well as any transcripts with graduate credit. All requested transcripts must be official and securely transmitted directly to UAA by the issuing institution. Students do not need to request transcripts from any University of Alaska Campus.

Transcripts can be sent directly from the issuing institution to UAA Admissions through a secure electronic transcript service by providing the following email address when requesting your transcript: application-documents@uaa.alaska.edu. Order printed transcripts sent to the UAA Office of Admissions (By USPS: UAA Office of Admissions, 3211 Providence Drive, UC 106, Anchorage AK 99508; By FedEx, UPS, DHL, or Courier: UAA Office of Admissions, 3901 Old Seward Highway, Anchorage, AK 99503).

REVIEW YOUR COMPLETE MSW APPLICATION
It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all materials required for a complete application are uploaded in the online application portal. The MSW program reserves the right to request additional materials and/or interviews pertaining to program admission. Please note that the UAA MSW program does not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

AFTER SUBMITTING YOUR MSW APPLICATION
• You will receive an email confirming submission of your application and notification of any incomplete documents.
• Notify the School of Social Work if your name, address, email, or phone number changes.
• Notify the School of Social Work if you decide to withdraw your application.