

## Application Instructions for Portland State University's Baccalaureate Social Work (BSW) Program

Thank you for your interest in the BSW Program at Portland State University! Our program is CSWE accredited and prepares undergraduates to become generalist social workers in a wide variety of community based, public and private sector human service organizations. We seek applicants whose values align with the mission the BSW Program, which combines theory with practical, hands-on experience and prepares undergraduate students for careers in social work and related fields and for future graduate studies. Students in our BSW Program gain knowledge, values, and skills to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Our program is committed to centering critical self-reflection, racial equity, and social and economic justice, and we encourage our students to be active citizens and practitioners who embody these values.

### Are you ready to apply? Important prerequisites for application to the BSW Program:

- In order to apply to the BSW Program, you must have submitted a complete admissions application to Portland State University, <http://www.pdx.edu/admissions/>
- You must be of junior status (90 credits) by the term that you will start the program.
- You must submit a postmarked application packet to the SSW office by **March 1<sup>st</sup>**.

### To complete the application packet, please submit the following by March 1st. All forms are available on the School of Social Work website:

<http://www.pdx.edu/ssw/bsw-admissions>

- BSW Application Form, including contact info and all experience with months and hours per week. Use additional experience form if necessary;
- Two reference letters using the BSW Reference Form;

Select two people who can serve as references for you. They should be people who know your academic work and/or your work with individuals, families and/or community services. Please do not submit letters from family or friends. Download the form from the website, complete the top part of the form, and give a copy to the people you have selected as references. Ask them to complete the form, attach a letter, place it in an envelope, sign the sealed envelope flap, and return it to you. You will submit these envelopes as part of your packet.

**\*COVID Update** – applicants may fill in the top of the reference form digitally and send that version to the people selected as references. If an applicant or reference is having trouble with this paper process due to COVID limitations, please email [bswadvisinq@pdx.edu](mailto:bswadvisinq@pdx.edu) for additional options.

- Your unofficial transcripts from any and all colleges that you have attended;
- An essay, which will be used to evaluate your writing skills and your readiness for admission to the BSW Program. Your answers to these questions demonstrate your interest in and commitment to social work, social justice, and social change. Please answer the following 5 questions; list the question and then your response. These should be double spaced, with no more than one page per question.
  1. Outside of your personal desire to help people, why have you chosen social work as a profession over another profession or major?

2. How have your life experiences and identities shaped your understanding of power and privilege?
3. Why is a commitment to racial, social and economic justice important to the field of Social Work? What are your areas for growth in relation to this commitment?
4. Reflect upon a time when you've had a long-cherished or accepted belief challenged. How did you respond? How did the challenge affect your belief?
5. In senior year, students are required to complete 16 hours per week in an unpaid field placement at an agency setting in their community. This is in addition to full time course work. Placements are not available on evenings or weekends. What about this structure do you think will work well for you and what will your challenges be? What is your plan for school, work, and life balance?

Please mail a copy of all application materials as a single application packet to:

BSW Program - Admissions  
Portland State University - SSW  
PO Box 751  
Portland, OR 97207-0751

The Admission Committee will notify you of our decision. This will be in time for you to register for the fall term. If you are admitted, you are required to attend a PSU Orientation prior to your registration and another BSW Program Orientation before classes start. This meeting is mandatory and your admittance will be provisional until you attend the BSW Program Orientation. The BSW Program Orientation date will be provided once your application is processed. Thank you for your interest in our BSW Program!

**Quick checklist of application materials to include in your packet:**

- Completed application form, including contact info and all experience with months and hours per week. Use additional experience form if necessary.
- 2 references in sealed envelopes, including both the reference form and additional letter.
- Unofficial transcripts from all schools/colleges you have attended.
- Essay answering all 5 questions, one page per question double-spaced.