



INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS WITH GPAS BELOW 3.0

We welcome all applicants to apply, regardless of GPA. Although the UW Graduate School lists a minimum 3.0 GPA requirement, there are occasionally exceptions.

The Admissions Committee evaluates applications holistically and is especially interested in your academic preparation for graduate school, social service experience, and fit with social work, and commitment to social justice and underserved communities. If, after reviewing your application, the Admissions Committee would like to extend an offer of admission, our office will first submit a petition to the Graduate School on your behalf requesting an exception to the GPA minimum. This petition is subject to denial, and if denied, we are unable to offer you admission. If, however, the petition is approved, we will move forward with an offer of admission.

While there's nothing extra required (we handle drafting and submitting the petition), candidates with lower GPAs can advocate for themselves by providing clear evidence of strengths. **Applicants with below a 3.0 GPA are encouraged to consider the following strategies:**

- Take classes (especially if you've been out of school for a while) that will boost your GPA. Upper-level courses relevant to social work and social justice (example: upper level sociology class) are viewed more favorably than unrelated or lower level courses (example: introductory art course). Consider pursuing multiple courses, not just one; having upward grade trends and earning strong grades in multiple upper-level, related courses demonstrates your commitment to academics.
- Consider earning professional certificates (from a regionally accredited college or university), which could include online coursework.
- Gain additional relevant experience. Applicants with a strong background in social work, especially in an underserved field, demonstrate a potential for success in the program.
- It is recommended that all applicants designate at least one academic reference among the three required references. If you've been out of school for a while, it may be unreasonable to reach out to a former professor. Instead, explore other compelling references who can speak to your preparedness for graduate studies and academic abilities.
- In your application, there is an optional short answer question that allows you to provide any additional information for the Admissions Committee to consider regarding your academic record and preparedness. Use this space to clearly convey what circumstances may have impacted your grades and how you have since prepared academically for graduate school.

Contact our Admissions office at uwsocialwork@uw.edu with any questions.

