MSW Supplementary Statement Questions

Please answer all questions separately, using the six headings listed below. Each answer will be evaluated on content and writing skills. Limit this statement to six double-spaced pages using 12 point font with one inch margins.

a. Understanding of problems and concerns relative to social work
Describe your understanding of the social work profession and the problems social workers address by using one example to discuss a particular social problem and how a social worker could intervene.

b. Understanding of diversity
Describe your personal philosophy and understanding of working with people different from yourself (e.g., race, ethnicity, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, mental abilities, and physical abilities). Using one example, discuss a personal experience with someone who is different from you. Briefly describe your understanding of issues that may affect this individual.

c. Personal values
A key ethical principle in the NASW Code of Ethics states the following: "Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person. Social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers promote clients' socially responsible self-determination. Social workers seek to enhance clients' capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs. Social workers are cognizant of their dual responsibility to clients and to the broader society. They seek to resolve conflicts between clients' interests and the broader society's interests in a socially responsible manner consistent with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards of the profession."

d. Personal background factors and experience
Describe your personal background and experiences such as culture, family, and community, which have influenced your professional choices as well as recent or past personal experiences that relate to your interest in social work.

e. Personal attributes
Provide a statement about your personal qualities and aptitudes which you consider as most pertinent to graduate studies and/or social work practice. What limitations do you recognize that you need to work on in order to be successful in graduate studies and in the professional practice of social work? How do you plan to address these limitations?

f. Academic preparation
Describe previous knowledge and skills that you gained in your undergraduate and/or graduate studies and how these will assist you in your graduate social work education. Describe to what extent you believe your final undergraduate grade point average accurately reflects your ability to obtain and MSW degree at Western Michigan University.