Social Work

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredits the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program at the university. Therefore, graduates are eligible to sit for the social work licensing exam to become Licensed Bachelor Social Workers (LBSW). Types of agencies where BSW graduates often find employment are foster care and adoption, hospitals, schools, military services, child and adult protection, substance abuse, criminal justice, mental health, hospice, home health care, aging, victim services, community outreach, and various other agencies. BSW graduates are experiencing a high rate of admission into Master of Social Work programs and are most often granted advanced standing, shortening the length of the master’s program to around 40 hours.

Social Work Program Goals

- Prepare students for research-informed generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations;
- Cultivate practitioners that are guided by the values and ethics of the social work profession; and
- Develop social workers who understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and the consequential need to advocate for economic and social justice, human rights, and respect for all people.

Social Work Program Outcomes

Graduates will be able to:

- Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly;
- Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice;
- Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments;
- Engage diversity and difference in practice;
- Advance human rights and social and economic justice;
- Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research;
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment;
- Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services;
- Respond to contexts that shape practice; and
- Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Weekend and Online Course Offerings

In order to meet the needs of those who are unable to take social work courses face-to-face during the week, the social work program offers social work courses on the weekend or online, in addition to social work courses offered during the week. Weekend courses are taught over four weekends in an every other weekend format with the following schedule: Fridays, 7-10 PM and Saturdays, 8AM-4PM. The curriculum of the social work courses is the same, regardless of how the course is offered.

Social Work Transfer Credit

To be considered for social work transfer credit, courses must be completed with a grade of C or higher and be of similar content and level. Courses taken from programs not accredited by CSWE and courses taken 5 or more years ago must first be evaluated by the Director of Social Work. Transfer credit for SWK 4610 and SWK 4620 is not accepted.

Admission to the Program

Students interested in the Social Work major must see the Social Work faculty for academic and career advising. Any student may enroll in the pre-professional course, SWK 2300. However, only students admitted to the Social Work program are permitted to enroll in SWK 3301, 3302, 3303, 4610 or 4620. Once SWK 2300 is complete, Social Work majors must apply to be admitted to the program. In order to be admitted, students must:

- An overall GPA of 2.00;
- Completed ENG 1301 and ENG 1302 earning a grade of C or better in each course;
- Completed SWK 2300;
- Completed a written application for admission;
- Provided a reference from a non-social work faculty member; and
- Provided a personal reference.

When the above requirements are met, the Social Work faculty will consider the application and grant or deny admission to the Social Work Program. Students will be informed of the decision by email. Applicants refused admission may appeal.
Field Placement

A vital part of the social work program is a 400 hour field placement, which is a required internship completed in the semester prior to graduation. Students complete the internship in a social service agency under the supervision of an experienced social worker. Social work students are required to successfully complete the 400 hours in field in a timely manner, consistent with field practice policy and procedure. It is each social work student’s responsibility to plan in advance for the field experience in order to ensure that they will have ample time to complete all field requirements. The vast majority of available and viable field agency sites are capable of accommodating students on a full-time basis during traditional business hours. Options for field sites will generally be limited to these types of agencies. Each student must arrange, in advance, to participate in the field experience on a full-time basis. Failure to do so may prevent a student from advancing in, or completing, the social work program.

Admission to Field

Students are evaluated for readiness before beginning field. Only students meeting this criteria will be admitted into field:

- Successful completion of all other courses required for the social work degree;
- Minimum overall GPA of 2.00;
- Minimum 2.0 GPA in social work courses;
- Minimum 2.0 average in SWK 3301, 3302, and 3303;
- Evaluated favorably by the Social Work faculty in professional ethics, values, and behavior using the NASW Code of Ethics;
- Successful completion of UNI2000;
- Submission of the Field Placement application; and
- Successful oral interview with the Director of Field Education.

The 2.0 average in the social work practice courses, SWK 3301, 3302, and 3303, will serve as a measure for determining student potential to engage in effective social work practice. The practice courses provide opportunities for students to demonstrate practice skills. If students have at least an average of 2.0 in those courses, it is assumed they have demonstrated the potential to engage in effective social work practice. Within these practice courses, and other social work major courses, social work faculty also evaluate student ability to recognize and demonstrate social work ethics and behavior. Ethics assignments required throughout the social work curriculum are used as the primary measure for evaluating student knowledge and demonstration of social work values, ethics, and behavior. Ethics assignments required throughout the social work curriculum are used as a measure for evaluating student knowledge and demonstration of social work values and ethics. Social work faculty also formally evaluate social work students on the demonstration of professional behavior in each upper level social work course.

Faculty evaluation of field readiness will occur after the Field Placement Application is submitted. Student are notified of the decision in writing. Students denied admission to field may appeal the decision. If field criteria are met, students meet with the Director of Field Education to discuss guidelines for field and to identify field placement sites. After successful completion, enrollment in SWK 4610 and 4620 is permitted. Students must have the prior permission of the Director of Social Work to take additional courses while enrolled in field.

Criminal Record Implications

Many social service agencies do not allow volunteers and/or employees with criminal backgrounds. Therefore, it may be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to locate an agency where students with criminal backgrounds can complete their field placement. In which case, it becomes the primary responsibility of a student with a criminal background to secure an approved field placement in accordance with the social work degree plan. The State of Texas reserves the right to deny a license to any person entering the field of Social Work with a criminal history. Therefore, upon their graduation students having a criminal background may be denied licensure by the State of Texas for this or any other reason the State deems relevant. Licensure eligibility is the sole decision of the State of Texas.