

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

The Master of Social Work (MSW) program at Texas A&M University-Texarkana is designed to educate and prepare students for rewarding careers as generalist social work practitioners and therapists who provide direct intervention at the individual, group, community, and organizational levels. Graduates will be able to become independently licensed as Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW), qualifying them for a wide range of employment opportunities working with a variety of populations (children, adolescents, adults, elderly, people with disabilities, etc.).

The MSW program includes a specialization in mental health, but will also include emphases in trauma-informed care and substance abuse. Program electives will prepare students to work in a variety of settings which are projected to be significant areas of growth within the social work field over the next decade and beyond as the population ages and the need for medical and social services increases. The MSW will include 60 semester credit hours.

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Admission Requirements

- Hold an earned baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university
- Have achieved a grade point average of 2.8 overall or in the last 60 hours of academic course work
- Provide three professional letters of reference from employers, professors, or a combination of both. If an applicant has been in college within the last five years, at least one letter must be from a faculty member. No personal references will be accepted. Letters must be on professional letterhead with a signature.
- Submit a resume that details work and/or volunteer experience. (While not required, paid and/or volunteer experience in the human services is highly valued and will be seriously considered in the application evaluation process.)
- Pay a non-refundable \$30 application fee
- Write a clear and concise critical thinking essay. This narrative should answer the following questions:
 - Describe your interest in pursuing a Master of Social Work degree at Texas A&M University-Texarkana and why it is a good fit for your educational and professional goals. Please include any relevant information from current or previous experiences (e.g. employment, volunteer, academic, and/or personal) that have influenced your decision.
 - Define a social problem affecting a population of specific interest to you that you would want to work with in the future. Please examine the relevance of the problem to the field of social work, how you came to identify and understand it as a social problem, societal factors that have contributed to the problem, and specific ways that you, as a social worker, could address the problem.
 - Social workers are expected to work with individuals, families, groups, and communities from diverse backgrounds in a caring and respectful fashion. Using a specific experience you've had with an individual or group different than you (in terms of race, socioeconomic background, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, culture, age, etc.), discuss what challenges and lessons you learned from this situation. How did the interaction affect your personal views about this individual/group and your overall perspective on diversity?

Accreditation

The MSW program is in candidacy status for initial accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education Commission on Accreditation. Students entering the program beginning Fall 2020, will be considered having graduated from an accredited program retroactively once the program receives full accreditation, which is anticipated 2023.

Degree Requirements

Students should refer to their DegreeWorks degree audit in their Web for Students account for more information regarding their degree requirements.

Code	Title	Hours
SOCW 501	Practice I: Social Work with Individuals	3
SOCW 510	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	3
SOCW 520	Social Welfare Policy	3
SOCW 530	Diversity and Social Justice	3
SOCW 551	Generalist Field Practicum I	4
SOCW 502	Practice II: Social Work with Families and Groups	3
SOCW 511	Human Behavior and the Social Environment II	3
SOCW 540	Research Methods in Social Work	3
SOCW 552	Generalist Field Practicum II	4
SOCW 521	Practice III: Advanced Macro Practice	3
SOCW 541	Practice and Program Evaluation	3

SOCW 560	Trauma-Informed Practice	3
SOCW 553	Specialization Field Practicum I	4
SOCW 562	Mental Health Assessment and Diagnosis	3
SOCW 563	Advanced Clinical Practice	3
SOCW 564	Clinical Issues in Addiction	2
SOCW 554	Specialization Field Practicum II	4
Social Work Elective-select 6 semester credit hours from:		6
SOCW 572	Crisis Intervention	
SOCW 576	Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents	
SOCW 571	Spirituality in Social Work	
SOCW 597	Special Topics in Social Work	
SOCW 574	Child Welfare	
COUN 510	Counseling Theories	
PSY 539	Advanced Psychological Statistics	
PSY 578	Marriage and Family Therapy	
PSY 579	Psychopharmacology for Counselors	
Total hours for Degree		60

2 Year Plan - Full Time

Code	Title	Hours
First Year-Fall		
SOCW 501	Practice I: Social Work with Individuals	3
SOCW 510	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	3
SOCW 520	Social Welfare Policy	3
SOCW 530	Diversity and Social Justice	3
SOCW 551	Generalist Field Practicum I	4
Fall Total Semester Credit Hours		16
First Year-Spring		
SOCW 502	Practice II: Social Work with Families and Groups	3
SOCW 511	Human Behavior and the Social Environment II	3
SOCW 540	Research Methods in Social Work	3
SOCW 552	Generalist Field Practicum II	4
SOCW 562	Mental Health Assessment and Diagnosis	3
Spring Total Semester Credit Hours		16
Second Year-Fall		
SOCW 521	Practice III: Advanced Macro Practice	3
SOCW 553	Specialization Field Practicum I	4
SOCW 560	Trauma-Informed Practice	3
SOCW 563	Advanced Clinical Practice	3
Social Work Elective		3
Fall Total Semester Credit Hours		16
Second Year-Spring		
SOCW 541	Practice and Program Evaluation	3
SOCW 554	Specialization Field Practicum II	4
SOCW 564	Clinical Issues in Addiction	2
Social Work Elective		3
Spring Total Semester Credit Hours		12
Total Semester Credit Hours Required for Degree		60

2 Year Plan - Part Time

Code	Title	Hours
First Year-Fall		
SOCW 501	Practice I: Social Work with Individuals	3

SOCW 510	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	3
SOCW 520	Social Welfare Policy	3
SOCW 530	Diversity and Social Justice	3
Fall Total Semester Credit Hours		12
First Year-Spring		
SOCW 502	Practice II: Social Work with Families and Groups	3
SOCW 511	Human Behavior and the Social Environment II	3
SOCW 540	Research Methods in Social Work	3
SOCW 562	Mental Health Assessment and Diagnosis	3
Spring Total Semester Credit Hours		12
First Year-Summer		
SOCW 551	Generalist Field Practicum I	4
SOCW 552	Generalist Field Practicum II	4
Summer Total Semester Credit Hours		8
Second Year-Fall		
SOCW 521	Practice III: Advanced Macro Practice	3
SOCW 560	Trauma-Informed Practice	3
SOCW 563	Advanced Clinical Practice	3
Social Work Elective		3
Fall Total Semester Credit Hours		12
Second Year-Spring		
SOCW 541	Practice and Program Evaluation	3
SOCW 564	Clinical Issues in Addiction	2
Social Work Elective		3
Spring Total Semester Credit Hours		8
Second Year-Summer		
SOCW 553	Specialization Field Practicum I	4
SOCW 554	Specialization Field Practicum II	4
Summer Total Semester Credit Hours		8
Total Semester Credit Hours Required for Degree		60

4 Year Plan

Code	Title	Hours
First Year-Fall		
SOCW 510	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	3
SOCW 530	Diversity and Social Justice	3
Fall Total Semester Credit Hours		6
First Year-Spring		
SOCW 511	Human Behavior and the Social Environment II	3
SOCW 540	Research Methods in Social Work	3
Spring Total Semester Credit Hours		6
Second Year-Fall		
SOCW 501	Practice I: Social Work with Individuals	3
SOCW 520	Social Welfare Policy	3
Fall Total Semester Credit Hours		6
Second Year-Spring		
SOCW 502	Practice II: Social Work with Families and Groups	3
SOCW 562	Mental Health Assessment and Diagnosis	3
Spring Total Semester Credit Hours		6
Second Year-Summer		
SOCW 551	Generalist Field Practicum I	4
SOCW 552	Generalist Field Practicum II	4

Summer Total Semester Credit Hours		8
Third Year-Fall		
SOCW 521	Practice III: Advanced Macro Practice	3
SOCW 560	Trauma-Informed Practice	3
Fall Total Semester Credit Hours		6
Third Year- Spring		
SOCW 541	Practice and Program Evaluation	3
SOCW 564	Clinical Issues in Addiction	2
Spring Total Semester Credit Hours		5
Fourth Year-Fall		
SOCW 563	Advanced Clinical Practice	3
Social Work Elective		3
Fall Total Semester Credit Hours		6
Fourth Year-Spring		
Social Work Elective		3
Spring Total Semester Credit Hours		3
Fourth Year-Summer		
SOCW 553	Specialization Field Practicum I	4
SOCW 554	Specialization Field Practicum II	4
Summer Total Semester Credit Hours		8
Total Semester Credit Hours Required for Degree		60

SOCW 501. Practice I: Social Work with Individuals. 3 Hours.

Provides an overview of clinical social work and the practice, knowledge, and skills needed to successfully treat clients. Emphasizes interpersonal and interviewing skills, the generalist planned change process, utilizing a strengths perspective, values and ethics, and cultural competence. Prerequisite: Admission to MSW program.

SOCW 502. Practice II: Social Work with Families and Groups. 3 Hours.

This course introduces students to the theory and practice of social work in Groups. It prepares students by helping them develop the knowledge, values, and skills needed for generalist social work practice with Groups. In this course, group work is broadly defined to encompass treatment groups as well as task groups. Attention is given to the individual person in the group, the group as a whole, and the environment in which the group exists. Emphasis will be placed on utilizing evidence-based practice principles and developing group leadership skills. Prerequisite: SOCW 501 with grade of C or better.

SOCW 510. Human Behavior and the Social Environment I. 3 Hours.

Presents biological and social science concepts and how they influence human behavior, particularly in the context of the social environment. Focuses on human development from the prenatal period through adolescence. Investigates varying social environment factors, such as race, culture, ethnicity, stress, adaptation, and gender. Examines biological, psychological, social, and spiritual theories and how they contribute to client assessments. Prerequisite: Admission to the MSW program.

SOCW 511. Human Behavior and the Social Environment II. 3 Hours.

Presents biological and social science concepts and how they influence human behavior, particularly in the context of the social environment. Focuses on human development from emerging adulthood through older adulthood. Investigates varying social environment factors, such as race, culture, ethnicity, stress, adaptation, and gender. Examines biological, psychological, social, and spiritual theories and how they contribute to client assessments. Prerequisite: Admission to the MSW program, and SOCW 510 with grade of C or better or department approval.

SOCW 520. Social Welfare Policy. 3 Hours.

Analyzes current social policy within the context of historical and contemporary factors. Examines major social forces and institutions as they relate to and determine social policy emphasizing social welfare services and social functioning within current U.S. society. Evaluates social welfare frameworks in light of the principles of social and economic justice and how this impacts individual, group, and community well-being. Prerequisite: Admission to the MSW program.

SOCW 521. Practice III: Advanced Macro Practice. 3 Hours.

The course introduces students to an important part of social work: policy practice and policy advocacy. Students will learn theory and practical skills that will enable them to help address the major social problems the social work profession faces in contemporary America and how they play out regionally. There will be an emphasis on the historical, cultural, socio-economic, and political basis of social welfare policy in Texas, United States and to some degree, around the globe. Attention will also be paid to issues such as social workers' ethical responsibility to engage in policy work, poverty and inequality, health and health care policy, child welfare, mental health care policy, welfare of the elderly, and human rights. Prerequisite: SOCW 520 with grade of C or better.

SOCW 530. Diversity and Social Justice. 3 Hours.

Course is designed to introduce students to the diverse populations they would come across in the field of social work. Course content will include a discussion of the historical, cultural, socio-economic, and political backgrounds of such groups as well as various ethical considerations involved in working with diverse populations. Prerequisite: Admission to the MSW program.

SOCW 540. Research Methods in Social Work. 3 Hours.

Introduces students to the principles of evidence-based research design. Discusses quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods designs to prepare students to conduct their own research. Addresses critical analysis of scholarly literature and applying it to clinical practice. Prerequisite: Admission to the MSW program.

SOCW 541. Practice and Program Evaluation. 3 Hours.

Presents an evidence informed approach to social work evaluation methods. Quantitative and qualitative research methods and commonly used statistical procedures and approaches are applied to the evaluation of social work practice interventions and the evaluation of human service programs. These research skills and knowledge are presented from the perspective of promoting diversity and social and economic justice in the evaluation of social work intervention and the delivery of human service programs. Prerequisite: SOCW 540, C or better.

SOCW 551. Generalist Field Practicum I. 4 Hours.

Offers engaged field education as the central form of instruction and learning to socialize students to become practitioners. Integrates social work theory with practice. Reinforces the purposes, values, and ethics of the social work profession. Fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge to promote the development of professional competence. Requires weekly attendance of a one-hour in-class seminar. Prerequisite: Admission to MSW program.

SOCW 552. Generalist Field Practicum II. 4 Hours.

Continuation of field seminar series. Offers engaged field education as the central form of instruction and learning to socialize students to become practitioners. Integrates social work theory with practice. Reinforces the purposes, values, and ethics of the social work profession. Fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge to promote the development of professional competence. Requires weekly attendance of a one-hour in-class seminar. Prerequisite: SOCW 551.

SOCW 553. Specialization Field Practicum I. 4 Hours.

Offers engaged field education as the central form of instruction and learning to socialize students to become practitioners. Integrates social work course concepts and theory with practice. Reinforces the purposes, values, and ethics of the social work profession. Fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge to promote the development of professional competence. Requires weekly attendance of a one-hour in-class seminar. Prerequisite: SOCW 552 C or better.

SOCW 554. Specialization Field Practicum II. 4 Hours.

Final course of field seminar series. Offers engaged field education as the central form of instruction and learning to socialize students to become practitioners. Integrates social work theory with practice. Reinforces the purposes, values, and ethics of the social work profession. Fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge to promote the development of professional competence. Requires weekly attendance of a one-hour in-class seminar. Prerequisite: SOCW 553 C or better.

SOCW 560. Trauma-Informed Practice. 3 Hours.

This introductory class provides the student with a comprehensive exploration of the psychological trauma field, including the history and current theories in the field, the nature of trauma (sexual abuse, combat, and natural disasters), how trauma affects individuals and systems, grief reactions, and traumatic stress. Also included in this class, is the exploration of the professional's response to trauma, vicarious traumatization, disenfranchised grief, crisis intervention, comorbid disorders and general treatment issues. Finally, students have the chance to review evidence-based practices in the trauma field. Prerequisite: SOCW 501, C or better.

SOCW 562. Mental Health Assessment and Diagnosis. 3 Hours.

This advanced course focuses on mental disorders and/or dysfunction for various age groups across the life span, from a bio-psychosocial perspective incorporating contexts of culture, human resilience, and strengths-based approaches in the use of the DSM-5 system. Emphasis is on the application of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) as an organizing framework for the differential diagnosis of mental disorders in children, adolescents, and adults within a person-in-the-environment perspective, inclusive of the strengths and weaknesses of the DSM system, and while adhering to social work ethics and values. Also addressed are evidence-based treatment approaches with diverse client populations and presenting problems. Evidence-based treatments (EBTs) are interventions which have been proven effective through rigorous research methodologies, evidence-based practice (EBP) refers to a decision-making process which integrates the best available research, clinician expertise, and client characteristics. Prerequisite: SOCW 501, C or better.

SOCW 563. Advanced Clinical Practice. 3 Hours.

This is an advanced course designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills to apply clinical social work services. Students in this course focus on the application of evidence-based theories and other intervention methods with individuals and families. There is a particular focus on individuals and families from diverse cultural backgrounds and marginalized or oppressed populations in this course. Students demonstrate therapeutic skills to engage clients, to define and prioritize issues, to set mutually developed goals, and to commit to the change process. Students select, implement, monitor, and evaluate interventions Prerequisite: SOCW 562, C or better.

SOCW 564. Clinical Issues in Addiction. 2 Hours.

This course is designed to help graduate students develop a biopsychosocial approach to the understanding of the problems of psychoactive substance misuse and dependency and other related disorders primarily as they are found in American culture. Biologically, the course will address recent developments in neurobiological and pharmaceutical research related to addictive behavior. From a psychological standpoint we will consider continuing treatment innovations and research on treatment effectiveness. Sociologically, the course will recognize that the individual addict does not live in a vacuum but is both shaped by and shaper of his or her social and political environment. The strengths perspective and client-centered practices are emphasized throughout. Upon completion of the course, students will understand the reciprocal interaction between the individual addict and the various systems that impact addiction, treatment and recovery (such as biology/genetics, family, SES, ethnicity, opportunity, the treatment industry, political and social reform movements, values, and spiritual frameworks). In addition, assessment criteria and treatment modalities will be reviewed for effectiveness and effects on the client system. The content of the course will draw heavily on current research and the process will emphasize critical thinking and analysis of the current controversies in the substance misuse and nonsubstance addiction field. Prerequisite: SOCW 501, C or better.

SOCW 571. Spirituality in Social Work. 3 Hours.

The course is designed to prepare students for social work practice with persons of diverse religious, spiritual, and nonreligious perspectives. The course provides a comprehensive introduction to spiritually sensitive social work and is intended to expand the explanatory theories that inform professional social work practice. Spirituality is differentiated from religion and each will be explored. There will be an ongoing focus on the student's growth as a reflective practitioner and how recipients of social work services may use their religious and spiritual perspectives to establish meaning and purpose in relation to their goals of daily living. The course provides the knowledge and skills to incorporate spirituality in the social work bio-psycho-social assessment process. Case scenarios and journal reflections are presented to assess students' mastery of professional social work practice competencies. Prerequisite: SOCW 501, C or better.

SOCW 572. Crisis Intervention. 3 Hours.

This course is designed to prepare students to address their response to crisis events by developing the assessment, diagnostic and evidenced based interventions to assist those in critical need. A crisis is defined as an event that exceeds and overwhelms an individual's coping skills to the point where equilibrium is disrupted. Crises can act as a catalyst for growth or change. The critical events which lead to a crisis can vary greatly and their impact are often unique to the individual. Critical events can occur on a micro, (e.g. death of a loved one, loss of employment, end of a relationship), mezzo, (e.g. natural disasters, tornadoes, floods, school shootings) and macro, (e.g. events on 9/11, wars, global warming) level. Prerequisite: SOCW 501, C or better, or permission from the instructor.

SOCW 574. Child Welfare. 3 Hours.

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the dynamics of child maltreatment and the impact on children who are exposed to abuse and neglect. In addition, we will examine the legislative and programmatic efforts to increase support for families and create better outcomes for children in care. Particular attention will be given to examining best practices such as family-centered programs, which engage families and communities to achieve more effective case planning and placements. Key issues such as the disproportional representation of racial and ethnic groups in the child welfare system, lack of prevention resources, and increasing father engagement will be highlighted. Prerequisite: SOCW 501, C or better.

SOCW 575. Advanced Practice: Social Work with the Aging. 2 Hours.

This course is designed to integrate the theories and practice skills needed for effective social work with older adults and their families. Understanding the issues of vital aging, developmental processes, fostering an alliance, overcoming stigma, use of self, therapeutic bias and ethical dilemmas with this population will be studied. Specific focus will be given to both the significance of the older person's history as well as understanding behavior within their environmental context. The student will be helped to develop diagnostic and treatment skills with older adults. Similarities and differences in assessments and practice techniques with other age groups will be reviewed and generic principles will be identified. Caregiving, concrete service delivery, case management and interdisciplinary practice as well as individual, family and small group treatment approaches will be addressed. The class format will include didactic material, case examples, films and group discussion. At all times students will be expected to think critically about aging in relation to human behavior and societal factors including those of race, class and gender. Prerequisite: SOCW 501 and SOCW 562, C or better.

SOCW 576. Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents. 3 Hours.

This course will teach approaches to clinical assessment and intervention with children and adolescents. It will address intervention issues for children from infancy through adolescence, and developmental and contextual strategies that influence changes in the intervention process. Prerequisites: SOCW 501 and SOCW 562, C or better.

SOCW 597. Special Topics in Social Work. 3 Hours.

This course provides an in-depth examination of a current issue that affects social workers and/or their clients. Emphasis will be on intervention levels and responses and clinical application. Topics will vary. Students may repeat for up to 4 semester credit hours. Prerequisite: SOCW 501, C or better, or instructor permission.

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