



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Department of Sociology,
Anthropology & Social Work™

Bachelor of Arts in Social Work Student Handbook

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This handbook, as well as additional information about the social work program, can be found at: www.depts.ttu.edu/socialwork/

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Social Work: What's it all about?

Social Work is a profession dedicated to partnering with people to create change. It is set apart from other human-related disciplines by its person-in-environment focus. That means that social workers have a dual orientation at all times - the individual and the environment. Social workers are educated in a body of specialized knowledge and skills, while being committed to a core set of values. While different individuals or organizations may express these a little differently, they all share the same basic principles. Here in the TTU Social Work Program, we adhere to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) [Code of Ethics](#). In that document, the organization identifies and defines six core values including service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. Those core values ground our professional practice as social workers. The code then goes on to guide and regulate our practice.

Choosing a career in social work does not mean that you are taking a vow of poverty. While most social workers choose the profession for its intrinsic rewards, financial benefits also exist. According the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), the median pay for social workers in 2018 was \$49,470. The BLS also reports an expected job growth of 16% (much faster than average) for social work between 2016-2026. More information on workforce related issues in social work can be found in the following reports: [Results of the Nationwide Survey of 2017 Social Work Graduates: The National Social Work Workforce Study](#) and the NASW [2009 Compensation & Benefits Study: Summary of Key Findings](#).

Professional social workers work in a great variety of different practice settings. Some of these include the broad areas of health, politics, policy, child welfare, school social work, mental health, aging, families, addictions, disabilities, corrections, administration, research, community organization and advocacy, homelessness, and many, many others. Social workers work for both public and private organizations.

Bachelor level graduates of social work are prepared for entry-level generalist social work practice. Generalist practice serves as a multifaceted foundation upon which the social worker joins with client systems of various sizes, diverse backgrounds and problem areas to promote their participation in society. The focus of change may be on interactions among individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and/or society. Such practice is predicated on the social worker's:

- commitment and adherence to social work values,
- broad knowledge base of social systems, human behavior and the social environment, human diversity, oppression, theories of practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro system levels, and the impact of policies on people and their environments, and
- skills such as critical thinking, ability to assess person-environment situations including strengths within people and their environments, application of

interventions based on assessment and research, ability to form and terminate relationships with client systems of diverse groupings and sizes, as well as the ability to evaluate interventions and policies.

Past graduates of the Bachelor of Arts in Social Work (BASW) program at Texas Tech University have contributed to the well-being of society at all levels of agency practice working with diverse populations throughout the country in such settings as behavioral health units, adult and juvenile corrections, health care organizations, schools and other public agencies. In addition, many graduates continue their formal social work education by attending graduate school, many in Texas but others have ventured to graduate schools in California, Colorado, Georgia, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. Some graduates have chosen to attend graduate programs in other professions that enhance the well-being of society such as public administration, nursing, law, and education. Some graduates contribute to the education of new social workers as field placement supervisors, directors of admissions, and social work faculty.

[The Council on Social Work Education \(CSWE\)](#) oversees all social work education programs at the bachelors and masters' levels in the United States. Accreditation with CSWE provides reasonable assurance of the quality of social work education programs and the competence of graduating students. In order to be licensed as a practicing social worker in any state, a person must have a degree in social work from an institution that is accredited with CSWE. Social Work education at TTU for bachelor level social work has been fully accredited since 1978, while the graduate program received its initial accreditation in 2018. The BASW program's most recent [assessment results](#) are posted on the program website.

[The Social Work Unit at TTU](#) is housed within the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work, which falls under the College of Arts and Sciences. Located in the Southeast corner of Holden Hall, we occupy most of the hallway near the main office (room 158) for the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social work. Today, about 120 students at TTU are working towards a BASW. In addition to nine full-time social work faculty members, the social work unit employs two full-time staff members. The latest information about [faculty and staff](#) can be found on the program website.

The Bachelor of Arts in Social Work

The BASW degree program requires 36 hours of social work credits, 7 hours of adjunct requirements, an 18-hour minor, the core curriculum requirements of the university and the general degree requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences. Because of the required sequencing of social work courses, the degree cannot be completed in less than 4 long semesters (fall or spring). There are no exceptions.

Professional Advising

Students should direct their questions about the profession of social work to one of the full-time faculty members. Social Work faculty members are better acquainted with the scope of social work practice, career opportunities, and licensing issues than are other staff members on campus. Students seeking such career counseling are encouraged to schedule an appointment in advance by email. Faculty members' fields of practice, research and teaching interests can be found on the program website, under the 'about us' section.

Students seeking recommendations for scholarships, potential employers, and admission to graduate education programs should request permission from faculty before providing contact information to others. Students are strongly encouraged to make requests for recommendation letters WELL IN ADVANCE of any application deadlines and to provide recommenders with a resume and signed release forms (as appropriate).

Academic Advising

The Academic Advisor for Social Work monitors students' progress through the degree program and keeps abreast of program, university, and state requirements for undergraduate degrees. Social work majors are expected to meet with the academic advisor for Social Work at least once each long semester and for additional meetings as requested. This requirement applies to all students, regardless of second majors or any other program enrollments. Students should be prepared for meetings with the academic advisor by being familiar with degree requirements for their majors, minors, and other programs, bringing requested documentation, and a draft of planned coursework for remaining semesters. Students should follow the recommendations of the advisor, in order to stay on track for degree completion; failure to do so can delay students' progression through the social work degree program. Please note that completion of all degree requirements is ultimately the responsibility of the student. Students should use the [appointment scheduling system](#) to arrange meeting for academic advising.

Degree Requirements

Students should be aware of the core and [general degree requirements](#) for the completion of the Bachelor of Arts Degree. While every student should consult with the Academic Advisor for

Social Work every long semester, completion of all degree requirements is ultimately the responsibility of the student.

In general, a student should keep in mind that:

- Many foreign language introductory classes start in the fall semester. Hint: Do not postpone beginning this sequence.
- Several courses required for a major in social work also meet general education requirements. Students should talk to the Academic Advisor for Social Work about these options to take full advantage of multi-fulfillment of requirements.
- A BA degree at TTU requires 40 hours at the Junior/Senior level (3000 or 4000 numbered courses).
- Most GDR requirements should be fulfilled prior to a student applying to enter the practice sequence (formerly called candidacy).
- Under the Texas Common Numbering System, the College of Arts and Sciences and the Social Work program will typically accept the equivalent of SW 2301, SW 2311 and SW 3312 for transfer if from a CSWE accredited program. Requests for transfer credit usually requires a review of course syllabi. The program may accept a maximum of nine hours of transfer credit for social work courses. The program does not ever accept transfer credit for SW 3332, SW 3333, SW 4340 or SW 4611.

Social Work Coursework

S W 1300 - The Why and How of Social Services. Interaction of conditions and ideas that contribute to design and delivery of social services and their impact on diverse populations. Fulfills core Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement.

Texas Tech University never gives social work credit for any work or other life experiences.

S W 2301 - Introduction to Social Work. Examination of society's responses to human needs and social problems through voluntary and governmental social policies and services.

S W 2311 (formerly 3311) - Human Behavior and the Social Environment: Systems. Examination of interaction between person and environment, emphasizing mezzo and macro level systems, including small groups, organizations, and communities.

S W 3312 - Human Behavior and the Social Environment: Lifespan. Examination of interaction between person and environment with emphasis on biological, social, emotional, and cultural systems across life-span.

S W 3331 - Social Work with Diverse Populations. Integrated approach to theory, values, and skills of working with culturally diverse populations. Emphasis - empowering vulnerable populations to fulfill their potential. Fulfills multicultural requirement. *{Majors must take this course before or with SW 3332.}*

S W 3332 - Generalist Practice 1. Prerequisite: Accepted to practice course sequence. Pre-requisite or co-requisite: SW 3331. Application of generalist knowledge, ethics and basic skills for effective partnerships at multiple system levels.

S W 3333 – Generalist Practice 2. Prerequisite: C or better in SW 3332. Application of generalist knowledge, ethics and enhanced skills for effective partnerships at multiple system levels.

S W 3339 – Social Work Research and Evaluation. Prerequisite: MATH 2300, SOC 3391, or PSY 3400. Scientific approach to social work knowledge. Emphasis on evaluation of social welfare programs and social work practice.

S W 4311 - Social Policy & Social Welfare Legislation. In-depth analysis of the social policy process. Emphasis on social welfare and social service delivery systems.

S W 4340 – Social Work: Field Placement Integrative Seminar. Prerequisite: C or better in SW 3333; co-requisite: SW 4611. Integration of social work knowledge, skills, and values used in the student’s individual practice of social work. Social work majors only.

S W 4611 – Social Work: Field Experience. Co-requisite: SW 4340. Closely supervised 400-hour practicum using social work knowledge/skills/ethics in program-approved social agency. Professional liability insurance required. Social work majors only. Pass-fail.

Adjunct Requirements

In addition to the social work courses identified, students are required to take human biology before or with SW 3312 and statistics before SW 3339. Options for courses fulfilling these requirements should be discussed with the Academic Advisor for Social Work.

CAUTION

⇒ **SW 3339 and 4311 are offered only once per year**

⇒ **SW 3332 may not be taken until a student is admitted into practice sequence.**

⇒ **SW 3333 may not be taken until SW 3332 has been completed with a C or better.**

⇒ **SW 4340 & 4611 may not be taken until SW 3333 has been completed with a C or better.**

⇒ **SW 4340 & 4611 must be**

Admission to Practice Course Sequence

At a midpoint in the social work curriculum, each major's progress is evaluated and a determination is made about whether he or she appears compatible with the profession and has been adequately prepared by the foundation curriculum to enter the sequence of social work practice specific courses (SW 3332, SW 3333, SW 4340, and SW 4611). At that point, each student should have a good sense of what social work is all about and how s/he might fit in. The application is due mid-semester before enrollment in SW 3332 for the next long semester. While calls for applications are made in program announcements, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to submit the application on time.

The application packet can be found on the program webpages and includes the following:

1. A cover page with up to date information and a picture.
2. Unofficial copy of transcripts (to include currently enrolled courses)
 - a. Highlight the following required courses (or approved equivalents): ENGL 1301, ENGL 1302, POLS 1301, POLS 2302 (or 2306), human biology, statistics, freshman level foreign language courses (as needed for CORE), SW 1300, SW 2301, SW 2311/3311), and SW 3312. The review committee will consider, but rarely approves, applications from students without these completed credits.
 - b. Every social work course listed above, as well as adjunct requirements, must be completed with a letter grade of 'C' or better.
 - c. An overall social work course GPA of at least 2.5 is expected for unconditional approval of your application. Applications from students with social work GPAs of 2.25-2.44 will be considered for *provisional approval with probation*.
3. Two (2) letters of reference. Common examples of acceptable sources include non-social work faculty, K-12 teachers, employers, counselors and volunteer coordinators. Non-acceptable sources include social work faculty and staff, peers or friends, family members, and co-workers. Letters must include complete contact information, including full name, professional address, and professional phone number.
4. Professional Statement. This should be typed in APA format, include a cover page and a reference page if needed (no abstract page), and be edited for spelling and grammar. The statement should have clearly designated sections that address each of the following points:
 - a. Most of the general public isn't really sure what social work is all about. Using the knowledge that you have gained in the curriculum so far, describe the profession of social work in your own words (maximum: 200 words).

“Gatekeeping” refers to the process by which social work educational programs limit entrance into the profession to graduates who have demonstrated compatibility with the values of the profession and appear to have good potential for success as ethical and effective social workers. The application to enter practice classes is one component of how the TTU Social Work Program fulfills the expectation of date

- b. The NASW states that poverty is of central concern for the social work profession. Describe what you have learned about the causes, nature, and impacts of poverty on at least two levels of systems (maximum: 300 words).
- c. Give a personal example of you having been helped and one of you giving help to another (maximum: 200 words).
- d. Given what you have learned about social work so far, discuss why you are a good match for the profession (maximum: 100 words).

The information that you provide in the application will be added to input from TTU social work instructors whose classes you have taken. Professors will address attendance, engagement, and professionalism for each student.

Each application will be reviewed by a committee of no fewer than three (3) social work faculty members and recommendations made. Final determinations will be made after grades for all the required courses are available in Banner. Each student will be notified by email of one of the following outcomes:

- A. **Admission Approved:** faculty confirms the student's progress and supports his/her continuing efforts to become a professional.
- B. **Admission with Warning:** student has made sufficient academic progress but has demonstrated one or more problems such as professionalism, engagement, or writing skills.
- C. **Provisional Admission:** student appears to be struggling. Students on probation must achieve letter grades of 'B' or higher, have high attendance and have adequate engagement in all social work classes to proceed further in the program. Students with provisional admission must follow any specific requirements made by the review committee. Failure to meet any of these requirements by the end of the next long semester will result in referral to the SCPR committee and/or delay in further progress in the program.
- D. **Deferred or Denied:** either the student has not completed the requirements and should resubmit the application at a later time OR faculty recommends that the student consider a major other than social work, based on significant signs of incompatibility with the profession or serious academic deficits in social work classes or retention of knowledge.

Most social work majors go through the application process with no problem at all. However, students should be aware that this process is taken seriously by the program and incomplete applications and failure to demonstrate learning will result in denial. Students have the option to reapply at the later time if their application is not approved. Students will be notified by email when all their application materials have been received; it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the application is complete by the deadline.

Field Placement Procedures and Expectations

The Council on Social Work Education requires that all social work students successfully complete an approved field placement. The field experience allows students to demonstrate their abilities to assess client system situations, apply generalist skills and the social work Code of Ethics with populations at risk across micro, mezzo and macro systems. It is a 400 hour, closely supervised individual experience using social work knowledge, methods, skills, and ethics in a social agency selected and certified by the program. The field experience is taken pass-fail. Only social work majors may participate. Students typically fulfill field experience hours during normal business hours (8am to 5pm). Further detailed information on the field experience can be found in the Field Experience Manual, which is located on the program website.

The field placement requires a large commitment of time and effort of participating students. Students enroll in 6 hours of field placement coursework as well as the accompanying 3-hour integrative seminar course. Typically, students also enroll in either SW 4311 or 3339 during that semester. These classes are scheduled to accommodate field students.

Student are STRONGLY DISCOURAGED from enrolling in other coursework or having significant outside work responsibilities during this

Applications for field placement are accepted early in the previous long semester. To qualify to begin a field placement, a student must have completed SW 3332 and 3333 with a C or better and be in good standing within the program.

Typically, the placement process begins with submission of (1) a completed Field Application, (2) a signed consent form that allows the program to share information with appropriate TTU or field agency personnel (3) signed informed consent/assumption of risk documents (4) agreement to comply with the NASW Code of Ethics and the laws of the state of Texas (5) copy of current unofficial transcript and (6) review and complete any other paperwork. Final arrangements for the field placement must be made prior to the end of the long semester before the semester in which field placement is expected.

Once a student becomes eligible for field placement, the Director of Field Education will explore every reasonable opportunity to secure a placement. The program will do everything possible to accommodate field placements for eligible students, but placement in a given semester cannot be guaranteed. If a student has specific needs or concerns relating to the field placement, s/he needs to arrange a meeting as soon as possible with the Director of Field and/or the Director of the BASW Program.

Additional Considerations

Therefore, while planning for this essential part of the curriculum, students need to consider several common issues related to field placement and ultimately, a social work career. These issues may include required medical procedures, driving records, workplace safety, student liability insurance and criminal background checks.

medical procedures. Some field sites, especially those in the medical field, may require employees and volunteers (including practicum students) to be tested for TB and/or receive the Hepatitis B vaccine. Agencies may do the testing/vaccinations on site, or may refer students to the Student Health Center. The procedure/s may be offered at no cost, or the student may be responsible for the fee.

driving records. Agencies that allow students to drive agency vehicles (or driving is part of the job) may check students' driving records as a condition of practicum placement. Moving vehicle violations may prevent a field placement with some agencies. Note: Students are not allowed to transport clients, according to University policy.

workplace safety. Students should know that there are dangers, risks and hazards inherent in participating in any activity or contact with physical surroundings or other persons. Dangers, risks and hazards include death, injury, illness, emotional disturbance, theft, loss or damage of personal property, natural disaster, and/or other disturbances. Students should always be aware of their surroundings and take steps to minimize risk.

student liability insurance. All TTU students who are participating in a field practicum must carry student liability insurance. For a fee (currently about \$15), students must obtain such insurance through the university before beginning field placement.

criminal background checks. Students who have been convicted of a felony should know that a felony conviction may limit options of being placed in human service agencies or to be licensed as a social worker. An increasing number of human service organizations and providers that serve as field placements **require** criminal background checks, fingerprinting, child welfare checks and/or driving record checks on students. Many agencies are unwilling to supervise students with legal convictions. All students must comply with and pass agency screening requirements. The Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners, which licenses social workers in the state of Texas, will evaluate your background to determine if prior convictions will make you ineligible to be licensed in Texas. The fee for this service is \$50; you can learn more and apply at their website: www.dshs.state.tx.us/plc_cheval.shtm

Should circumstances make it impossible for a student to secure an appropriate field placement, or to complete the field requirement within the prescribed period of time, s/he will be unable to complete the requirements for a Social

Field Placements outside of Lubbock

In some instances, a social work major may desire to complete the required 400-hour field placement in an agency outside of Lubbock. This circumstance necessitates out-of-the-ordinary burdens for the Director of Field Education and/or other faculty liaisons. Therefore, students should carefully consider the following requirements before making a request for such a placement.

- The TTU Social Work Program has final control over the field placement of all social work students, as well as approval of field sites.
- All placement sites, as well as field supervisors, must meet minimum requirements as stated in the Field Manual for the TTU Social Work Program.
- Requests for out-of-town placements are generally referred to the SCPR committee for review; the SCPR may request to meet in-person with the requesting student.
- The requesting student will be responsible for identifying possible agencies (and field supervisors) in the desired community.
- Only agencies within a 1-hour drive of the main university campus (or about 60 miles) will be considered.
- The requesting student will be required to attend co-requisites (such as SW 4340) or special events as scheduled during the semester of the field placement.
- **No later than** the end of the 3rd week of the semester **one year** before planned enrollment in SW 4611¹, the requesting student must submit a letter to the Director of Field Education addressing the following points:
 - Why is the out-of-town placement being requested?
 - What is the student's plan for attendance in co-requisites or other required events during the semester?
 - Does the student have initial ideas about possible agencies?
 - A statement that the student has read and agrees to the stipulations for out-of-town placements as stated in (this) policy.
- Prior to the end of the semester during which the letter was submitted, the student will be notified if the request has been approved or denied.
- If approved (but not before), the requesting student may begin inquiries with agencies about their willingness to accept a social work field placement student for no less than 400 hours during the semester of desired placement.
- Contact information for two potential field supervisors, each with a different social service agency must be provided to the Director of Field Education **no later than** the end of the 3rd week of the **semester before** the planned placement².

¹ If planning to complete a field placement in the fall semester of 2020, the student would submit the letter by the end of the third week of the fall 2019 semester.

² If planning to complete a field placement in the fall semester of 2020, the student would submit contact information of at least two possible agencies by the end of the third week of the spring 2020 semester.

- From that point, the requesting student should follow the general instructions provided to all social work majors for completing an Application for Field Placement and participating in timely, formal interviews with the Director of Field Education, as well as potential field supervisors.

Student Rights & Responsibilities

Students should refer to the Code of Student Conduct in the University's Student Handbook (<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/handbook/>) for an explanation of rights and responsibilities of TTU students in general.

TTU Non-discrimination Policy

The university is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from any form of unlawful discrimination. The university is dedicated to fostering and supporting a culture of mutual respect and communication. This policy applies to all university students and employees, visitors, applicants for admission to or employment with the university, as well as university affiliates and others conducting business on campus. The university does not tolerate discrimination or harassment based on or related to sex, race, national origin, religion, age, disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, or other protected categories, classes, or characteristics. While sexual orientation and gender identity are not explicitly protected categories under state or federal law, it is the university's policy not to discriminate in employment, admission, or use of programs, activities, facilities, or services on these bases. (TTU, OP 40.02).

Student Representation & Participation in the Governance of the Program

While students are invited to share thoughts and concerns with faculty at any time, the Social Work Program encourages formal student participation in the governance of the program through two elected student representatives. Student representatives are tasked with collecting student concerns, comments, or questions about the program and presenting them to the faculty at least once each long semester. These issues may arise directly from students or as a result of a request from the faculty to address particular issues. The Student Representatives may collect this type of feedback through any legitimate means (i.e. e-mail, in writing, SWSO meetings). The most important considerations are that: a) all social work majors be made aware of the process for submission of concerns, b) student representatives fairly present these issues to the faculty in a timely manner, and that c) the student representatives report back to the student body about the response of the faculty to each of their concerns.

Typically, there are two student representatives, one elected each long semester. Nominees should be social work majors enrolled in SW 3332 and in good standing in the program. At the beginning of each long semester, SW 3332 students will be contacted and invited to nominate a

peer for the position. A student may self-nominate. After reviewing the status of nominated students, eligible nominees will be contacted to confirm *willingness* to serve. Ballots listing qualified and willing nominees will then be distributed to all social work majors. Students have at least one week to submit confidential ballots. To ensure the integrity of the election, the student must include their university-issued identification number on the ballot. The Director will verify and count the ballots; with a confirmatory count made by a current student representative, if available, or another faculty member. Results will then be reported to the student body.

Academic Integrity

Texas Tech University Statement of Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one's own work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures that grades are earned honestly and gives added value to the entire educational process. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers

[<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/studentconduct/academicinteg.php>].

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, violations of published professional ethics/standards, and any act or attempted act designed to give unfair academic advantage to oneself or another student. [[Code of Student Conduct](#), Part I, Section B, 1].

The Social Work program takes issues related to academic integrity very seriously. In addition to being a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, academic misconduct is a violation of the Code of Ethics for social workers. Students accused of academic misconduct are automatically referred to the Office of Student Conduct and the Student Concern and Professional Review committee.

Professionalism

Students are expected to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>) throughout the program, but particularly during any fieldwork. Faculty is expected to adhere to the same code as well as the

Students planning a career in social work should demonstrate a level of professionalism commensurate with their exposure to professional standards. Demonstration of professionalism is one of the criteria for remaining in good standing in the Social Work Program and is therefore always reviewed when students apply to enter the practice sequence. Additionally, professionalism demonstrated during a student's tenure in the social work program has a significant impact on the nature of any references that faculty members may provide to students (for graduate school, for example).

The following behaviors and skills are used as a means of evaluating students' professionalism. Students should meet basic behavioral expectations, including, but not limited to:

- attending class regularly and keeping appointments (or making appropriate arrangements);
- being punctual to class and other meetings;
- being dependable in observing deadlines;
- being prepared for class or other meetings;
- being fully cognitively engaged in class and other academic meetings
- working cooperatively and effectively with others with little or no intervention;
- and appropriate acceptance of and utilization of feedback.

Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate communication skills, including, but not limited to:

- written work that is clear, grammatically correct, uses non-biased language, and conforms with APA style for formatting and source citation;
- oral communication that reflects a general ability to successfully make oneself understood, willingness to listen to others, recognition that one's political, religious, or personal views are not the only way of looking at situations, and that some opinions are more appropriately expressed in personal settings other than in the classroom, in social service agencies, or other professional contexts;
- and non-verbal communication that reflects respect for others.

Students are expected to demonstrate emotional and cognitive abilities that reflect a level of maturity needed for successful program and professional performance, including, but not limited to the:

- ability to manage life stressors using appropriate coping strategies and resources
- ability to seek and effectively use help for problems that interfere with academic and professional performance, impair professional or academic judgment, or jeopardize the best interests of those to whom the student has a professional responsibility
- self-awareness, including how values, attitudes, emotions and past experiences affect relationships with others, an ability to assess strengths and limitations and a willingness

to examine and change behavior when it interferes with professional performance or expectations.

In addition to compatibility and potential for success, a social work grade point average of less than 2.5 is sufficient cause for a social work major to be placed on probation at any time within their social work curriculum and be referred to the SCPRC. Students on probation will have one long semester to remedy the situation. An extension may be granted if the student demonstrates sufficient progress. Students who fail to return to good standing without an approved extension will be referred to the SCPRC.

Student Concern and Professional Review Committee

The Student Concern and Professional Review Committee (SCPRC) was established to support the success and well-being, as well as the rights and responsibilities of social work students within the context of the TTU Social Work Program. To the best of its ability, the Social Work Program has the responsibility to regulate entry to the profession. Social work majors are expected to demonstrate adequate potential and progress as well as necessary self-care, for successful current and future practice. Additionally, the SCPRC acts as the reviewing body for general student appeals regarding program action³.

All students in the program are expected to learn and maintain expectations for professional and personal behavior established by the university, the program, and the profession. As students become more exposed to the professional codes of conduct they will be held more accountable; in other words, students who are near the end of their program of study are held to a higher professional standard than beginning students. Students are also expected to demonstrate adequate self-care. Throughout their lives, all people encounter obstacles and challenges to well-being, including social work professionals. While the social work curriculum is intended to provide exposure to the minimal level of needed knowledge and skill for social work practice, some students may require additional academic or personal services to achieve success⁴. While problems can sometimes be avoided, students should be willing to identify their own needs as well as seek out and accept help as required to resolve problems and reach goals. As developing professionals, social work students are expected to attend to and properly resolve problems so that these do not interfere with professional abilities, judgments, or client interactions. Admitting needs and accepting assistance can be difficult for professionals; however, we must be willing to do for ourselves what we ask of our clients.

Social work students will be notified, in writing, of their referral to the SCPRC and the identified concerns. In that notice, a meeting date for the SCPRC meeting will be stated, typically within

³ Grade appeals are not handled via the SCPRC. Refer to the TTU Student Handbook for information and instructions on making grade appeals.

⁴ Although social work faculty members may have the skills necessary to provide counseling or other assistance, doing so with a student would create an inappropriate dual relationship. Therefore, the SCPRC does not provide any direct services other than referral.

30 days if during a long semester. The referred student has the right to meet privately with the committee, present written or oral material, and with 48-hours advance notification, invite up to 2 persons to share additional information during a meeting. In some circumstances, the SCPRC may strongly urge a student to appear at the meeting, but attendance is not required. The SCPRC is composed of no less than three faculty/staff members from the Social Work Program; at least one member should be familiar to the referred student, when possible.

The SCPRC accepts referrals from students, faculty, and staff; students may refer themselves or a peer of whom they are concerned. As the SCPRC attempts to address and assist in situations which may interfere with a student's progress through the social work curriculum or future practice in the field, examples include (but are limited to) concerns about a student's:

- lagging writing, social, communication, or other professional skills
- insufficient provision of basic needs, such as shelter and nutrition
- experiences of trauma and challenge, such as bereavement, abuse, or mental illness
- failure to make sufficient academic progress or remain in good standing
- possible academic misconduct or dishonesty, such as cheating or plagiarism⁵
- failure to follow policies and rules in field settings
- behavior that threatens the welfare of others
- other behaviors that violate professional ethics
- student appeals, such as denied admittance into practice sequence, program probation, or program dismissal

Any decisions of the SCPR Committee are made by majority vote. Regardless of meeting attendance, the referred student is expected to respond to the SCPRC as requested and follow any decisions, recommendations, and/or requirements stipulated. Failure to respond and/or make good faith efforts to follow through can result in dismissal from the program. In these rare cases, students typically change to a minor in social work with a new major of their choice. Students may appeal, in writing, any decision made by the SCPR Committee to the Department Chair within 5 university working days. If the student disagrees with the decision of the Department Chair, the student may appeal, in writing, to the Associate Dean in the college within 5 additional university working days.

Communication Tools & Social Media Use for Social Work Students

The ability to communicate effectively is necessary for social work practice and professionals use phone, video, email, text and written correspondence to do so. While professional guidelines are just beginning to address newer methods, social media is increasingly being used both professionally and personally. In order to uphold our legal and ethical responsibilities as social work professionals, we must be sensitive to issues of informed consent, conflicts of

⁵ The SCPRC in no way supersedes, but may be in addition to, university policy or action regarding the Code of Student Conduct as stated in the current TTU Student Handbook. If a social work major is referred to the TTU Student Conduct Office by a social work faculty member and is determined to have committed a violation of student conduct, a referral to the SCPRC is required.

interests, privacy and confidentiality, boundaries, and dual relationships. Paying attention to how these issues relate to the use of social media and other new communication tools is particularly important. It is also important to be aware of our private conduct, as it may impede or enhance our ability to effectively function as professionals.

The TTU social work program has established the following guidelines designed to help protect the confidentiality, privacy and interests of our students, SW Program, university, agency, colleagues, clients, instructors and peers. It is important to remember that all social work faculty and students are expected to adhere to professional standards and conduct including abiding by the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers and the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers.

Additionally, students should be mindful that use of the internet, social media, and other forms of communication may have consequences for social work careers and inappropriate use can undermine public trust and confidence in the social work profession as well as individual practitioners. E-mails to or from many public employees are considered public information, including those from and to TTU faculty and staff. [Please ensure that e-mails to program staff and faculty do not include personal information that you would not want to be public. Face-to-face contact about this type of issue prevents this possibility.] The following are guidelines and suggestions for students and professionals related to social media; students are responsible for being aware of these.

Use of social media:

- Review and comply with all program, university, and agency guidelines and policies regarding the use of social media and other technology
- Review all of your social media and delete inappropriate posts, tweets, blogs, pictures (also, “untag”), videos, etc.
- Review your “likes” and “unlike” anything inappropriate
- Consider the wisdom of posting any identifying information such as address, phone, email, place of employment, date of birth, etc. as a part of your “profile, “about me”, “biography”, etc. sections.
- Use the highest Privacy settings possible for all social media. Remember, even with these settings in place, it is still possible for content to be shared and retained (forever) on the internet with or without your knowledge/consent.
- Be conscientious on who you “friend, follow”, etc. You should never “friend, follow”, etc. current or former clients.
- Be cautious about friending, following, etc. personnel from your agency. Do not friend or follow personnel during your field placement.
- Do not “look up” or research current or former clients, patients, etc. on social media unless there is compelling reason to do so (Consult with your supervisor first)
- Do not take or share photos of clients at an agency for which you are employed or volunteer without their express and voluntary consent. Be aware that taking and sharing pictures threatens the confidential receipt of services.

- Remember that the sites you “visit,” the comments you post and the videos and images you upload are retained on the internet indefinitely and do not go away.
- Be very careful that any information you share online about your work is for the purpose of improving client services and protects the identity of those involved. Do not share any information online about your work during your field placement at TTU.

Use of computers, phones, tablets, cameras:

- Review and abide by agency policy regarding communication policies.
- Communicating via email or text: Abide by agency guidelines. Do not share client identifying information unless using a secure system AND it is permissible by agency policy. (Remember, at certain agencies, including this university, any and all communication using agency/university technology is considered public information and may be retained indefinitely).
- Agency/program technology (computers, phones should be used for business communication only.
- Review and abide by agency policy about use of personal devices for work purposes.
- Most agencies’ policies state that provided email accounts should NOT be used for personal communication. (Remember, at certain agencies, including this university, any and all communication using agency/university technology is considered public information and may be retained indefinitely).

Other Resources for Students

Texas Tech University offers many resources that can be helpful to students.

[Information Technology](#) service is available to the TTU community, including email, campus-wide software contracts (such as Microsoft Office), training on how to use technology, and other specialized technology services. [IT Help Central](#), 806.742.4357, can assist students with resolving web, software and other technology issues by email, phone, or in person. The [Advanced Technology Learning Center](#) in the main university library includes multiple PC and Mac labs for student use as well as technology instruction. Multiple [computer labs](#) are located across campus, some operated by the ATLC and others by colleges or departments. WEPA™ (Wireless Everywhere Print Anywhere) is available at multiple [kiosks](#) across campus as well. Social work students may find the following locations particularly useful:

- ⇒ The Social Sciences computer lab in room 105 of Holden Hall.
- ⇒ Computers are available in the Learning Center, room 80 of Holden Hall.
- ⇒ The WEPA™ kiosk located near room 79 of Holden Hall.

The [Learning Center](#) is located in the basement of Holden Hall, room 80, and offers academic support and coaching, as well as drop-in and online tutoring for some subjects. Social work students may particularly benefit from tutoring in math and biology, but other subjects may be possible depending on the availability of peer tutors competent in a particular discipline.

The [Writing Center](#) is located in the English/Philosophy building, room 175, and provides tutoring sessions, in-person or online, for written assignments. Each session is 30 minutes in length. Social work students are STRONGLY ENCOURAGED to utilize these services to improve their writing assignments and general skills.

[Student Health Services](#), 806.743.2848, offers a variety of healthcare services to TTU students, both with and without health insurance⁶, in the Student Wellness Center. Unless intentionally waived, students pay a general medical fee with their tuition that allows them to access either heavily discounted or free services. In addition to seeing a physician or nurse, students can receive immunizations, laboratory services, radiology, and pharmacy.

[Student Counseling Center](#), 806-742-3674, “provides a safe environment for students to explore issues of concern, resolve psychological distress, and maximize their potential.” Located at the Student Wellness Center, the SCS provides a variety of individual and group counseling options, a walk-in clinic M-F from 12:30-3:30pm, a 24-hour crisis helpline, 806-742-5555, as well as self-care services, including [the Mind Spa](#). Full and part-time students are eligible for their no-cost services. If a student needs more assistance, the SCS will connect students with other professionals, either on-campus or in the community.

[Center for Collegiate Recovery Communities](#) offers “specialized support” for TTU students recovering from excessive substance use, allowing them to “flourish with low relapse rates, high GPA's, high retention and graduation rates.”

[Risk Intervention & Safety Education \(RISE\)](#) program provides prevention and education services related to substance abuse, gender & sexuality, safety & violence prevention, and student wellness.

[Recreational Sports](#) offers students the opportunity to participate in a variety of exercise, sports, and leisure activities.

[Student Organizations](#), with a broad variety of personal, professional, and social purposes, are available for student participation. Social work students may be particularly interested in the

Did you know that 1 in 5 people experience a mental health condition during college?

While common, many students still resist seeking services when they are struggling. Even without a diagnosable condition, the demands of balancing studies, employment, and social life can be overwhelming at times. The Social Work Program strongly encourages all social work students to access mental health services during their time at TTU; experiencing mental health services from a client's perspective makes us better and

⁶ If not covered elsewhere, students can purchase a [health insurance plan](#) to help pay for medical services during college.

Social Work Student Organization (SWSO), which offers a good way to meet students in other phases of their social work education, get additional volunteer experiences, demonstrate leadership ability, and have fun.

[Texas Tech Police Department](#), 806.742.3931, offers 24-hour law enforcement on the TTU campus. To reach law enforcement in an emergency situation, you should call 9-1-1.

[Scholarships and Financial Aid](#) are available to help TTU students pay for their college education. There are just a scholarships for [social work majors only](#). The size and number of these internal funds vary but are typically awarded each long semester based on applicants' need, demonstration of commitment to the profession, and/or progress in the social work program. Descriptions, criteria, and applications are available on the program website.

Other financial aid sources are available. Interested students should contact the [TTU Financial Aid Office](#) and review opportunities within the [College of Arts & Sciences](#).