

**Master of Social Work
Program Handbook
2024-2025**

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Letter from the MSW Coordinator



Dr. Nathan Li
MSW Program Coordinator
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Dear MSW Students,

I hope this message finds you in good spirits and eager anticipation for the exciting journey that awaits you in our Master of Social Work (MSW) program at TWU. Congratulations on choosing to pursue graduate studies during this challenging yet exciting period in history. The faculty and staff of our MSW program are thrilled to embark on this educational journey with you and are committed to ensuring a productive and enriching experience.

Welcome to a program that prides itself on innovation and inclusivity. Our online program is designed to provide you with flexibility while maintaining the richness of an in-person experience. This flexibility allows us to accommodate various learning styles, making education accessible to a diverse group of students.

One of the hallmarks of our program is the diversity that enriches both our faculty and student body. Here, you'll find a wide array of perspectives and experiences, contributing to a vibrant learning environment. Our faculty members bring a wealth of expertise to the table, and we are committed to being accessible and supportive throughout your academic journey.

Emphasizing the core values of social work, our program is committed to instilling ethical principles in every aspect of education. We aspire to graduate professionals who embody compassion, social justice, and a commitment to making a positive impact in their communities.

Graduate school is a unique opportunity for personal and professional growth. Beyond the classroom, you'll find a plethora of opportunities to engage in research, community service, and collaborative projects. We encourage you to explore these avenues, as they can significantly enrich your graduate experience. As you embark on this exciting chapter, remember that you are not alone. Our dedicated faculty and staff are here to support you, and your fellow students will become lifelong colleagues. Embrace the challenges, celebrate the victories, and make the most of the incredible journey that lies ahead.

Once again, welcome to the MSW program at TWU. We are thrilled to have you on board and look forward to witnessing your growth and success. Please feel free to reach out to me to discuss your successes and challenges during your time in the MSW Program. We look forward to getting to know you and assisting you in achieving your educational goals.

Sincerely,

Nathan Li

Nathan Li, Ph.D., LMSW, MA
MSW Program Coordinator

FACULTY AND STAFF OF THE MSW PROGRAM

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Texas Woman's University (TWU) Master of Social Work (MSW) program—an advanced generalist social work program awaits you. Our goal is to educate and graduate individuals who are ethical, competent, and equipped to serve culturally diverse communities through evidence-based practice. Join us in fostering a compassionate and socially just approach to make a meaningful impact in your community.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)

As of June 2024, our MSW program has received full accreditation from the CSWE, which is the national accrediting body for social work education programs. The Bachelor of Social Work degree program at TWU has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education since 1974 and 1975, respectively. This national accrediting body is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the operation and curricula of undergraduate and graduate social work degree programs. To be accredited, these programs must meet standards that are designed to ensure quality social work education and rigorous professional preparation.

The CSWE rewrites accreditation standards every eight years in a document known as EPAS: Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards. EPAS contains all the accreditation rules and expectations of all accredited program. Here is the 2022 EPAS document: <https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/bb5d8afe-7680-42dc-a332-a6e6103f4998/2022-EPAS.pdf>

Graduates of programs that are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education receive educational experiences consistent with those of social work students across the nation and relevant to the major currents within the profession of social work. CSWE accreditation standards guide all aspects of the MSW program.

Advanced Generalist Social Work Education

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice. Generalist practitioners incorporate diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice. Generalist practice incorporates all the core competencies (EPAS, 2022, pp. 8-13).

The MSW program is an Advanced Generalist Program. Advanced Generalist social work practitioners are equipped for practice in virtually any setting and may be perceived as having three key areas of strength: “multidimensional problem-setting, self-reflective leadership, and ethical advocacy” (Lavitt, 2009).

MSW programs are required by the accrediting body, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) to have at least one practice specialty. Advanced Generalist, as an area of specialization for MSW programs was introduced almost 30 years ago and the number of Advanced Generalist programs have grown quickly. With rapidly changing societal problems, evolving social service needs, resources, and funding, a specialization in Advanced Generalist practice meets complex needs. We designate the Advanced Generalist year as the Advanced Year.

Mission and Goals

Mission

The mission of our MSW program is to prepare effective advanced generalist social workers for ethical practice and leadership across settings, and to promote human and community well-being in rapidly changing environments. The program is dedicated to preparing graduates to apply evidence-informed knowledge, skills and values as they address complex issues and problems, while promoting social, environmental and economic justice with those who are vulnerable and oppressed. With a global perspective of our interdependent world, graduates will practice and promote respect for human diversity and the advancement of human rights to benefit the quality of life for individuals, groups, families, organizations and communities.

Program Goals

1. To prepare professional social workers who competently practice with a solid ethical base founded upon the values and principles of the profession.
2. To prepare professional social workers to apply advanced knowledge and skills in complex practice environments.
3. To prepare professional social workers to effectively incorporate a global perspective and dimensions of diversity in practice
4. To prepare professional social workers to act as agents of positive social change by understanding and analyzing injustice and implementing social and economic justice strategies.

Council on Social Work Education Core Competencies

CSWE is the accrediting body of the TWU MSW program. CSWE requires accredited social work graduate programs to deliver curriculum to students that will assist them in acquiring the following competencies:

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior
2. Advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice
3. Engage anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) in practice.
4. Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice

5. Engage in policy practice
6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Recognizing that generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and includes a strong professional foundation, the Joint MSW degree plan has been developed accordingly. Degree plans and course requirements found below are preempted by the General Catalog of the year of the student's admission to TWU.

Student Rights under FERPA

Students have the following rights under the 1974 Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

- Students and former students have the right to inspect and review their education records through established procedures within a maximum of 45 days after written request is received.
- Right to seek amendment or correction of educational records
- Right to have some control over the disclosure of information from education records except when release is permitted by law
- Right to file complaints with the Family Policy Compliance Office, United States Department of Education, within 180 days of alleged violation

TWU has policies about disclosing personally identifiable information to school officials for educational purposes. School officials include faculty and staff directly associated with the MSW program and personnel in the graduate schools at the respective universities. Faculty and staff at TWU Department of Social Work may discuss personal information about students when students need additional clarification on policies, support or resources. This is viewed as constituting legitimate educational interest because it is directly related to furthering student success in the program.

DEGREE PLANS/PLAN OF STUDY FOR MSW PROGRAM OPTIONS

MSW Generalist Full-Time Degree Plan

Two-Year Program (Full Time) 60 Credits

Semester	Course	Title	Hours
Fall Year 1	SOWK 5103*	Social Work Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	3
	SOWK 5203	Social Work Practice I Individuals & Systems	3
	SOWK 5303*	Social Work History & Social Welfare Policy	3
	SOWK 5403*	Social Work Research Methods	3
	Fall Year 1 Total		
Spring Year 1	SOWK 5113*	Social Work Human Behavior and the Social Environment II	3
	SOWK 5213	Social Work Practice II Organizations & Communities	3
	SOWK 5223	Social Work Practice III Groups	3
	SOWK 5243**	Social Work Human Diversity & Multicultural Practice	3
	SOWK 5803	Social Work Foundation Field Seminar & Practicum I	3
	Spring Year 1 Total		
Summer Year 1	SOWK 5243**	Social Work Human Diversity & Multicultural Practice ⁺	3
	SOWK 5813	Social Work Foundation Field Seminar & Practicum II	3
	Summer Year 1 Total		
Fall Year 2	SOWK 5233	Social Work Advanced Practice I Multidimensional	3
	SOWK 5253	Social Work Advanced Practice II Interventions	3
	SOWK 5423*	Ethical Social Work Practice	3
	SOWK 5833*	Social Work Advanced Field Seminar & Practicum I	3
	SOWK 5903.51* or SOWK 5513*	Social Work Elective (Social Work in Healthcare OR Practice in Mental Health)	3
	Fall Year 2 Total		
Spring Year 2	SOWK 5323*	Social Work Administration and Management	3
	SOWK 5333*	Social Work Advanced Policy Analysis	3
	SOWK 5503* or SOWK 5543*	Social Work Elective (Death and Dying OR Child Maltreatment: Assessment and Intervention)	3
	SOWK 5843*	Social Work Advanced Field Seminar & Practicum II	3
	SOWK 5973 or	Social Work Advanced Integrative Seminar, or	3
	Spring Year 2 Total		
Total Credits:			60

Note: *online courses; +course can only be taken in either semester.

MSW Generalist Part-Time Degree Plan

Four-Year Program (Part Time) 60 Credits

Semester	Course	Title	Hours
Fall Year 1	SOWK 5103*	Social Work Human Behavior and the Social Environment I	3
	SOWK 5303*	Social Work History & Social Welfare Policy	3
	Fall Year 1 Total		6
Spring Year 1	SOWK 5113*	Social Work Human Behavior and the Social Environment II	3
	SOWK 5243**	Social Work Human Diversity & Multicultural Practice*	3
	Spring Year 1 Total		6
Fall Year 2	SOWK 5203	Social Work Practice I Individuals & Systems	3
	SOWK 5403*	Social Work Research Methods	3
	Fall Year 2 Total		6
Spring Year 2	SOWK 5213	Social Work Practice II Organizations & Communities	3
	SOWK 5223	Social Work Practice III Groups	3
	SOWK 5803	Social Work Foundation Field Seminar & Practicum I	3
	Spring Year 2 Total		9
Summer Year 1	SOWK 5813	Social Work Foundation Field Seminar & Practicum II	3
	Summer 1 Total		3
Fall Year 3	SOWK 5233	Social Work Advanced Practice I Multidimensional Assessment	3
	SOWK 5253	Social Work Advanced Practice II Interventions	3
	SOWK 5423*	Ethical Social Work Practice	3
Fall Year 3 Total		9	
Spring Year 3	SOWK 5323*	Social Work Administration and Management	3
	SOWK 5333*	Social Work Advanced Policy Analysis	3
	Spring Year 3 Total		6
Fall Year 4	SOWK 5903.51* or SOWK 5513*	Social Work Elective (Social Work in Healthcare OR Practice in Mental Health)	3
	SOWK 5833*	Social Work Advanced Field Seminar & Practicum I	3
	Fall Year 4 Total		6
Spring Year 4	SOWK 5503* or SOWK 5543*	Social Work Elective (Death and Dying OR Child Maltreatment: Assessment and Intervention)	3
	SOWK 5843*	Social Work Advanced Field Seminar & Practicum II	3
	SOWK 5973 or SOWK 5983	Social Work Advanced Integrative Seminar, or Thesis	3
	Spring Year 4 Total		9
Total Credits:			60

Note: *online courses; *course can only be taken in either semester.

MSW Advanced Standing Full-Time Degree Plan

One-Year Program (Full Time) 30 Credits

Semester	Course	Title	Hours
Fall Year 1	SOWK 5233	Social Work Advanced Practice I Multidimensional Assessment	3
	SOWK 5253	Social Work Advanced Practice II Interventions	3
	SOWK 5423*	Ethical Social Work Practice	3
	SOWK 5833*	Social Work Advanced Field Seminar & Practicum I	3
	SOWK 5903.51* or SOWK 5513*	Social Work Elective (Social Work in Healthcare OR Practice in Mental Health)	3
Fall Year 1 Total:			15
	SOWK 5323*	Social Work Administration and Management	3
	SOWK 5333*	Social Work Advanced Policy Analysis	3
	SOWK 5503* or SOWK 5543*	Social Work Elective (Death and Dying OR Child Maltreatment: Assessment and Intervention)	3
	SOWK 5843*	Social Work Advanced Field Seminar & Practicum II	3
	SOWK 5973 or SOWK 5983	Social Work Advanced Integrative Seminar, or Thesis	3
	Spring Year 1 Total:		
Total Credits:			30

Note: *online courses.

MSW Advanced Standing Part-Time Degree Plan

Two-Year Program (Part Time) 30 Credits

Fall Year 1	SOWK 5233	Social Work Advanced Practice I Multidimensional Assessment	3
	SOWK 5253	Social Work Advanced Practice II Interventions	3
	SOWK 5423*	Ethical Social Work Practice	3
Fall Year 1 Total			9
Spring Year 1	SOWK 5323*	Social Work Administration and Management	3
	SOWK 5333*	Social Work Advanced Policy Analysis	3
Spring Year 1 Total			6
Fall Year 2	SOWK 5903.51* or SOWK 5513*	Social Work Elective (Social Work in Healthcare OR Practice in Mental Health)	3
	SOWK 5833*	Social Work Advanced Field Seminar & Practicum I	3
Fall Year 2 Total			6
Spring Year 2	SOWK 5503* or SOWK 5543*	Social Work Elective (Death and Dying OR Child Maltreatment: Assessment and Intervention)	3
	SOWK 5843*	Social Work Advanced Field Seminar & Practicum II	3
	SOWK 5973 or SOWK 5983	Social Work Advanced Integrative Seminar, or Thesis	3
Spring Year 2 Total			9
Total Credits:			30

Note: *online courses.

MSW ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Admissions Eligibility Requirements

The MSW program requires students to have a bachelor's degree with a liberal arts foundation from an accredited college or university recognized by a regional accrediting association. In Texas, the state undergraduate core is generally considered adequate for the liberal arts foundation. A GPA of 3.0 in the last 60 hours of undergraduate (and graduate, if applicable) coursework is required. International students must meet the English Language Proficiency examination requirements for TWU. In addition, an applicant may be asked to participate in an interview if there is a question or concern regarding clarification of their application or suitability for the program. The program does not require a GRE score.

The Masters of Social Work degree, or MSW, is considered the “Gold Standard” in social services. It is also the terminal degree. The MSW program prepares students for a multitude of life-changing social work career opportunities in areas such as health care and family services, among many others. We offer 2 paths to admission. Each path has a full-time and a part-time option.

Generalist Program (60 Credit Program)

Those with a bachelor's degree other than a BSW from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning, or those with a BSW degree from a program that is not accredited by the CSWE, are eligible to apply to the MSW and, if admitted, will be considered Generalist-level students. Students who have no completed course of study in social work, must complete a 60-hour program. The first 30 hours of credits are the Generalist curriculum year and consist of enhanced coursework typically found in accredited BSW programs. After the Generalist year, students will complete an advanced generalist curriculum or “Advanced Year” for the last 30 hours of the program.

Advanced Standing Program (30 Credit Program)

Graduates of CSWE accredited BSW programs who have matriculated in the last seven years are often eligible to apply to the MSW with Advanced Standing status and enter directly into the Advanced Year. Advanced standing applicants who graduated 7 years or more ago may be required, due to changes and advances in the field, to take additional BSW coursework before moving to the advanced year.

Grades of Baccalaureate social work (BSW) graduates entering the master's program will be reviewed to ensure they meet minimum standards of at least a “B” in every course. Grades below a “B” will necessitate repeating a course at the graduate level. BSW students with GPAs below 3.0 in social work courses may have to repeat the first year of the social work curriculum. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Additional coursework may be required to enter the MSW Program as an advanced student due to identified gaps in coursework or knowledge or length of time since graduation. Provisional admission may be granted in certain cases with the expectation that students will maintain a 3.0 GPA.

The MSW will not require Advanced Standing students to repeat coursework completed from their BSW program. Advanced Standing students may complete the MSW program in 30 semester credit hours. The 30 hours may be completed on a full-time (12 months) or part-time (24 months) basis.

Overview of the Application Process

Step 1: Access and complete the TWU Admission Application via Target X at

https://apply.twu.edu/TX_SiteLogin?startURL=%2FTargetX_Portal_PB

To start an application, please visit the URL above and create an account. The following materials will be required and submitted online: Current personal and education information, contact information for two references, resume, transcripts, and the MSW program application.

- **Requirements for the 2 references**
 - 2 Recommendation Forms must be submitted on the applicant's behalf
 - Both references must be professional references
 - The MSW Admissions Committee recommends including letters from recent employers in social services, volunteer supervisors at social service agencies, supervisors from your field placements, and/or current or former faculty members
 - Advanced Standing applicants are advised to have at least one reference from individuals in their BSW program, such as the program director, a faculty member or a practicum instructor, who can speak to your performance
- **Find more information on Transcripts**
<https://twu.edu/admissions/application-process/test-scores-transcripts/>

Step 2: Pay the Application Fee

- \$50 for most students
- \$75 for international students

Step 3: Upload MSW specific application materials in Target X.

These include (a) MSW program application and (b) your current resume.

3(a): Access and complete the MSW program application in its entirety at

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Og9s6fVdd6AyhooJ_pQtwKKKEF9b2cmv/view?usp=sharing

The MSW program application includes a personal state comprised of 4 essay questions. A strong component of the application is the applicant's personal statement. Applicants address the following essay questions: (2000 word maximum).

- ❓ Please describe your interest and professional goals in pursuing a Master of Social Work degree. Describe any experiences that have influenced your

- decision, as well as your strengths and areas of growth that you will bring to your study. (500-word limit)
- ❑ Discuss what you learned in your undergraduate program (as well as any additional professional training) that has helped to prepare you for the MSW program. Please include in what area(s) of social work you hope to practice, how your MSW will contribute to you achieving that goal, and any challenges or struggles you anticipate that you may encounter in the MSW program. (500-word limit)
 - ❑ Discuss your views on the importance of diversity (in all forms, i.e. not limited to cultural diversity, but open to include all aspects of diverse identities) in social work practice. Examine experiences that you have had with diverse populations and how these have influenced your attitudes and biases. (500-word limit)
 - ❑ Consider the rigorous requirements of our MSW program, which include course work (2-3 courses a semester if part-time, 4-5 courses a semester if full-time), and expectations for field internship hours (16 hours per week served at an assigned agency, typically over two semesters), and your out of class study time (9 hours per week, per course). With these expectations in mind, please describe your plan to balance work, education, and your personal life, including how you will practice self-care, as you engage in your graduate studies. (500-word limit)

In addition to the above, the Admissions Committee will consider the following in their review of each personal statement:

- Critical thinking skills
- The ability to write at the level of a professional with appropriate grammar, spelling, and structure.
- Thoroughness and organization of responses

3(b): Current Resume

Please upload a resume at the application site that reflects your education, and volunteer or professional experiences, as applicable.

Step 4 (may not necessary):

If you did the three steps above, but your application in Target X is still incomplete. When this happens, you should (1) contact your reference and remind them to submit their letter via the system and/or (2) contact TWU Office of Graduate Admissions Processing at 940-898-3076 and ensure your transcripts are processed.

The Admissions Review and Notification Process

The Admissions Review Committee, made up of MSW faculty, will review each prospective student's completed TWU Admissions Application via (Target X), as well as the MSW Program Application. Applicants are scored through the use of a rubric, and students are rank-ordered according to rubric scores. Selection is based on rubric scores and reflect an objective perception of the student's ability to perform at the level of an advanced generalist social worker and successfully complete the MSW. Information contained in both the TWU Admissions Application and the MSW Program

Application are considered in the admissions process. While interviews are not required for admissions into the MSW program, the Admission's Committee may request an interview with the applicant

The application process for the MSW Program is competitive and a completed application does not guarantee acceptance into the program. A final determination of acceptance will be made by the admissions committee after the *Target X* application is reviewed. Applications submitted before February 15 will be given priority (a more immediate look). Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis as they come in and decisions will typically be made within a month. The deadline

Transfers of Credit

If an applicant has been or is currently enrolled in another MSW program and wants to transfer to our program, an additional letter of recommendation from the Chair or MSW program director is required. Please contact your previous institution and have them submit a letter to MSW Program Coordinator, TWU Division of Social Work, 304 Administration Dr. Denton, TX 76204. MSW courses taken at another institution will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and subject to approval before they can be transferred into the MSW program. Transfer credits are limited in accordance with graduate school guidelines of a maximum of 12 semester credits.

Applicants wishing to have MSW courses from another institution reviewed for equivalency must submit a syllabus for each completed course. They must have completed the course with a grade of B or better. Credit acceptance is not guaranteed. Once admitted to the program, students would formally submit course syllabi and be notified of the outcome in writing.

Students have the responsibility of providing the necessary documentation to demonstrate that competency was achieved in courses taken at another institution. Practice courses, Field Practicum courses, or Field Seminar courses from another institution will generally not be accepted.

Work/Life Experience Credit Policy

The MSW program does not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience. Students must complete the full curriculum and all practicum requirements in order to graduate from the program. Students are informed about this policy in the MSW Handbook. The information is also available on the MSW website.

Generalist Year and Advanced Year Comprehensive Exams

Policies & Procedures

Generalist Year Comprehensive Examination

All generalist students must take and pass a "pass/fail" comprehensive exam in order to progress into the Advanced Year. Students must score a 70% or higher to pass. The Generalist Comprehensive Exam will assess individual student mastery of the Generalist Competencies, facilitate student learning, demonstrate readiness for the

Advanced Year, and provide the program with assessment data. Additional information about the exam is provided to students in Foundation & Field Seminar II (SOWK 5813). The exam is administered in SOWK 5813 during summer term at completion of generalist curriculum. Students are encouraged to take good notes during their classes and to keep their textbooks, readings and syllabi from courses in order to prepare for the exam.

Generalist Exam Questions

Question Categories	Courses Covered	Competencies
10%	Research—SOWK 5403	4 & 7
10%	Practice I—SOWK 5203 Individuals & Families	1, 6, 7, 8 & 9
10%	Practice II--SOWK 5213 Organizations & Communities	1, 6, 7, 8 & 9
10%	Policy—SOWK 5303	1, 2, 4 & 5
10%	Diversity--SOWK 5243	1 & 3
10%	Human Behavior Social Environment I—SOWK 5103	1, 2, 3, & 4
10%	Human Behavior Social Environment II—SOWK 5113	1, 2 & 3
10%	Foundation Field Seminar & Practicum I—SOWK 5803	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9
10%	Foundation Field Seminar & Practicum II—SOWK 5813	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9
10%	Practice III—Group Work	1, 6, 7, 8 & 9

Advanced Year Comprehensive Examination

All students will be required to take and pass an end of year comprehensive exam in order to graduate. The Advanced Year Comprehensive Exam will assess individual student mastery of the Advanced Generalist Practice Competencies, facilitate student learning, demonstrate readiness for graduation, and provide the program with assessment data. Additional information about the exam is provided to students during the Integrative Seminar, and a “pass” on the exam is required to pass SOWK 5973 or SOWK 5983 in spring term of the final semester. Students are encouraged to take good notes during their classes and to keep their textbooks, readings and syllabi from courses in order to prepare for the exam. Courses that will be included in this exam and corresponding competencies are included in the table below.

Advanced Exam Questions

12.5%	Ethical Social Work Practice--SOWK 5423	1, 2, 3, 4, 7 & 8
12.5%	Advanced Policy--SOWK 5333	1, 2 & 5
12.5%	Advanced Practice Assessment—SOWK 5233	1, 3, 6, 7, 8 & 9
12.5%	Advance Practice Interventions SOWK 5253	1, 3, 6, 7, 8 & 9
12.5%	Administration & Management SOWK 5323	1 & 5
12.5%	Advanced Field Seminar & Practicum I—SOWK 5833	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9
12.5%	Advanced Field Seminar & Practicum II—SOWK 5843	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9
12.5%	Advanced Integrative Seminar—SOWK 5973 or Thesis—SOWK 5983	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9

Test Procedures

If a student has a **disability and needs accommodations** for either exam, please contact Student Disability Services (DSS) at TWU **during the first week of the term** in which you are scheduled for the exam. Please also notify your instructor about your

needs for accommodation. Unless you contact faculty, we will assume you do not need accommodations. Accommodations will not be available unless advance notice is given. The comprehensive exam will take place in supervised computer labs (utilizing Canvas). No notes or textbooks or allowed at the testing site. An exam day will be scheduled for the Advanced Comprehensive Exam and announced no later than 3 weeks before the graduation date.

All backpacks, personal belongings and cell phones will be collected at the door of the exam room and returned to students upon completion of the exam. There will be proctors present in the room at all times during the exam. There will also be a person from IT readily available in the event of a computer problem. Students will log onto their Canvas account to take the exam. Students will have up to 3 hours to complete the exam. There will be approximately 100 questions on each exam.

Test results will be published within one week of the test date. Students must score 70% or higher to pass. Criteria for retaking the generalist year or advanced year comprehensive examinations:

1. Students may schedule a second comprehensive examination in the same semester in which they failed the first scheduled examination.
2. A second comprehensive exam time in the same semester will be scheduled by the instructor, and the student will be notified.
3. After two failed written attempts, student may be administered an oral examination for a third attempt only if they achieve a score of 60% or higher on either of the first two attempts. The student would meet with a committee composed of three faculty to verbally demonstrate mastery of the nine social work competencies.
4. Failure to satisfactorily pass an examination after three attempts, including completing two written and one oral exam, will terminate the student's program, subject to appeal to the SWPP Director and the graduate school.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR NEW STUDENTS IN THE MSW PROGRAM

New students in the MSW Program are responsible for reading this Handbook in its entirety. They will also participate in an orientation that occurs shortly before classes begin in the fall semester they join the Program.

MSW PROGRAM CLASSROOM RELATED POLICIES

Attendance Policy

Attendance and professionalism are vital in social work education. You are expected to attend all classes, seminar meetings, faculty appointments and other obligations, and to come to class on time. Many courses use small group collaboration and roleplaying methods that require your presence and participation **during class** for optimal learning. Professors rely on your timely presence to effectively implement these experiential methods and enhance the learning environment for everyone.

If you must miss a class, **please notify the professor in advance that you will be absent**. It is your responsibility to collect notes from a classmate and/or handouts/PowerPoints from Canvas. **An essay paper demonstrating competency in class work may be required as makeup in the event of an absence.**

Absences may be excused based on:

1. a major event/illness that is life disrupting and clearly outside of your control, or
2. an illness that renders you incapable of participating or that is infectious and thus risks causing harm to your fellow students and professor if you participate.

The professor reserves the right to deduct points from your final point total for multiple (more than one) absences, late arrival, and/or leaving early. **It is the policy of the MSW Program that upon obtaining 3 misses from any course you will earn a failing grade for the semester.** You will not be able to advance in your field practicum or other parts of the MSW Program until you retake the course due to minimum grade and GPA requirements.

Social Media/Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones should be turned off prior to class except students on “emergency on-call” with an employer or placement. This includes texting. Students may not leave class to make or receive calls. Use of laptops during class is at the discretion of the instructor.

Intellectual Property

All course materials and course content are the intellectual property of the instructor and/or your classmates. As a result, recording audio or video of the class, as well as the duplication of or forwarding of e-mail and Canvas postings is prohibited without written permission. This means, for example, that you may not post materials from the class, audio of lectures, or video of the class to personal web pages, Facebook, YouTube or any other electronic medium without the written consent of the instructor, and if appropriate, all relevant class members. Students may, however, request permission from the instructor to record course lectures for personal academic use (See TWU Policies-Academic Integrity).

Grading in the MSW Program

Decisions regarding the methods of grading are made by the individual instructors for each course. These grading methods are made available in the course syllabus each

semester. It is the student's responsibility to understand the grading method used by the instructor and to familiarize him/herself with this method at the beginning of the semester. Each student should read each course syllabus at the beginning of the semester and seek clarification if any portion of the syllabus is not clear. Instructors differ in the weight assigned to different class assignments, whether late assignments will be accepted or receive a lower grade, etc.

Academic Status GPA requirement

- MSW students must maintain an overall graduate GPA of 3.0 in order to remain in good standing and to graduate from the master's degree program.
- MSW graduate students are required to achieve a grade of "B" or higher in all courses with a SOWK-prefix.

Should the student receive a grade of less than "B" in any SOWK course, the student will have one additional opportunity to enroll in the course to achieve a grade of "B" or higher. If a student takes a SOWK course twice without achieving a grade of "B" or higher, students will be terminated from the program. The maximum number of courses for which a student may have a grade change, including grades of Incomplete, is two. Should there be any additional course(s) in which the student receives less than a "B" (or an Incomplete), the student will be terminated from the program.

Students must have earned "B's" or better in all degree-seeking courses before he or she will be permitted to take the program's comprehensive examination.

If a grade of "D" or "F" is earned in any MSW course, a review of student performance will be undertaken in order to determine if the student should continue in the program or be terminated.

In fairness to students who do complete assignments on time, those who turn papers in late will have significant points deducted unless a legitimate reason for the tardiness has been discussed with the instructor **prior** to the due date. **Ten points x total number of days late will be subtracted from possible points unless arrangements are made with the professor in advance of the due date.** If you missed handing in an assignment, it is the professor's choice about whether to give you a make-up option. If a make-up option is provided, the professor retains the right to set the content of the make-up work, the points that may be earned, and the timeline for completing the work.

Incomplete Course Work

Only in exceptional circumstances, on a case-by-case basis that adheres to TWU policies, will an incomplete grade be considered. Policies for granting the exception will be based on graduate policy can be found at: <https://twu.edu/registrar/grades/>

Repeating Courses

Students have only one additional opportunity to repeat a course in which they did not achieve a grade of “B” or higher. Should the student be unable to achieve a grade of “B” or higher after a 2nd attempt at the course, continuation in the MSW Program is by successful grade appeal only (see policy on Appeals).

It is preferable that students avoid having to repeat any course while pursuing their master’s degree because of earning a grade of less than a “B” in a SOWK course. But, should that occur, a desirable outcome is that student replace the initial grade with either a “B” or “A” upon repeating the course. Students are able to repeat an SOWK course only once. Furthermore, students can repeat only a maximum of two MSW courses. Should the student receive a grade of less than a “B” on a third MSW course, the student will be terminated from the MSW program.

Periodic Review

At the end of each academic semester, each student will be the subject of an informal review by their faculty members to determine if they are making sufficient progress, both academically and professionally, to continue in the program. If concerns arise as a result of the informal review, a formal faculty staffing will occur. As a result, the student may be asked to meet with the faculty, a plan of remediation may be developed, or the student may be removed from the program.

Appeals Procedures for Academic Decisions

In the event that a student wishes to appeal a decision relating to an academic matter other than academic dishonesty, probation, or suspension, such as the assignment of a particular grade, the following protocol should be followed:

1. **Contact the faculty member FIRST in an effort to resolve the problem.**
2. If the issue is not resolved at this level, the student may contact the MSW Program Coordinator for consideration of the matter.
3. If the issue is not resolved at this level, the student may ask the SWPP Director to consider the appeal.

Students should be aware that these procedures should be followed in a sequential manner. Any complaints regarding academic performance or grading should first be addressed directly with the faculty member for resolution, prior to proceeding to higher administrative levels.

EVALUATING STUDENT ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE

The CSWE document, 2022 Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), provides guidance in the evaluation of academic and professional performance. Ultimately, students in the MSW must demonstrate that they are capable of functioning at the level of an Advanced Generalist practitioner in order to graduate. EPAS discusses social work practice competence as consisting of “nine interrelated

competencies and component behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes.” Proficiency in each of these nine competency areas must be demonstrated, observed, and measured in two ways.

Field practicum, described by CSWE as the “Signature Pedagogy” in social work education, is the component where observation of competence is most readily available. In the MSW Program, students are evaluated for mastery of the nine competencies using the Final Field Evaluations completed by their field instructors both in the Generalist Year and the Advanced Year. Additionally, a Comprehensive Exam will be administered at the end of the Generalist and the Advanced year, respectively. Academic progress through the program is also determined through the use of graded assignments, tests, papers, practice demonstrations, and other means throughout the coursework. Grades are considered a measure of academic progress.

Professional progress, or simply, “professionalism” is expected of all students at all times in the program. The TWU MSW program adheres to all university guidelines, procedures, policies, and regulations. However, there are program specific areas of concern regarding student conduct within the Social Work Program of which students should be aware. All assignments and written work submitted in the program may be included by MSW faculty as part of a review to determine if sufficient progress is being made by the student to continue in the program.

Professional Etiquette

The University experience is intended to assist in preparing students for professional and career pursuits. That preparation includes learning to use professional etiquette in dealing with people in various positions. The appropriate way to address your instructor depends on her/his particular education credentials. These are usually indicated on the course syllabus. If your instructor has a:

- Doctorate (Ph.D. or Ed.D.), you should address them as: Dr. Instructor’s last name
- Master’s degree (MA, MS, MSW, MSSW) you should address them as: Professor Instructor’s last name
- Law degree (J.D.) you should address them as: Professor Instructor’s last name

If you are not certain about an instructor’s education credentials, you should address them as “Professor.” It is not appropriate to call the instructor by his/her first name unless given permission.

Professional etiquette extends to all types of communication with your instructor. Written communication—including email—forms a permanent record and so it is important to use care about how you make requests, ask questions, or express concerns. Slang (e.g., Hey, Yo) and texting abbreviations should be avoided. The use of profanity is not permitted.

Any type of communication—verbal or written—is most likely to achieve the intended result when it is polite or courteous. Please note that communication can be polite even

if there is some type of conflict involved. Instructors may choose not to respond to emails or other forms of communication perceived as insulting, disrespectful, or unprofessional.

STATEMENT ON CIVILITY

As a student you should consider the viewpoints and ideas of others with courtesy, even if you disagree. This policy extends to our online interactions, including discussion boards, emails and social media. Creating a civil discourse is part of embracing our professionalism. Listen with openness, offering your suggestions and ideas in a positive and respectful manner. When in doubt, refrain from responding until you at least thoughtfully considered what they are stating. Reread emails and other communications to assess tone and discrepancies between message intended and message conveyed. In a national climate of distrust and disrespect it is important to model civility in every word and deed.

Our social work program provides a unique opportunity to deconstruct our biases, prejudices, and privilege and to evolve our values. We must make the commitment to know ourselves deeply. We learn to speak out against incivility. We must sometimes embrace uncomfortable discoveries about who we have been and still are. Growth often begins where our comfort zones end. Through reflection, especially for those who are new to this journey, we seek to understand other persons' perspectives. Connecting in relationships with those who are different from us will sometimes leave us feeling uncomfortable, awkward, sad, or enraged. Respectful dialogue, even without resolution, is valuable.

We are committed to fostering socially just environments in our classrooms, work and gathering spaces. It is everyone's job to continue building social environments where we can have honest and respectful conversations. Valuing the dignity and worth of all persons and seeking to honor our cultural/racial/ethnic differences is paramount to embracing the ethical basis of our profession. How we choose to treat our colleagues and fellow students reflects directly on how we will interact as social workers with our clients. These common, ordinary exchanges are a window into our commitment to professionalism and social justice.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity emanates from a culture that embraces the core values of trust and honesty necessary for full learning to occur. As student-centered public research universities, TWU promote the integrity of the learning process by establishing and enforcing high academic standards. Academic dishonesty breaches the mutual trust necessary in an academic environment and undermines all scholarship. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, submitting a paper multiple times to complete course requirements, forging the signature of the instructor or of another student, fabrication, and/or facilitating or sabotaging the academic dishonesty of other students for exams, papers etc.

Plagiarism can take various forms:

Cheating: This includes exchanging answers on tests or pretending the work of others is your own work. This includes using work drawn from books, essays, newspapers and magazines, websites, and papers you wrote for another class or one that was written by other students.

Non-attribution: Copying quotes or text where you don't give proper credit. You should use quotation marks for quotes and block indentations for passages. Always use citations at the end of a quote. The best way to avoid non-attribution is to always give ample credit to source authors. Better to have too many citations than to fail to credit your sources.

Patchwriting: Using quotes and the structure of someone else's writing as your own. It is careless paraphrasing. Please summarize and report what you are reading using your own words. Quotes should be kept to a minimum as per APA guidelines.

Students who are unsure whether a particular act constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor. Professors will periodically utilize Turn-It-In software on Canvas to determine that students are not plagiarizing. "Accidental copying" is still plagiarism.

Specific details and descriptions of TWU's Policies on Academic Dishonesty Procedures and students' right to appeal are available at <https://servicecenter.twu.edu/TDClient/KB/ArticleDet?ID=24426>

Tutorials on Academic Integrity

Also review the CBB (Colby, Bate, and Bowdoin Colleges) Plagiarism Resource site: <http://abacus.bates.edu/cbb/>. After reviewing these resources, please take the "self-test" at <http://abacus.bates.edu/cbb/quiz/index.html>

Students identified as potentially committing academic dishonesty at TWU will be reported to the MSW Program Coordinator and will also be reported to appropriate

University officials. University policy supersedes department policy. Those who commit violations will receive a sanction according to policies on Academic Integrity at TWU.

At TWU, an initial report will be made by the faculty member to the Office of Civility and Community Standards through their website: <https://www.twu.edu/civility/report-an-incident/> In addition, faculty should submit documentation of the alleged academic dishonesty with supporting documentation of the potential violation. If the faculty member determines that the violation is more severe, the case should be referred to the Office of Civility and Community Standards as soon as possible.

Faculty will immediately contact students with a potential violation to meet with them to discuss the situation. Students will be apprised of their student rights and responsibilities and asked to provide an explanation for their behavior. If the student(s) acknowledges the act of academic dishonesty and the faculty member is satisfied that the incident can be effectively resolved with a grade sanction, the faculty member will assign one of the following sanctions:

- A. Admonition. Verbal or written reprimand
- B. Performance of additional work/Assignment of Educational Coursework. The student may be required to perform additional coursework not required of other students in the specific course.
- C. Changing/reduction of grade--Partial or no credit for an assignment or assessment. The instructor may award partial or no credit for the assignment or assessment on which the student engaged in academic dishonesty, to be calculated into the final course grade
- D. Withdrawal from the course
- E. Failure. The instructor may assign a failing grade for the course

Academic dishonesty is grounds for termination from the Social Work Program or denial of admission.

Student Conduct

Any student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct class or other students' opportunities to learn is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any instructional setting at TWU. This includes traditional face-to-face classes, online or blended classes, labs, discussion groups or boards, field trips, and verbal and/or written (including email or Canvas) communication with the instructor and/or other students. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, disrespectful treatment of other students (verbal or written), disrupting lecture, and use of inappropriate or profane language or gestures in class or other instructional settings.

- Everyone has the responsibility for knowing that each student's conduct reflects not only upon the student but also upon the University and the members of the community, and that conduct must be judged accordingly. We all bear the

responsibility to help maintain a safe environment by reporting suspicious, inappropriate, or dangerous behavior to university employees.

- Please let the professor know if you are having difficulty working with others in assigned group projects so that the professor can help you mediate a solution. Learning how to work effectively during classroom projects and teams is essential to professionalism.
- Maintaining confidentiality. Students may not divulge client, collateral or collegial information, disguising all names, demographic information and any case details that might identify a client or co-worker. Client files and records should never be removed from the agency for any purpose. Personal material of students shared in the classroom as part of participating in class exercises and practice should not be shared with others outside of the classroom.
- All written assignments will use nondiscriminatory language. Treat your colleagues, professors and clients the way you want to be treated. You are expected to display respect of fellow students' unique characteristics including race, color, gender, religion, creed, ethnic or national origin, age, veteran status, disability, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation.
- To institute a culture and climate with high standards, rich dialogue and few distractions in the classroom, please refrain from using your cell phones in class. Laptop use will be at the discretion of the instructor.
- A student engaging in unacceptable behavior may be directed to leave the classroom or other instructional setting and may also be referred to the Office of the Vice President for Student Life at TWU (TWU Student Life Handbook) to consider whether his/her conduct violates the Student Code of Conduct. <http://www.twu.edu/student-life-office/student-code-of-conduct.asp>

Campus Carry & Concealed Handguns

In accordance with state law and TWU policies, students who are licensed may carry a concealed handgun on campus premises except in locations and at any function, event, and program prohibited by law or by this policy. Students may learn more about TWU's concealed handgun policy at <https://public.powerdms.com/TWU1/documents/1745580>

TWU UNIVERSITY STUDENT SERVICES & SUPPORTS

Disability Accommodations

In accordance with university policies and state and federal regulations, TWU is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. To this end, all academic units are willing to make reasonable and appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies in order to facilitate equality of educational access for persons with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the TWU Disability Services for Students (DSS). If a disability is verified, DSS will provide the student with an accommodation letter to be hand delivered to the instructor to begin a private discussion regarding the student's specific needs in the course.

Students may request accommodations at any time; however, DSS notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Every semester, students must obtain a new letter of accommodation, and they must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to request that students discuss such letters during their designated office hours in order to protect the privacy of the student.

For additional information, visit the Disability Services for Students at TWU in CFO 106 or at <https://twu.edu/disability-services/>. You may also contact the DSS office by phone at 940.898.3835 (voice). Specific information on TWU's policies related to disability accommodations is available at <https://twu.edu/accessibility/>

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault

TWU is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. TWU has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. TWU's webpage for resources is found at <https://twu.edu/title-ix/>

Counseling and Support Services

TWU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is committed to providing enrolled students across all three campuses with culturally responsive mental health services. They aim to support students in developing resilience, emotional well-being, interpersonal effectiveness, and academic success. CAPS is located on the Denton campus in Jones Hall. They can be reached via phone at 940-898-3801. More information can also be found on their website at <https://twu.edu/counseling/>

Additional Support Services

Write Site: <https://twu.edu/write-site/>

Student Health Services: <https://twu.edu/student-health-services/>

Fitness and Recreation: <https://twu.edu/fitandrec/>

Advising Requirements

Academic and professional advising are an essential part of the Social Work educational experience. The MSW program assigns a faculty advisor to all Social Work students to ensure that each student understands the academic requirements for earning a MSW degree and progresses through the program in an orderly and timely manner. The faculty advisor will also provide professional and career advising. This

one-to-one advising encompasses academic, professional and career advising, and when necessary, addresses special academic needs or problems.

Several policies surrounding advising are in place and are as follows:

1. Students will be assigned a faculty advisor at the time when they are accepted into the program. If necessary, initial academic advising (pre-first semester) will be conducted by the assigned advisor at the time of admission.
2. All students enrolled in social work courses are required to meet with their faculty advisor every semester for professional advising as well as academic advising for the next semester.
3. Students should contact their advisor early in each term for an appointment, be on time for their advising meetings, and contact the advisor in advance if unable to attend. Students who choose not to meet with an advisor may not attend MSW courses the following semester. Advising must be face-to-face, unless specific permission to participate in e-mail advising has been granted by the faculty advisor.
4. Students should register for and complete all recommended courses in the proper sequence. Course schedules are unlikely to allow students to “catch up” if they fail to complete a course during the recommended semester. Students will then need to wait until the following academic year to pick up a missed course.
5. The word “advise” means to “offer suggestions about the best course of action to someone.” In other words, advising is simply the giving of advice. Sometimes, with academics as in life, advice can be wrong. Student and their academic advisors should work together to develop the most direct path to graduation. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of students to ensure that the correct courses are taken in the correct sequence to earn an MSW degree. Students should understand the MSW curriculum requirements.

Codes of Ethics

Students are, at all times, expected to engage in behavior consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics and the Texas Code of Conduct for licensed social workers. The current Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers was adopted by the 1996 National Association of Social Workers Delegate Assembly and was revised in 2017. The Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners Code of Ethics also governs professional social work practice in the State of Texas (see Appendix A for a copy of the NASW Code of Ethics and Appendix B for a copy of the Code of Ethics of the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners). The Codes of Ethics may be found here: NASW Code of Ethics: <http://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

Texas Code of Conduct:

[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=22&pt=34&ch=781&sch=B&rl=Y](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=22&pt=34&ch=781&sch=B&rl=Y)

In addition to following the two Codes of Ethics/Conduct linked above, social workers and MSW students must also comply with the Texas General Standards of Practice

found in the Texas Administrative Code. The Standards of Practice may be found here: [https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=22&pt=34&ch=781&sch=B&rl=Y](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=22&pt=34&ch=781&sch=B&rl=Y)

Impaired Professionals

The National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics addresses the professional expectations regarding impaired professionals. Substance abuse, personal problems, and/or psychosocial distress which interfere(s) with judgment and performance, or which jeopardize(s) the welfare of those for whom the social worker has a professional responsibility are recognized as a violation of the Code of Ethics.

Students who are accepted into the MSW are expected to comply with this requirement throughout their tenure in the program. In order to develop the knowledge, practice skills, and values that promote the professional practice of social work, it is imperative that students be cognitively available to receive social work education. Substance abuse, personal problems, and psychosocial stress that interferes with the student's academic and/or professional performance will first be brought to the student's attention. An inability or unwillingness to implement measure to address the impairment is considered grounds for denial of admission to the program or termination from the program.

REMEDICATION AND TERMINATION POLICY

The MSW encourages students, staff, faculty, field instructors, and faculty field liaisons to deal directly with concerns as they arise. The remediation and termination policy is applied when previous attempts to address an issue have not been successful. Concerns may include, but are not limited to, academic integrity, academic achievement (including field practicum achievement), and/or student conduct. As discussed below, the policy is applied in two phases. The first phase explores the situation further, while the second phase sets out to resolve the situation.

Exceptions to the procedures described below are allowed in cases where students have engaged in particularly egregious conduct, for example ethical or legal misconduct, actual or threatened physical or verbal aggression, academic dishonesty, or refusal to implement the recommended Corrected Action Plan, in which case a student may be referred directly to the appropriate administrative level and/or legal authorities to face disciplinary actions in accordance with university policies.

Termination from Program

Students whose academic performance is consistently problematic or marginal, and/or students who are unable or unwilling to function at the level of an advanced social work practitioner may be terminated from the program. Examples of unacceptable performance that could lead to termination include:

- The student's MSW GPA falls below 3.0

- The student receives a grade lower than a “C” in a Practice Course, Integrative Seminar, or Field Practicum, regardless of overall or Social Work GPA.
- The student demonstrates an inability or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards, and/or has an inability or unwillingness in acquiring professional skills and reaching an acceptable level of competency, and/or has an inability or unwillingness in controlling stress, emotional dysfunction, or behavioral reactions that may impact professional functioning.

To continue in the program, students must function at the level of a professional at all times or demonstrate that they are willing to accept feedback and modify their unprofessional behavior.

Concerns are addressed according to two categories:

Low Level Concerns are categorized according to the following behaviors, although they are not limited to them:

- No evidence of harm or risk of harm to self or others, agency or university
- A specific identifiable problem area
- Demonstrated student awareness, initiative, and ability to resolve the issue
- Evidence that the impact is limited to the student directly involved in the issue

High Level Concerns include, but are not limited to, behaviors in which there is:

- Evidence of harm or risk of harm to self, others, agency or university
- Direct violation of TWU’s Student Code of Conduct, NASW Code of Ethics, agency policies or standards, other relevant policies governing social work practice
- Misrepresentation of self on an application for the program or field practicum
- A serious breach of policy in a field practicum setting
- Being dismissed from a field practicum with documented cause
- Discovery during the program that the student did not disclose a prior conviction
- Breaking the law in an agency related situation or conviction on a felony charge during time in the program
- Failure to demonstrate minimal level of competency on one or more of the CSWE and/or AGP identified behaviors
- Diffuse concerns that affect multiple aspects of the learning environment
- Concern regarding how the student’s behavior negatively impacts the learning environment for others
- Concern because the student is already on remediation status for a low-level concern and s/he failed to successfully remediate according to the Corrective Action Plan
- Additional performance concerns because student is already on remediation status

The policies and procedures for terminating a student’s enrollment in the TWU MSW program are as follows:

- A faculty committee, made up of at least three members including the program coordinator or designee, will review all cases in which termination is being considered and present their recommendation to the SWPP director. The SWPP director will be responsible for accepting or rejecting the committee's recommendation to terminate the student.

Student Rights and Obligations

Students are in many ways considered partners in the educational process. Their input is valued and necessary. TWU has issued statements regarding student rights at each institution, and those are available at:

<https://servicecenter.twu.edu/TDCClient/1956/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=24405>

MSW policies and procedures related to student formulation and modification of policies affecting academic and student affairs include:

- The program, in order to ensure the right and opportunity for students to influence academic and student affairs policies, includes at least one student from each institution, on the MSW Community Advisory Board.
- The program allows and encourages individual students, student organizations, or informal groups of students, to make recommendations to improve the program. Such recommendations should be made in writing directly to the MSW Program Coordinator.
- The program acknowledges and supports the right of students to advocate for themselves and the program with faculty and institutional administration.
- Students are encouraged and supported in creating and engaging in student organizations.
- Each academic year, officers of the Student Association of Masters of Social Work (SAMSW) will be invited to meet with the MSW program coordinator, or a designee, to receive feedback and suggestions on how to improve the student experience for all students

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Student Participation

Students are not just encouraged, they are strongly supported by the MSW in organizing student organizations, affinity groups, professional development activities, and other initiatives to further their interests.

- Faculty advisors will be made available for all student organizations.
- The MSW will coordinate NASW student activities and serve as a liaison with the local branch of NASW
- The MSW will encourage and support students to participate in an annual "Social Work Day at the Legislature."
- The MSW will make space available for students that wish to meet as a group.
- The MSW encourages students to organize in any manner that is effective in furthering their interests.

The MSW Community Advisory Board

A professional advisory board for the MSW meets regularly to promote cooperative planning and programming between the social work practice community and those involved in social work education. Advisory Board members include at least two MSW students, current and emeriti social work faculty/staff, field instructors, and community practitioners.

The National Association of Social Workers

The National Association of Social Workers is an off-campus organization that welcomes social work students as members at a special student rate. MSW students are encouraged to join the Texas Chapter of NASW, become active, and receive the many benefits of a professional association. NASW provides membership services such as a monthly newsletter, a job bank program, and directory social workers who are NASW members. In addition, the Texas Chapter of NASW provides ongoing professional development opportunities such as continuing education workshops. The State Conference is held in the fall of each year and features workshops, seminars, and general sessions with outstanding speakers. Student members are eligible for reduced student fees for these professional development activities. Many MSW faculty members participate extensively in NASW at the local and state levels.

Texas Social Work Licensure

Social workers are one of the largest professional groups providing social services to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Their actions and decisions frequently have permanent, life-changing effects on individuals, families and groups. Because of this, the Texas Legislature determined that the public should be protected from incompetent and unethical social work practices. The Social Work Licensure Law is the legal recognition for the social work profession in Texas. The law restricts the use of any social work title or designation to those individuals who meet minimum qualifications and are licensed.

The Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners, Texas Department of Health, is designated to administer this law. The Board, consisting of social workers and public members, was created to implement and administer the Texas Licensure Law.

It is a crime to present oneself as a social worker in Texas without licensure. Licensure is acquired by successfully completing a CSWE accredited educational program and passing an examination for licensure. A study guide is available through the American Association of State Social Work Boards for a fee. Information about the dates and locations of the examination and the ordering of study guides are available on the Association of Social Work Boards website: www.aswb.org. Information about applying for the licensure examination can be obtained at the Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners website: <https://bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-social-worker-examiners/>.

Students in the MSW are encouraged to take the licensing exam upon completing their degree. “In Texas, the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners allows graduates of MSW programs that are in candidacy for accreditation with CSWE to take the exam for a license at the level of Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW).”

Texas Law requires institutions that provide educational programs leading to an occupational license to notify applicants and enrollees of the program about the implications of having a felony conviction on future licensure. It is important to note that, depending on the severity of the offense and other factors, a criminal history may or may not render a person ineligible for Social Work licensure. The Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners issues all Social Work licenses in Texas. More about the Social Work board may be found here:

[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=22&pt=34&ch=781&sch=C&rl=Y](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=22&pt=34&ch=781&sch=C&rl=Y)

When necessary, the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council will provide a “Criminal History Evaluation Letter” for potential applicants or students in a Social Work program. The evaluation is meant to determine whether or not the criminal history is likely to impact licensure after completing the educational program. The fee for the Criminal History Evaluation letter is \$150 and the letter may be ordered on the page below (search “Criminal History Evaluation Letter” on the page and click on the link):

<https://bhec.texas.gov/forms-and-publications/>

MSW Field Practicum

The field practicum provides both Generalist Year and Advanced Year. MSW students with opportunities for practice experience in a social service agency, under the supervision and direction of a trained social work instructor (the “field instructor”). Field is a critically important element of any social work education program; the CSWE has declared that field is the “Signature Pedagogy” of the profession.

The purpose of the field practicum is to continue and complete the social work education curriculum in a practical setting and to demonstrate social work competencies. The practicum is an experiential course in which students apply theories and concepts learned in the classroom to practical situations in agencies. Students gain experience working with individuals, families, groups, and communities. Students should not contact agencies to arrange their own practicums but instead work directly with the field director.

While in field practicum, the student is expected to meet specific learning objectives related to the effective practice of advanced social work. The objectives laid out for field work match the objectives of the MSW and are intended to ensure that graduates are capable of functioning as advanced generalist practitioners.

For more information about field practicum and related policies, please refer to the MSW Field Manual on the MSW website: <https://twu.edu/social-work/master-of-social-work/>



Texas Woman's University

Master of Social Work Program

Program Handbook Receipt Agreement

This Form represents the student's acknowledgement that a copy of the MSW Program Manual has been issued to the student. By signing below, the student accepts the manual and agrees to follow instructions as contained in the manual.

Student Name (*Please Print*)

Student Signature

Date of Receipt