

**UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO**

**BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK DEGREE PROGRAM**

**STUDENT MANUAL**





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## **¡BIENVENIDOS!**

Welcome to the University of Texas at El Paso's (UTEP) Bachelor of Social Work Program. Ahead of you are two years of hard work in learning a profession that will bring you immense satisfaction. Our students, faculty, and Community Advisory Board have helped us develop this manual, with the purpose to guide you through the policies and procedures of the program. It will outline what you can expect as you proceed through your social work education, as well as your responsibilities as a student social worker.

As you explore your new profession in classes, field work, and with your fellow students, we look forward to sharing your journey. ¡Buena suerte! Good luck!

### **UTEP Mission**

UTEP has as its primary mission the provision of quality educational training to all individuals seeking to improve their own lives and the overall quality of life in their own communities. To that end, the University has as part of its commitments: a) the preparation of students who can meet lifelong intellectual, ethical and career challenges and assume leadership positions in the 21st Century; b) the advancement of knowledge through research, scholarship, and artistic production; and c) the establishment of collaborative partnerships with public and private institutions and organizations to improve the overall quality of life locally, in the University's service region, and in the world.

### **Social Work Department Mission, Goals, and Objectives**

The mission of the Department of Social Work is to educate culturally competent social work practitioners to provide services and promote social and economic justice in partnership with the unique multicultural, international population of the Paso Del Norte region and beyond. The Department of Social Work is dedicated to student success

The University's service area can be broadly defined as the urban and rural regions of far west Texas, southern New Mexico, and northern Mexico. The urban service regions are comprised of two major bi-national metropolitan centers, with El Paso and Ciudad Juarez constituting the two largest urban cities in far west Texas and northern Mexico. These two cities are joined together by a shared geographical border and a commonality of cultural, racial, and ethnic histories. At the rural end of the spectrum, many geographically isolated, economically impoverished, and unincorporated *colonias* dot the landscape on either side of the border.

Given the uniqueness of the region and its inhabitants, the BSW program envisions the preparation of generalist social work practitioners who are able to understand, define, and act upon the complex forces that prevent individuals, groups, and communities from attaining social and economic justice and equality. More specifically, the program seeks to achieve its mission through the fulfillment of the following program goals and objectives.

#### *BSW Program Academic Goals*

1. Provide students with liberal-arts based, generalist social work knowledge, skills, and values related to professional practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities from a social and economic justice perspective.
2. Preparing generalist social workers equipped with professional knowledge, values and skills necessary for culturally competent practice within the bi-national, multicultural context of the Paso Del Norte border region and beyond.
3. Provide students with skills in scientific inquiry and evidence-based practice.
4. Preparation of BSW students for graduate education in social work.

#### *BSW Program Educational Objectives*

The BSW program will develop graduates that have:

1. Capacity to use liberal-arts based generalist knowledge, theories, skills, and values related to professional social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities from a social and economic justice perspective.
2. Ability to apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice with an emphasis on social justice and border-related issues.
3. Preparation to engage in generalist social work with diverse client populations with particular emphasis on the bi-national, multicultural population of the El Paso/Ciudad Juarez border region.
4. Capacity to critically utilize research as a tool to guide social work evidence-based practice and capacity to use research methods to evaluate one's own practice.

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK FACULTY

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## THE STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

The Student Association of Social Workers (SASW) has been in existence at UTEP since 1991. The SASW provides students with opportunities to become active in their profession, practice professional roles, and learn more about the profession and the community while still students. The SASW has a faculty advisor who meets with members on a regular basis. The SASW also provides ongoing feedback to the Department of Social Work about policies that affect students.

SASW is involved in multiple departmental, university and community projects each year. Members may have opportunities to attend the state NASW conference, help with holiday parties for children at local elementary schools, provide food for needy families, and raise funds for social causes and other activities.

**Commented [JS1]:** Do we want to change this since SASW is going to be Masters and Bachelors?



## THE BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK CURRICULUM AT UTEP

### Introduction

The Social Work curriculum is built on a strong liberal arts foundation. Social work majors complete 43 credit hours of required UTEP university core courses in Biology, English, Fine Arts, History, Humanities, Math, Political Science, and Psychology. In addition, students complete 18 hours of supporting pre-professional course work prior to beginning upper-division professional course work. Pre-professional course work includes an introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare, sociology, a modern language, statistics, and a writing course. Students are required to take the writing course as part of their lower-division course work because success in social work professional coursework relies heavily on clear and precise writing.

The Social Work curriculum meets the standards of accreditation established by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Since social work is a practice-oriented discipline, the program's curriculum is designed around rigorous course requirements and sequential course offerings in five content areas: Human Behavior and Social Environment; Social Welfare Policies and Services; Social Work Research; Social Work Practice Methods; and Field Instruction. In addition, students are required to complete a total of 18 hours of Social Work electives and/or support courses in other departments. Electives and support courses are designed to broaden student's knowledge base in social work and the social sciences. However, in compliance with CSWE Curriculum Policy, **no credit for life experience and previous work experience can be awarded.**

The BSW program stresses community involvement and students gain practical experience through service learning or volunteer service at approved agencies. In the first year of professional coursework, pre-internship experiences of 30 hours are incorporated into Practice I (SOWK 3355) and Practice II (SOWK 3358) courses.

An essential component of the social work degree is the completion of a minimum of 480 hours (over two semesters) of field practicum in the final year of coursework. This provides the student an opportunity to integrate and utilize the knowledge, skills, and values learned in the classroom. **All students must complete an average of 16 clock hours of field practicum each week during both the fall and spring semesters; a minimum of 8 of these hours must be during normal business hours.**

### BSW Honors Program

The BSW Honors Program application is open to current BSW Juniors who are interested in continuing to the Advanced Standing Program at UTEP. This program is intended to help students have a smoother, more prepared transition from the Bachelors of Social Work degree to the Advanced Standing Masters of Social Work degree program. Students in the Honors program will take three Master's level courses (Theory and Practice with Individuals; Groups; and Families) as electives over three semesters beginning in the summer before their Senior year. Honors students complete these classes alongside MSW students, to better prepare them to enter the MSW Program in its second year. Honors students will also register for a special field seminar—which replaces the regular field seminar—that will be tailored to increase knowledge and practice skills. To be eligible for the Honors program, students must have a minimum overall GPA of 3.3 and a minimum BSW GPA of 3.5. This program is competitive, and will only admit a maximum of 10 BSW Junior students per cohort.

### Grading

The BSW Program bases grades on the standards in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog. Grades will be assigned as follows:

A	90 – 100%	Excellent
B	80 – 89%	Good
C	70 – 79%	Average
D	60 – 69%	Below Average
F	Below 60%	Failure

For more information on university grading policies, please refer to the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog.

## Overview of Typical Progression through the BSW Program

Graduate from High School or transfer to UTEP from another college or university	
<p>Apply and be admitted to UTEP, or apply and be admitted to EPCC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declare your major</li> <li>• Work with the College of Health Sciences (CHS) Student Support Center (SSC) to develop a degree plan -</li> <li>• Complete lower division (University Core and Pre-professional)</li> <li>• Attend the online orientation to the BSW Social Work Program</li> <li>• Apply for admission to the UTEP BSW Program in the month of January</li> </ul>	
Fall semester, first year taking Professional Courses :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take Social Work Core courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Human Behavior and Social Environment I (SOWK 2331)</li> <li>○ Social Welfare Policy and Services I (SOWK 2320)</li> <li>○ Generalist Social Work Practice I (SOWK 3355)</li> <li>○ Research Methods in Social Work (SOWK 3430)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Take support and/or elective courses as advised</li> <li>• Participate in group and/or arrange for individual advising regarding courses to be taken in the spring semester</li> <li>• Apply for admission into Field</li> <li>• Attend field orientation-related activities, and meet with Coordinator of Field Instruction to plan field placement</li> </ul>
Spring semester, first year in the program (Junior year):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take Social Work Core courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Human Behavior and Social Environment II (SOWK 3341)</li> <li>○ Social Welfare Policy and Services II (SOWK 3320)</li> <li>○ Generalist Social Work Practice II (SOWK 3358)</li> <li>○ Culturally Grounded Social Work (SOWK 3325)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Take support and/or elective courses as advised</li> <li>• Participate in group and/or arrange for individual advising regarding courses to be taken in the summer and fall semesters</li> <li>• Receive assignment for 480-hour Field Placement</li> <li>• Honors Students: Apply for the Honors Program, which takes place your final year, by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in February</li> </ul>
Summer, first year in the program:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take support, and/or elective courses as advised</li> <li>• Honors Students: Take Theory and Practice with Individuals (SOWK 5331)</li> </ul>
Fall semester, second year in the program (Senior year):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take Social Work Core courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Diagnostic Systems for Generalist Social Work (SOWK 3350)</li> <li>○ Generalist Field Seminar I (SOWK 4281) OR Honors Field Seminar I (SOWK 4283)</li> <li>○ Field Instruction I (SOWK 4380)</li> <li>○ Honors Students: Theory and Practice with Groups (SOWK 5333)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Take support and/or elective courses as advised</li> <li>• Apply for Graduation</li> <li>• Participate in group and/or arrange for individual advising regarding courses to be taken in the spring semester</li> </ul>
Spring semester, second year in the program (Senior year):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue 480-hour Field Placement</li> <li>• Take Social Work Core courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Generalist Social Work Practice III (SOWK 4370)</li> <li>○ Generalist Field Seminar II (SOWK 4282) OR Honors Field Seminar II (SOWK 4284)</li> <li>○ Field Instruction II (SOWK 4390)</li> <li>○ Honors Students: Theory and Practice with Families (SOWK 5332)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Take support and/or elective courses as advised</li> </ul>

## FIELD PRACTICUM

During the final year of study, students complete their field practicum working 16 hours per week in an approved agency or organization under the supervision of a degreed social worker. Students are required to be registered for (or have completed) the following social work courses: SOWK 2310, 2320, 2331, 3320, 3325, 3355, 3341, 3358, and 3430 **before** making formal application for the field practicum. Students are to contact the Coordinator of Field Instruction in the Fall semester of the first year of professional coursework to begin planning their placement, and must secure their placement before the end of spring semester of the first year of professional course work.

Some field practicum agencies require a criminal background check, drug testing, immunizations, CPR training, and/or citywide safety training among other possible requirements. As a result, students seeking placements in some agencies may need to begin the screening procedure as much as six months before the beginning the field placement. The Coordinator of Field Instruction will assist students in determining which requirements must be fulfilled for a particular agency.

Please refer to the Field Policies and Procedures Manual for more detailed information on the field practicum.

### **Background Checks**

The UTEP Department of Social Work does not require that students undergo a criminal background check or drug screening for admission into the program. Please be advised that several field practicum agencies require students to secure a criminal background check and to undergo drug screenings or other medical tests as a prerequisite to the field practicum with that agency. Also, the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners requires applicants for Social Work licenses to report if they have been convicted of a crime, although having done so does not necessarily preclude licensure. Additionally, organizations that employ social workers may require criminal background checks and drug screenings as part of the process of applying for jobs.

Students may choose not to be subjected to a background check. The Coordinator of Field Instruction will work with students to address concerns related to criminal background checks and the practicum experience, but cannot guarantee referral to an alternate site that does not require background checks. Any student wishing to discuss concerns about a criminal background check may do so by meeting with the Coordinator of Field Instruction. All students must complete field education requirements for graduation.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

Below are the guidelines pertaining to confidentiality, with consideration given to the NASW Code of Ethics.

#### *Regarding Clients*

Under no circumstances are students to use clients' actual names or other identifying information in assignments, in class discussions, or in meetings with faculty or faculty field liaisons. In addition, students are to follow ethical standards and agency policies on confidentiality.

In some cases, students placed in different agencies will have a client system in common. If a signed release of information has not been given by the client for the purpose of information sharing, the student is responsible for guarding such information and not disclosing specific characteristics that might allow another student to identify their mutual client.

#### *Regarding the Service-Learning or Practicum Agency*

Agency practices will be discussed for the purpose of learning. If discussing questionable practices of an agency colleague, a student will protect the identity of that individual. In discussions of any problematic agency politics, practices, or policies, all students will maintain confidentiality and will not divulge the topics or substance of these discussions outside the classroom, including in the field practicum agency and in conversations with colleagues or field instructors. If students observe practices that may constitute unethical or unprofessional behavior, they should discuss their observations and analysis with their field instructor/supervisor.

#### *Regarding Colleagues*

Students will not discuss, in their agency or in the community, information about classmates that relates to their professional roles or their contributions to class discussions.

## **Safety Policies**

Students should refer to University of Texas Regents Rules and Regulations, the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures (Student Conduct section), and the "Miner Guide" for general, university-wide safety policies and procedures. During the volunteer/service learning experience (junior year) and field practicum (senior year), social work students are expected to learn and follow all safety policies and standards at their particular agencies.

Students will not drive clients in their private vehicles. Students should report any accident or mishap experienced in field to the Practicum Coordinator.

## **ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISING**

Academic advising for students working on lower-division requirements is provided by the Student Support Center (SSC) at the College of Health Sciences (747-7280, located in HSSN 200). SSC advisors help students plan for successful completion of UTEP university core courses and pre-professional course work before advancing to professional upper-division course work. The SSC begins the process of early and periodic evaluation of each student's performance and guides students in selecting areas of coursework. The SCC can help students anticipating a social work degree ensure that coursework complies with the current BSW degree plan. Students can make an appointment with the SCC by calling the College of Health Sciences (747-7280) and asking for an appointment with a Student Support Center advisor. The UTEP College of Health Sciences is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of (Room 200) of the Health Sciences/School of Nursing building (HSSN) in front of the UTEP Library. The website for the CHS SSC is <http://www.utep.edu/chs/ssc/>

When a student nears completion of the university core and pre-professional courses on the Social Work degree plan, including Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare (SOWK 2310), the student should consult with a CHS advisor regarding professional and academic advising through the BSW Program.

The BSW degree plan is designed to ensure coverage of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accreditation-mandated curriculum content. This degree plan is based on the building block analogy of social work education. As stated above, the curriculum is designed to provide a broad liberal arts base to support success in subsequent professional courses.

The BSW Program maintains "advising holds" that prevent a student from registering for classes until they have met with their advisor and the advisor has approved the registration plan. This process is implemented every semester to ensure students are progressing in their degree plan.

When students are admitted to the program, they are assigned an academic advisor. Students are allowed to change academic advisors at any time, or they may choose to stay with their original advisor throughout their academic program. Any change of advisors must be signed off by both the old and new advisor using the Request for Change of Advisor Form (see Appendix 3.2-11). Advisors will meet with their advisees at least once a semester.

Because the BSW Program is fairly structured in the sequencing of courses, advising is typically done within a group format. Approximately two-thirds of Junior and Senior students receive advising during this group advising session. Those students who are unable to attend a scheduled group advising session are seen individually. During group advising sessions, a member of the BSW faculty provides an overview of information relevant to registration, and a review of the course schedule for the next semester. Students then break up into smaller groups to meet with their assigned advisor; the advisor reviews each student's transcripts and degree plans, and discusses their progress. Recommendations are made for the courses to be taken in the next semester. If there are no complications or issues with the student's progression through the degree plan, the student and advisor sign the Advising Form – the student retains one copy and the other copy is used to remove the Advising Holds and is filed in the student's record. If more attention is needed to assist the student with advising, the advisor will schedule an additional, individual meeting with the student.

Students may also schedule individual meetings with their advisors throughout the semester. The hours available to advisees are posted in the Department of Social Work main office and attached to their office doors. Advisors may also be available by phone and e-mail to answer questions or address concerns.

**Advising Calendar**

Advising Opportunity	Where	Goals
Initial Advising – Freshman/Sophomore	CHS Student Support Center Office	Student declares BSW major Establish or review degree plan Attend advising for registration for the Summer/Fall or Spring semester(s)
<b>Spring of the Sophomore Year</b> Advising for summer, and first semester of the Junior Year	CHS or Social Work offices	Review degree plan <b>Attend Orientation to the BSW Program</b> <b>Obtain and submit Application for Admission into the Social Work Program during February</b> Be admitted the BSW Program Complete University Core and Pre-professional course work Attend advising for registration for the Summer/Fall semester(s)
<b>Fall of the Junior Year</b> Junior Advising for Spring of the Junior year	Social Work offices	Begin Professional courses Review degree plan <b>Apply for admission into Field</b> Attend advising for registration for the Spring semester
<b>Spring of the Junior Year</b> Advising for Summer, and Fall of the Senior Year	Social Work offices	Review degree plan Attend advising for registration for the Summer/Fall semester Attend advising for Field
<b>Fall of the Senior Year</b> Advising for Spring of the Senior Year	Social Work offices	Review degree plan Advising for registration for the Summer/Fall semesters <b>Apply for graduation through the SSC</b>
<b>Spring of the Senior Year</b> Advising as needed	Social Work offices	Advising for any courses pending for graduation

## POLICY: FORMAL ADMISSION TO THE BSW PROGRAM

### Declaration of Major

When students think they want to become a social work major, they should schedule a meeting with an advisor from Student Support Center (915-747-7280, HSSN 200) at the College of Health Sciences. Students may then declare Social Work their major. Declaring a major does not guarantee admission to the upper division of required Social Work courses.

### Admissions Process

The UTEP BSW Program requires that students apply for and be admitted to the BSW Program in order to begin Professional Course work.

**The application for admission to the UTEP Social Work Program should be submitted when:**

- The student has met with Student Support Center at the College of Health Sciences, developed a social work degree plan, and has declared Social Work their major.
- The student has completed all University Core and Pre-Professional courses. (Students may apply if they will complete all University Core and pre-professional before the next Fall semester.)
- The student has attended an online orientation to the BSW program. This PowerPoint presentation is available on the Department of Social Work website.

Applications for the BSW program are accepted only during the month of January each year. In addition, students will not be admitted to the Field Practicum and will be blocked from taking upper division courses unless they have already been fully admitted to the BSW program.

### ***How to Apply***

Once a student is in the last semester of University Core and Pre-Professional course work and has attended the BSW Program Orientation, the student may compile the application packet that will be submitted to the BSW Program Coordinator. The application packet includes:

#### **1. Application for Admission for the Bachelor of Social Work Program**

The Application for Admission for the Bachelor of Social Work Program can be found on the Department of Social Work website (<http://www.utep.edu/chs/sw/>). Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Follow the directions on the Application to complete it.

#### **2. Recent transcripts**

- a. Official transcripts from EPCC, UTEP, and other 2- or 4-year institutions the student has attended must be included. A separate transcript for each institution, even if transfer coursework is listed (such as EPCC coursework displayed on UTEP transcripts), is required.
- b. If not reflected in the transcripts described in (a), a transcript showing grades for the Fall semester just completed and courses in progress for the current spring semester.

#### **3. A completed Personal Statement**

Instructions for completing the Personal Statement are included in the Application for Admission

#### **4. Resume**

Resume showing work and volunteer experience. Resumes should indicate if employment is/was full or part time and the number of volunteer hours completed, and tasks performed as an employee or volunteer.

#### **5. Experience Summary Form**

This form captures the students work and volunteer experience, including both full-time and part-time activity. It also indicates the type of work/volunteer roles and activities in which student participated.

#### **6. Two letters of recommendation from professors or supervisors**

The application packet contains forms for use in obtaining the letters of recommendation. Have the person writing the letter of recommendation place it in a sealed envelope, with their signature across the back of the envelope. These sealed letters should be included in the application packet.

**The student should submit the completed packet of application materials to the Social Work office at HSSN 431.**

### **Admissions Criteria**

Requirements for consideration for admission to the BSW program include:

- a. Completed application to the BSW Program along with all required documents received by the due date
- b. Completion of University Core and all pre-professional Courses (Students in the last semester of lower division course work may apply)
- c. Viewing the online orientation to the BSW Program
- d. Cumulative GPA is 2.5 or higher

Once submitted, applications are reviewed for completeness and, if complete, are reviewed by the BSW Admissions Committee. The decision to admit a student is based on ratings of the following criteria:

- a. Cumulative GPA
- b. Hours of human services experience (paid and volunteer, indicated on resume and experience form)
- c. BSW Personal Statement
- d. Two letters of professional recommendation

Students are notified of faculty decisions by mail. There are three possible admissions decisions:

- *Admission:* The student is admitted into the Bachelor of Social Work program with no additional conditions placed on that admission. We are a small program and a limited number of students will be admitted each year.
- *Conditional admission:* Student is admitted to the program, with conditions. In order to gain clear admission to the BSW Program conditionally admitted students must meet admission conditions, such as completing pending University Core and Pre-Professional course work. Students who do not meet requirements for full admission will be dropped from Professional courses, or blocked from enrolling in Professional social work courses.
- *Waitlist:* Students who do not initially receive admission to the BSW program, but have strong applications, will be placed on a wait list. The Department uses the waitlist as spaces become available before the beginning of the Fall semester.
- *Denied admission.* This designation indicates denial of formal admission to the social work program.

If a student is admitted to the program but does not enroll in classes in the next semester, admission to the program is withdrawn and the student would need to re-apply the following year.

### **Leave of Absence**

Students who wish to temporarily withdraw from the program due to a personal or medical emergency must request a leave of absence from the Coordinator of the BSW Program. Students may be approved up to one year. If the student is not able to return to the program after one-year's time, the student will be required to reapply for admission to the program. Extended leaves greater than one year due to medical conditions may be granted with appropriate medical documentation of need. If a student stops attending classes and/or officially withdraws without approval, the student will be withdrawn from the BSW Program and would be required to re-apply for admission.

### **Formal Withdrawal from Program**

A student who voluntarily withdraws from the BSW Program (by leaving the university or changing majors) or is officially withdrawn will be required to re-apply to the BSW Program should they wish to return. If admitted, they will be required to adopt the degree plan active at the time of re-admission.

## **POLICY: FORMAL ADMISSION TO THE BSW HONORS PROGRAM**

### **Admissions Process**

The UTEP BSW Honors Program requires that students must already be admitted to and attending classes in the BSW Program. BSW Junior students (students who are in the first year of Professional Coursework) who meet the eligibility requirements may apply to be admitted in their Senior year (final year of Professional Coursework).

Applications for the BSW program are accepted only once per year, from the beginning of January to the third Friday in February.

### **Eligibility:**

- The student is currently enrolled in the first year of BSW Professional coursework
- The student has an overall GPA of at least 3.3 (including transfer credit), and a social work GPA of at least 3.5
- The student is interested in applying to the Advanced Standing MSW program at UTEP following graduation with a BSW

### **How to Apply**

Once a student is in the Spring semester of their Junior year, the student may compile the application packet that will be submitted to the BSW Program Coordinator. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. The application packet includes:

#### **1. Honors Program Application and Experience Summary Form**

- The Honors Program Application can be found on the Department of Social Work website (<http://www.utep.edu/chs/sw/>) and includes a coversheet and the Experience Summary Form.
- The coversheet includes a list of all application materials, statements to initial, and a list of courses that must be completed before you may enter the Honors Program.
- The Experience Summary Form is the same as was filled out for the BSW program application, but must be updated with current activities.

#### **2. Recent transcripts**

- Official transcripts from EPCC, UTEP, and other 2- or 4-year institutions the student has attended must be included. A separate transcript for each institution, even if transfer coursework is listed (such as EPCC coursework displayed on UTEP transcripts), is required.
- If not reflected in the transcripts listed above, a transcript showing grades for the Fall semester just completed and courses in progress for the current spring semester.

#### **3. Graduate School Fast Track Application**

- In order to qualify for admission to the Honors Program, **students MUST apply to the UTEP Graduate School**. The Fast Track application has fewer requirements than the regular Graduate School application for a Master's program, and is much quicker to complete. **DO NOT** use the Social Work Summer application under the Health Science Heading.
- The Graduate School Application can be found at <http://graduate.utep.edu/>. Click on the "Apply Now" link and follow the instructions.
- The Fast Track Application form on the Social Work website has been pre-filled with the information pertaining to the MSW classes completed by Honors students; all you need to do is fill in your information and sign it. It must also be signed by the BSW Program Coordinator (other signatures not required).
- There is a one-time \$45 fee associated with the Fast Track Graduate School application. For students planning to apply to the Advanced Standing or regular-track MSW program, you will not have to pay a second time. We highly recommend paying the \$45 now.

**The student should submit the completed packet of application materials to the Social Work office at HSSN 431.**



## Admissions Criteria

Requirements for consideration for admission to the BSW Honors program include:

- a. Completed application to the BSW Honors Program and UTEP Graduate School along with all required documents received by the due date
- b. Completion of first semester of Social Work Professional Courses with a 3.5 or higher; students are expected to maintain the 3.5 or higher GPA in their second semester
- c. Cumulative GPA is 3.3 or higher

Once submitted, applications are reviewed for completeness and, if complete, are reviewed by the BSW Admissions Committee. The decision to admit a student is based on ratings of the following criteria:

- a. Cumulative GPA and Social Work GPA
- b. Hours and types of human services experience (paid and volunteer, indicated on updated experience form)
- c. Recommendation forms received from Policy I, Practice I, and Research Methods professors (students are **NOT** responsible for obtaining these, the Department of Social Work contacts the professors after student applications are received)

Students are notified of faculty decisions through UTEP email. There are three possible admissions decisions:

- Admission: The student is admitted into the Bachelor of Social Work Honors program with no additional conditions placed on that admission. A maximum of 10 students will be admitted per cohort.
- Waitlist: Students who do not initially receive admission to the BSW Honors program, but have strong applications, will be placed on a wait list. The Department uses the waitlist as spaces become available before the beginning of the Fall semester.
- Denied admission. This designation indicates denial of formal admission to the Honors program. Students denied admission continue with the regular BSW Program courses.

## Formal Withdrawal from Program

A student who voluntarily withdraws from the BSW Program (by leaving the university or changing majors) or is officially withdrawn will be required to re-apply to the BSW Program should they wish to return. If admitted, they will be required to adopt the degree plan active at the time of re-admission.

**Commented [JS2]:** Are we going to have a waitlist option? For later semesters if more than 10 students apply?

**Commented [JS3]:** Do we need a specific policy regarding withdrawing from Honors after first semester and completing regular Senior final semester? Are we going to allow that, or do they have to stay in the Honors Program both semesters, regardless of grades?

## TRANSFER COURSE WORK GUIDELINES

Transfer guidelines are established by the Texas Board of Higher Education. For complete information regarding allowable transfer of course work, please see a representative of the College of Health Sciences Student Support Center (747-7280).

### **Community College Transfer Students**

Students may transfer up to 66 hours of courses from community college. These courses are those listed as "University Core," or "Pre-Professional Courses." These may also include some courses listed in the Professional Courses, and/or electives or support courses. All transfer students must meet with a UTEP College of Health Sciences advisor to develop a Social Work degree plan.

### **Transfer Students from Four-Year Universities**

It is important that transfer students meet with a CHS advisor before registering for classes at UTEP. In addition to the University Core and Pre-Professional core requirements, transfer course work from a four-year university's CSWE-accredited BSW program may include the following:

1. An introduction to social work course (3 hours)
2. Up to 6 hours of social policy
3. Up to 6 hours of Human Behavior in the Social Environment
4. Up to 9 hours of Social Work practice courses
5. Up to 3 hours of research coursework

Only students who have been admitted into the BSW Degree Program and satisfactorily completed all degree plan requirements will be recommended for graduation with a BSW degree.

Students must complete at least 25% of the semester hours needed for graduation (a minimum of 32 hours) in residence at UTEP, and 24 of the last 30 semester hours must also be completed in residence.

Students must complete the two-semester field practicum and seminar (SOWK 4281 and SOWK 4282) at UTEP.

Students must complete 12 advanced hours in their major, in residence, in the three years prior to graduation.

### **Policy on Certification of Course Work from Other Schools or Previous Catalogs**

Transfer students attending UTEP who wish to become social work majors must first seek advising from the College of Health Sciences Student Support Center in order to gain certification of appropriate previous course work as prerequisites necessary for the Social Work Program. **No credit for previous life or work experience may be awarded.**

#### ***Categories of Students Covered by the Policy***

Students who matriculated at other schools must satisfy academic requirements for all courses presently specified by the current CSWE standards, the policies of UTEP, and the Department of Social Work's accredited degree plan. Additionally, students who matriculated under a previous UTEP catalog must follow this policy.

#### ***Procedures for Student Submission of a Request for Review of Previous Course Work***

Following are procedures for students who wish to graduate from the current BSW degree plan and who matriculated under a previous catalogue at UTEP or matriculated at another school. Each student is required to:

1. Submit, in writing, to a CHS advisor, a request for the review of an old degree plan; students from other schools must submit a transcript.
2. Submit a syllabus pertaining to previous course work in question.
3. Schedule a meeting with the CHS advisor to review the policy on certification of course work.
4. Develop a new plan, in writing, that clearly specifies the necessary steps to complete the degree requirements.
5. Take proficiency exams for credit, take and/or retake courses, and pay the appropriate fees to complete the degree requirements specified in the new degree plan.

The student is ultimately responsible for meeting all requirements for the degree plan. It is the student's responsibility to check and review the course work approved by the advisor to ensure that it meets requirements for the degree plan. If the written requirements are in conflict with what an advisor says, it is the written requirements that take precedence. The student should make this known to the advisor. The student may transfer up to 66 hours into the Social Work degree plan from an accredited two-year college, or 87 hours from an accredited four-year college or university. Twenty-four of the last 30 semester hours must be completed at UTEP; this includes the field practicum.

## STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE BSW PROGRAM

### Introduction

University policies related to student behavior can be found in the Handbook of Operating Procedures on the Provost's website: [http:// admin.utep.edu/hoop](http://admin.utep.edu/hoop). Once in the Handbook of Operating Procedures, click on the "Student Affairs" link. The first chapter, titled "Student Conduct and Discipline," contains the information discussed here. The Handbook of Operating Procedures also describes the process for investigating, hearing, and disciplining a student based on these violations.

The UTEP Scholastic Dishonesty policy states:

#### **1.3.1 Scholastic Dishonesty**

It is the official policy of the University that all suspected cases or acts of alleged scholastic dishonesty must be referred to the Dean of Students for investigation and appropriate disposition. It is contrary to

University policy for a faculty member to assign a disciplinary grade such as an "F" or zero to an assignment, test, examination, or other course work as a sanction for admitted or suspected scholastic dishonesty in lieu of normally charging the student through the Dean of Students. Similarly, students are prohibited from proposing and/or entering into an arrangement with a faculty member to receive a grade of "F" or any reduced grade in lieu of being charged with scholastic dishonesty.

Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student for any of the following acts or omissions:

##### **1.3.1.1 "Cheating" includes:**

- a. copying from the test paper of another student, engaging in written, oral, or any other means of communication with another student during a test, or giving aid to or seeking aid from another student during a test;
- b. possession and/or use during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes, books, or specifically designed "crib notes";
- c. using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters, but which will be used again either in whole or in part without permission of the instructor; or accessing a test bank without instructor permission;
- d. substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one's self, to take a test; and
- e. falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit;

**1.3.1.2 "Plagiarism"** means the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own academic work offered for credit, or using work in a paper or assignment for which the student had received credit in another course without direct permission of all involved instructors.

**1.3.1.3 "Collusion"** means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.

Social Work students are expected to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics, to be familiar with the UTEP Scholastic Dishonesty policies, and the Department of Social Work Student Honor Code, as well as specific classroom and field confidentiality policies. As stated in Department of Social Work syllabi:

#### ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

It is the philosophy of the University of Texas at El Paso that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures.

Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, or any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

#### BSW PROGRAM STUDENT HONOR CODE

UTEP's policies on academic dishonesty are important to the faculty of the Department of Social Work. Social work, like other professions, is based on ethics and values. A key professional value, identified by the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), is integrity. Synonyms for integrity are honor, honesty, truthfulness, veracity, reliability and uprightness.

Integrity is important to social workers because they encounter people when they are most vulnerable. Also, the input of professionals can change the course of people's lives. Based on professional verbal or written opinions people can be labeled as having mental disorders, convicted of breaking laws, have their children removed from the home, be committed for observation for psychiatric problems, and so forth. It is important that social workers are competent to assess a person, diligent about producing accurate documentation, and respectful of even their most vulnerable or difficult clients.

In addition to requiring students to avoid academic dishonesty themselves, the Bachelor of Social Work Program supports a student Honor Code. The student Honor Code acknowledges that when a student cheats it hurts not only other students, but damages the cheater as well. As a group, social workers are responsible for monitoring the professional conduct of their peers. The Honor Code is the mechanism by which UTEP social work students protect the integrity of the group.

Also, as stated on the application for Admission to the BSW program:

By applying for formal admission to the UTEP BSW program, students confirm that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by Scholastic Dishonesty statement, BSW Student Honor Code Statement, and the NASW Code of Ethics available at <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>. Also, application for admission to the BSW program indicates that the student understands that failure to adhere to academic and professional standards can result disciplinary action which could include, but is not limited, to receiving failing grades on assignments or in a class or classes, dismissal from the Bachelor of Social Work program, denial of formal entry into the BSW program and/or field practicum and/or referral for disciplinary action to the Dean of Students in the Office of Student Life.

For general information about student's rights and responsibilities please refer to UTEP's university-wide policies and procedures, see <http://www.utsystem.edu/board-of-regents/rules>

#### **Appeals Regarding Grades**

Appeals regarding grades should be handled based on information from in the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. Information about grade appeals can be found at <http://sa.utep.edu/dean/grade-grievance/>

### **Denial or Termination of Admission to the BSW Program**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires that accredited social work programs have policies that describe admission requirements and circumstances under which a student may be denied admission to or terminated from the social work program for academic reasons or for reasons related to professional ethics. Also, the BSW program has established a process through which students may appeal such decisions.

The following policies describe circumstances under which students may be denied admission or terminated from the UTEP Bachelor of Social Work Program, and the procedures that will be followed in doing so. Also described is the process for appealing such decisions.

#### ***Possible causes for termination include:***

- Persistent academic failure:
  - If a student fails to maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 or a Social Work GPA of 2.5 for two consecutive semesters.
  - If a Honors student fails to maintain an overall GPA of 3.3 or a Social Work GPA of 3.5 in their first semester of the Honors Program
  - If a student earns a grade below a “C” in more than two SOWK courses in the social work curriculum.
  - If a student withdraws from the same course more than twice
- Confirmed violation of university policies related to scholastic dishonesty
- Violation of the BSW Program Student Honor Code
- Violations of the NASW Code of Ethics, including engagement in academic activities while impaired
- If a student receives a grade below a “C” in Generalist Field Seminar (SOWK 4281 or 4282), Honors Generalist Field Seminar (SOWK 4283 or 4284), or Generalist Field Instruction (SOWK 4380 or 4390). (Refer to Field Policies and Procedures Manual for more detail)

#### *Identifying Concerns*

**Academic concerns:** BSW Program faculty members review student’s file on a periodic basis. Reviews will take place on a periodic basis such as at the end of each Fall and Spring semester, as part of advising for registration, upon application for admission to the program, in response to student’s academic performance in the classroom, in preparation for the field practicum, or in response to other circumstance. Faculty members will report concerns to the student’s advisor and the BSW Program Coordinator if a student performs poorly in the classroom or earns grades of “D” or “F” in any social work course.

**Scholastic Dishonesty:** Instructors are responsible for monitoring student assignments and behavior during quizzes and tests for signs of scholastic dishonesty. UTEP policy requires that instructors report suspected scholastic dishonesty the UTEP Dean of Students in the Office of Student Life. Scholastic dishonesty may be the focus of concern whether the student in question is or is not admitted to the program.

**Professional Competence:** In the classroom or in volunteer or field activities, those who supervise students may raise concerns about student’s adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics, such as the possibility that a student is providing services while impaired.

### *Bringing Concerns to the Attention of the Student*

It is the responsibility of the Social Work faculty members to bring concerns mentioned above to the attention of students so that students have an opportunity to respond to these issues.

For the most part, these concerns will be addressed with students in an informal manner within the context of individual advising meetings between the faculty member and the student. The student and faculty member may develop an informal plan to address the problem. These meetings will be documented in the student's Department of Social Work file. While the faculty member may discuss concerns and work with the student to develop a plan to address concerns, it is the sole responsibility of the student to follow the agreed-upon plan and/or to take other action needed to address the concern.

In some instances, depending on the nature of the problem, the student may be referred to the Assistant Dean of Students in the Office of Student Life or the student may be counseled to change majors/degree programs and/or be dismissed from the BSW program.

### *Actions if Concerns Are Not Addressed*

The program may deny or rescind admission to the BSW program for persistent academic failure, and may rescind admission to the BSW program for evidence of scholastic dishonesty, failure to comply with the BSW program Honor Code, or with the NASW Code of Ethics.

In compliance with UTEP policies, any concerns related to scholastic dishonesty will be referred to the Associate Dean of the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for resolution. This may happen whether a student has or has not been admitted to the BSW program. Depending on the nature of the concern and the actions of the OSCCR, students may have admission to the BSW program rescinded.

Students who are identified by classroom instructors, or volunteer or field supervisors as being in present in agency settings while impaired will be formally counseled by their academic advisor, may be counseled to change majors/degree programs and if necessary may have their admission to the BSW Program rescinded.

Students who are identified by Social Work faculty or by volunteer or field supervisors as potentially impaired due to emotional, psychological or substance abuse problems will be encouraged to seek evaluation and assistance through the University Counseling Center (<http://sa.utep.edu/counsel/>). If, based on the evaluation of the University Counseling Center the student has an identifiable diagnosis as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is the student's responsibility to seek assistance through the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) office (<http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>). Students with emotional, psychological or substance abuse problems that could negatively influence the provision of ethical or effective social work services may be counseled to change majors/degree programs and if necessary may have their admission to the program rescinded.

The faculty of the Department of Social Work reserves the right to review any student's appropriateness for continued admitted status in the BSW Program.

## Appeals Process

Students who are declared Social Work majors and have been denied admission to the program or have been admitted to the BSW Program but who have had their admission rescinded have the right to appeal decisions made by the social work program regarding their admission status. Students are assured freedom from reprisals for filing appeals.

Students who wish to appeal a decision made by the OSCCR should consult the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog or contact the OSCCR for information on grievance procedures.

Students who wish to appeal decisions about admission status to the BSW Program may do so following the procedure below.

### Initial Appeal

- 1) The student notifies the student's academic advisor of the intent to file a formal appeal to a decision to deny or terminate admission to the BSW Program. The notification by the student must be in written form, such as via a letter or e-mail, and must be submitted to the academic advisor within 20 calendar days from the date on the letter sent to the student with notification of admission status.
- 2) UTEP policies and procedures state that the student should contact the office of the Associate Dean in the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) in cases of suspected scholastic dishonesty. UTEP policies also state that the circumstances of a case of suspected scholastic dishonesty are confidential. With this in mind, once the case had been referred to OSCCR, Social Work faculty will not discuss the case with the student unless directed to do so by the OSCCR. The academic advisor will respond within 10 calendar days of receipt of the student's letter to arrange a meeting with the student.
- 3) If the student does not respond to the request for a meeting within 10 calendar days of the academic advisors communication to the student, the appeal will be dropped.
- 4) The academic advisor and student meet to discuss the admission decision. In preparation for the meeting with the student the advisor may gather information about the decision from involved faculty and other parties. Similarly, the student may gather information regarding admission-related issues. When the academic advisor and student meet, the circumstances of the admission decision will be discussed. The student may choose to provide evidence that issues related to denial of admission have been addressed. As a result of the student/advisor meeting, the advisor may recommend several possible courses of action. A timeline for completion of any actions will be established.

#### Possible Actions:

- a) Admission to the program
  - b) Dismissal from or denial of admission to the BSW Program pending academic improvement
  - c) Dismissal from or denial of admission to the BSW Program pending outcomes of external referral (e.g., referral to the student counseling center)
  - d) Referral of the student's appeal to the Social Work Department Chair for faculty review
  - e) Permanent dismissal from or denial of admission the BSW Program
  - f) Other actions deemed appropriate
- 5) Based on the outcome of the meeting between the student and the academic advisor, the student may follow the academic advisor's recommendations, appeal to the Social Work Department Chair, or choose not to follow the academic advisor's recommendations. If the student chooses to follow the academic advisor's recommendations actions must be in accordance with the established timeline. Choosing not to follow the academic advisor's recommendations may result in permanent dismissal from the BSW Program.
  - 6) After completion of the agreed upon actions, the student may reapply for admission to the program.



### Final Appeal

If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the academic advisor, or disagrees with the recommendations and/or timeline established by the academic advisor, the student may submit an appeal to the faculty of the Social Work Department.

- 1) Within 20 days of the meeting with the student's academic advisor, the student may write a letter to the Social Work Department Chair describing:
  - a) The student's current status within the BSW Program
  - b) A summary of the meeting with the academic advisor, including advisor recommendations
  - c) The student's concerns about the outcomes of the meeting with the academic advisor
  - d) A statement about the action(s) the student would like taken.
- 2) At the next regularly scheduled Social Work Department faculty meeting the student's letter will be discussed and disposition of the final appeal will be decided.
- 3) The Social Work Department faculty may take any of the following actions;
  - a) Admit the student to the program
  - b) Concur with the recommendation of the academic advisor
  - c) Recommend alternate actions and/or timelines to be overseen by the academic advisor.
  - d) Other actions deemed appropriate

The student will be notified by letter of the Social Work faculty's decision within 20 days of the regularly scheduled Social Work Department meeting during which the disposition of the appeal was reached.

If the student chooses to follow the Social Work faculty's recommendations, actions must be in accordance with the established timeline and will be monitored by the academic advisor. Choosing not to follow the Social Work faculty's recommendations will result in permanent dismissal from the BSW Program.

After completion of the agreed upon actions, the student may reapply for admission to the program unless permanently denied admission to the BSW Program.

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO POLICY STATEMENT ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The University of Texas at El Paso is committed to an academic and employment environment free from inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual misconduct and sexual harassment are unprofessional behaviors. In addition, sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is illegal. The university will take prompt disciplinary action against individuals who are found to have engaged in sexual misconduct and/or sexual harassment against employees and/or students.

UTEP policies related to sexual harassment and sexual misconduct are summarized below and can be found at: <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=30552>

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a. submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of employment or student status, either explicitly or implicitly;
- b. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or academic decisions affecting that individual; or
- c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance as an administrator, faculty member, staff, or student, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Complaints of sexual misconduct or sexual harassment should be made to the UTEP Office of Equal Opportunity in Kelly Hall, Room 302. To the extent legally possible, complaints will remain confidential, and information will be provided only to those persons who must know in order to achieve a timely resolution of the complaint.

Harassment and retaliation against an individual filing discrimination charges is illegal and will not be tolerated.

Students who believe that they have been the target of sexual harassment should follow the UTEP and/or field agency guidelines for reporting.

A copy of the complaint procedure is available at the EO/AA Office. Their website is <http://admin.utep.edu/eoaa>

## **UNIVERSITY POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY**

The University of Texas at El Paso does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. The UTEP ADA Coordinator has been designated to investigate complaints and coordinate compliance with the non-discrimination requirements contained in section 35.107 of the Department of Justice regulation. Information concerning the provisions of the American with Disabilities Act, and the rights provided there under, are available from the ADA Coordinator.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF AND ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS**

Student academic records are maintained by the Social Work Program. These are kept in locked file cabinets to maintain student confidentiality and can only be accessed by authorized program staff and faculty. Students may view their records by requesting access through their academic advisor.

## **OTHER ISSUES**

For more information, please refer to the UTEP Student Life Policies and Procedures manual.