

School of Social Work

Marcella Smith (Department Head)

Location: Henderson Hall, 903-468-8100

School of Social Work Web Site (<https://www.tamuc.edu/school-of-social-work/?source=universalmenu>)

Program of Graduate Work

Master of Social Work

The Master of Social Work program at Texas A&M University-Commerce is designed to meet the educational needs of advanced level social workers. The program is fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). All MSW graduates are eligible to sit for the State of Texas LMSW licensure testing. The program follows an advanced generalist practice model.

Admission

Admission to a graduate program is granted by the Dean of the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the department. Applicants must meet the following requirements for admission in addition to meeting the general university requirements in social work.

In addition to the general requirements for admission to the Graduate School, those seeking admission to the MSW Program must submit a packet of admissions materials, available either by contacting the School of Social Work at 903-886-5029 or by going to <https://www.tamuc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/AM-Commerce-MSW-admissions-packet.pdf>. The completed documents must be submitted to Dayla Burgin at Dayla.Burgin@tamuc.edu (Dayla.Burgin@tamuc.edu). Components of the admissions materials include:

1. A professional narrative statement. A description of what would be contained in such a statement is included in the admissions packet.
2. A resume or vita of educational and occupational experiences.
3. Three references using the forms included in the admissions packet, preferably including one reference from an undergraduate professor or a former supervisor from a paid or volunteer social services agency.
4. Official bachelor's degree transcript if other than A&M-Commerce graduate.

The MSW program will admit students who show the greatest capacity to complete graduate-level work and become effective social work practitioners.

To be admitted to the program, students must meet school criteria such as undergraduate grade point average, GRE scores, and writing ability. Other criteria include evidence of effective interpersonal skills, professional work experience, and values, ethics, and a fit with the social work profession and our program. The program is committed to recruiting and instructing students who represent a diverse population.

Depending on their undergraduate degree, students who are admitted to the MSW program will receive either Foundation Admission or Advanced Standing Admission. Advanced Standing is reserved for those who hold a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) undergraduate degree from a CSWE-accredited institution. Fewer hours are required of students who receive advanced standing admission.

All students are expected to act in accordance with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners Code of Conduct and the School's Student Code of Conduct.

If students do not conduct themselves in a manner befitting a professional social worker (as defined in the NASW Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct), whether in the classroom, in the field setting, or in their interactions with other students, faculty, and staff they may be dismissed from the program. Such conduct is regarded as an academic expectation for the social work profession, regardless of classroom grades.

- Social Work Admission Requirements (<https://www.tamuc.edu/programs/social-work-msw/#tamuc-section-67244>)

Successful completion of the Comprehensive Exam is required of all students.

Note: Individual departments may reserve the right to dismiss from their programs students who, in their judgment, would not meet the professional expectations of the field for which they are training.

Social Work MSW (<http://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/grad/colleges-and-departments/education-human-services/school-of-social-work/social-work-msw/>)

The Business of Social Work Graduate Certificate (<http://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/grad/colleges-and-departments/education-human-services/school-of-social-work/the-business-of-social-work-graduate-certificate/>)

SWK 501 - Generalist Practice with Individuals, Families, and Small Groups

Hours: 3

Generalist Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups. Three semester hours. This foundation practice course provides an overview of social work values, skills, and knowledge from an empowerment and strengths perspective to mezzo and macro systems (i.e., organizations and communities). The relationships between communities, organizations, human diversity and at-risk populations are infused throughout the course. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program.

SWK 503 - Generalist Practice with Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Hours: 3

Generalist Practice with Groups, Organizations and Communities. Three semester hours. This foundation practice course provides an overview of social work values, skills, and knowledge from an empowerment and strengths perspective to mezzo and macro systems (i.e., organizations and communities). The relationships between communities, organizations, human diversity and at-risk populations are infused throughout the course. Prerequisite: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program.

SWK 505 - Advanced Generalist Practice with Individuals

Hours: 3

Advanced Generalist Practice with Individuals. Three semester hours. This advanced practice course provides students with theories and skills for working with individuals from an advanced generalist perspective. By the end of the course, students will be expected to demonstrate critical thinking, integration of theory with practice, and knowledge, values and skills appropriate for autonomous practice. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program; completed all MSW foundation curriculum requirements; and be in good standing in the MSW program.

SWK 506 - Advanced Generalist Practice with Families

Hours: 3

Advanced Generalist Practice with Families. Three semester hours. This advanced practice course provides students with theories and skills for working with families which includes an advanced generalist approach. Students will be expected to demonstrate critical thinking and the use of evidence-based practices in working effectively with family systems. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program, completed all MSW foundation curriculum requirements, and be in good standing in the MSW program.

SWK 507 - Organizations, Communities, and Social Policy

Hours: 3

Organizations, Communities and Social Policy. Three semester hours. This advanced practice course provides students with theories and skills for working with organizations and communities. Students will learn how to engage in policy practice and intervene with macro-level systems. This course emphasizes advanced generalist practice with policies and political systems, organizations, and communities. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program, completed all MSW foundation curriculum requirements, and be in good standing in the MSW program.

SWK 508 - Social Work Supervision and Administration

Hours: 3

Social Work Supervision and Administration. Three semester hours. This advanced practice course provides students with theories and skills needed for supervision of direct service staff and management skills in human service organizations. The course addresses relevant theories and models of supervision and administration. Key skills are identified which will enable students to effectively manage and create resources, develop and impact organizational policies, and serve as effective administrators and supervisors. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program, completed all MSW foundation curriculum requirements, and be in good standing in the MSW program.

SWK 509 - Advanced Generalist Practice with Small Groups

Hours: 3

Advanced Generalist Practice with Small Groups. Three semester hours. This advanced practice course provides students with theory and skills necessary for advanced generalist practice with groups. Students will apply critical thinking and evidence-based practice to work with groups. Students are expected to integrate theory and knowledge with skills to effectively lead and intervene with group systems. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program, completed all MSW foundation curriculum requirements, and be in good standing in the MSW program.

SWK 510 - Clinical Practice in Mental Health

Hours: 3

Clinical Practice in Mental Health - Three semester hours. This advanced course presents the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) of mental disorders as a resource for understanding individual psychosocial functioning. Students will develop the ability to understand and apply the DSM in advanced generalist social work practice. Students will be expected to use critical thinking and evidence-based practice approaches with clients experiencing mental health issues. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program, completed all MSW foundation curriculum requirements, and be in good standing in the MSW program.

SWK 511 - Human Behavior in the Social Environment I

Hours: 3

This foundation course in Human Behavior in the Social Environment is designed to provide foundation students with an understanding of the biological, psychological, and behavioral aspects of human development from before birth through adolescence. Content in this first course covers interactions between individuals, families, and their relationship to the social environment. Systems theory is the underlying context used to underpin all other major theories of individual and family development. Life stages will be considered in diverse frames of reference, e.g., different cultures/ethnicity/ races, gender and sexual orientation, poverty, and physical or mental disabilities. In addition to theory, practical skills in parenting, communications, self-esteem, and relationship building will be explored to engage and assess individuals and families. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program.

SWK 512 - Business Practices

Hours: 3

This course is the capstone course for The Business of Social Work Graduate certificate. This course is designed to provide students with instruction, resources, and skill building in a variety of business practice to promote successful creation of a non-profit, private practice or leading a non-profit agency.

SWK 513 - Human Behavior in the Social Environment II

Hours: 3

This course is designed to provide foundation students with knowledge and theoretical understanding of the bio-physical, psychological, and behavioral aspects of human development within a variety of social systems. In this course we will study human development with attention to the interaction between individuals, families, and the changing social environment as it pertains to the phases of adulthood. Traditional approaches to life stages will be considered, as well as less traditional issues such as the impact on human development of different cultures, poverty, physical/mental disabilities, gender roles, sexism, ageism, and sexual orientation. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program.

SWK 514 - Social Work and the Law

Hours: 3

This elective introduces students to the intricacies of the United States legal system. Course content will delve into the connection between social work and the legal system, including constitutional rights, rights granted by law and other protections within administrative proceedings, civil proceedings, and the criminal justice system at the local, state and federal levels of government. Special attention will be paid to rights of community members under the U.S. Constitution, U.S. code and other laws that grant protections against violation of a person's rights.

SWK 521 - Foundation of Social Welfare Policy

Hours: 3

Foundation of Social Welfare Policy. Three semester hours. This foundation course in social welfare policy introduces students to social policy development, social welfare institutions, and the historical and existing policies underpinning the development of social policy. Course content is designed to emphasize the effect of social policies on client systems at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Specific attention will be given to the interaction between social welfare policies and at risk populations. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program and be in good standing in the MSW program.

SWK 531 - Research for Practice

Hours: 3

Research for Practice. Three semester hours. The scientific method in social work practice is presented. The methods of empirical research for knowledge building, the role of research in theory construction, research designs and data analysis, and methods of practice and program evaluation are introduced. Students learn to apply qualitative and quantitative research methods to the problems of social work practice. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program and be in good standing in the MSW program.

SWK 541 - Social Justice For Oppressed Populations

Hours: 3

Social Justice for Oppressed Populations. Three semester hours. This foundation course provides students with knowledge about social work with diverse populations. The emphasis of this course is on developing an understanding about client groups who are oppressed in our society based on factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability. Attention will also focus on systems which perpetuate oppression and exploring mechanisms for achieving social justice. Course content will include strategies for empowering diverse groups. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program and be in good standing in the MSW program.

SWK 553 - Field Foundations Practicum

Hours: 3

Field Foundations Practicum. Three semester hours This field practicum provides students with experiential opportunities designed to develop foundation level social work skills and knowledge in an agency setting. Students are required to complete a minimum of 260 clock hours. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program, completed all foundation courses or be concurrently enrolled in remaining foundation courses to enroll in SWK 553 and be in good standing with the MSW program. Students must complete this course and all foundation coursework before enrolling in advanced classes. Must receive grade of 'B' or above.

SWK 554 - Advanced Generalist Practice Field Practicum

Hours: 3-6

This field practicum provides students with experiential opportunities designed to integrate theory and advanced generalist practice with client systems in an agency setting. Note: Students are required to complete a minimum of 500 clock hours, 6 semester hours of Field Practicum (typically over 2 semesters), and attend a weekly field seminar. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 semester hours. Must receive grade of 'B' or better. Prerequisites: Students must have been admitted to the MSW program, completed all MSW foundation curriculum requirements, and be in good standing in the MSW program.

SWK 589 - Independent Study

Hours: 3

Independent Study. One to three semester hours. Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. Prerequisites: Consent of department curriculum committee and department head.

SWK 590 - Research Methods in Advanced Social Work Practice

Hours: 3

This course provides students with information on advanced techniques of practice and program evaluation. Both qualitative and quantitative research designs are taught. All steps in the research process are examined. Ethical and behavioral issues in evaluation research are presented. Prerequisites: SWK 531 or admission to the advanced standing program. Must be successfully completed in preparation for enrollment in SWK 595.

SWK 592 - Study Abroad

Hours: 3

The course explores the evolution and current development of social work practice in other countries through building knowledge links between political processes, economic constraints and the actual implementation of public policies. Focusing on how modern and evolving bureaucracies along with cultural and institutional frameworks of a given political system dictate the way in which governments work and interact with the public/private sector. As a requirement of this course students engage in an organized travel abroad opportunity with faculty instructors. In addition students may be required to engage in online activities including discussion groups and/or assignment preparation before and after the study abroad component. Prerequisites: Admission to the School of Social Work. Crosslisted with: SWK 492.

SWK 595 - Research Techniques in Data Analysis for Social Work

Hours: 3

This course provides instruction in data analysis using Microsoft Excel program. Students learn how to calculate descriptive statistics, t-Tests, ANOVA, and Chi-Square. Emphasis is placed on interpreting and reporting results of data for purposes of disseminating information and informing program/practice decisions. Prerequisites: SWK 595 is the second half of the research series for the AGP MSW program and students must take it sequentially in the semester immediately following their successful completion of SWK 590.

SWK 597 - Special Topics

Hours: 3

Special Topics. Three semester hours. Topics vary and have included the following: Rural Social Work with the Elderly, Progressive Practices in Developmental Disabilities, Spirituality and Social Work, Child Welfare and Issues in Addiction.