



**STEPHEN F. AUSTIN
STATE UNIVERSITY**
School of Social Work



**Doctorate in Social Work (DSW)
Student Handbook
2024**

Contents

1. Overview	2
2. Stephen F. Austin State University, School of Social Work and DSW Program Missions	3
3. School of Social Work Anti-Discrimination, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Statement	4
4. DSW Admissions	4
5. DSW Program Faculty	5
6. DSW Curriculum	6
6.1 Learning Objectives	6
6.2 DSW Program Competencies and Behaviors	6
6.3 Course descriptions	9
7. Mandatory Texas OCC Code Chapter 53	13
8. Academic and Professional Integrity Code for DSW Program	14
9. Advising	18
9.1 Academic and Career Advising	18
9.2 Degree Plan	19
9.3. Admission to Candidacy	19
10. Grades	19
11. Application for Graduation	19
12. DSW Student Inclusion and Engagement	19
13. Checklist	21

1. Overview

Welcome to the Doctorate in Social Work (DSW) program at Stephen F. Austin State University. The program prepares the future leaders of social work practice and education for the profession. The program will contribute on a national and international level through preparing academic scholars and enhancing global recognition. In this program, you will develop competencies and behaviors to become a leader and manager, scholar-practitioner, practice expert and social work educator. The program will assist you in further strengthening your niche/specialization area as well as developing new areas of interest. The program is guided by different organizations including the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education in Social Work (GADE), National Association of Social Workers (NASW), International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR).

The DSW program is approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The program consists of 54 credit hours (3 courses per semester over 3 years). Core courses are 45 credit hours and elective courses 9 credit hours. All courses are located within the social work curriculum. Elective courses are offered per availability and faculty resources. Full and part-time options are available and should be discussed with the DSW director.

The DSW program is based on a cohort model and students are strongly advised to continue as part of the cohort. SFA Office of Research and Graduate Studies states that a doctoral degree must be completed within 10 years. If a student has not graduated within the time limit, a petition for extension of the time limit with justification may be sent and approved by the academic dean of the college as well as the dean of the graduate school.

We are located in the School of Social Work Building on the corner of Mound and Starr Avenue
Doctorate in Social Work Program
School of Social Work
College of Library and Applied Arts (CLAA)
P.O. Box 6104
Nacogdoches, TX
75962-6104

The DSW course delivery is face to face on Fridays from 9:00am to 5:45pm on the Nacogdoches campus. Students are required to attend the face-to-face class meetings in person.

2. Stephen F. Austin State University, School of Social Work and DSW Program Missions

Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA)

Mission

Stephen F. Austin State University is a comprehensive institution dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, creative work, and service. Through the personal attention of our faculty and staff, we engage our students in a learner-centered environment and offer opportunities to prepare for the challenges of living in the global community.

SFA School of Social Work

Mission

The mission of the School of Social Work at Stephen F. Austin State University is to prepare competent and effective professional social workers committed to generalist and advanced generalist practice and able to respond to the needs of rural communities and to the challenges faced by people with rural lifestyles. The School is committed to providing leadership for the region, particularly in identifying and addressing community needs and issues, including those related to the alleviation of poverty and oppression within the context of rurality, cultural diversity and social and economic justice. In support of its educational endeavors, the school is dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, lifelong learning and community service.

Doctorate in Social Work (DSW) Program

Mission

The DSW program's mission is to prepare students for teaching, administration, leadership and practice. The program creates and maintains a learner-centered environment in which students are prepared to effectively address the challenges of living and working in a global community as a scholar-practitioner. The learning environment enhances students' substantive expertise to develop the knowledge, skills, values and cognitive and affective processes needed for higher education, administration and leadership and practice. Students develop insight in how they are influenced by their own values in addressing critical social work issues related to anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion. The program contributes to the enhancement of social, economic, and environmental justice in diverse contexts. Doctoral students are able to identify as social work educators, practitioners, scholars and leaders who are guiding and influencing the future of the profession.

3. School of Social Work Anti-Discrimination, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Statement

Social work's mission is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people with particular attention to those who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. The School of Social Work honors this mission which is rooted in social work values.

We are change agents ensuring that all students, staff and faculty feel affirmed, respected, valued and appreciated. Our mission is to prepare competent and effective professionals who are able to provide leadership in the region which includes leadership in identifying and alleviating issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We commit to serve as a strong catalyst for change at all levels and we strive to provide a safe place for intercultural dialogues and community partnerships which promote diversity and inclusion.

We must first acknowledge the fact that we have much to overcome in regard to the history in which our profession oppressed those who were vulnerable and disempowered. We must never forget the profession's involvement in the history of slavery, indigenous boarding schools, eugenics and voting oppression. Let us now, as the School of Social Work takes part in a new shift that is anti-racist and committed to creating an environment that is empowering, centered in anti-oppressive values, frameworks and practices.

4. DSW Admissions

In terms of becoming nationally competitive, the DSW program will not only prepare social workers for practice, but to become leaders in the profession. The program will contribute on a national level through preparing academic scholars and enhancing global recognition. According to CSWE, criteria for admissions must include an earned master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and a minimum of 3 years of practice experience beyond the master's degree in social work.

The SFA Graduate Admissions standards and procedures:

Standards

Admission to SFA Graduate School is under the control of the dean of the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, to whom application for admission must be made and to whom all correspondence should be addressed on the subject.

Three types of admission exist:

1. Clear admission under which the student is eligible to work toward a graduate degree;
2. Probationary admission under which the student is eligible to work toward a graduate degree but with the provision that the student earns a B average on coursework the first 12 semester credit hours of study or the number of hours set by the graduate advisor where probationary students who do not meet that objective will be placed on academic suspension;
3. Post-baccalaureate admission under which the student already holding a bachelor's or master's degree is eligible to take graduate courses but may apply only a limited number of these courses toward a graduate degree.

Graduate applications for admission are available online at applytexas.org. Official transcripts from the master's degree-conferring college/university attended showing proof of degree must be sent to the

Office of Research and Graduate Studies. Stephen F. Austin State University will accept credit or recognize degrees only from institutions accredited by one of the regional accrediting bodies.

Procedures

Prospective doctoral students visit [Apply Texas](#) as a first step in the official application and pay the application fee as required.

In addition to the SFA Graduate School, the School of Social Work will require a separate application. The admission requirements for the DSW Program will include the following:

1. The student will meet requirements for admission to the Graduate School.
2. The student will hold a Master's degree in social work from a program accredited by the CSWE. Applicants from international programs will be reviewed on an individual basis.
3. The student will have three years of post-MSSW/MSW practice experience.
4. The student will have a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale for previous graduate work.
5. The student will complete a statement of Interest and Purpose.
6. The student will provide a writing sample.
7. The student will provide three reference letters from colleagues and supervisors in a field related to social work.
8. The student will participate in an applicant interview.

Application Process

Prospective students submit a School of Social Work DSW application form and support documentation to the School of Social Work (electronic or in person).

The application is reviewed by the DSW admissions committee, consisting of all DSW faculty. The committee uses the program admissions rubric to evaluate the application. After the application is reviewed by the DSW admissions committee, the prospective student is invited for an interview. The prospective student meets with the DSW admissions committee in person, after which the committee submits their recommendation to the DSW Director/Coordinator and Director of the School of Social Work. The DSW Director/Coordinator informs the Dean of the SFA Graduate School and/or the Office of International Programs. The prospective student is informed in writing by the DSW Director/Coordinator within two weeks of the interview.

5. DSW Program Faculty

Name	Rank/Title	E-mail
Freddie L. Avant, Ph.D.	School Director/Associate Dean/Professor	favant@sfasu.edu
José Carbajal, Ph.D.	Associate Professor	carbajalji@sfasu.edu
Emmerentie Oliphant, Ph.D.	DSW Program Director/ Professor	oliphante@sfasu.edu
Stephanie Washington, Ph.D.	Assistant Professor	Stephanie.Washington@sfasu.edu

6. DSW Curriculum

6.1 Learning Objectives

The learning objectives are the competencies of the program. The competency-based framework is used to effectively identify and assess the knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes of DSW students.

- ❖ Identify as a Social Work Educator
- ❖ Embody Ethical and Professional Behavior
- ❖ Apply Critical Thinking
- ❖ Engage Diversity and Difference
- ❖ Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic and Environmental Justice
- ❖ Identify as a Scholar Practitioner
- ❖ Identify as a Social Work Leader
- ❖ Demonstrate Collegiality and Stewardship

6.2 DSW Program Competencies and Behaviors

Competency 1. Identify as a Social Work Educator

Description: Doctoral students develop an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a social work educator. They understand how ethical standards, pedagogical approaches, the social work knowledge base and policies influence their work as an educator. They develop the skills to teach, mentor and supervise future students. Skills development include the ability to apply social work and interprofessional knowledge to teaching, scholarship and service in the profession. Students develop an educator identity, which they use effectively to shape social work education and practice. They can incorporate knowledge, values and skills to contribute to social work education and the profession.

Behaviors Competency 1:

- Develop skill in using theory-based models of social work education.
- Critically analyze multiple pedagogical approaches, methodologies, and practices in social work education.
- Understand the critical role of social work educators in the academy.
- Demonstrate an understanding of teaching, scholarship, service responsibilities, and career progression in the academy.
- Understand the impact of professional and university-wide accreditation.

Competency 2. Embody Ethical and Professional Behavior

Description: Doctoral students can effectively incorporate the values of the social work profession with their own professional development. They can identify how their own value system can be used to guide student and faculty supervision and mentoring. They understand how emerging societal issues can impact sound decision-making in social work. Skills development focuses on the management of ethical dilemmas in social work education, leadership and practice. Students can effectively participate and lead the development of ethical guidance for organizations.

- Recognize and manage personal values as they guide work with students and colleagues.

- Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate teaching and learning outcomes.
- Conscientiously manage and analyze general and discipline specific ethical dilemmas and behavior.
- Understand and apply the NASW Code of Ethics.

Competency 3. Apply Critical Thinking

Description: Critical thinking is a core skill of social work education, administration and practice. Doctoral students will understand and demonstrate how to apply critical thinking to complex systems (individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations). They will demonstrate how cognitive and affective processes, including self-reflection, guide their actions in social work. Critical thinking requires students to have a sound knowledge base, ability to analyze multiple sources of information, skills to articulate, question, and synthesize current issues. Students will develop skills to design pedagogical and practice strategies related to critical thinking.

- Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources and ways of knowing.
- Engage in critical self-reflective practice.
- Clearly articulate issues and questions central to social work education and actively engage in addressing them.
- Create, understand, analyze, and synthesize original work.

Competency 4. Engage Diversity and Difference

Description: Doctoral students can recognize how societal constructs impact social work education and practice. They develop the skills to develop and lead strategies to engage systems in anti-racism, diversity and inclusion in practice and education. They demonstrate the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes, to guide students, faculty, colleagues and teams in engaging within diverse contexts. Doctoral students develop and demonstrate their competencies in addressing the local, national and global challenges which influence the social work profession.

- Recognize the extent to which society and organizations including educational structures, culture, and values create or enhance privilege and power among student learners.
- Critically engage with students in a shared learning process, acknowledging differences in experience, power, and privilege.
- Work sensitively and effectively with diverse student populations, with an appreciation for student strengths across cultures.
- Develop the capacity to differentially apply knowledge related to diverse groups and contexts in teaching practice.
- Understand how global challenges impact social work practice and education.

Competency 5. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic and Environmental Justice

Description: Doctoral students use their comprehensive understanding of human rights to demonstrate how they will advocate, assess, lead and develop effective change strategies. They understand how oppression, racism and discrimination negatively impact higher education and social work practice. They can demonstrate how their role as a social work educator, practitioner

and administrator empowers them to address ongoing social injustices on a local, national and international level. Doctoral students can guide students, faculty, colleagues and teams to effectively influence systems and institutional policies and practices related to social, economic and environmental justice.

- Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination in higher education and other systems.
- Advocate at multiple levels for policy change that improves the lives of students and colleagues as a reflection of institutional mission and professional values.
- Assess how social work practice and education, institutional policies, and governmental policies impact access to education and its delivery.
- Develop understanding of environmental justice.

Competency 6. Identify as a Scholar Practitioner

Description: Doctoral students will demonstrate how they use ethical, culturally informed and anti-racist and anti-oppressive approaches to guide, supervise, participate in and lead research initiatives to build the social work knowledge based in higher education and practice. They will implement skills in using research to benefit and improve individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations. In addition, students will understand the role of social work leadership as part of interprofessional teams. Doctoral students will be prepared to take responsibility in developing innovative research strategies to enhance the social work profession. Their future academic scholarship will enrich the profession globally.

- Use practice and teaching experiences to inform scholarly work.
- Use research findings to inform social work practice and teaching.
- Engage in critical analysis of research methods and findings across the research spectrum.
- Use research methodology in evaluation of student and program outcomes.
- Assume active roles and responsibilities as a scholar practitioner, including the generation of new knowledge and public dissemination of one's work.
- Critique and demonstrate the connection between social work practice and scholarship.

Competency 7. Identify as a Social Work Leader

Description: Leaders in social work can effectively address the societal and systemic challenges to the social work profession. Doctoral students will develop the knowledge, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes to identify their own leadership styles and develop advanced leadership competencies for higher education and practice. They will be able to lead the next generation of social workers, as well as shape the future of the profession. Students will understand the importance of leading initiatives for life-long learning for students, faculty, colleagues and interprofessional teams. By using the capstone project, they will be able to demonstrate their ability to lead systems of different sizes.

- Recognize leadership approaches and their application to organizational contexts.
- Facilitate organizational change toward innovative practice.
- Understand the impact of national, international, political, social, and regulatory factors on social work education.

- Engage in interprofessional practice, education, service, and research.

Competency 8. Demonstrate Collegiality and Stewardship

Description: Social workers are collectively responsible for the future development and growth of the profession. By developing advanced competencies, the doctoral students will be in the unique position to transform higher education, the social work profession and interprofessional practice. Doctoral students will apply advanced level knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes to carefully develop, participate in and lead multi-level change strategies. They will develop a commitment to enhance the social work profession. Collegiality is a necessary requirement of professionalism. Doctoral candidates will demonstrate their ability to ethically lead through collegial strategies based on inclusion, transparency, participation and empowerment.

- Demonstrate flexibility and initiative by taking leadership roles when needed.
- Work effectively with others in the classroom, university, and the profession.
- Embody the profession's identity in social work practice in all practice settings including social work faculty roles and respectfully addressing issues within the university.
- Develop a sense of responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the social work profession.

6.3 Course descriptions

SOCW 6300: History of Social Work and Social Work Education (3 credit hours)

This course will provide the doctoral student with a comprehensive overview of the history, development, and evolution of the social work profession, social work education, and knowledge and practice.

SOCW 6301: Applied Research Methods I (3 credit hours)

This course will provide doctoral students with the knowledge and application of research methodology related to quantitative research in preparation for development of the capstone project.

SOCW 6302: Applied Statistical Methods I (3 credit hours)

This course emphasizes the importance of developing a firm understanding of why and how to use specific statistical methods to answer specific research questions and on understanding how statistics should and should not be used. It focuses on teaching students to identify and utilize existing best practice in observational and experimental designs, sampling, measurement, and descriptive and inferential statistics. This utilization will guide social work practice and policy decision-making.

SOCW 6303: Social Work Education (3 credit hours)

This course focuses on understanding the knowledge and skills of the EPAS of the CSWE. It includes content on competency-based education and the integration of accreditation standards in creating social work curricula and an educational setting that meets accreditation standards.

SOCW 6304: The Academy and the Professoriate (3 credit hours)

In this course students will articulate the dimensions of their identity as social work educators in preparation for seeking a teaching position in higher education. Grounded in their experience and previous coursework and input from students, classmates, and instructor, students will develop and analyze their teaching skills through direct teaching opportunities in the classroom. Students will articulate their educator identity through seminar-based consultations with the instructor, peers, faculty development, and other career-focused experts. Students will develop updated teaching and scholarship statements; and formulate a curriculum vitae showing their teaching, scholarship, and service/leadership accomplishments. Guided by the instructor, and with supporting evidence/detail, students will articulate their scholarship agenda and teaching philosophy through practice colloquium presentations.

SOCW 6305: Social Work Leadership and Administration (3 credit hours)

This course highlights the essential roles and responsibilities of leadership in a variety of different settings. Knowledge and skills related to managing and advancing administrative skills in the areas of resource management, marketing and technology, and employee and community relations, as well as strategies to build an effective organizational culture that elevates the vision and mission of the organization. Additionally, this course is designed to assist students in developing a personal philosophy and approach to leadership. Historical and current theories on leadership will be introduced and reflect on the various contexts in which leadership skills are exercised and considered in leadership practices in multicultural environments.

SOCW 6306: Social Work Theoretical Perspective (3 credit hours)

The intent of this course is for students to gain a mastery in the selection and application of theories, concepts, and frameworks that serve as the grounding of social work and social work teaching. This course will provide the opportunity for students to identify their own bias in the selection and application of theory and the factors that contribute to this process. This course serves to inform the teaching of all social work practice courses (micro through macro), providing students the opportunity to develop skills in deconstructing and reconstructing key theories and frameworks utilized in both practice and classroom settings. This course will provide opportunities for students to critically analyze and compare theories from a variety of frameworks including ethics, diversity, and social justice.

SOCW 6307: Pedagogies in Social Work Education: Theory and Practice (3 credit hours)

This course extends the doctoral student's proficiency beyond the traditional social work classroom to include an understanding of how adult learners learn, how to structure an educational unit, the imperative of competence in digital-based education processes, and strategies for success at the traditional academic arena. This course provides theoretical background to enable the doctoral student to better understand and develop competency in social work education teaching tasks, as well as requisite skills for effective presentation of social work practice content. The goal of this course is to prepare doctoral students for leadership roles in social work education as well as practitioners who are adept at training methodologies, curriculum development, and presentation delivery at various levels. The course provides a unique opportunity for engaging with a senior social work education mentor who will assist students in their development and demonstration of teaching an assigned educational unit through a four-week mentorship that involves classroom practice and discourse around teaching experiences.

SOCW 6310: Using Mixed Methods in Social Work Research (3 credit hours)

This course will assist students in developing proficiencies in the integration of mixed methods in social work research by developing and implementing research projects with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. The course will provide an overview of mixed methods research with an emphasis on its application in social work research. Students are expected to have a basic understanding of quantitative and qualitative research methods prior to beginning this course. "Mixed methods" refers to the intentional mixing of quantitative and qualitative approaches within one study or across a program of research. Engagement in mixed methods research is intended to enhance the researcher's ability to study complex social phenomena holistically, while minimizing some of the limitations posed by mono-method (qualitative or quantitative) designs. The foundation for conducting mixed methods research in social work is laid by exploring the historical, philosophical, and epistemological roots of this emerging research methodology. Methods for collecting, analyzing, and presenting data will also be explored.

SOCW 6312: Teaching in Social Work (3 credit hours)

This didactic and experiential course will expose the doctoral student to the theory and techniques necessary to teach social work courses in generalist and specialized practice curricula in graduate and undergraduate social work programs. The course provides students an opportunity for learning and evaluating paradigms for teaching and learning, and for selecting teaching methods that are most congruent with that paradigm. Alternative pedagogies for teaching and learning have emerged in social work education, and four pedagogies representing the most traditional to the most radical will be examined. The ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions of each will be explored as well as other pedagogical issues such as focus of teaching/learning, role of teacher, course structure, and methods of evaluation

SOCW 6313: Evidence-based Social Work Practice (3 credit hours)

This course is designed to teach the basics of social work practice research with an emphasis on intervention research. A particular focus will be placed on understanding evidence-based practice and how to use it in one's own practice. The course will address building conceptual frameworks, research ethics, source credibility, formulating research questions and hypotheses, measurement and scale construction, sampling procedures, and research design. Importance will be placed on the development of designing ethical, feasible, and practical research studies to answer questions of importance to social work practice, particularly regarding social work interventions and the use of randomized designs. The course will demonstrate the importance and the means of developing conceptual frameworks for purposes of developing interventions, curriculum, research proposal writing, and ultimately publications.

SOCW 6314 Qualitative Research Methods (3 credit hours)

This course emphasizes the importance of being an informed and effective consumer of interdisciplinary qualitative research. It focuses on teaching students the skills to identify and effectively understand and utilize existing qualitative research to guide social work practice and policy decision-making.

SOCW 6315 Research Practicum 715 (3 credit hours)

Individual student research performed under the direction of social work faculty. Students are required to demonstrate the integration of social work knowledge, values, and skills in developing a scholarly research report.

SOCW 6316 DSW Capstone Seminar (3 credit hours)

Students identify a specific topic or area of study in consultation with their advisor and then engage in a review of the literature about the topic. The course culminates in a proposal, including a work plan for completing the project. Briefly, the Proposal is a document that includes: (1) a statement of the problem to be investigated and which capstone it falls under, (2) a description of the question(s) under investigation, as well as the significance and relevance of the topic and questions, (3) brief commentary on the initial exploration of the literature, (4) proposed methodology to conduct the inquiry, and (5) a draft timeline and work plan for completion of the capstone. Depending on the capstone choice, the work plan may require a needs assessment to secure buy in (e.g., Program Development Capstone), a research methods design (Research Project Capstone), or a critical analysis of the literature (Theoretical or Conceptual Framework Development Capstone). The product for this course is dependent upon capstone choice, and may include the methods section, the needs analysis, or analysis of the literature in addition to a proposal.

SOCW 6317 Professional Development Seminar (3 credit hours)

This course will provide students the opportunity to create their own professional development plan in their chosen field of practice. It will focus on the development of their portfolio to guide their career choice whether in social work practice or social work education. It will include the effective implementation of skills and strategies that help them achieve their career interest and goals.

Elective Courses**SOCW 6321 Assessment and Program Evaluation (3 credit hours)**

The purpose of this course is to address the essential knowledge and skills of program evaluation and assessment needed for faculty to actively participate in assessment in their university, college, and program. This course also addresses the application of this knowledge and skill set to guide evaluation of programs in the community. Programs of all types are increasingly under pressure to demonstrate their effectiveness and accountability to a variety of internal and external constituencies and stakeholders. They need to demonstrate how they are meeting specific performance objectives and program outcomes, the achievement of which may be linked to continued program funding. This course will provide an overview of approaches and essential skills to participate in program evaluation and assessment for programs in higher education and in the community.

SOCW 6322 Psychopharmacology (3 credit hours)

This course provides the basic tenants of psychopharmacology. While the subject area is too vast to fully explain in this brief review, the basics will be presented. Students will be expected to bring questions or case examples to the course each week. Cases should be presented with only clinical details, and any identifying information about the patients or their lives should be omitted to ensure privacy. The focus on case studies as examples will be key to understanding the clinical applications of the various medications we will discuss.

SOCW 6323 Clinical Social Work Practice (3 credit hours)

This purpose of this course is to address the specialized application of theory, models, and skills for advanced clinical practice in a variety of practice contexts. Uses social work knowledge, skills, and values to prepare students to clinically engage in clinical assessment, diagnosis, and treatment and intervene at the levels of individual, family, and group in a practice setting.

SOCW 6324 Independent Study Courses (1-3 credit hours) refers to a type of learning contract in which a registered student and/or professor have the responsibility for defining, organizing, and evaluating a special project of limited scope (limited in content and in the time designated for its completion). Independent study provides an opportunity for students to receive one-to-one instruction and guidance, while pursuing a subject of special interest. This work is completed independently under the professor's personal direction.

SOCW 6325 Special Topics (3 credit hours)

The topic courses will vary each semester and provide an in-depth study of particular issues, concerns, and trends in social work practice at all levels and in social work education. Topics may address areas such as emerging trends; the roles and responsibilities of social work educators in leadership in the profession, community, and academy; the development of a scholar-practitioner identity; and technology in social work practice and education.

7. Mandatory Texas OCC Code Chapter 53

Each student must sign the SFA School of Social Work *Criminal History Notification Form* upon application. The form states that the DSW student has been informed about the mandates state policy related to criminal history.

The form includes the following information:

1. An individual who has been convicted of an offense is potentially ineligible for issuance of an occupational license on completion of the educational program;
2. The Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners has determined the following felonies and misdemeanors directly relate to the duties and responsibilities of a licensed social worker:
 - a) Offenses listed in Article 42A.054 of the Code of Criminal Procedure;
 - b) A sexually violent offense, as defined by Article 62.001 of the Code of Criminal Procedure;
 - c) Any felony offense wherein the judgment reflects an affirmative finding regarding the use or exhibition of a deadly weapon;
 - d) Any criminal violation of Chapter 505 (Social Work Practices Act) of the Occupations Code;
 - e) Any criminal violation of Chapter 35 (Insurance Fraud) or Chapter 35A (Medicaid Fraud) of the Penal Code;
 - f) Any criminal violation involving a federal health care program, including 42 USC Section 1320a-7b (Criminal penalties for acts involving Federal health care programs);
 - g) Any offense involving the failure to report abuse or neglect;
 - h) Any state or federal offense not otherwise listed herein, committed by a licensee while engaged in the practice of social work;
 - i) Any criminal violation of Section 22.041 (abandoning or endangering a child) of the Penal Code;
 - j) Any criminal violation of Section 21.15 (invasive visual recording) of the Penal Code;
 - k) Any criminal violation of Section 43.26 (possession of child pornography) of the Penal Code;
 - l) Any criminal violation of 22.04 (injury to a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual) of the Penal Code;
 - m) Three or more drug or alcohol related convictions within the last 10 years, evidencing possible addiction that will have an effect on the licensee's ability to provide competent services; and
 - n) Any attempt solicitation, or conspiracy to commit an offense listed herein.

This information is subject to change by the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners. Any changes should be published in Rule 781.420, Title 22, of the Texas Administrative Code;

3. There may be other state or local restrictions or guidelines used by the licensing authority to determine the eligibility of an individual who has been convicted of an offense for an occupational license issued by the licensing authority; and
4. The right of an individual to request a criminal history evaluation letter (See Texas Occupations Code, Sec. 53.102).

An individual may request a licensing authority to issue a criminal history evaluation letter regarding the person's eligibility for a license issued by that authority if the person:

- (1) is enrolled or planning to enroll in an educational program that prepares a person for an initial license or is planning to take an examination for an initial license; and
- (2) has reason to believe that the person is ineligible for the license due to a conviction or deferred adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense.

The request must state the basis for the person's potential ineligibility.

Social work majors and those interested in social work should visit the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council website for more information on criminal history evaluation for social workers. Those majoring or interested in social work should also review the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council and Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners Rules.

The purpose of the criminal history evaluation is to establish procedures to evaluate, upon request, the criminal history of potential applicants to determine if they are ineligible to hold a license for health professions that include social workers.

In accordance with Occupations Code, Chapter 53, the board is required, if requested in writing and accompanied by a fee, to perform licensure evaluations for prospective applicants who have a criminal history. This process requires that an individual who has a criminal history present all related information to the board, board staff, or appropriate board committee in order to obtain a written predetermination of whether the existing criminal history would bar the individual from becoming licensed, if all other minimum requirements are met in the future and there has been no subsequent changes related to criminal history or fitness for licensure. More information can be obtained at this website: <https://www.bhec.texas.gov/applying-for-a-license/index.html>.

Additional information may also be found in the Best Practices Guide: Applying for an Occupational License After Conviction or Deferred Adjudication, published by the Texas State Auditor's Office.

8. Academic and Professional Integrity Code for DSW Program

DSW students have to adhere to different codes of ethics including the School of Social Work Academic and Professional integrity code:



STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Social Work

Academic and Professional Integrity Code DSW Social Work Program

Introduction

DSW students are preparing to become leaders and scholar-practitioners in the social work profession. As a DSW student, you will have great responsibility to be a role model for colleagues in the profession. Your actions and decisions will affect the next generation of social workers. In order to be excellent role models, you need to reflect on your academic and professional integrity. It implies a deep understanding of the values that guide the social work profession. Professionalism is based on respect, justice, dignity and worth of a person, competence, integrity, trust, honesty, fairness and the importance of human relationships. In order to be successful in the DSW program it is important to treat students, faculty, staff and any other stakeholders with respect and dignity. This implies respect for difference and diversity in practice, views, backgrounds and experience. DSW students should commit to a life-long reflection of their own professional behavior and how others are influenced by it.

DSW students are already in the role of social work leaders and scholar-practitioners as you start the program. You are respected for your knowledge, expertise and professionalism. It is important to understand that you always represent the social work profession, whether you are in your professional or personal roles in life. You are expected to show leadership, be innovative, connect evidence to practice and contribute to the profession through your knowledge and expertise. Your actions will not only impact the social work profession, it will showcase who you are to other disciplines working closely with you and your teams. DSW students must focus on and strive to advocate for the social work profession in an interprofessional work environment.

Mission of the DSW program

The DSW program's mission is to prepare students for teaching, administration, leadership and practice. The program creates and maintains a learner-centered environment in which students are prepared to effectively address the challenges of living and working in a global community as a scholar-practitioner. The learning environment enhances students' substantive expertise to develop the knowledge, skills, values and cognitive and affective processes needed for higher education, administration, leadership and practice. Students develop insight in how they are influenced by their own values in addressing critical social work issues related to anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion. The program contributes to the enhancement of social, economic, and environmental justice in diverse contexts. Doctoral students are able to identify as social work educators, practitioners, scholars and leaders who are guiding and influencing the future of the profession.

It is important for DSW students to uphold and advance the values, ethics and mission of the social work profession at all times. Advancing implies that DSW students will provide effective and constructive feedback and participate in decision-making when requested. As a DSW student, you represent Stephen F. Austin State University, College of Liberal and Applied Arts and the School of Social Work in your interactions with fellow students, faculty, staff, colleagues and community and agency partners. You have a responsibility to use all opportunities to create a transformational learning experience for yourself. Through active engagement, you will be able to make the most of your time in the DSW program.

DSW learner-centered environment

The School of Social Work creates a learner-centered environment for all our students. Our learner-centered environment is strengthened by transparent communication between faculty, staff and students. We encourage students to participate in School of Social Work activities, events and committee work. As a DSW student you will receive personal attention to provide a quality academic experience. In addition to academic content, DSW faculty are dedicated to provide academic and career mentorship, opportunities to apply your knowledge, values and skills and prepare you for become a leader and scholar-practitioner in the social work profession.

DSW students should portray professionalism and active participation in class activities, reflections and discussion, regardless if held face-to-face, livestream or online. This includes limiting distractions by others in your households and maintaining a professional demeanor and presence while attending class. DSW students should showcase professional demeanor through professional and appropriate dress, and positive and constructive communication.

For the School of Social Work, a learner-centered environment is a safe place where the quality development of knowledge, values, skills, and affective and cognitive processes can occur. You are expected to treat fellow students, faculty, supervisors and staff with respect, honesty, courtesy, fairness and good faith. This includes all types of communication including texts, phone conversations and emails. As you know, you should not participate in, condone or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation. You should understand that engaging in criminal behavior and/or convictions may prevent their licensing and practicing of social work.

The School of Social Work's implicit and explicit curriculum is guided by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) (2022). These standards provide very specific requirements for anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion (A DEI). DSW students should not engage in any form of inappropriate discrimination based on an individual's race, ethnicity, country of origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or other personal characteristic, belief, status or condition. You should act as a role model to advocate for A DEI at all times.

As our society is changing, social media is playing a greater role in how we communicate. DSW students will take the lead in how the social work profession will shape its future responses to the changing technology and social media demands. DSW students should develop a comprehensive understanding how the values of respect and dignity are effectively conveyed through social media.

Brightspace is the online platform used by SFA for explicit curriculum delivery. While online classes are offered through Brightspace, face to face classes are in person. DSW faculty teaching face to face classes can use Brightspace as support, but not as the main method of delivery. You are responsible for responding to your SFA jacks e-mail address in a timely manner. Faculty and staff do not respond to personal e-mails, you have to refrain from sending e-mails through personal e-mail platforms. Social media should not be used to communicate information about fellow students, faculty, supervisors and staff.

Professional Codes of Conduct and Ethics

DSW students should have a comprehensive understanding of the different codes of ethics that guide social work on a national and international level. An essential part of understanding these, you must be able to apply the codes to different practice contexts. The codes are guidelines developed by social work leaders over many years. Part of your responsible to lead and advocate for the profession is to critically analyze and review the codes. As future leaders you need to show innovation to change and add to the codes to be in line with current times. DSW students should understand that Social Work is an evolving profession and it is important to address current issues.

The main Codes of Ethics we follow in the profession are:

- Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) - Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) (2022)
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics
- Statement of Ethical Principles developed by the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW)

These codes establish behavioral expectations for professional social workers and students. As a DSW student, adherence to these codes of ethics is important; you must fully understand and appreciate the importance of the provisions of these codes and apply them to your educational experience, as a condition to your continued status as a student in the program. DSW students are expected to maintain high standards of personal conduct and act in accordance with the highest standards of integrity. You must take the lead to show and model the meaning and application of integrity to other students.

The codes establish guidelines for participation in the profession. DSW students have a responsibility to actively participate in organizations to develop their area of specialization and to contribute to the profession. These organizations also have specific codes of conduct/ethics to follow. It is important to develop knowledge about the different social work and inter-professional organizations.

Commitment to becoming a leader and scholar-practitioner

The School of Social Work recognizes that DSW students are in the process of learning and strengthening their roles as leaders and scholar-practitioners. It is important that you continue to

reflect on your area of specialization. At the core of your work is the importance of becoming a scholar-practitioner who will lead the profession in future. As a DSW student, while engaged in academic work, scholarship and research, you should reflect on and be guided by the conventions of scholarly inquiry. As a scholar-practitioner, you should seek out opportunities to enhance your knowledge about ethics engaging with people, when seeking evidence.

Social work leaders and scholar-practitioners are focused on addressing the needs of individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations through effective problem-solving. DSW students will have many opportunities to be engaged in working with people in need. Through community-based research and outreach, organizational support, program design and development you will showcase leadership and innovative skills. While engaging in service delivery in any form, you should make the needs of people your first priority. DSW must show others how to respect the privacy of clients and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of professional service. DSW students should engage in strategies to respect and maintain confidentiality requirements during class discussions, regardless if held face-to-face, livestream or online. This allows all students to participate honestly and keeps sensitive materials from being discussed in front of non-social work students.

As a future leader of the profession, your commitment should reflect in your course work, assignments, class participation, engagement with agencies and communities, professional presentations and all professional interactions. will continue their professional development through regular self-assessment of academic and professional aptitude and performance. DSW students will continue their professional development through regular self-assessment of academic and professional aptitude and performance.

❖ Each student will sign the document and a copy must be kept for their own records.

9. Advising

9.1 Academic and Career Advising

Since the DSW program is delivered face-to-face and supported by technology, advising will take place in person or on Zoom. The DSW Director is responsible for academic advising of all students in the program. In addition to academic advising, students will receive career advising from DSW faculty. DSW faculty are mentors and are available to provide support relates to academic and career development. The DSW program strives to ensure students have consistent access to faculty members. DSW Faculty members have ten office hours per week and they are available in person, via Zoom and per e-mail or phone.

Students are required to meet with the DSW director a minimum of once per semester to discuss academic issues. In addition, students must schedule a follow-up meeting mid-semester to discuss progress.

9.2 Degree Plan

During advising a degree plan is developed for each student. The plan is approved, signed and submitted to the Graduate Dean. A copy is kept in the student's records. The student will also receive a copy.

9.3. Admission to Candidacy

DSW students have to apply to the School of Social Work for candidacy. In terms of the process leading to candidacy, prior to advancement to the final year of study, students will be required to present a plan for their capstone project. In the second year, the Doctoral Faculty Committee will assess and make recommendations for students for candidacy based on a qualifying exam. Students are required to demonstrate the application of the four domains of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective process per CSWE standards. The DSW director will notify the student of admission to candidacy approval.

10. Grades

DSW students must maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout the program. SFA Graduate Bulletin identifies the following: 'During any semester or summer session that the grade point average falls below a B, the student with clear admission to graduate study will be placed on academic probation; the student with probationary admission will be placed on academic suspension.'

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. Please read the complete policy on grades: <https://www.sfasu.edu/docs/policies/5.5.pdf>

11. Application for Graduation

The university informs graduate students of the deadlines to apply for graduation. The application must be filed in the SFA graduation office by the deadline. These deadlines are also available in the Graduate Bulletin. Students must meet all the requirements to graduate.

12. DSW Student Inclusion and Engagement

DSW students encouraged to participate in professional activities on a regional, national and international level. The School of Social Work provides equitable and inclusive opportunities for student input and participation. We encourage DSW students to participate in all activities.

Many different opportunities are available through the School of Social Work. Information about these opportunities will be shared with you on a continuous basis.

DSW Student Organization

The first cohort of DSW students will start a student organization to support and encourage each other. SFA Student Life provides information on how to start a formal student organization.

<https://www.sfasu.edu/student-life/student-engagement/connection-involvement/student-organizations>

NASW

DSW students are encouraged to participate in your local NASW branch. The School of Social Work is in the Deep East Texas region. Prof. Wilma Córdova is the branch chair. The branch meets once a month and offers a CEU lecture series. DSW students will find the local and national conferences as an opportunity to share their work and present their ideas to their peers.

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)

The School of Social Work's programs are accredited by CSWE. We encourage DSW students to get involved in volunteer opportunities with the Council. The annual conference provides an excellent opportunity to connect with other doctoral students. Visit the website at <https://www.cswe.org/> and use the CSWE Spark tool to connect, explore and engage with your colleagues and peers.

Social Work Month

Social Work Month is celebrated across the world. The theme for Social Work Month 2023 is *Social Work Breaks Barriers*. DSW will be required to take the lead in planning and implementing activities to celebrate this important month.

<https://www.socialworkers.org/News/Social-Work-Month#:~:text=Social%20Work%20Month%20in%20March,is%20Social%20Work%20Breaks%20Barriers.>

SFA Graduate Research Conference

During the Spring 2023 semester, the Office of Research and Graduate Studies offers a campus-wide conference for graduate students. DSW are encouraged to attend and participate in the conference. Students can present posters as well as paper/oral presentations. DSW faculty will share information and you will work with you to sponsor a presentation. Presentations are not only research focused, but can include conceptual and innovation papers.

Journal for Social Work Scholar-Practitioners

The School of Social Work is establishing an academic journal. DSW students will have an opportunity to publish in the journal and participate in review activities. Students will also be encouraged to publish in other national or international journals.

Professional Organizations

DSW students are encouraged to contribute to the social work profession through professional associations and organizations specific to their interest areas. DSW faculty will share information on professional organizations. Some examples of professional organizations include:

- International Association for School of Social Work (IFSSW)
- Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR)
- The Association for Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD)
- Association for Community Organization and Social Action (ACOSA)
- Clinical Social Work Association (CSWA)
- Islamic Social Services Association
- North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NACSW)
- Association of Veteran Affairs Social Workers
- Social Welfare Action Alliance

All DSW students will be encouraged to become members of CSWE, BPD or SSWR. These organizations provide many opportunities for DSW students to become scholar-practitioners.

13. Checklist

As you progress through the program, you will hear about many different requirements. Please make sure to always read your SFA e-mails for information and announcements. This checklist will help you to make sure you have a good start to the DSW program. The DSW faculty are looking forward to support you during this journey.

- The DSW director will complete a degree plan for each student, at the beginning of the first semester of their studies. You will review, sign and return the degree plan to the DSW director. Keep a copy of the degree plan.
- During each advising session, you will receive an advising form. In order for the advising hold to be lifted, you need to review, sign and return it to the DSW director. Upon receipt and verification of good standing status, your hold will be lifted to register for the next semester.
- During application, you have to complete the *Criminal History Notification Form*. If there are any changes to the criminal history, please inform the DSW director.
- Make sure you sign and apply the *Academic and Professional Integrity Code*. Please keep a copy of the code for your own records.
- Apply for candidacy by the deadline provided to you by the DSW director.
- Make sure you understand the requirement of the maintenance of a 3.0 GPA during your studies. In case you are experiencing any challenges to maintain the GPA, please discuss this with your instructors and the DSW director.
- Make sure you file for graduation, upon meeting the requirements. SFA will inform you of graduation application deadlines via e-mail.

