

General Information

Accreditation

The bachelor of social work degree program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

Mission

The Steve Hicks School of Social Work provides professional education and leadership in social work practice, research, and service to promote social, racial and economic justice, enhance social welfare, and build strong community-University partnerships.

The mission of the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program is to prepare students as beginning level generalist professional social work practitioners who are committed to the provision of services that further the well-being of people and who promote social and economic justice. Building on a broad liberal arts framework, the BSW curriculum is designed to develop generalist practitioners who have an understanding of social work knowledge and values and are able to select different methods and resources to meet identified client needs, while recognizing and engaging the strengths of the client in the process. The curriculum offers students the opportunity to learn to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the social functioning of multiple levels of systems in the environment, including individuals, families, small groups, organizations, and communities.

BSW students are given the opportunity to learn to work collaboratively in a variety of settings using an ecosystems/developmental perspective; to recognize the relationships between client needs and public issues; to work toward the development of social policies, resources, and programs that meet basic human needs and empower oppressed and marginalized groups; and to be aware and responsive to the diversities among individuals, including race, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, age, sexual orientation, religion, and ability. The program is intended to prepare reflective, self-evaluating practitioners who have a strong identification with the social work profession and work to alleviate injustice, oppression, and discrimination.

Graduates of the program are expected to be able to enhance the problem-solving, coping, and developmental capacities of individuals, especially those from marginalized groups. They also are expected to addressing systemic injustices and discrimination within the environment that provide individuals with resources, services, and opportunities; to link individuals in need with the appropriate systems; and to contribute to the development and improvement of just social policies that have an impact on people and their social environments, especially by empowering marginalized groups and by promoting social, racial and economic justice.

The BSW program is integrated with and builds upon a liberal arts base that includes knowledge in language arts, the humanities, and the social, behavioral, and natural sciences. The curriculum includes content in social work values, diversity and oppressed and marginalized groups, social, racial and economic justice, human behavior and the social environment, research, social welfare policy and services, and social work intervention.

Program Objectives

Students graduating from the BSW program are expected to demonstrate the following characteristics:

- a. A professional identity that incorporates the values and ethics of the social work profession and the professional development of self.

- b. The ability to work with diverse populations with an understanding of, and respect for, the positive value of diversity, including race and ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, religion, and country of origin, and to use communication skills differentially with diverse groups.
- c. An understanding oppression and discrimination.
- d. The ability to apply strategies and skills that advance social and economic justice and to address the oppression of marginalized groups.
- e. An understanding of the biological, psychological, social, and cultural contexts of changing client systems, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and the broader society, and their effects on development and behavior.
- f. Beginning level competencies in research and evaluation, including the ability to evaluate research studies and apply their findings to practice, and, under supervision, evaluate their own practice interventions and those of other relevant systems.
- g. An understanding of how social policy develops and differentially affects various client systems, workers, and agencies.
- h. An understanding of the role the social work profession has played in promoting social change, historically and currently.
- i. The attainment of knowledge and skills that demonstrate the ability to practice effectively with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, in a manner that empowers client systems and uses their strengths in order to maximize their health and well-being.
- j. An ability to apply critical thinking skills within the context of social work roles and practice.
- k. An awareness of their responsibility to continue their professional growth and development, including the use of supervision appropriate to generalist practice.

History

The Steve Hicks School of Social Work was established as a graduate program in 1949 and began classes in the fall of 1950 with 24 students enrolled in the Master of Science in Social Work (MSSW) program. Undergraduate courses in social work were first offered in 1958. These were incorporated into a full Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program in the fall of 1974.

The first BSW degree was awarded in December 1977. Since that time, the program has been strengthened by curriculum modifications reflecting changes in the profession and in society that have implications for beginning social work practice.

The Steve Hicks School of Social Work also offers programs leading to the Master of Science in Social Work and the Doctor of Philosophy. These are described in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

Facilities

The Steve Hicks School of Social Work Building (1925 San Jacinto Boulevard) provides space for social work classes; offices for faculty and staff; an advising center and student services area; and a student lounge. The building also houses the Learning Resource Center (LRC), which has an extensive collection of social work related books, journals, and other publications partially funded by the Josleen Lockhart Memorial Book Fund. The LRC includes a computer laboratory for student use and provides space, equipment, and technical assistance for studying, meetings of small groups of students, viewing audiovisual materials, video recording, and completing other skills-based learning assignments. The Steve Hicks School of Social Work Building also houses the Center for Social Work Research and the DiNitto Center for Career Services.

Financial Assistance Available through the School

Although many University scholarships are awarded through the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, a limited number are awarded by the Steve Hicks School of Social Work to undergraduate social work students. Awards are made for reasons ranging from academic promise to financial need. Scholarship information, including eligibility requirements and the application process, is available through the Office of Academic Affairs. Additional scholarships funded by yearly contributions to the Steve Hicks School of Social Work are awarded to undergraduate social work students on the basis of academic excellence, financial need and potential contributions to the social work profession.

Student Services

Academic Advising

The Office of Academic Affairs in the Steve Hicks School of Social Work seeks to assist the student in exploring social work as a career choice, in planning an academic program suited to the student's interests and talents, in seeking help with academic or personal problems, and in post-graduation planning, whether for employment or for further study. The Office of Academic Affairs also provides administrative support and student services, including maintenance of academic records, provision of official degree audits, and graduation certification for social work majors. Faculty and staff members are also available to assist students with questions about scholarship programs, degree requirements, rules and regulations, and other available campus services. Students who declare an interest in completing the social work program are required to meet with a social work advisor at least once each semester for academic advising. To arrange an appointment with an advisor, students should contact the Office of Academic Affairs.

During the student's first and second academic years, the student and the advisor discuss the student's career choice, the selection of a major, degree requirements, and requirements for advancement to the practice sequence; during the third year, the course work required for the major completion and the student's preparation for entry into the field practicum; and during the fourth year, the field practicum and the student's post-graduation plans.

Career Choice Information

Students interested in social work as a career are encouraged to discuss this interest at any time with a social work advisor. Advisors are available in the Office of Academic Affairs to help students explore social work practice and settings and the development of interest in social work through academic, volunteer and service learning experiences. Students are encouraged to use the variety of career services available through the [DiNitto Center for Career Services](#).

Members of the social work faculty are available to assist the student in choosing a career, as are the staff and resources of the University's Sanger Learning Center, the Center for Community Engagement, and the Vick Center for Strategic Advising. Since the social work program requires admission to the major and completion of 122 semester hours, students are encouraged to discuss their interest in social work as a career early in their studies.

Career Services

Career development services are provided to students preparing to enter the professional job market. Students should inquire in the DiNitto Center for Career Services, Steve Hicks School of Social Work Building 2.214. The office maintains a listserv of employment opportunities and provides information about social work careers, graduate programs, online resources, and other opportunities for professional development,

volunteer and service-learning placements, and social work licensure. Workshops and other programs are offered on the fields of social work practice, résumé preparation, and job search and interview skills.

Professional social workers may seek employment in a number of areas. The Health and Human Services Commission has established quality control standards that mandate the hiring of holders of social work degrees in designated positions. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services hires social workers for its child protective services programs. Large nursing home facilities are also required to have a social work staff. Substance use disorder treatment programs, psychiatric hospitals, health care programs, school social work and dropout prevention programs, criminal justice programs, community non-profit agencies and programs for the elderly also employ social workers. Hospitals and agencies providing community-based health services, especially in rural areas, hire BSW graduates. More than a third of the program's graduates go on to graduate schools throughout the country.

As a complement to the assistance available from the school, the University's Sanger Learning Center and the Vick Center for Strategic Advising provide comprehensive career services to all students. The centers offer professional assistance to students in choosing or changing their majors or careers, seeking an internship, and planning for the job search or for graduate study.

The University makes no promise to secure employment for each graduate.

Hogg Foundation for Mental Health

The [Hogg Foundation for Mental Health](#) funds and advocates for programs in mental health service research and public policy analysis.

Social Work Council

The Social Work Council is an organization open to all students pursuing a social work degree or interested in the social work profession. The purposes of the council are to help students acquire a better understanding of the profession of social work, to provide a mechanism for student input on issues related to the social work curriculum and the school, and to organize and support social work related programs and projects that will benefit students, the school, the University, and the community.

Council activities are often conducted in collaboration with the Office of Academic Affairs. They include forums with guest speakers from community agencies and the University, community service projects, special interest groups that meet to discuss social work related topics, and social gatherings. Members of the Council represent student concerns as voting members of the school's curriculum committees, the Senate of College Councils, and the Student Government.