



TCU Department of Social Work

BSW Program Handbook – 2025-2026

TCU Department of Social Work
BSW Program Handbook
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TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

www.tcu.edu

Department of Social Work

Harris College of Nursing and Health Sciences

Mailing Address: TCU Box 298750 Fort Worth, TX 76129

Website: <https://harriscollege.tcu.edu/social-work>

The Department of Social Work has been committed to excellence in preparing generalist Social Work practitioners since its inception in 1975. As the University has grown and modified its mission, so has the Department. Both the University and the Department emphasize ethical behavior, life-long learning, service to the community, and the importance of a knowledge base. Social Work has long been viewed as the conscience of the University and as specifically applying the University mission in its educational process. The University values dignity, respect, inclusiveness, tolerance, and ethical leadership qualities consistent with Social Work values.

TCU Mission

The mission of Texas Christian University, a private comprehensive university, is to educate individuals to think and act as ethical leaders and responsible citizens in the global community through research and creative activities, scholarship, service, and programs of teaching and learning offered through the doctoral level.

TCU Vision

To be a world-class, values-centered university.

TCU Core Values

At TCU, we value: academic and personal achievement, intellectual inquiry and the creation of knowledge, artistic and creative expression, a heritage of service in pursuit of the greater good, personal freedom and integrity, the dignity of and respect for the individual, and active appreciation for the array of human experience and the potential of every human being.

Harris College Of Nursing and Health Sciences Mission

The mission of the Harris College of Nursing and Health Sciences is to impact global health through equitable, accessible and inclusive education, scholarship and innovation.

Department of Social Work Mission

Through experiential learning opportunities, innovative research, and student-focused mentoring, the TCU Department of Social Work prepares competent, ethical, culturally-responsive social work leaders. We train our students to critically interrogate structural inequities, apply a trauma-informed approach, and advocate for social change with local and global communities. By doing so, the Department equips graduates to partner with diverse populations, specifically those who endure marginalization and oppression, to promote an equitable and just society.

Department of Social Work Values

Excellence, Social justice, Collegiality, Community Engagement, and Student Focus

BSW Program Mission

The TCU BSW Program is committed to cultivating compassionate, ethical, and trauma-informed social workers who view the world through a critical lens. Our mission is to equip students with the knowledge, values, and skills needed to address complex societal issues while upholding the highest ethical standards.

We believe in the power of ethical care and trauma-informed practice to promote social justice, community healing, and empower individuals. Our program prepares students to critically examine systems of power through rigorous academic coursework, experiential learning opportunities and internships, as well as a strong emphasis on leadership development. We strive to develop the next generation of social workers who are well-prepared professionals and passionate advocates for social change.

Goals of the BSW Program

The BSW Program goals are derived from the mission of the department and supported throughout the efforts of the department. The goals are incorporated as objectives in the syllabi of the Social Work courses and in the expressed competencies and practice behaviors assessed in Field Education. The goals form the basis for the design of the curriculum and are discussed in both classroom and field experiences.

The BSW Program goals relate to the competencies outlined by CSWE. The goals reflect the BSW Program's commitment to its mission and to the mission of the University. The goals are:

1. To prepare generalist practitioners to work with individuals, groups and communities at micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice, to help them reach social, physical, and emotional well-being
2. To prepare generalist practitioners who practice with an emphasis on human rights and social justice, in order to enhance the quality of life for all people
3. To prepare generalist practitioners with leadership skills to contribute to the social work profession

These goals are accomplished through a course of study consisting of a curriculum including content in social welfare policy and services, human behavior and the social environment, Social Work practice, research, and Field Education, focusing on values and ethics, populations at risk, and diversity. Concurrent with their academic work, students are provided service-learning opportunities in several classes. In their concurrent field placement, students are placed in social service agencies and other settings where Social Work has a presence under the supervision of Bachelors or Masters-level social workers, where they learn generalist practice methods used with a variety of client systems. Students complete 480 hours in the field placement, with approximately two full days each week (16 hours) spent in the placement over two semesters.

The BSW program is fully accredited at the baccalaureate level by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

Section I: BSW Policies

I. BSW POLICIES

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISING

Academic and professional advising is an intentional, collaborative partnership between students and their faculty advisors. This shared responsibility is designed to equip students with the knowledge and tools to make informed decisions, identify their educational and career goals, and achieve success.

All social work faculty members serve as advisors for social work majors and provide academic and professional advising. Students at every level within the social work program are assigned a faculty advisor. Advisors oversee students' degree plans and are accessible for academic and professional guidance, including, but not limited to:

- Course scheduling and degree plan progress
- Addressing academic concerns or challenges
- Exploring graduate education opportunities
- Career planning, professional development, and job opportunities
- Social work licensing support and preparation

The Program Director holds primary accountability for the overall quality and effectiveness of advising. Students are expected to meet with their assigned faculty advisor at least once per semester.

Support and Referrals:

Faculty advisors support students by referring them to appropriate campus and community resources when challenges arise. Commonly used university services include:

- Counseling and Mental Health Center
- Center for Writing
- Brown-Lupton Health Center
- Student Access and Accommodation Services

Faculty advisors limit their role to concerns related to students' educational and professional development. For professional counseling or support beyond the scope of advising, faculty will guide students to appropriate resources, both on and off campus.

Role of the Director of Field Education:

The Director of Field Education provides additional support to students as they navigate field placement decisions. This includes:

- Advising students on field placement options that align with their educational and career goals.
- Working individually with each student entering their field placement to ensure a successful process, including preparing a professional statement and resume.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students may declare a Social Work major at any time. Admission to BSW Field Education requires that students:

- Have attained junior status
- Have a 2.25 or higher overall GPA
- Complete or be currently enrolled in Social Work courses 10833, 30843, 30853, 30863, 30833, 30883, 40863, and 40883. The courses should be completed with a grade of "C" or above in order to start Field Education the following semester.
- Have a 2.5 GPA in Social Work and a "C" (C- is not acceptable) or better in all Social Work (SOWO) courses
- Submit a field application. The Director of Field Education will review your field application, a

faculty feedback form, and transcript. Field Education may be postponed or denied if the faculty determines the student is not sufficiently prepared to handle the responsibilities and tasks of Field Education.

COURSE CURRICULUM

The BSW curriculum provides students with the knowledge and skills consistent with the values of a generalist Social Work perspective and provides a foundation for graduate education. In addition, the student's knowledge of and identification with the Social Work profession is developed: knowing about and appreciating Social Work's historical development and evolution, the range of modes of professional intervention characteristic of contemporary practice, ethical issues and concerns now confronting practitioners, and the organizational contexts of practice.

To graduate with a BSW total semester hours must total 120 and must include:

- Three hours of human biology: BIOL 10003 Contemporary Issues in Human Biology
- Three hours of statistics: MATH 10043
- Three hours of psychology: PSYC 10213 General Psychology

The following 9 hours are considered foundation courses and should be taken according to course prerequisites and requirements:

- SOWO 10833 Introduction to Social Work
- SOWO 30863 Social Welfare Policy
- SOCI Introduction to Sociology or SOCI 20223 Social Problems

33 semester hours of upper-level Social Work courses are required as well as 9 hours of Social Work and/or approved electives.

GATEKEEPING

The Social Work profession has the legal and ethical responsibility to protect both society and the profession by assessing students' readiness to work with clients. This gatekeeping responsibility is outlined in the BSW program handbook and based on the NASW professional Code of Ethics. The faculty team discusses students' professional development and readiness to interact with clients. The field admissions process reinforces the gatekeeping process.

HONORS COLLEGE (BSW)

BSW students who plan to pursue Departmental Honors must be members of the Honors College and should enroll in SOWO 30003 during the spring semester of their junior year and SOWO 40003 during the fall semester of their senior year.

LIFE EXPERIENCE

Students may not receive academic credit for life experience or previous volunteer or work experience in social work.

MINOR

A minor in Social Work requires 18 hours of SOWO courses, including 10833, 40883, and at least one of the following: 30863, or 30843, or 30853. Additional courses are to be selected from the social work curriculum, excluding field education/seminar courses. A grade of "C" or better is required in all social work courses for the minor.

PASS/NO-CREDIT GRADING OPTION (BSW)

Undergraduate students in Harris College may take up to two courses (eight hours maximum) on a P/NC

basis. No course applied to the student's major or minor may be taken on a P/NC basis. Courses offered only with the P/NC grade will not be counted toward this limit on the number of P/NC hours.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAM POLICY

Student participation in Social Work department development is encouraged formally and informally. Students provide an important perspective to evaluate the department. Ongoing mechanisms that support student input into policy change and program evaluation include end-of-the-semester course evaluations, field evaluation forms, student exit questionnaires, alumni surveys, and personal feedback to faculty and advisors about curriculum, faculty, or course issues. Students participate in faculty searches by providing reactions to formal class presentations by candidates and having separate group interviews with candidates, after which they offer summary evaluations. The Student Association of Social Work (SASW) also provides written feedback to faculty and recommends changes and opportunities for students.

TERMINATION FROM THE BSW PROGRAM

TCU distributes its policies on student rights and responsibilities in the TCU Student Handbook available at: <https://codes.tcu.edu/>

The Social Work profession has the legal and ethical responsibility to protect both society and the profession by assessing students' readiness to work with clients. This gatekeeping responsibility is based on the National Association of Social Worker's Code of Ethics. The faculty works with students on their professional development and readiness to interact with individuals, agencies, and the community.

Academic Misconduct

The criteria for potential dismissal from the major include academic performance, including grades below C in Social Work courses, an overall GPA below 2.25, a GPA below 2.5 in social work courses, and a second grade of "D" or "F" in any Social Work course means automatic termination from the social work major. Neither field course may be repeated more than once.

Professional Misconduct

Gatekeeping also includes ethical and personal issues that affect professional performance. Nonacademic criteria related to professionalism are considered part of the academic arena of a professional program and, as such, are part of the total student evaluation. The University supports the BSW Program's professional criteria as part of the evaluation process. Any violation of the TCU Student Code of Conduct and/or the NASW Code of Ethics is grounds for dismissal from the Social Work major.

Nonacademic criteria related to professionalism and ethical behavior are considered part of the academic arena of a professional program. As such, a student could be dismissed from the program for failing to uphold the ethical guidelines of the profession and for personal issues that affect professional performance.

A student may receive a written warning for a range of ethical and personal issues that affect professional performance, including but not limited to:

- Engaging in dishonest, fraudulent, deceitful, or misrepresentative behavior
- Failure to comply with agency policies and procedures
- Engaging in inappropriate relationships with others
- Inability to accept constructive feedback
- Disruptive behavior that undermines the teaching, learning, or morale of others
- Inability to perform due to personal problems
- Excessive absences or tardiness
- Inability to recognize and/or respect personal or professional boundaries
- Failure to treat others with respect
- Exploitation of others for personal advantage
- Engaging in sexual activities with clients

Serious infractions or repeated infractions may lead to immediate counseling out of the social work program. Nonacademic criteria related to professionalism are considered part of the academic arena of a professional program and, as such, are part of the total student evaluation. The University supports the BSW Program's professional criteria as part of the evaluation process. Any violation of the TCU Student Code of Conduct and/or the NASW Code of Ethics is grounds for dismissal from the Social Work major.

Faculty may identify, in writing, those students who demonstrate behaviors that raise serious questions about their continuing towards the professional degree in Social Work. Such students' names will be submitted to the program director who will coordinate a review, including appropriate faculty members in such a process.

Students can be eliminated from the program for academic or professional reasons. These gatekeeping efforts, counseling students in or out of the program, are supported by the university and by the judicial system.

UNIVERSITY GRADE APPEAL PROCESS

TCU distributes its policies on student rights and responsibilities in the TCU Student Handbook available at: <https://codes.tcu.edu/>

TRANSFERRING COURSES

Most core curriculum and related coursework from accredited universities will transfer. However, all courses used to satisfy the cultural awareness, global awareness, or citizenship and social values components of the TCU Core Curriculum must be taken at TCU. Social work courses from CSWE-accredited social work programs may be accepted toward the social work degree upon review of the syllabi from the transfer college/university.

Section II: Other Resources

II. OTHER RESOURCES

HARRIS COLLEGE ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER

The Harris College Academic Resource Center is designed to support students and faculty in Harris College of Nursing & Health Sciences. The Center's goal is to enhance the overall student experience to prepare graduates for a lifelong career in health sciences.

The Academic Resource Center provides:

- Academic advising
- Educational workshops
- Career services such as resume critiques, mock interviews, and career exploration
- Information about study abroad and student research opportunities
- Information about graduate programs
- Leadership development within the health professions

For more information contact:

Academic Resource Center
Annie Richardson Bass Building
HARC@tcu.edu
817.257.6112

TCU CAREER SERVICES

Assigned Liaison: Nicole Evans (L.NICOLE.EVANS@tcu.edu)

THE WILLIAM L. ADAMS CENTER FOR WRITING

The William L. Adams Center for Writing serves the entire TCU community – faculty and staff as well as undergraduate and graduate students. This is a resource provided by the University to assist you. Staffed by writing specialists and peer tutors, the Center offers one-on-one instruction. A tutorial may focus on a specific piece of writing or on a selected writing skill (e.g., usage, punctuation, essay exams, documentation, etc.). The Center is a non-threatening and supportive place where you can talk openly and confidentially about your writing with someone who is informed but nonjudgmental.

To schedule an appointment with a writing specialist, call (817) 257-7221. Please refer to the Center for Writing's website, <https://wrt.tcu.edu/> for additional important information.

TCU LIBRARY

Students and faculty have access to over 1.5 million books and audio-visual materials and over 79,000 current journals, electronically and on paper. In addition, the library provides access to over 300 databases, many of which include the full text of journal articles, from the library website. The Library has been a depository for federal documents since 1916 and participated in the Texas Depository Library program for more than 60 years. Portions of the U.S. documents collection date as far back as the eighteenth century. Harris College of Nursing and Health Sciences has a research librarian assigned to the College to specifically assist students enrolled in a program in Harris College. Visit the library's website for contact information. The TCU Library is available to students, faculty, adjunct faculty, and Field Instructors, as a benefit of being part of the University community.

STUDENT ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATION

Texas Christian University provides reasonable accommodations for each student who has a physical, medical, psychological, or learning disability. If you have a disability and have not submitted information concerning that disability to the University, please contact the Student Access and Accommodations office

as soon as possible. The office is eager to get to know you and assist you in determining appropriate University services. It is to your advantage to file all medical or assessment reports before the semester begins. For more information regarding these services, contact: <https://www.tcu.edu/access-accommodation/index.php>

Section III: Appendix

III. APPENDIX

[BSW Program requirements](#)

[NASW Code of Ethics](#)

[NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice](#)

[TCU Code of Student Conduct](#)

[Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners](#)

TCU DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Name/Position	Teaching Interests	Research Interests
Tenisha Polk-Potts , LCSW-S BSW Program Director Assistant Professor of Professional Practice	Intro to Social Work Field Education Social Work with Children	Mental Health Intimate Partner Violence Interventions with Children
David Becerra, Ph.D., Professor Department Chair	Social Welfare Policy Human Behavior in the Social	Immigration Policy Mental Health Wellbeing Social Welfare Policy Education
Sh'Niqua Alford , DSW, LCSW-S Director of Field Education Associate Professor of Professional Practice	Advanced Practice Micro Practice Diversity and Social Justice Child Welfare Social Work with Children Field Education	Neuroscience in Social Work Clinical Social Work Mental Health Play Therapy
Avery Amador Academic Program Specialist		
Nada Elias-Lambert , Ph.D., LMSW Professor	Research Policy Intimate Partner Violence Professional Foundation Diversity	Sexual Violence Prevention Bystander Interventions Program Design, Implementation, and Evaluation
Aesha John , Ph.D., LMSW Professor	Human Behavior and the Social Environment 1 Social Work with Children and Families Developmental Disabilities Research	Wellbeing of Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Attachment and Parenting Program Evaluation
Katie Lauve-Moon , Ph.D. Associate Professor	Policy Communities & Organizations Gender & Inequality Macro Practice & Social Issues	Work & Gender Sociological Social Work Organizations & Inequality Gender & Religion
Ashley Palmer , Ph.D., LMSW Assistant Professor	Intro to Social Work Social Welfare Policy	Healthy Development among Youth and Young Adults Mental health and wellness Social and economic well-being Connections to school and work Social support Housing insecurity Anti-oppressive educational practices
Mary Twis , PhD, LMSW-AP Associate Professor	Macro Practice Micro Practice Mental Health Criminal Justice Systems and Social Work Interpersonal Violence	Human Trafficking Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Human Trafficking Nonprofits and Best Practice Sexual Abuse
Tee Tyler , Ph.D., LCSW MSW Program Director	Micro Practice Methods (IND, FAM, GRP)	Parent-LGBTQ Child Relationships Social Work Education

Associate Professor	Research Methods Diversity & Social Justice	Interprofessional Education Social Identity Transitioning
Chrisi Petty Administrative Assistant for MSW Program		