TCU Department of Social Work

Master of Social Work Program Handbook

TCU Box 298750, Fort Worth, TX 76129

Harris College of Nursing & Health Sciences
Social Work

Master of Social Work Program Handbook
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www.tcu.edu

Department of Social Work Contact Information
Harris College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Website: www.socialwork.tcu.edu

Mailing Address:
TCU Box 298750
Fort Worth, TX 76129

The TCU 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.

The Master of Social Work Program mission is consistent with the Social Work profession's purpose and values and the program's context. The mission of the TCU MSW Program is to prepare highly competent, ethical, and culturally-responsive advanced generalist social workers.

TCU Mission
To educate individuals to think and act as ethical leaders and responsible citizens in the global community.

TCU Vision
To create a world-class, values-centered university experience for our students.

TCU Core Values
TCU values integrity as the foundation of learning, discovery, and ethical leadership; engagement that impacts personal and academic growth; community and a culture of belonging; and excellence in our pursuit of the greater good.

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.

TCU MSW Program Mission

The TCU MSW Program prepares highly competent, ethical, and culturally-responsive advanced generalist social workers. Through our hands-on approach to teaching, research, and mentorship, students are prepared to challenge structural inequities, implement trauma-informed approaches, and lead social change at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice. Program graduates are leaders within the social work profession, who meaningfully partner with diverse populations to transform local and global communities for the greater good.

Goals of the MSW Program

MSW Program goals are derived from the mission of the Department and program, 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 practicum education. The goals form the basis for the design of the curriculum and are discussed in both classroom and practicum experiences.

The MSW Program has three goals, each of which relates to the competencies that will be assessed in relation to that goal. The goals reflect the MSW Program's commitment to its mission and to the mission of the University.

1. To prepare advanced practitioners to practice with an emphasis on human rights and social justice, in order to enhance the quality of life for all people;
2. To prepare advanced practitioners to contribute to the social work profession through leadership, administration, and supervision; and
3. To prepare advanced practitioners with competence to address human needs both locally and globally.

These goals are accomplished through a course of study consisting of a foundational curriculum required of all students, followed by an advanced curriculum. The MSW Program ensures students have the knowledge, values, and skills required to move into advanced social work practice, and incorporates the core competencies specific to the Advanced Generalist concentration. The curriculum is developed in a structured manner building on the foundation content and moving into more advanced practice content. The MSW Program emphasizes that Advanced Generalist social workers have a common base of social work knowledge, values, and skills that prepares students to move into positions of leadership. The Advanced Generalist concentration requires professional judgment and proficiency to apply the professional foundation within service systems of various sizes and types.

The MSW Program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate- and master's-level social work programs.

TCU DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK FACULTY & STAFF

Name/Position	Teaching Interests	Research Interests
Sh'Niqua Alford, DSW, LCSW Director of Practicum Education Assistant Professor of Professional Practice	Practicum Education Advanced Practice Direct Practice with Children/Families Child Welfare Micro Practice Social Work with Adolescents	Child Welfare Mental Health
David Becerra, Ph.D., Department Chair Associate Professor	Policy Diversity Macro Practice	Social Justice Immigration Latino Health
Aesha John, Ph.D., LMSW Associate Professor	Human Behavior in Social Environment Social Work with Children and Families Developmental Disabilities Research	Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Attachment and Parenting Program Evaluation
Katie Lauve-Moon, Ph.D. Assistant Professor	Policy Communities & Organizations Gender & Inequality Macro Practice & Social Issues	Work & Gender Sociological Social Work Organizations & Inequality Gender & Religion
Ashley Palmer, PhD, LMSW Assistant Professor	Micro Practice Policy Professional Foundation Diversity & Social Justice Child Welfare	Healthy Development among Youth and Young Adults Positive Mental Health Poverty and Inequality Open Educational Resources Social Work Education
Tenisha Polk-Potts, LCSW-S BSW Program Director Assistant Professor of Professional Practice	Practicum Education Intimate Partner Violence Child Welfare Direct Practice with Children & Families Mental Health	Mental Health Women's Issues Attachment and Parenting
Mary Twis, PhD, LMSW-AP Associate Professor	Macro Practice Mental Health Interpersonal Violence Human Behavior Program Evaluation	Human Trafficking Youth Sex Trafficking Sexual Abuse
Tee Tyler, Ph.D., LCSW MSW Program Director Associate Professor	Research Methods Micro Practice Methods Diversity & Social Justice	Parent-LGBTQ Child Relationships Interpersonal Leadership Skills Groupwork and Dialogue
Avery Amador, Academic Program Specialist		
Chrisi Petty, Administrative Assistant		

Section I: MSW Policies

I. MSW POLICIES

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Academic advising is an important process in which faculty and full-time advisors assist students in developing plans and clarifying career and/or advanced study goals. All students should meet with an academic advisor at least once each semester to plan future coursework. In these meetings, students and advisors discuss academic and career goals, plans, and records which may include grade reports, transcripts, evaluations of work transferred to TCU and degree plans. Students new to the TCU and the MSW Program are likely to require assistance in the mechanics of first-time enrollment and in exploring choices related to selection of courses and degree programs. Students with more University and MSW Program experience often handle these tasks with little need for assistance, but may profit from direction in maximizing academic performance and setting career goals. Students nearing the completion of their academic programs are likely to need specific help in ensuring that all degree requirements are met. They may also need assistance with their transition to a career or advanced study. The specific activities required will depend on the advisor, the student and the student's progress in their academic career.

The student-advisor relationship is one of shared expectations and responsibilities, the nature of which will depend on the needs of the student and their academic program. The actual activities involved in advising will change as the student progresses through the degree program.
A quality advising relationship requires a dedicated advisor and a prepared student. The student must initiate the advising activities, define the need of advising activity, and be prepared to take responsibility for their academic and career goals as well as their academic performance. Prior to seeing their advisors, students should become familiar with degree and major requirements for programs of interest and courses in which they wish to enroll. Advisors will answer questions and make suggestions, but the student must assume full responsibility for satisfying all program and degree requirements (see University Advising Policy).

Advising Process

At the beginning of the first semester in the MSW Program, students are assigned a Social Work faculty member as an academic advisor.
The actual number of times a student should meet with their academic advisor each semester depends on the advisor, the student, the student's program and their academic progress. All students should confer with their academic advisors at least once each semester during the scheduled advising period for the subsequent semester. Students may also want to meet with their advisors to discuss degree requirements, career goals, internship opportunities, academic progress, etc. Students must meet with their advisors before registering for classes each semester, but are encouraged to confer with them anytime that academic concerns arise during the year.
In preparation for the advising for the subsequent semester, students should:

- Give thoughtful consideration to their personal, educational and career goals, and reevaluate these goals as necessary.
- Acquire a basic familiarity with their own academic program, including all applicable requirements and policies.
- Give advance consideration to a tentative schedule of classes each semester prior to their

advising meeting.
- Provide timely notice and information concerning any academic problems encountered.
- Read carefully and make appropriate responses to all communications from their school/college office, their advisor, the Dean of Students Office and Office of the Registrar.

Additional considerations for advising within the TCU MSW Program
Any student who is assigned a grade of I (incomplete), a grade of C, or who is placed on academic warning status must contact their assigned advisor before registering for the following semester. The assigned advisor will work with the MSW Program Director to set up a joint meeting with the student to discuss their academic progress (see Academic Problems, Academic Warning Status & Program Termination section below).

For students experiencing difficulties, faculty advisors refer them to appropriate resources inside or outside the university setting. University services most frequently used include the Counseling Center, the Writing Center, the Health Center, and the Center for Academic Services. Social Work faculty members limit their advising role to those concerns relevant to the educational needs of students. When students require or request ongoing professional counseling, faculty refer them to appropriate resources, both on and off campus.

The Director of Practicum Education may serve in an advisory function to students as they work to determine which practicum placement locations best fit their educational and professional goals.

Academic Warning Status

An MSW student will be placed on academic warning status if their grade-point average falls below 3.0 or if they receive a "C" in a graduate course. A student who receives a C grade or below, an incomplete grade, or a report of academic misconduct may have their academic progress reviewed by their MSW academic advisor.

While in warning status:

- If a student plans to continue in their degree program, they may not drop any course(s) or withdraw for a semester without approval from their academic advisor, MSW Program Director, and Department Chair.

- The semester after they receive warning status, the student must raise their overall grade-point average to a 3.0, or the student will be terminated from the program.

Early Termination

Students can be terminated from the MSW program for reasons relating to low academic performance, academic misconduct, and unethical/professional actions. Examples for receiving early termination:

- Earning more than two C grades (or below) in courses and/or failing to maintain an overall 3.0 GPA.

- Earning a third C grade or first F grade in the final semester before they are scheduled to graduate.

Students will be notified in writing about decisions impacting their continuation in the program. They may follow the university grade appeal process if they would like to appeal a course grade. Review the MSW Program Handbook for more details:

https://harriscollege.tcu.edu/social-work/student-experience.php

Further, students can receive early termination for unsatisfactory practicum performance. Before termination is considered, students can make improvements aligned with policies found in the MSW practicum manual. A corrective action plan will be co-created with the student, agency representative, and director of practicum education. This plan will outline specific issues/behaviors, how they must be addressed, and the timeline that the student must follow to avoid further programmatic action steps if the issues/behaviors continue.

If deemed necessary, the MSW program and/or the agency have unfettered discretion to immediately remove students from the agency setting if the agency for MSW program considers the removal a warranted action to take. For example, poor performance, even one time, can place clients at risk. Therefore, any unprofessional and/or unethical conduct may result in immediate dismissal from a practicum internship, even when the student has yet to be notified in greater detail regarding why the decision was made. The student will be notified before they can return to their practicum or if a determination has been made for them to receive early termination. Removal decisions are often made jointly by the agency and the director of practicum education, yet agencies can terminate an internship without notice if they decide they must stop working with a student. Review the MSW Practicum Manual for details:

https://harriscollege.tcu.edu/social-work/student-experience.php

Additionally, faculty may notify in writing the MSW program director and/or department chair of the names of students who demonstrate any actions that raise serious questions about unprofessional conduct. The MSW program director will consult with the faculty member to make a determination about next steps. Non-academic actions related to ethical and professional conduct are also considered part of a student's performance, and a student can be dismissed from the program for failing to uphold ethical guidelines, including instances that may extend outside of the classroom, off-campus, and outside of their internship. Therefore, students can be eliminated from the program for academic and/or professional reasons.

ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE & PROCESS

Composition of Admissions Committee

The MSW Program Admissions Committee will consist of four to six members, including:

1. MSW Program Director
2. Admissions Coordinator – non-voting staff member
3. Department Chair
4. Director of Practicum Education

5. One to two faculty members from the Department of Social Work

Positions on this committee may rotate as faculty composition of the Department changes. The program's MSW Admissions Coordinator will coordinate all admissions efforts with the TCU Office of Graduate Studies. The MSW Admissions Coordinator is responsible for the initial eligibility screening of all applicants.

Process for Admission
There is a four-stage process for admissions to the MSW Program:

1. Eligibility Review
    a. MSW Admissions Coordinator reviews the application to determine if basic eligibility is met and indicates if the applicant has any unique characteristics.

2. Preliminary Consideration
    a. The MSW Admissions Committee reviews applications and assesses them according to the MSW Program Application Review Scoring Rubric.
    b. Applicants are separated into one of three categories:
        i. Exceeds required qualifications/criteria
        ii. Meets required qualifications/criteria
        iii. Does not meet required qualifications/criteria
    c. Those placed in the "Exceeds" or "Meets" categories will be included for final consideration.

3. Final Decisions
    a. The MSW Admissions Committee reviews those in the top and middle tiers.
    b. The MSW Admissions Committee will make admissions decisions for the top candidates.
    c. The MSW Admissions Coordinator will send letters of acceptance to those accepted into the MSW Program. A second tier of applicants will be maintained as a wait list and will be notified as such.
    d. Additional applications may be accepted if there is space available in the program.

4. Conditional acceptance is offered for those who need to complete prerequisites prior to enrollment.

Follow-Up and Offer Acceptance
Students admitted to the program will be given the opportunity to view financial aid details. Those accepting an offer of admission will need to pay a $300 non-refundable deposit to secure their seat in the program for the upcoming academic year. This deposit will be applied to their tuition.

The MSW Admissions Coordinator and MSW Program Director will provide fall course enrollment instructions and any additional materials needed by students following their acceptance of an admission offer. If needed, students admitted to the program may submit documentation for transfer credit consideration (see Transferring Courses description below).

A student orientation meeting will be held with all new graduate students before classes begin in the fall semester. Orientation is mandatory for all students accepted into the MSW program.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The admissions policy and procedures are designed to ensure that graduate students entering the MSW Program are committed to upholding the values, ethics, and principles of the social work profession and are committed to the mission of the MSW Program. The admission criteria and selection process are designed to ensure that students possess the academic abilities and motivation, and in the case of the Advanced Standing option, requisite knowledge and credentials to be successful in the MSW Program.

In addition to meeting the general admission requirements of TCU and the TCU Office of Graduate Studies, applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Traditional (2-year) or Advanced Standing (1-year) MSW program. Applicants may be reviewed for entry into either of the programs.

Admissions decisions will be based on a wide range of information, including the stipulated qualifications described below. Admission to the program presumes the ability and willingness to follow the sequential curriculum structure.

Traditional MSW Program (60 Credits, 2-Full-time Years)

Admission Requirements:

1. **Undergraduate Degree:** a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.

2. **GPA:** at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in the last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework.

3. **References:** three professional/academic reference letters from persons who can address the applicant's qualifications (academic skills, interpersonal skills, potential for graduate education or social work practice). Please include at least one academic reference (instructor/advisor) and one professional reference (manager/supervisor).

4. **Professional Statement:** provide 100-200 word responses to these questions (below). Please answer each question separately and clearly in your responses.

   a. Why do you want to pursue an MSW degree at TCU?

   b. How do your personal values align with professional social work values?

   c. What social work career paths currently interest you and why?

   d. Name two things you could contribute to fellow MSW students to enhance their learning (e.g., skills or past work/volunteer experiences).

   e. Name two TCU-SW faculty you want to collaborate with and why.

f. Name two personal strengths and two personal areas for improvement.

5. **Resume:** submit either a current resume or a curriculum vitae.

6. **Transcripts:** unofficial transcripts from every university or college attended.

   a. Current and former TCU students will not need to complete this step.

   b. International applicants must submit an English copy of the transcript.

Academic Exception Petitions: An applicant with a GPA below 3.0 must submit a one-page letter (titled "Academic Exception Petition") outlining why the 3.0 minimum expectation should be waived. This letter can include (a) context relating to events outside their control that impacted their grades, (b) why their current GPA does not reflect their current academic abilities, and (c) their capacity to be successful in our MSW program. Examples of potential items to include: higher grades during their final 60 hours of undergraduate courses (indicating a trend toward improved academic performance) or outstanding (volunteer or paid) performance in human services work settings. Describe how you plan to address obstacles to complete the program (e.g., if you received low grades in the past because you "needed to work full-time during my undergraduate studies," then please also describe precautions taken to avoid this situation becoming a factor if you are admitted to the MSW program.

Advanced Standing MSW Program (30 Credits, 1 Full-time Year)

Admission Requirements:

1. **Undergraduate Degree:** an undergraduate social work degree (BSW, BSSW) or (BA, BS) in a social work major (your degree must be from a CSWE-accredited program.

   a. **Note**: International applicants with a bachelor's in social work must have their degree recognized by CSWE's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service to be considered for the Advanced Standing program.

2. **GPA:** at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in the last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework (advanced standing applicants must have a 3.0 or higher for past practicum courses). You can apply for the traditional program with a GPA below 3.0 for practicum courses.

3. **References**: three professional/academic reference letters from persons who can address the applicant's qualifications (academic skills, interpersonal skills, potential for graduate education or social work practice). Please include at least one academic reference (instructor/advisor) and one from a practicum instructor or supervisor.

4. **Professional Statement**: provide 100-200 work responses to these questions (below). Please answer each question separately and clearly in your responses.

a. Why do you want to pursue an MSW degree at TCU?

b. How do your personal values align with professional social work values?

c. What social work career paths currently interest you and why?

d. Name two things you could contribute to fellow MSW students to enhance their learning (e.g., skills or past work/volunteer experiences).

e. Name two TCU-SW faculty you want to collaborate with and why.

f. Name two personal strengths and two personal areas for improvement.

5. **Resume:** submit either a current resume or a curriculum vitae.

6. **Transcripts**: unofficial transcripts from every university or college attended.

   a. Current and former TCU students will not need to complete this step.

   b. International applicants must submit an English copy of the transcript.

COURSE CURRICULUM

Foundation Curriculum

The foundational curriculum provides students with the basic knowledge, skills and values necessary for generalist social work practice and for progression into advanced generalist work. In order to achieve its objective, foundation curriculum provides instruction in values and ethics; diversity; populations-at-risk and social, racial, and economic justice; human behavior and the social environment; social work practice; research; and practicum education.

In their practicum placement, students are placed in social service agencies under the supervision of Masters-level social workers, where they learn generalist practice methods used with a variety of client systems. Students complete 400 hours in the foundation practicum placement, with approximately two full days each week (16 hours) spent in the placement.

The foundation curriculum will provide students with the knowledge and skills consistent with the values of a generalist social work perspective, and provide a foundation for advanced practice. 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 characteristics of contemporary practice, ethical issues and concerns now confronting practitioners, and the organizational contexts of practice.

Foundation Curriculum Courses

MSW Foundation	
Fall	Spring

SOWO 61803- Professional Foundation	SOWO 61823-Diversity & Social Justice
SOWO 61813-Research Methods in Social Work	SOWO 61833-Macro Practice
SOWO 61873-Micro Practice	SOWO 61863-Social Welfare Policies & Services
SOWO 61843- HBSE 1	SOWO 61853-HBSE 2
SOWO 61883-Practicum 1	SOWO 61893-Practicum 2

Advanced Curriculum

The advanced curriculum builds on the foundation curriculum and has an advanced generalist focus with the expectation that graduates can assume practice, supervisory, and administrative roles in organizations at the advanced level. The advanced curriculum is also structured to allow students to choose electives in the areas of children and families, and health and mental health.

All students complete a full year of advanced practice courses, including one course each in administration and management, applied evaluation research, mental health practice, and advanced practice. In addition to these required courses, students in the advanced year of the curriculum must take two electives, which will enhance their knowledge and skills in one area of specialization (children and families or health and mental health).

The advanced practicum education courses allow students to apply their knowledge and skills to one area of specialization noted above through placement in an agency that reflects the specialization of the student's choice. In their practicum placement, students are placed in social service agencies under the supervision of Masters-level social workers, where they learn advanced practice methods used with client systems of interest to the student. Students complete 500 hours in the advanced practicum placement, with approximately two to three full days each week (20-24 hours) spent in the placement.

Advanced Curriculum Courses

The MSW advanced curriculum chart below serves as a guide for both Traditional 60-hour students in their concentration year, as well as Advanced Standing students who are entering the program after completion of an accredited BSW program. Traditional students will complete the advanced curriculum in their second year of the program. Advanced Standing students will complete the advanced curriculum in year one of the program.

MSW Advanced	
Fall	Spring
SOWO 65833- Perspectives on Mental Health Practice	SOWO 65803-Administration & Management
SOWO 65873-Advanced Practice	SOWO 65893-Practicum Education 4
SOWO 65813-Evaluation Research	SOWO 65863-Practicum Seminar 4
SOWO 65883-Practicum Education 3	Elective
SOWO 65823-Practicum Seminar 3	Elective

NO REPEAT OF GENERALIST CONTENT

Advanced Standing students who have successfully completed their undergraduate social work degree from a CSWE-accredited baccalaureate social work program will not repeat generalist content at the Master's level that has been achieved at the baccalaureate level. Advanced Standing students are admitted to the Advanced Standing program option by displaying strong academic preparation as demonstrated by an undergraduate GPA of at least a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, as well as an

earned grade of B or better in their BSW placements. Advanced Standing students who have a minimum of a 3.0 GPA in their last 60 hours of BSW coursework and a B or better in their BSW placements will not have to repeat generalist content because our program understands that they have achieved this content via the 3.0 GPA and B or better grade in practicum. Students who do not meet these criteria are understood to have not achieved this content and will only be considered for admission to the Traditional program option.

COURSE LOAD REQUIREMENTS

Students in the MSW program are expected to be enrolled for the prescribed 15 semester hours during each long-session semester. Students may take courses on an extended basis with approval from the MSW Program Director, which may prolong their time in the program to up to four years.

LIFE EXPERIENCE

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

DIRECTED STUDY COURSES

Directed study courses provide students with an opportunity to study special topics of interest to members of the social work profession. Directed study courses in the MSW program can only be taken in the advanced year, as an elective. Core courses cannot be taken as a directed study course.

In all respects, directed study courses should meet the standards of other courses offered in the program. Supervised practicum experience as well as research experience may be used as a component of a directed study course, but all courses must contain substantial reading and writing components as well as regularly scheduled meetings with the instructor to assist in the integration of course material. Employment cannot be counted as directed study course credit.

To Register for a Directed Study Course

Each student must secure the cooperation of a faculty member of the Department of Social Work or other department who is willing to be the instructor for the course, as well as permission from the MSW Program Director for the Directed Study course. The student, in collaboration with the faculty member, must submit an outline for the directed study course that contains specific information about course content and objectives. Students may not register for a directed study course without the completed course outline, including the faculty member's signature. The completed outline should be returned to the student's academic advisor, prior to the registration period. A copy of the outline will be placed in the student's file.

ELECTIVES

To satisfy elective requirements, students may take elective course work within the Department or with approval from the Curriculum Committee, in other University departments.

Taking Electives Outside of the Department of Social Work

In order to take an elective course outside of the Department and receive proper credit toward the MSW degree, the student must submit a course description of the elective being considered along with the student's current career objectives to their academic advisor. Pre-approvals for

registration may be required from other departments. A copy of the completed form along with a syllabus of the course taken outside of the Department of Social Work must be kept in the student's academic file for graduation certification.

Because some University departments may place restrictions on enrollment, students should begin the approval process prior to the official University advising period each semester. Consult the Course Schedule and your academic advisor for listings of courses offered in other departments and any prerequisites they may carry.

PRACTICUM HOUR CREDIT (Advanced Standing MSW Students Only)

Students entering the MSW program as Advanced Standing students will have 400 hours of undergraduate practicum work recognized toward the total of 900 hours needed for graduation from the MSW program at TCU, regardless of the number of hours completed in a CSWE accredited BSW program over 400. If in the undergraduate practicum placement, a student did not receive a B or higher average across their practicum education and/or practicum seminar courses, the student will be considered for the Traditional Program.

If granted 400 hours toward completion of MSW practicum hours, students are then required to complete 500 hours in the advanced practicum placement during the MSW program.

Grading Policy

Academic performance is based on alignment with course objectives and policies outlined in course syllabi. Instructors are responsible to evaluate students' academic performance to determine student's final grades. In the MSW program, students earn course credit when they receive A, B, or C letter grades. Students will not receive course credit for any grade below a C grade. Students will be dismissed from the MSW program if they receive below a C grade in one graduate course or two or more C grades in graduate courses. Students must have a 3.0 GPA or higher across all courses to complete their MSW program. Transfer credits from other institutions will not be included in a GPA. Only upper-division and graduate-level courses completed for a letter grade while a student is enrolled in the MSW program will be counted.

Regarding incomplete courses:

- Students must satisfy any applicable incompletes before starting final year coursework / practicum.
- Conditionally admitted MSW students may not begin coursework with incompletes for applicable undergraduate degree courses.
- Students cannot receive transfer credits for incomplete courses from another academic institution.
- Students applying for graduation cannot receive an incomplete during their final program semester.

- Any incomplete(s) remaining during a student's final semester will result in postponed graduation and require them to retake incomplete courses in a future semester before they can officially graduate.

Sometimes, students may wish to appeal a grade. In these cases, they should follow the university Grade Appeal Policy. This policy provides the formal process for students appealing a grade assigned for a course or the results of another critical component of a degree requirement (e.g. oral exam, juried exhibition, thesis, etc.), program dismissals, sanctions for academic misconduct or other appeals of an academic nature. The grade appeals process is as follows:

1. Appeal to the Faculty Member(s)
    a. In the event a student questions the appropriateness of a grade assigned for a course or the results of another critical component of a degree requirement (e.g. oral exam, juried exhibition, thesis, etc.) the student must first discuss the matter with the faculty member(s).
    b. These discussions between the faculty member and student should be initiated by the student as soon as possible after the grade is assigned, but no later than ten (10) Academic Days following the disclosure of the grade to the student.
    c. The faculty member is expected to respond with their decision within ten (10) Academic Days of the initiation. If there is no response from the faculty member, the student may present the issue directly to the Department Chair.
    d. In the event that the faculty member agrees to change the grade/decision, the normal process for changing a grade shall be followed.
    e. If the student wishes to appeal the faculty member's decision after these discussions, they must follow the formal grade appeals process outlined below.
2. Appeal to the Department Chair
    a. The student may appeal the faculty decision in writing to the Department Chair or appropriate administrator within five (5) Academic Days of receiving a response from the faculty member.
    b. The Department Chair or appropriate administrator will become familiar with the facts of the case by communicating with the student and the faculty member(s). The parties have a right to meet with the chair without the other party present. The faculty member or examination committee chair will respond in writing to the Department Chair concerning the student's appeal. At any point in the appeals process, the appealing student has the right to request and obtain copies of any materials relating to the student that have been shared with others to justify the grade or other issue under appeal.
    c. The Department Chair or appropriate administrator may either accept or deny the student's appeal. The chair will notify the student and faculty member(s) of their decision in writing within ten (10) Academic Days of receiving the appeal. In the event that the Department Chair accepts the student's appeal, and no further appeals occur, they will initiate a grade change through the dean of the college.
    d. EXCEPTIONS: If the Department Chair is involved in the appeal as the faculty member (or is one of the faculty members), the chair of the department advisory committee will assume the Department Chair's role in the appeal process. If the department does not have a department advisory committee, the chair of the school/college advisory committee will assume the Department Chair's role in the appeal process.

3. Appeal to the Academic Dean
    a. The chair's position may be appealed in writing by the student or faculty member(s) to the appropriate Academic Dean within five (5) Academic Days of the Department Chair's decision.
    b. The Dean will become familiar with the facts of the case by reading the prior appeal documents and by communicating with the student, faculty member(s), and the Department Chair. The parties have the right to meet with the Dean without the other party present.
    c. The Academic Dean will notify the student, faculty member(s), and the Department Chair of their decision in writing within ten (10) Academic Days of receiving the appeal. In the event the Dean upholds the student's appeal and no further appeals occur, the change of grade shall be reported by the Dean to the Office of the Registrar.
    d. EXCEPTIONS: If the Dean of the college/school is involved in the appeal as the faculty member, the student may appeal directly to the Academic Appeals Committee.
4. Appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee
    a. The Dean's decision may be appealed in writing by the student, the faculty member(s), or the department chair to the Academic Appeals Committee within five (5) Academic Days of the Dean's decision. The Academic Appeals Committee will follow the appeals procedures in the Academic Appeals Committee Policy, which may be obtained in full from the chair of the committee or the Provost's office.
    b. The appeal by the student, the faculty member(s), or the Department Chair will be sent to the Academic Appeals Committee chair in writing. The material corresponding to the appeal should include a letter to the committee discussing the reason for the appeal and all pertinent documents that support the appeal. When the appeal is received, the committee chair will ask the appropriate Dean for all written documents pertaining to the appeal. Once the committee chair receives the documents, they will convene a hearing panel and distribute the documents to the hearing panel members and, typically, to the parties to the appeal. During the review of the material, the chair may request other documents pertaining to the appeal. The chair will set a date for a hearing that will include the appropriate committee members, the student, and the faculty member(s). The chair will request that the Dean or a designee be present to represent the college or school. Other faculty or administrators with information directly relevant to the hearing may also be invited by the committee chair.
    c. A hearing will take place at which time all parties will have an opportunity to discuss their case and committee members will ask questions to better understand the appeal. The committee will confer and come to a decision on whether to support the appeal or not. All 4 parties will be notified in writing of the committee's decision within five (5) Academic Days of its decision. In the event the committee upholds the student's appeal, the chair will advise the appropriate dean to report the change of grade to the Office of the Registrar.
5. Throughout the appeal process, if a student does not receive a reply acknowledging receipt of an appeal letter within five (5) Academic Days, they may contact the next administrator to request the next stage of appeal.

INCOMPLETE POLICY

An "I" (Incomplete) grade is recorded when the student and instructor have determined that the work required for a course cannot be completed within the term of enrollment due to

circumstances beyond the control of the student. Under no circumstances will a grade of "I" be given to avoid earning a grade of "F" for the course. The "I" grade must be removed within the first 60 days of the regular semester immediately following or it is changed to an "F." Any extension of this time must have the written approval of the instructor and dean.

Removal of I-Grades
Grades of incomplete must be changed by 60 days into the next long semester after the incomplete was received. "I" grades received in the spring semester must be removed 60 days after the start of the fall semester. Actual deadline dates are posted on the Academic Calendar available on the Registrar's Home Page. To remove an incomplete, the instructor initiates the grade change via the grade roster. The request is routed to the department chair, and when approved, it is routed to the academic dean. After the dean's approval the grade is changed. Current and cumulative grade point averages (GPA) are recalculated at time of grade change posting.

Department of Social Work Incomplete Grade Contract
Incomplete grades are only given when the student has a) not completed all required coursework, b) there is a reasonable probability that the student will complete the course requirements after the end of the term, and c) if the student's overall grade in the course is passing at the time a student requests an Incomplete from the instructor. Responsibility for completing all course work rests with the student. Responsibility for grading the completed work and reporting the grade change to the Office of the Registrar rests with the instructor.

An "incomplete" may be initiated by student request to the instructor. The instructor must inform the MSW Program Director of the request, and collaboratively complete an incomplete contract with the student. The contract must be signed by the MSW Program Director, instructor, and student, and then saved in the student's file.

Graduation

To graduate, students must:

- Be enrolled in the MSW program in the same semester when they graduate.
- Successfully complete all required coursework for the MSW or dual degree.
- Have no incompletes and a cumulative 3.0 graduate GPA or better in courses.
- Take the Texas Jurisprudence and Master's Level Social Work Licensure Exams.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE
Students who anticipate being on leave in a long semester (fall or spring) must:
1. Complete the Program Confirmation of Leave of Absence form.
2. Obtain authorization from the Department Chair.
3. Failure to secure a leave of absence in advance of the semester of which a student will be on leave will result in a non-guarantee of readmission.

LICENSURE EXAM

All students must take the applicable licensure exam prior to graduation. Any student who does not take the licensure exam prior to graduation is no longer eligible to graduate during the current semester.

MEDICAL WITHDRAWAL/COURSE REDUCTION/RETROACTIVE WITHDRAWAL

Students must be "continuously registered" for all long semesters (fall and spring) until completion of the degree. Students are required to secure a leave of absence for semesters in which they will be on leave. If a student has not taken courses for one long semester or more, application for readmission must be completed and students must have departmental approval to return. TCU requires that students seeking readmission pay a $40 readmission fee to the Registrar's Office.

Significant medical or mental health problems can affect a student's ability to attend classes or perform academically. In these cases, a student may apply for a course load reduction, a current semester withdrawal, or a retroactive withdrawal for the previous long semester. Students must meet with their academic advisor to discuss this course of action. Decisions will be made based on a review conducted by the MSW Program Director and the student's assigned faculty advisor.

PASS/NO-CREDIT GRADING OPTION

Graduate students may not elect the Pass/No-Credit grading option for their coursework.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAM POLICY

Student participation in the Social Work department is encouraged formally and informally. Students provide an important perspective to assist in the formation of the implicit and explicit curriculum. Ongoing mechanisms that support equitable and inclusive student involvement in the implicit and explicit curriculum include: end-of-semester course evaluations, program evaluation surveys, practicum evaluation surveys, student exit questionnaires, and personal feedback to faculty and advisors about the program environment, program policies, faculty, and staff. Evaluations, surveys, and questionnaires are sent to every student in the program to ensure that student participation in the implicit and explicit curriculum is equitable and inclusive.

Furthermore, 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 enhancement of the implicit curriculum.

TERMINATION FROM THE MSW PROGRAM

Criteria for dismissal from the major includes academic performance and nonacademic criteria. These gatekeeping efforts, counseling students in or out of the program, are supported by the university and by the judicial system.

A student will be dismissed from the program for earning two or more "C" grades or below in courses and/or failing to maintain an overall GPA of 3.0.

Nonacademic criteria related to professionalism and ethical behavior is considered part of the academic arena of a professional program. Criteria may include, but are not limited to, the criteria described in the university's policy on Unprofessional Behavior, Disruptive Behavior, and Lack of Academic Progression. 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, as described in both the NASW Code of Ethics and the Texas Code of Conduct for social workers. The process of termination from a course and/or the MSW Program is described in full below. 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. The process of termination from a course and/or the MSW Program is described in full below.

UNPROFESSIONAL OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR & LACK OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Unprofessional Behavior

When a student exhibits Unprofessional Behavior within an academic discipline, the student may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University. Violations will be reported to the dean of the school/college in which the student is enrolled, who will be responsible for investigating all allegations and recommending appropriate disciplinary actions. While the above applies to all students, graduate students at TCU occupy a unique position in the student body. They are more mature individuals with a defined perspective for the future and a high degree of both motivation and ability. In some instances, they are both seeking advanced knowledge and transmitting knowledge through their assignments as teaching or research assistants. While preparing for the professional models characteristic of their chosen discipline, they also serve as models to others in the graduate student role. All of this brings a special obligation to evidence a level of conduct that is compatible with the University's goals to offer programs of excellence and to enrich both the community and humankind.

Disruptive Behavior

When any student, acting individually or in concert with others, engages in Disruptive Behavior, the student may be asked to stop the disruptive behavior by an instructor or staff of the University. If the student continues, an instructor/staff member is authorized to tell the student to leave the area or classroom and, if the student will not leave, to call campus police. The instructor/staff may immediately call campus police without prior request to the student if presented with an unsafe situation, threatening behavior, violence, or other appropriate circumstances. Further, the instructor/staff may take action to withdraw the student from the class or educational experience. Although some disruptive behavior may be due to a mental or physical disorder, as it relates to violence or disruptive or threatening behavior, students with such disorders will be held to the same standards as others.

Lack of Academic Progress

When a student is exhibiting a Lack of Academic Progression, this may result in consequences including withdrawal from classes, denial of enrollment, program dismissal, suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate action.

Withdrawal of Student from Class or Other Educational Experience

When a student disrupts a class or other educational experience, acts in a threatening manner, is not making acceptable academic progress, or if the student's behavior or lack of preparation is

detrimental to the educational experience of others or could create an unsafe condition, or if the student is compromising the learning environment, the instructor may take action to withdraw the student from the class or educational experience. To do this, the instructor shall provide the student written notice of intent to withdraw the student from the class or educational experience, with an explanation of the instructor's reason(s), and with a copy to the instructor's department chair. The notice should schedule a meeting with the student and the department chair to occur within five (5) Academic Days of the notice. The instructor may bar the student from the class or educational experience pending the result of the meeting, and the written notice should advise the student if there is such a bar. At the meeting, the student may have one advisor. Following the meeting, the instructor shall decide whether to withdraw the student from the class or educational experience. If a student is withdrawn after the last day to drop, their grade will be recommended by the instructor to the dean of the instructor's college or school as an "F." Before the last day to drop, the course may be dropped without notation. The student may appeal these decisions within ten (10) Academic Days in writing to the academic dean of the college or school offering the course or their designee. If a student does not receive a reply acknowledging receipt of an appeal letter within five (5) Academic Days, they may contact the next administrator to request the next stage of appeal. During the student's appeal, the student remains withdrawn from and is barred from attending the class. The dean's decision may be appealed in writing to the Academic Appeals Committee within five (5) Academic Days of the dean's decision. The Academic Appeals Committee will follow the appeals procedures in the Academic Appeals Committee Policy, which may be obtained in full from the chair of the committee or the Provost's office.

Denying Enrollment, Suspension, Expulsion, and Other Appropriate Action
When a student disrupts a class or other educational experience, acts in a threatening manner, is not making acceptable academic progress, or if the student's behavior or lack of preparation is detrimental to the educational experience of others or could create an unsafe condition, or if the student is compromising the learning environment, or if the student has acted contrary to the professional or ethical standards of the University, a department thereof, or a particular field, an academic dean, or the dean's designee, may additionally: a) deny class enrollment to the student; b) suspend or expel the student from the University or dismiss the student from one or more of its programs; or c) take other appropriate action. The student affected by such a decision by an academic dean, or the dean's designee, may appeal in writing to the Academic Appeals Committee within ten (10) Academic Days of the dean's decision. The Academic Appeals Committee will follow the appeals procedures in the Academic Appeals Committee Policy, which may be obtained in full from the chair of the committee or the Provost's office. The decision of the academic dean (or designee) remains in place during the pendency of the appeal. A student so suspended, dismissed, or expelled shall have a grade of "F" recorded for each course in progress as determined appropriate by the academic dean. Unless the action under this policy will render the student ineligible to enroll in the University, the transcript will not record suspension or expulsion.

TIME LIMITS FOR COMPLETION

The Council on Social Work Education's standard for completing the MSW degree is four years. Based on the CSWE standard, the Department of Social Work requires all students to complete the degree in a timely fashion. Continuation beyond four years is approved only in rare and extenuating circumstances, and initiated only upon student request. In all cases, all requirements

for a master's degree must be completed within one six-year period. Work over six years old can be reinstated only with the permission of the Department Chair, upon recommendation of the MSW Admissions Committee.

TRANSFER CREDIT

Applicants may request credit hour approvals. Each transfer credit request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, yet all transfer credit requests for graduate-level social work courses must meet these criteria:

1. Be from a CSWE-accredited MSW program

2. Receive a B grade or higher (3.0 on a 4.0 scale)

Requests for transfer credit approval must first be submitted to the MSW program director. The program director will review the request. With program director approval, the request will be sent on to the department chair and college dean for additional approval reviews.

Applicants requesting transfer credits must first:

1. Apply to the MSW program (traditional or advanced standing).

2. Submit unofficial transcripts for each transfer credit course.

3. Submit a letter with the exact courses they want to transfer.

Admission to the MSW program does not guarantee that transfer credits will be approved. More materials may be requested (courses catalog descriptions, syllabi copies, etc.).

Section II: Other Resources

HARRIS COLLEGE ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER

The Harris College Academic Resource Center (HARC) 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

TCU Center for Career & Professional Development

Assigned Liaison to Harris College
817-257-2222

HARC Information
Annie Richardson Bass Building, 2nd floor
HARC@tcu.edu
817.257.6112

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.

Main Center:
Reed Hall, Room 419
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
writingctr@tcu.edu
817.257.7221

Tom Brown Annex:
3rd Floor Commons
Sunday - Thursday
6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
To schedule an appointment with a writing specialist, call (817) 257-7221 or visit the Center for Writing's graduate web site for additional information on making virtual appointments.

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 in 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 practicum instructors, as a benefit of being part of the University community.

STUDENT ACCESS & 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 office of the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities during orientation or as soon as possible. The Coordinator 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 and met with the Coordinator before the semester begins. For more information regarding student access and accommodation services, contact:

Student Access and Accommodations
Texas Christian University
TCU Box 297710
Fort Worth, Texas 76129
(817) 257-7486

Section III: Appendix

NASW Code of Ethics
Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners
NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice
TCU Student Handbook