



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY
CENTRAL TEXAS™

Master of Social Work Program Student Handbook

Table of Contents

Introduction- Pg. 3
Program Mission Statement- Pg. 4
TAMUCT MSW Program Framework- Pg. 4
Advanced Generalist Practice Definition- Pg. 5
Generalist Practice Definition- Pg. 5
Generalist Social Work Competencies- Pg. 6
Advanced Generalist Social Work Competencies -Pg. 6
Admission to the TAMUCT MSW Program- Pg. 7
Transfer Admittance Criteria- Pg. 8
Graduate Student Course Load- Pg. 9
New Student Orientation- Pg. 9
Academic Standing, Probation, Suspension, & Dismissal from the MSW Program- Pg. 9
Academic Appeals- Pg.10
Unprofessional Behaviors Policy- Pg. 12
Procedure- Pg.12
Termination of MSW Students for Professional Reasons- Pg.14
The MSW Curriculum- Pg. 14
Prior Work & Life Experience Credit Policy- Pg. 15
TAMUCT MSW Program Advisement Policies & Procedures-Pg. 15
MSW Field Instruction- Pg. 16
MSW Student Organizations, Rights, & Responsibilities- Pg. 17
Student Support Services- Pg. 18
Communication Between MSW Faculty & Students- Pg. 18
Professional Resources- Pg. 19

Texas A&M University-Central Texas
(TAMUCT)
Master of Social Work Program Student
Handbook

It is the student's responsibility to read and understand the Texas A&M-Central Texas Policies and Procedures as printed in the Texas A&M-Central Texas Student Handbook and in the University Student Handbook. Policies can also be viewed on the Texas A&M-Central Texas web page, www.tamuct.edu.

Introduction

Social work is a rewarding and a challenging profession, with a wide range of career options and fields of practice. Social workers are professionals who help people cope with complex interpersonal and social problems. Social workers help people to get needed resources and to promote just and better living conditions that promote social, economic and environmental justice. This helps make society a better place for us all. Because of rapid changes in our society and its complexity, social work is continually adapting to these changes.

The MSW program at TAMUCT is seeking candidacy status from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the accrediting body for professional social work programs. Social work at TAMUCT and its predecessors have offered social work education at the undergraduate level for over 35 years. The MSW is a professional program, and students are strongly encouraged to join the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the largest professional social work organization in the United States. The MSW at TAMUCT prepares graduates to take the graduate social work license examination through the Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners.

The MSW Social Work Student Handbook contains information about the mission and goals of the program, the generalist and advanced generalist practice models, the curriculum, admission requirements, the student's academic rights and responsibilities, student support services, academic appeals processes, professional development, and information about participating in student organizations.

The MSW handbook provides the policies and criteria for dismissal from the program for both academic and non-academic reasons and appeal processes. The MSW Handbook has policies and information about faculty advising for students.

Many of the expectations for students reflect professional and ethical behavior found in the NASW Code of Ethics <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>. The MSW Handbook also contains basic information about the field instruction program, although a more complete discussion of field instruction policies and procedures may be found in the MSW Field Instruction Manual.

This MSW Student Handbook is not intended to replace the TAMUCT Code of Conduct Policies and Procedures, which can be accessed at <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html>

MSW Students are responsible for being aware of and following all policies and procedures contained in this Student Handbook and the Texas A&M-Central Texas Catalog.

The TAMUCT MSW Program follows rigorous academic standards that ensure the professional competency of graduates. The MSW program is new and is actively pursuing accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). CSWE accreditation is an eligibility requirement for Texas licensure as an MSW. The MSW program's specialization and its foundation on Generalist Practice provide MSW graduates with the flexibility to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. MSW social workers often find employment in child and adult protective services, mental health agencies, nursing homes, hospitals, and other agencies that serve vulnerable populations.

Although MSW students may bring a variety of work and life experiences to the program, the MSW program does not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

TAMUCT MSW Mission Statement

The mission of the Master of Social Work Program at Texas A&M University-Central Texas, is to prepare high-quality graduates for leadership as advanced generalist social workers through education delivered in a rigorous and student-centered learning environment that promotes social work professional behavior, values and ethics, human and community well-being, respect for all people, challenges discrimination and oppressive practices, within a global perspective, and is guided by a person-in-environment framework, knowledge based on scientific inquiry, and social work competencies in for urban and rural communities. The MSW program also prepares graduates for becoming licensed social workers and for further education.

The program is intended to prepare professional social workers for advanced generalist social work and leadership across a wide range of social services, health care, behavioral health, and protective service positions.

TAMUCT MSW Program Framework

The TAMUCT MSW Program curriculum is rooted in a competency-based framework established by CSWE. Specifically, the program endeavors to develop social workers who promote human and community well-being by being able to demonstrate the following 9 competencies upon graduation:

- Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic and Environmental Justice
- Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
- Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice
- Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice
- Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Advanced Generalist Practice Definition

The MSW program uses the Advanced Generalist practice definition developed by Daley & Borasky (2025). This definition is as follows:

Advanced generalist practice is grounded in the professional foundation and incorporates the person-in-environment framework, strengths, and a problem-solving method. Its interventions extend and enhance the foundation competencies through a multi-system model which may incorporate a field of practice. Preparation for the advanced generalist provides theories, practice techniques, knowledge and application of values and ethics that prepare students for more complex generalist practice scenarios, situations or enhanced roles within generalist practice settings. Advanced generalist practitioners identify with the social work profession and apply ethical principles and critical thinking at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Advanced generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, to promote human and social well-being. Advanced generalist practice employs best practices and is based on scientific inquiry. Advanced generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. (Daley & Borasky, p. 69)

Generalist Practice Definition

The MSW program uses the generalist practice definition provided by CSWE in its 2022 Educational Standards. This definition is:

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice.

The social work competencies used by the program for advanced generalist practice are the same 9 competencies as those for generalist practice.

Generalist Social Work Competencies

The definition of generalist social work used by the program is that developed by the Council on Social Work Education (2022). This definition is:

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice.

The 9 social work competencies for generalist practice are:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Full descriptions of the competencies and the related practice behaviors may be found at:

<https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/bb5d8afe-7680-42dc-a332-a6e6103f4998/2022-EPAS.pdf>

Advanced Generalist Practice Competencies

Advanced generalist practice is based on the same 9 competencies as generalist practice. However, advanced generalist practice adds specialized knowledge, values, and skills with at least two social systems. Advanced generalist are expected to demonstrate more autonomy and leadership than a generalist social worker.

Admission to the TAMUCT MSW Program

Students apply directly to the University and Graduate school for admission to the TAMUCT MSW Program. Each applicant must apply for graduate admission to TAMUCT and submit copies of undergraduate transcripts. **All applicants to the MSW must also submit an application to the MSW program and two letters of reference that speak to the applicant's interest in social work and qualities that would make a good social worker.** Criteria for admission to the MSW program are as follows:

Standard Admittance Criteria

To be admitted to the MSW program a student must have an earned bachelor's degree from an accredited university. The minimum GPA for full admission is 3.0 in the last 60 sch of the bachelor's degree.

Admission to any graduate degree program is subject to approval by the dean of the Graduate School, based on the recommendation of the respective department overseeing the proposed course of study. Full admission is granted to applicants who meet the following criteria:

- Attainment of conditional admission status to the Graduate School at A&M–Central Texas.
- Acceptance into a specific graduate program of interest.
- Submission of a current degree plan on file.
- Fulfillment of any additional program-specific requirements required for full admission.

Full admission status allows graduate students to enroll in maximum course loads or lower, based on their preferences. However, students are encouraged to take a manageable course load to facilitate retention of learned skills. If pursuing a full course load, students are advised not to work full-time.

Conditional admission is granted to applicants who meet the following requirements:

- For current A&M–Central Texas undergraduates: Completion of the Quick Admissions application.
- For new students: Submission of a completed application via ApplyTexas.
- Possession of a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited U.S. institution or an equivalent foreign institution.
- Conditional admission is granted to applicants whose GPA on the last 60 credit hours of undergraduate coursework falls between 2.5 and 2.99. This status provides an opportunity for applicants to demonstrate their ability to succeed in graduate-level coursework while upholding the academic standards of the university.
- Applicants in this GPA range may submit minimum acceptable GRE or GMAT scores to be considered for full admission at the time of application.
- The minimum passing scores for the GRE and GMAT are as follows:

GRE: A minimum score of 290 is required for general admission consideration.

GMAT: A minimum score of 500 is required for general admission consideration.

Applicants who do not submit GRE/GMAT scores, or who do not meet the minimum score requirements, are admitted conditionally.

- Conditionally admitted students are limited to 12 semester credit hours (SCH) of graduate coursework. Students who maintain a 3.0 GPA in the first 12 SCH are fully admitted and allowed to continue in the program. If a student's GPA falls below 3.0 after completing 12 SCH, they are dismissed from the program.
- Applicants with a GPA below 2.5 on the last 60 credit hours (including all courses in the semester where the 60th hour occurs) are not admitted. These students are encouraged to improve their GPA through post-baccalaureate or non-degree-seeking (NDS) coursework before reapplying.
- Conditional admission may be granted by the Graduate School until full admission criteria are met. For details regarding specific graduate program admission requirements, please contact the graduate program coordinator via the Graduate School.

Either full or conditional admission status for the MSW program is made by the Graduate upon recommendation by the MSW program.

Students who have the BSW in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (or equivalent) are eligible for advanced standing and may complete only the final 30 sch of the program. Students who are conditionally admitted may not receive full advanced standing status.

No course credit is awarded for prior work or life experience.

Transfer Admittance Criteria

Graduate transfer credit requests must be submitted by the student's academic advisor or Graduate Program coordinator with approval of the department chair and are subject to final approval by the dean of the Graduate School. The university may accept up to 12 semester credit hours of graduate coursework from an accredited institution, including coursework completed as part of a previously awarded degree.

Transfer coursework must be completed at an accredited institution, must carry a letter grade of A or B (3.0 or higher), and must not be more than six years old at the time of degree conferral. Courses with non-letter grades (e.g., CR, P, S, U) are not eligible for transfer consideration.

Coursework that reaches or exceeds the six-year limit at the time of degree conferral will become invalid and will not apply toward degree requirements. Expired coursework will be reflected accordingly on the student's degree audit.

Transfers of graduate credit in social work must be from a MSW program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (or equivalent) and be equivalent to courses in the program. Specialized practice courses and the final field instruction must be taken at TAMUCT.

No course credit is awarded for prior work or life experience.

Process for the evaluation of applications:

Applications for admission come to the Graduate School and are reviewed there. They are then forwarded to the MSW program for review and recommendations prior to an admission decision being made. MSW applications are reviewed by the program faculty. Recommendations from the MSW program are forwarded to the Graduate School for an admission decision. The Graduate School then notifies the applicant of the admission status and any conditions.

Graduate Student Course Load

A full-time graduate student is defined as one who is enrolled in 9 semester credit hours during the fall or spring semester. Summer course loads vary depending on the length of the session in which a student is enrolled. These course loads pertain to registration status—see Enrollment Status Descriptions for Financial Aid requirements.

16 Week Term – Full load = 9 sch & Maximum = 16 sch

10 Week Term = Full load 6 sch & Maximum load 9 sch

8 Week Term = Full load 6 sch & Maximum 9 sch

International Student Enrollment Requirement – International students on an F-1 visa must enroll in a minimum of 9 credit hours per fall and spring semester to maintain their visa status. Of these 9 credit hours, at least 6 credit hours must be taken in an on-site, face-to-face format.

Enrollment Status Descriptions for Financial Aid – For financial aid purposes, enrollment requirements remain consistent across all semesters (Fall, Spring, and Summer). Graduate students must meet the following credit hour thresholds to qualify for various enrollment statuses:

- Full-time: 9 or more graduate-level credit hours
- Three-fourths time: 7 to 8 graduate-level credit hours
- Half-time: 5 to 6 graduate-level credit hours

Note: Enrollment exceeding the maximum load requires prior approval from the dean of the Graduate School.

New Student Orientation

All new MSW students are required to attend a new student orientation to the program. This orientation is separate from any orientation required by the university. The purpose of this orientation is to meet the faculty, learn about the profession of social work, learn program expectations, be introduced to policies and procedures, and to build a sense of community with other students.

Students who do not complete this orientation may not proceed through the program.

Academic Standing, Probation, Suspension & Dismissal from the MSW Program

Students may be placed on probation, suspended, or dismissed from the MSW program for either Academic or Professional Behavioral reasons. For matters of academic standing the MSW program follows the policies of the Graduate School.

Academic Standing = Every student enrolled in the Graduate School is expected to maintain a high standard of academic performance and to comply fully with all institutional policies and regulations. Students admitted to graduate study must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA on all graduate coursework

completed at A&M–Central Texas, both for each semester and cumulatively. The Graduate School reserves the right to suspend any graduate student who fails to maintain satisfactory academic standing or who does not adhere to university policies and regulations.

Probation – At the end of any grading period, if a student’s semester or overall GPA falls below the minimum required by the department (at least a 3.0 GPA), the student will receive notice of unsatisfactory academic performance and will be placed on probation. The student must attain a 3.0 cumulative GPA during the next period of enrollment. Failure to do so will result in suspension.

Suspension – At the end of any grading period, if a student’s semester or overall GPA falls below a 2.0, the student will be automatically suspended and may not enroll in classes for one long semester or the summer term. During the suspension period, students are not permitted to submit transcripts for coursework taken at other institutions for the purpose of degree advancement. Upon return from suspension, the student must sign a contract with the Graduate School outlining the conditions required for continued enrollment. At a minimum, the student must maintain a 3.0 GPA in every subsequent semester. Additional conditions may be imposed on a case-by-case basis. A graduate student is allowed one suspension.

Dismissal - If poor academic performance results in a second suspension, the student will be dismissed from the current program and may be permanently dismissed from the university. Dismissal from a second program will result in permanent dismissal from the university.

Appeals of probation, suspension or academic dismissal may be done under procedures established by the TAMUCT Graduate school.

Academic Appeals

A student’s final course grade is based on the grading policies, procedures, and criteria stated in the course syllabus distributed at the beginning of the semester by the instructor. The syllabus will include the basis for calculation of grades, including weights as applicable for tests, field work, projects, papers, homework, class attendance and participation and other graded activities.

Normally a student’s concern over a final course grade can be handled informally between the student and the instructor of the course. If the issue cannot be resolved satisfactorily between the student and the instructor, then the student may request a grade appeal using the procedure outlined below. The next in line of appeal is the MSW program director.

The original grade will stand in the student’s university record until the appeals process is concluded.

1. A final grade can only be appealed under one or more of the following conditions:
 - A clerical/computational error was made in calculating/reporting the grade.
 - The grading decision was made on some basis other than academic performance and other than as a penalty for academic misconduct.

- The grading procedure employed was arbitrary and departed substantially from accepted academic norms or is not consistent with the course syllabus.
- The grade was not determined using the same process applied to other students in the course.

a. Course grades affected by plagiarism and/or cheating may not be appealed.

2. A student who wishes to appeal a final course grade must submit a written grade appeal request to the course faculty member at their official university email address within 30 calendar days of the date that final course grades were posted. The written appeal must contain all of the information necessary to render a decision. The written grade appeal must include the following information:

- Student name, address, student's university email, telephone number, and Warrior Identification Number
- Course name, CRN, prefix/number and semester/year class was taken
- Name of faculty member assigned to the course
- A clear statement of the grade change being requested and the justification for the request
- Attach additional evidence that supports the grade appeal. This may include items such as personal grade records, copies of graded work, email communication with the faculty member, or comparisons of own work to the work of other students.

3. The faculty member is expected to provide the student a written decision (by the student's university email or by certified mail) within 20 business days. If the student is dissatisfied with the decision or does not receive a response from the faculty member within 20 business days, the student may submit the grade appeal to the MSW program director or department chair. In the rare case that there is not a department chair or if the faculty member of the course is the department chair, then the written appeal should be sent directly to the dean of the college. The student has five business days to submit the appeal.

4. The department chair is expected to provide the student a written decision (by student's university email or by certified mail) within 10 business days.

5. A student dissatisfied with the department chair's decision may submit the appeal in writing to the college's dean. The student has five business days to submit the appeal. The college dean will give the grade appeal to the College Academic Appeals Committee for review. The Academic Appeals Committee consists of three faculty members from the college; each college is responsible for developing a specific and unbiased committee structure. After considering all aspects of the incident, the committee will render a recommendation to the academic dean. The decision of the academic dean is final and will be communicated to the student in writing within 20 business days.

A request for deviating from the grade appeal timeline must be approved by the dean of the college, and the student must be notified in writing of the change in appeal timeline.

Any question of interpretation or application of the Academic Grade Appeals Procedure shall be referred to the Office of the Provost.

Any question of interpretation or application of the college procedure shall be referred to the dean of the college.

Unprofessional Behaviors Policy

Social work is a professional program, and MSW students are held to standards of conduct consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics (<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>), the TAMUCT Student Code of Conduct, and the CSWE professional competencies. It is a student's responsibility to read, understand, and adhere to these standards of conduct, just as it would be expected of a professional social worker. Conduct that violates these standards is cause for concern as to whether a MSW student can successfully enter the social work profession. Consequently, violations of professional standards of conduct may result in disciplinary action by the program.

The TAMUCT MSW Program expects all social work students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner, consistent with our profession's Code of Ethics. The values and standards contained in the NASW Code of Ethics are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective.

Accordingly, we expect social work students to demonstrate courtesy, respect and support for fellow students, instructors, staff, other professionals, clients, and all other persons. While the values of the profession are codified in the NASW Code of Ethics, we believe that additional standards of behavior are to be exhibited as well by all students enrolled in our program. These standards have been presented in this Student Handbook.

Some examples of unprofessional behavior by students include, but are not limited to:

1. Consistently missing classes/meetings, entering class more than 10 minutes late, or leaving class more than 10 minutes early.
2. Demonstrating disrespect to professors, staff, or students in a class.
3. Demonstrating disrespect of a professor, staff member, students, clients or persons in a field placement (including clients) that is discriminatory.
4. Consistent difficulty in collaborating with peers.
5. Failing to uphold the ethical standards of the NASW Code of Ethics.

Procedure

Any faculty member, student, field faculty, or staff member who has concerns about unprofessional behavior of a student can make a report of this behavior to the MSW program director. This report should be in writing and contain specific information including:

- The name of the person being reported
- A clear description of the unprofessional behavior(s) and the context in which they occurred.
- specify why the behavior was inappropriate
- specify sources of information that support the complaint
- Dates of the behavior(s).
- The specific concerns about the behavior in terms of the criteria spelled out in the policy.
- clearly identify the complainant

If needed, the MSW Program Director may work with the reporting person to clarify the report and supportive information to help more concretely identify the issue of concern.

The program director will review the report within 10 working days and may either collect additional information or take further action. Following receipt of a written complaint for impaired or unprofessional behavior, the identified student will be provided with a copy of the complaint within 10 working days, and the Program Director will arrange to meet with the student to discuss the reported problem behavior. After this discussion, the Program Director will appoint no fewer than two graduate social work faculty members to review the complaint. The faculty will collect any additional information necessary to evaluate the complaint.

This process will include contacting the complainant and the student, as well as collecting other relevant information. The student will be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint in the presence of the faculty members. The student may request help in responding to the complaint. The student may bring a support person advisor to a faculty review meeting.

The appointed faculty committee will weigh the information and reach a decision about the validity of the complaint and make recommendations to the Program Director about appropriate actions based on the findings. The faculty may not make a recommendation for action unless sufficient information exists to support the complaint. Recommendations should focus on correcting problems identified in the complaint. Recommended actions might include:

- No further action
- A letter of concern or warning
- Probation with plan of action for the student
- Suspension of the student from the program for a finite time period
- Dismissal from the program in cases of serious violations

The faculty will conclude their work within 20 working days from the filing of the complaint, excluding holidays. The faculty will then discuss their findings and the recommendations with the student and the Program Director. If referred to a faculty committee, the committee should develop a report with recommendations within 15 working days from the time the report is assigned. This report should include reasons for the recommendations. The MSW Program Director will inform the student, in writing, within 10 working days of the Program's decision. If the student wishes, an appeal of the appointed faculty's recommendation can be submitted to the department chair. Appeals must be in writing and state clearly the reason for the appeal. Appeals must also be submitted within 10 working days after the student has been notified of the faculty's decision.

Students who receive negative recommendations will be provided with this information in writing.

And notification will be provided if the complaint is unfounded. The MSW director is responsible for reviewing and implementing recommendations from an appointed committee. Appeals any recommendations may be made in writing within 10 working days to the MSW program director. Decisions of the MSW program director may be appealed in writing to the chair of the department and Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences within 10 working days from the receipt of a decision.

Termination of MSW Students for Professional Reasons

The grades students earn in their academic course work are not the only indication of a student's suitability for the social work profession. The MSW Program has a termination policy to address student behaviors that represent significant violations of professional social work ethical standards. The NASW Code of Ethics is the standard that is used to promote good ethical practice in social work. As graduate social work students and as future social workers students are expected to become familiar with this Code of Ethics and to follow it. Appropriate professional behavior is as significant as academic performance in the program.

The MSW Curriculum

The MSW curriculum is designed as a two-year 60 credit program. Students who are admitted with a BSW from a CSWE accredited program and advanced standing are only required to complete the 30 credit hour curriculum. Students who are admitted without a BSW are required to complete the full 60 credit curriculum.

Full course descriptions may be found in the TAMUCT catalog <https://catalog.tamuct.edu/course-information/tamuct/>

MSW Program - Full-Time Plan

First Semester:

SOWK 5301- Intro. to the SOWK Profession, Ethics, Skills	3
SOWK 5302- Culturally Grounded Social Work	3
SOWK 5304- Social Welfare, Social, Economic & Environmental Justice	3
SOWK 5305- Generalist Practice I: Individuals & Families	3
SOWK 5384- Field Instruction I	3
	15

Second Semester:

SOWK 5310- SOWK Practice Research Methods & Analysis	3
SOWK 5307- Contexts of SOWK Practice	3
SOWK 5312- Generalist Practice II: Groups	3
SOWK 5315- Generalist Practice III: Orgs. & Communities	3
SOWK 5385- Field Instruction II	3
	15

Third Semester:

SOWK 5320- Supervision & Administration	3
--	----------

SOWK 5317- SOWK Leadership	3
SOWK 5325- Advanced Generalist Practice I: Micro	3
SOWK 5335- Adv. Generalist Practice II: Mezzo & Macro	3
SOWK Elective	<u>3</u>
	15

Fourth Semester

SOWK 5330- Practice Evaluation	3
SOWK Elective	3
SOWK 5985- Field Instruction III	<u>2</u>
	15

Total Credits **60**

Prior Work and Life Experience Credit Policy

The Social Work Program does not grant social work course credit for life or previous work experience.

The TAMUCT MSW Program does require that the specialized year practice methods courses and field instruction courses be complete with TAMUCT.

TAMUCT MSW Program Advisement Policies and Procedures

The TAMUCT MSW Program considers the advising of students as critical to a student's success in the program and to entry into the profession of social work. MSW faculty provides essential advising for course scheduling and professional matters including areas of interest in social work and professional behavior. The Program Coordinator assists the faculty with scheduling and administrative aspects of advising. This type of advising helps to ensure an effective focus on student success as well as an opportunity to receive professional mentorship. The goals of faculty advising are to aid in student retention and success efforts, to develop professional social workers, and to maintain the overall integrity of the program.

Faculty Advising

Student advising is shared among faculty members as part of their workload. When students declare social work as their major and come for their first advising session, they are assigned to a social work faculty advisor. Faculty maintain regular office hours, during which advising sessions are arranged. Students are also able to use email to communicate with their advisor as needed.

Advising Procedures

The procedures governing advising are as follows:

- All new MSW students must receive advising before beginning classes.

- Any student who has made subsequent changes to their course plan should seek additional advising.
- All students are able to receive advising at least once per semester.
- Students receiving a grade below C in a required social work course or an overall GPA below 3.0 must meet with the faculty to develop a plan of action to resolve the concern(s).
- Faculty advisors and the administrative coordinator help students with course registration, removal of academic holds, and provision of course overrides and course substitutions/petitions.
- Faculty advisors and the administrative coordinator inform students of Program requirements.
- Faculty advisors conduct a graduation audit with each student early in the semester they are scheduled to graduate.
- Faculty advisors identify and provide support for students' academic and nonacademic issues and/or concerns.
- Faculty advisors work with and refer students to university resources for additional support (e.g., Career Services, Access and Inclusion, University Library, Student Engagement, Writing Center, Tutoring, etc.).

MSW Field Instruction

Field instruction in social work is more than just a collection of courses. Field instruction requires a professionally supervised placement in a social welfare agency that provides students with practical experiences that help students apply the concepts learned in the classroom and incorporate that experience into professional practice. The primary purpose of the field instruction is to help the students demonstrate the social work professional competencies, generalist, and advanced generalist practice. Thus, field placement experiences are designed to help students integrate their classroom and field experience. Competence is assessed by observation from field supervisors who assess students' ability to demonstrate the competencies and practice behaviors identified by CSWE. Field placement should also strengthen a student's identification with the social work profession.

Details MSW about the field experience are located in the Program's field manual at <https://www.tamuct.edu/academics/graduate-degrees-certificates/master-of-social-work/>

Establishing a quality MSW field placement requires many activities prior to the start of the placement. Briefly students should understand that in the semester before a field placement is desired:

1. A student must submit a field application
2. Attend a field instruction orientation
3. Understand that the MSW program makes all placements with input from the students
4. All placements require demonstrating generalist or advanced generalist practice methods

Students in the 60 credit hour program and first semester advanced standing students should work with the MSW program coordinator before the start of the semester to minimize delays in start at a

new placement.

Field instruction for the 60 hour program consists of two semesters in placement concurrent with classes. Students in their final semester of the MSW specialization will complete a block placement.

Requests for a field placement in an agency in which a student is employed require additional work with the MSW Field coordinator and are not guaranteed. Students should make these requests early and work through the process of approval with the Field coordinator. Night and weekend placements are rare and difficult to find; therefore, the Program cannot guarantee night or weekend placements.

Students should not seek their own placements. Placements are done in consultation with the MSW Field coordinator. The final decision on a field placement rests with the MSW program.

MSW Student Organizations, Rights, and Responsibilities

MSW students are encouraged to participate in the program through developing a student organization specific to graduate social work. Through this organization students may organize and participate in professional development activities and programs. Through the organization's officers, students are encouraged to provide input into the MSW program's development and its policies and procedures. Student representatives are invited to attend formal MSW program meetings with the faculty to provide input.

The TAMUCT campus also has several student organizations through which students can pursue their interests and student government to participate in broader areas of student governance. Information about campus based student organizations can be found by contacting the Office of Student and Civic Engagement. <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-and-civic-engagement/>

MSW students have the option of creating a Social Work honor society chapter of the Phi Alpha Honor Society. The TAMUCT BSW chapter of Phi Alpha has a long tradition of being recognized for its community service.

Phi Alpha is the International Social Work Honor Society. The purposes of the Phi Alpha Honor Society are to provide a closer bond among students of social work and to promote humanitarian goals and ideals. Phi Alpha fosters high standards of education for social workers and invites into membership those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work. Membership requirements are that the student:

- Is a Social Work major at Texas A&M-Central Texas
- Has completed 9 semester hours of required social work courses from TAMUCT
- Has and will maintain an overall GPA of 3.13
- Has paid current lifetime membership dues.

Phi Alpha members attend an induction ceremony during the semester they are approved for membership, and they wear honor cords, medallion and pin at graduation.

Student Support Services

All new Texas A&M-Central Texas students must complete the new Texas A&M University-Central Texas student orientation, which introduces a wide variety of support services available to students and can be found on the university webpage. A full list of available services and detailed descriptions of each can be found on the university's website,

<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-success.html>

Communication Between MSW Faculty and Students

Effective communication between the faculty and students is maintained through the MSW Program e-mail or during meetings with faculty in the social work suite or in class. All official notices and updates are emailed to students through Canvas and are announced in class. Email communications should be through TAMUCT email accounts. Personal email accounts are not confidential, and students may not receive full responses if that is the means of communication used.

Students are responsible for checking Canvas several times a week. Messages to students from faculty, important meetings, volunteer and job opportunity notices will be posted. Students are able to contact a faculty member by leaving a message or note with the program Administrative Coordinator, located in the department office. Faculty office hours are posted on office doors, in syllabi and/or on Canvas. Appointments should be made in advance to ensure a convenient meeting time.

Students may also contact faculty members by e-mail or phone. Canvas can also send a faculty member an email message. Current students should not connect to individual faculty through social media accounts. Students should be aware that many forms of social media are open to public view and that personal items posted on those accounts may reflect negatively on the individual and the program. Therefore students should be cautious in the use of social media.

TAMUCT BSW Program Full-Time Faculty and Staff

Faculty	Position	Telephone	Email
Michael Daley, PhD, MSW, LMSW- AP, ACSW	Social Work PMSW Program Director, Regents Professor	254-501-5936	mdaley@tamuct.edu
Vacant	MSW Field Coordinator		
Lauren Musson	Administrative Coordinator	254-501-5948	socialwork@tamuct.edu

Professional Resources

As future professional social workers students should familiarize themselves with resources that help them learn more about social work. The list of resources provided here may be helpful as a start but is by no means exhaustive.

As students explore their future career paths they may want to know more about specific topics. These are best explored through the professional advising provided by the MSW faculty advisors. Some typical questions raised by students concern the state licensing exam, professional organizations, future employment in social work, résumé preparation, job interviewing skills, further education, and career development.

Information about professional social work may be found at:

- The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) <http://www.socialworkers.org>
- Texas NASW Chapter <http://www.naswtx.org/>
- The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) <http://www.cswe.org/>
- The Association of Social Work Boards <https://www.aswb.org/>
- Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners <https://bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-social-worker-examiners/>
- *The New Social Worker* <https://www.socialworker.com/>