



## **BSW PROGRAM**

### **Student Engagement in Policy Development and Modification**

The following policy regarding students' opportunities to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs is available to students on the BSW Program learning management system (Canvas) and the School of Social Work/BSW Program website.

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Student voice and agency are a priority when considering the development and implementation of school policies that impact academic and student affairs. Texas State University School of Social Work is committed to providing students with multiple opportunities to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Student leadership is a priority within the School of Social Work in general and the BSW program more specifically. While the Organization of Student Social Workers (OSSW) plays a significant role in student philanthropy, leadership opportunities, and socialization within the school, it is necessary to have a structured vehicle for participating in BSW Program policy decisions, especially as these affect academic and student affairs. This structure consists of identifying a BSW Student Representative to attend regular monthly meetings of the BSW Program Advisory Committee. The purpose of regular and ongoing student involvement in the BSW Program Advisory Committee is to ensure students have a voice in the program's planning and decision-making. This representative serves to facilitate two-way communication between the BSW Committee and students about academic and student affairs.

#### **STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN POLICY PROCESSES**

The School of Social Work/BSW Program utilizes a structured process and procedure for ensuring student voice and agency within policy and procedure formulation, reviews, and updates as outlined below.

Within the first month of the academic year, the BSW Committee Chair reaches out to the new OSSW officers to identify any recommended students for the BSW Program Student Representative role. Once a representative is chosen, they meet with the BSW Program Director/BSW Committee Chair to learn about role expectations, the meeting schedule, and obtain any initial feedback from the student body regarding current curriculum, policies, and procedures. The student representative attends monthly

meetings in full except when student or personnel issues are being discussed. This is a chance to both learn about OSSW and BSW students' goals and priorities, improve curriculum and policy, procedure development, and enhance student inclusion in not only policy and procedure formulation, but in the School of Social Work/BSW Program planning processes overall.

Points of emphasis for student inclusion also include cultivating student leadership and engagement and developing a BSW support plan that touches multiple aspects of the student experience (e.g., recruitment, orientation, retention, and alumni involvement). The BSW Program Student Representative provides invaluable input about the BSW program, and what supports could be most helpful for students preparing for Field and the profession. The representative also assists directly with development of ideas about student (social, emotional, and academic) support. This input contributes to other voices (e.g., student, faculty, staff stakeholders) that collectively prepare students for academic, social, and emotional success at the start of and throughout the BSW Program.