



BSW PROGRAM

Academic and Professional Advising Policy

The following academic and professional advising policy is available to students on the BSW Program learning management system (Canvas) and the School of Social Work/BSW Program website.

POLICY STATEMENT

Texas State University School of Social Work is committed to providing students with academic and professional advising that ensures successful educational and career planning.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The School of Social Work provides regular, ongoing, and multiple modes and levels of advising for BSW students. The School/BSW Program has policies and processes which students are made aware of when entering the program. These include academic and professional advising, and students' rights and opportunities to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs. It is recommended that students meet regularly with the College of Applied Arts Academic Advisor, assigned specifically to the BSW Program, to ensure proper comprehension of their degree plan and the implications of grades and academic progress each semester. The BSW New Student Contract outlines all major program policies and procedures including the availability and roles of academic advisors, and the myriad of opportunities for professional advising by program administration, faculty, or staff.

ADVISING AT TEXAS STATE

As an integral part of teaching and learning in the School of Social Work/BSW Program, advising is a student-centered, collaborative process that engages students in educational planning to promote academic, personal, and professional development, while considering diverse interests, abilities, and goals alongside achievement of mandatory professional social work competencies.

COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS ACADEMIC ADVISORS

The School of Social Work/BSW Program is part of the College of Applied Arts (CAA). Students must adhere to academic expectations outlined in the BSW Program degree plan to successfully complete the BSW degree. Students are encouraged to regularly

attend Academic Advising appointments in the CAA Advising Center where they have access to the BSW Program assigned advisor as well as seven other advisors.

Students are also encouraged to seek advising each semester prior to registration to review course scheduling, graduation requirements, GPA requirements, and academic status (e.g., good standing, probation, suspension, etc.). Academic expectations are formally monitored by the CAA Academic Advising Center in partnership with the BSW Program Director and Associate Program Director. Students may reach out to the BSW Associate Program Director and/or CAA Academic Advisor at any point in the program to discuss or clarify academic expectations.

Per College of Applied Arts policy, the primary responsibilities of the CAA Academic Advisors are to:

- Encourage students to develop clear and attainable goals;
- Ensure advising services remain accessible and available throughout the year;
- Understand and effectively communicate curriculum information, graduation requirements, and University and College policies and procedures;
- Provide clear and accurate information in all advising correspondence and documentation;
- Help understand the purpose of higher education and its effects on academic and personal development;
- Foster a supportive and inclusive environment for all students;
- Encourage students to think critically and make independent decisions regarding their education and career;
- Maintain confidentiality as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA);
- Provide students with information on campus resources and refer to campus partners as needed.

EXPECTATIONS FOR ADVISING, ASSESSMENT, AND RECORD-KEEPING

The School of Social Work has established the following expectations for academic advising, assessment, and record-keeping:

1. The BSW Associate Program Director will encourage each new student who attends the BSW Student Orientation to seek academic advising with CAA Academic Advisor prior to registration;
2. The Academic Advisor will encourage new students to communicate with them regularly, specifically each semester prior to registration, following entrance into the university;
3. The BSW Associate Program Director and CAA Academic Advisor will contact students on academic probation prior to registration;
4. The Academic Advisors will encourage students to review their degree plan prior to each registration period and to communicate with any questions or needed points of clarification to ensure that students are engaged in their course

progression. Students will be encouraged to use the degree audit as basis for understanding course progress and to determine that other standards such as grade requirements for courses, field/practicum enrollment, and graduation are maintained;

5. The Academic Advisor will develop and keep secure advising records for students in official electronic repositories;
6. The Academic Advisor will affirm and update the catalog of record for students and monitor application of credit to degree requirements in the degree audit;
7. The Academic Advisor will facilitate the maintenance of program audit updates for their colleges;
8. The Academic Advisor will attend regular meetings at the College of Applied Arts, and Institutional levels, where changes in policies and procedures will be explained and their implications discussed;
9. The Academic Advisor and others with advising-related responsibilities will take reasonable precautions to ensure the security, retention, or appropriate destruction of all convenience copies or non-permanent student records under guidance from the person charged with oversight of records retention, in compliance with the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 \(FERPA\)](#);
10. The BSW Program Information site on the School of Social Work Learning Management System (“Canvas”), facilitated by the BSW Associate Program Director, provides regular updates on matters related to matriculating through the BSW program including issues globally related to the degree plan (e.g., academic calendar deadlines);
11. The BSW Program Information site is also used to regularly share professional opportunities like job fairs and (social work) employer outreach efforts.

PROFESSIONAL ADVISING

Professional advising for students occurs with the School of Social Work administration, faculty and staff, CAA Academic Advisor, and the School of Social Work Field/Practicum Office. Students are instructed to reach out to the BSW Program Director, BSW Associate Program Director, and Field Director at any time with questions and concerns related to their professional and career trajectory.

Faculty provide professional advising to students via the following:

- office hours consultations;
- course assignments requiring interviews;
- networking opportunities with social work practitioners/professionals;
- guest speakers;
- research assistance positions.

To link students to more specific information about active employment opportunities that may be available, the BSW Associate Program Director and CAA Academic Advisor provides access to the following Career Services web resource at or close to graduation: <https://www.careerservices.txstate.edu>. The BSW Associate Program Director regularly posts employment opportunities on the BSW Student Information Canvas site, as well as in the School of Social Work alumni networks such as Canvas and Facebook. The BSW Associate Program Director and the CAA Academic Advisor encourages students to participate in activities like professional networking, mentorship, and planning for their career.

Field Education is also an important time for professional development and advising for students. The path to becoming a social work professional is accentuated in the field placement where students explore and realize their career options in a more experiential manner and in discussion with their Field Education Advisor as well as their Agency-Based Field Instructor. Students are notified to begin the field application process the semester before their intended practicum. During this planning time, information sessions are held, applications for the field are processed, pre-placement interviews are conducted, and students are referred to agency interviews. This is a significant opportunity for career advising as students discuss specific career aspirations, goals, and possibilities. Students are assigned a Field Advisor to guide the field education process for every student. All students must complete a mandatory field education orientation prior to beginning their field internship. Field Education consists of two courses taken concurrently, the experiential field practicum and the integrative seminar, both of which includes professional advising as students then transition from experiential education to job seeking and gainful employment upon graduation.