



MSW 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 MSW Program learning management system (Canvas) and on the School of Social Work/MSW Program website.

POLICY STATEMENT

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

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Student leadership development is a priority within the School of Social Work and the MSW program. While the Organization of Student Social Workers (OSSW) plays a significant role in the school, it is necessary to have a structured vehicle for student participation in MSW program policy decisions, especially as they affect academic and student affairs. The purpose of regular and ongoing student involvement in the MSW Program Committee each month is for students' voices to be fully represented. This representation in program planning and decision-making serves to facilitate two-way communication between the MSW Program Committee and students about academic and student affairs.

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN POLICY PROCESSES

Below is a detailed description of the MSW Program structured process and procedures for ensuring student voice and agency within policy formulation, and ongoing reviews and updates to MSW program-related policies and procedures.

Within the first month of the academic year, the MSW Committee Chair/MSW Program Director reaches out to the new OSSW representatives to identify the student recommended by their peers/OSSW to serve in the MSW representative role. The student representative attends scheduled monthly MSW Committee meetings. This is a chance for the Program Director, MSW Committee members, and other School stakeholders to learn about OSSW and graduate students' goals and priorities which have included, but are not limited to, voting advocacy, enhancing individual and global

resilience, social justice issues; and coalition-building among formal and informal student leaders within the school. Serving as the MSW Program student representative also provides opportunities for students to learn about the program priorities, program and curriculum initiatives, changes, and goals.

An additional goal of student engagement is cultivating student leadership and developing an MSW support plan that touches multiple aspects of the student experience (e.g., recruitment, orientation, retention, and alumni involvement). The MSW student representative provides invaluable input about academic expectations and preparation for practice such as the comprehensive exam, and what supports could be most helpful for students preparing for the exam. The representative also helps directly with ideas about how to increase social, emotional, and academic support for all students while matriculating through the MSW Program. This student representative's input significantly contributes to planning and decision-making by other MSW Program stakeholders that collectively create and facilitate academic success and other strategies to support students' successful matriculation through the MSW Program and maintenance of emotional, physical, and psychological wellbeing.