

# CHAPTER 10: CULTURE OF LEARNING



*Students and Faculty celebrate at Hooding Ceremonies*

Chapter  
**10**

## Building a Diverse Learning Culture and Developing our BSW Students

### *Professionals in Progress*

**W**e build our School by crafting a culture of learning that encourages diverse thought and diverse cultures, and that admits and retains students who can grow and develop through our program to become leaders of the profession. These are elements of the School's implicit curriculum, which sets the context and backdrop of our efforts to meet our mission and reach our goals.



**EDUCATIONAL POLICY 3.0.—Implicit Curriculum: The Learning Environment.** The implicit curriculum refers to the educational environment in which the explicit curriculum is presented. It is composed of the following elements: the program's commitment to diversity; admissions policies and procedures; advisement, retention, and termination policies; student participation in governance; faculty; administrative structure; and resources. The implicit curriculum is

manifested through policies that are fair and transparent in substance and implementation, the qualifications of the faculty, and the adequacy of resources. The culture of human interchange; the spirit of inquiry; the support for difference and diversity; and the values and priorities in the educational environment, including the field setting, inform the student's learning and development. The implicit curriculum is as important as the explicit curriculum in shaping the professional character and competence of the program's graduates. Heightened awareness of the importance of the implicit curriculum promotes an educational culture that is congruent with the values of the profession.

“They know  
enough who  
know how to  
learn.”

—Henry Adams

Steve Medel,  
Clinical Lecturer,  
invited in both  
Democratic and  
Republican  
candidates for  
the state  
legislature in fall  
2010. Students  
heard both sides  
and could then  
compare and  
contrast.

---



**EDUCATIONAL POLICY 3.1—DIVERSITY.** The program's commitment to diversity—including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation—is reflected in its learning environment (institutional setting; selection of field education settings and their clientele; composition of program advisory or field committees; educational and social resources; resource allocation; program leadership; speaker series, seminars, and special programs; support groups; research and other initiatives; and the demographic make-up of its faculty, staff, and student body).

**Accreditation Standard 3.1—Diversity**

- 3.1.1** *The program describes the specific and continuous efforts it makes to provide a learning environment in which respect for all persons and understanding of diversity and difference are practiced.*
- 3.1.2** *The program describes how its learning environment models affirmation and respect for diversity and difference.*
- 3.1.3** *The program discusses specific plans to improve the learning environment to affirm and support persons with diverse identities.*



**EDUCATIONAL POLICY 3.2—STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**  
Educational preparation and commitment to the profession are essential qualities in the admission and development of students for professional practice. To promote the social work education continuum, BSW graduates admitted to MSW programs are presented with an articulated pathway toward a concentration. Student participation in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs are important for the student's professional development.

**Accreditation Standard 3.2—Student Development: Admissions; Advisement, Retention, and Termination; and Student Participation**

**Admissions**

- B3.2.1** *The program identifies the criteria it uses for admission.*
- 3.2.2** *The program describes the process and procedures for evaluating applications and notifying applicants of the decision and any contingent conditions associated with admission.*
- 3.2.4** *The program describes its policies and procedures concerning the transfer of credits.*
- 3.2.5** *The program submits its written policy indicating that it does not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience. The program documents how it informs applicants and other constituents of this policy.*

**Advisement, retention, and termination**

- 3.2.6** *The program describes its academic and professional advising policies and*

*procedures. Professional advising is provided by social work program faculty, staff, or both.*

**3.2.7** *The program spells out how it informs students of its criteria for evaluating their academic and professional performance, including policies and procedures for grievance.*

**3.2.8** *The program submits its policies and procedures for terminating a student's enrollment in the social work program for reasons of academic and professional performance.*

### **Student participation**

**3.2.9** *The program describes its policies and procedures specifying students' rights and responsibilities to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs.*

**3.2.10** *The program demonstrates how it provides opportunities and encourages students to organize in their interests.*

## **Creating and Advising the Student Body**

The School is committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse BSW student body. The University recruits heavily from and has articulation agreements with many community colleges. Several times a year, thousands of students, many from underrepresented groups, come to "Bobcat Days" to learn about Texas State, and the School of Social Work participates in this and other University recruitment activities. The School reaches out to student veterans as well. In fact, Texas State serves more student veterans than any other public institution in the state.

***Applying to the Major.*** Any undergraduate student in good standing in the University may enroll in SOWK 1350 Introduction to Social Work, SOWK 2375 Social Services in the Community, SOWK 4355 Policy Practice, and the social work electives. Any of these students may declare the pre-social work major.

Social work pre-majors may apply to become social work majors in either the fall or spring application cycle. During pre-major courses, the BSW Coordinator and faculty discuss with students the application process, the work involved in the major, and what kinds of job graduates can secure with the BSW.

The application, in addition to demographic questions and questions about academic preparation, asks students to write an essay about their experience with and commitment to social justice. They also discuss their 50-hour volunteer experience in SOWK 2375 Social Services in the Community. Applicants must have completed at least 45 semester hours, including most of the University's core curriculum, with at least a 2.75 GPA in their social work and supportive social science courses and a 2.5 overall.

***Reviewing the Application.*** The BSW Oversight Committee reviews applications, using an evaluation matrix which assesses GPA, minimum course hours, paid or unpaid work experience, written exercises, and an essay on

The School celebrates faculty birthdays and events, and we share each other's grief as well. At every faculty meeting, faculty members tell what projects they are working on, what successes they have achieved, and what they may need help to accomplish.

---

Faculty model  
appreciation for  
diversity. Dr.  
Angela  
Ausbrooks, for  
instance, was the  
invited keynote  
speaker at the  
2010 Lavender  
Graduation,  
celebrating the  
joys of GLBTQ  
grads. She also  
spoke at the  
Multicultural  
Graduation.

---

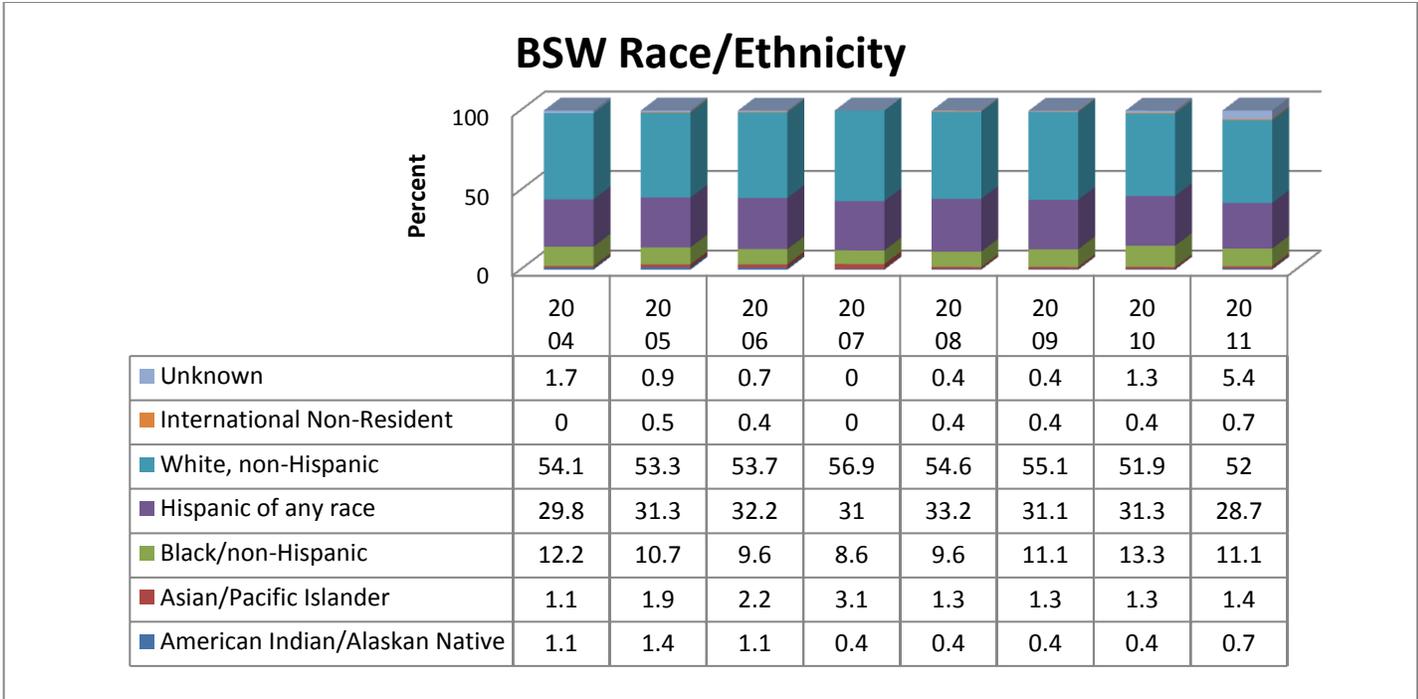
social justice issues. **The School gives no academic credit for life or work experience**, a fact which is clearly stated in admission materials and in the BSW Student Handbook. The Committee votes to recommend admission, denial, or conditional admission (which sets up conditions, such as completing specific courses according to a timeline, or attending the University Writing Lab to shore up writing competence), but the BSW Coordinator makes the final decisions. Being accepted into the social work major does not guarantee that a student will be allowed to remain in the major.

***Notice of Acceptance or Denial.*** Applicants receive notice of acceptance or denial via both written letter and email as soon as decisions are made.

***Appeals.*** Students who are denied have the right to appeal, in writing, to the BSW Coordinator within 30 days of receiving the decision. The Coordinator and Committee will review the appeal and respond within 10 working days.

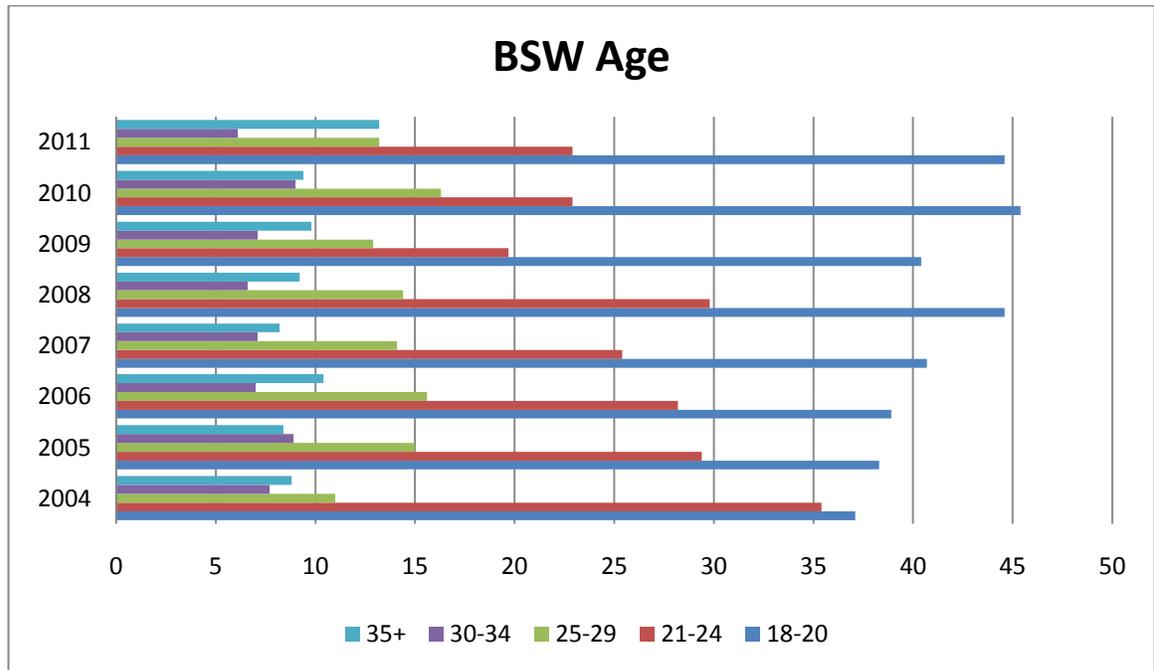
***Transfers.*** The University has written policies regarding transferring in credit from another accredited post-secondary institution; students can access these policies on the web or in the *Undergraduate Catalogue* (pgs 29-30). The University has articulation agreements with numerous community colleges and accepts many transfer students. The Undergraduate Office determines if non-major courses are equivalent and therefore transferrable. If an undergraduate from another university wishes to transfer in social work courses to apply to the major, the BSW Coordinator and Committee carefully review the syllabi which the student supplies and determine equivalency, balancing redundancy and quality. We do not accept as equivalent to our social work courses any course which is titled Human Services or other similar curricula which fails to identify with the social work profession. Students must take at least 20% of the minimum number of hours for the degree in residence at Texas State.

***The Make-Up of the BSW Student Body.*** Currently the School serves 161 pre-majors and 142 declared BSW students. Approximately 88% of these are female. Many of our students live outside of San Marcos, so they are commuters to campus. The majority of our BSWs hail from Texas, which is consistent with the University's mission to serve the state's citizens. That having been said, Texas is an extremely large and diverse state, so even in-state students have the opportunity to learn many different viewpoints from their classmates. Approximately 52% of our BSW students are white, 32% are Hispanic, and 14% are black, as shown in the following table.



The majority of our BSW students are traditional college age, but we have a notable number who are more mature, as shown below.

Students in all courses are encouraged to express their views, and to listen in a considerate, tolerant manner to other students' ideas.



Dr. Christine Norton works as a mentor with alumni of the foster care system who are now Texas State students.

---

**Advising Students.** The College of Applied Arts supplies a full-time advisor for our BSW students, and the School supplies her an office in the Health Professions Building. The Advisor informs pre-majors, transfer students, or students changing their major about admissions and degree requirements, as well as assisting current majors to build and follow their degree plans effectively. Having a dedicated BSW Advisor has been a great boon for the School: it allows consistent, accurate, and accessible curriculum advising.

Each student also is assigned a Faculty Professional Advisor, who talks with students about career or professional matters. The faculty respond timely to students questions and, if several students have similar questions, will create group activities to help students answer questions. For instance, Drs. Christine Norton and Amy Russell held a series of brown-bag lunches for students who had questions about professional issues such as preparing a vita, interviewing for jobs, or applying for graduate school.

The University achieved Hispanic-Serving Institution status in 2011, two years ahead of its target date. Recently the University hosted a showcase of Hispanic and Black playwrights' work. And Texas State hosted the 19<sup>th</sup> annual African-American Leadership Conference.

---

**Disability Services.** Students who have some issue of ability which affects their school success have access to the Texas State Office of Disability Services (ODS), which is the expert on student access and accommodation, a fact which is highlighted on every social work course syllabus. OSD staff review documentation of students who qualify for accommodations, notify faculty of eligible and required accommodations, and provide opportunities for accommodations, such as extended test-taking time. OSD works with faculty to understand Americans with Disabilities Act and to develop the most integrated accommodations possible. For instance, Dr. Anne Deepak often uses YouTube in class. OSD transcribed these segments for a blind student, and the process worked quite well. The School's working relationship with ODS has been very effective to help students succeed.

**Other Services to Assist Students.** The University provides many services to help students achieve success and personal growth. The BSW Handbook, as well as the University Student Handbook, inform students about such benefits as the Writing Lab, where students can bring drafts of their papers for feedback. The University's Counseling Center is available for students who have emotional or mental concerns. The Health Center provides a number of services to ensure wellness. Students have access to a beautiful Recreation Center, while the University Police provide such training as rape defense. Faculty encourage students to take advantage of the many campus services.

**Retention.** The median time to receive the BSW degree is four years. The program retains close to 80% of the students who begin the program.

For our strongest BSW students who meet the criteria for admission to the MSW program, we discuss in the senior classes the option of Advanced Standing MSW studies. Advanced Standing allows students the chance to continue their studies without repeating material, advancing directly into the concentration courses.

## Appreciating and Accepting Diversity

Texas State has been named a Vet-Friendly School for the third time in a row this year. The university works hard to meet the needs of veteran students.

---

The University's mission addresses the need for well-educated people to appreciate and accept diversity, and this emphasis is clearly evident in the School. The University, over the last eight years, has made funds available to hire qualified faculty who bring diverse factors to enrich the faculty; the School has been fortunate to be able to hire five faculty through six cycles of this Target of Opportunity program.

*Selecting Field Agencies that Promote Diversity.* The School, which works with hundreds of agencies across Central Texas, strives to ensure diversity in field experiences. The School's priority is to place students in public agencies, which means that students work with the most vulnerable populations in the community, those who live in poverty, have limited options, and are frequently marginalized. These client populations often include many people who are ethnic minorities.

In addition to public agencies, we also work with non-profit and faith-based agencies that offer diversity in the populations they serve and in their practice fields. These agencies serve the most vulnerable groups, typically using streams of public money. In addition to working in agencies that have diverse sources of authorization and work with different populations, our students also can choose between rural, urban, and ex-urban settings for field placement. The agencies with which we work offer a blend of micro, mezzo, and macro work. We have placements in local, state, and federal agencies, and we have an active working relationship with several military social work programs, such as Fort Hood and various Veteran's Affairs installations.

Because the School has a personalized approach to developing placement opportunities with students based on their learning needs and career aspirations, we have rich opportunities to make placements diverse. Our agency-based field supervisors are also a diverse lot in terms of gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and ethnicity. These field supervisors present a broad variety of professional backgrounds and earned their social work degrees at different universities. The School incorporates the rich backgrounds and experiences of our field supervisors by using them as our advisors to help us keep abreast of what is going on in the work place, what kind of contemporary learning students need to be successful in the work place, and how well we are doing in preparing students. Here are just a few of the various placement agencies that we use for BSW students:

- ⇒ Vitas Hospice in San Antonio, where a recent BSW intern developed an outreach program to the Latino community to address the fact that hospice is an under-used option in the Latino community
- ⇒ San Marcos Housing Authority, where a recent BSW intern worked with older adults, and the clients submitted a petition to ask the agency to hire her after internship
- ⇒ Angel Heart, a foster placement agency that hired our BSW intern after graduation
- ⇒ Caritas-Austin, which provides homeless and refugee services

- ⇒ Marbridge Foundation of Austin, a residential facility for persons with intellectual disabilities
- ⇒ Travis County Office of Parental Representation, which works on disproportionality issues with child welfare cases

*A Multi-Cultural Faculty and Staff.* The School of Social Work faculty presents diversity on a number of levels:

The University sponsors many organizations for diverse students, such as groups for non-traditional students, for black students, for LGBTQ students, for Hispanic students, and many others.

---

- ✓ Currently, seventeen core faculty are female, while four are male.
- ✓ Two core faculty members are African-American; three are Hispanic; one is Asian American; and the others are white with a spectrum of origins. Of our current five adjunct faculty, two are Hispanic and one is African American.
- ✓ Faculty present different physical abilities and health statuses. While two faculty regularly run marathons, for instance, another person is a kidney transplant recipient, and yet another faculty person regularly uses a cane or walker to assist in mobility.
- ✓ They represent various religions, with a range of political, social, and dietary beliefs.
- ✓ Faculty ages range from roughly 35-61.
- ✓ Faculty come from a variety of economic backgrounds, and they originally hail from various localities (from Massachusetts to Kansas, Mississippi, California, and many points in between), and they have worked professionally in such diverse areas as Illinois, Minnesota, Tennessee, Louisiana, England, India, and Mexico. Now they live all over Central Texas, from San Antonio to Round Rock, New Braunfels to Round Top, Kyle to Killeen. We are a commuting faculty.
- ✓ Several of the faculty speak Spanish.
- ✓ Faculty differ in sexual orientation and family structure.
- ✓ Several of our faculty are the first in their families to earn a college degree.
- ✓ Faculty certainly present diverse work backgrounds and interests. Dr. Kathy Selber is passionate about working with military families and veterans, while Dr. Catherine Hawkins is focused on global human rights and sustaining gains through peace. Dr. Betsy Wisner teaches meditation and self-reflection as intervention, while Dr. Christine Norton is committed to adventure therapy and Dr. Raphael Travis teaches Hip-Hop as therapy. So there are many diverse viewpoints on the faculty.

Dr. Anne Deepak is the faculty sponsor of Interruptions, a campus student group designed to interrupt racism.

---

Regardless of faculty members' diverse contextual factors, all faculty have access to resources equally. The University and School makes funding available for professional travel, creates grant opportunities and makes grant support services available, provides graduate assistant time, and provides all other faculty resources regardless of any contextual factor.

The School has four administrative staff, three of whom are Hispanic and speak Spanish fluently. Their differences in culture, place of origin, first language, family educational level, and other contextual factors do not interfere with their access to University and School resources. They are treated equitably.

*Educational Strategies that Enhance Appreciation of Diversity.*

The School uses educational strategies that build a culture in which students learn to appreciate the broad range of human diversity.

In  
undergraduate  
HBSE courses,  
Dr. Dorinda  
Noble regularly  
does guest  
lectures about  
how to mesh  
one's personal  
religious or  
spiritual beliefs  
with  
professional  
ethics.

---

- The School's mission incorporates an emphasis on serving the most vulnerable populations, and these are diverse groups on many levels.
- The School has embraced online education as a way to reach out to educationally-underserved prospective MSWs. While this is not a BSW program, the learning from online technology has washed back over the BSW program. BSW faculty have expanded their teaching strategies so that the School can now more easily accommodate diverse groups, such as differently-abled students who would benefit from more flexible learning techniques. Learning activities and strategies that incorporate technology also express appreciation for how different generations learn differently.
- The School's Spanish Language Institute (with the Department of Modern Languages) emphasizes the practical reality that our University is located in an area in which Hispanics are an important group, and in which Spanish is often spoken. Even for those students who do not participate in the Institute, faculty encourage them to take Spanish to meet their language requirements.
- Some of our courses have been translated to multi-cultural emphasis through the cooperative work of faculty and the Office of Multicultural Affairs. We hope to have more of these translations in the future.
- The School is involved with a campus group exploring dual language issues on campus, and we will continue to work with this effort.
- The fact that the University is designated as an Hispanic-Serving Institution highlights that the study body has a substantial Hispanic component. It also offers many opportunities for future learning experiences that will teach students to appreciate diversity. For instance, the College of Applied Arts Dean, Dr. Jaime Chahin, is in charge of the University's drive to bring in grants related to the University's HSI-status. He and several members of the School faculty are discussing how to develop a Hispanic Family Institute to study the Hispanic family across the life span, and develop recommendations for serving Hispanic families.
- Faculty are engaged in a number of research projects that involve diversity, and they share this with students. For instance:
  - Drs. Ausbrooks, Jones, and Tijerina have done research on the cultural climate in schools of social work.
  - Drs. Travis and Ausbrooks have researched interventions empowering high-school-aged black men.
  - Dr. Tijerina has researched Hispanic women in higher education.
  - Dr. Tijerina has researched the effect of child welfare services on Mexican immigrants.
  - Drs. Russell and Ausbrooks have researched transracial adoption.
  - Drs. Jones, Biggs, and Knox have researched services to the aged.
- The School offers an undergraduate course as part of the University's study abroad program in Cambridge, England. Though not many students are able to participate in this program, participating students

A number of our  
faculty have  
gone through  
Texas State  
Allies Training,  
which prepares  
them to be allies  
to LGBTQ  
students on  
campus. They  
post a rainbow-  
colored "Allies"  
sign on their  
office doors.

---

volunteer in British social agencies and learn about service systems in other societies.

## Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Governance

The School, through the School Handbook and the School website, informs students of their rights and responsibilities. Students are also informed by these media of the need to follow the official University Student Handbook, which delineates academic policies and procedures; student's rights, privileges, and expectations; and the grievance and resolution process. It describes students' responsibilities, including required and prohibited conduct, and specifies policies on sexual and racial harassment, denial of civil rights, and computer use. The Student Handbook explains how student justice is administered on campus and how disciplinary penalties are determined. It outlines students' due process rights and options for hearing grievances, as well as rights to appeal and review. Issues such as the prohibition of plagiarism, the rules against sexual harassment, the regulation of alcohol use and the prohibition of drugs and tobacco use on campus, and the rules related to absence on religious holidays are clarified in the student handbook.

*Ways to Participate in Governance.* Undergraduate and graduate representatives of the Organization of Student Social Workers (OSSW) and a representative of the Alpha Chi chapter of the Phi Alpha National Honor Society are invited to attend regular meetings of School faculty. Students have voice but not vote on the faculty, consistent with Texas State Faculty Senate policy which limits faculty governance to full-time faculty. Students are also recruited to serve on several School committees, where their opinions are solicited and considered. In reality, student participation in School committees is rather low, since many of our students are working individuals who commute to school and have limited time to participate.

Last year Tim  
Wise, an anti-  
racism activist,  
spoke on  
campus. Many  
Social Work  
faculty gave  
extra credit for  
students to  
attend, and many  
students and  
faculty were  
profoundly  
affected by his  
presentation.

One way the School solicits input from students is through periodic focus groups on specific issues. The School also involves students as participants in developing the learning environment through encouraging them to be part of developing classroom logistics and expectations for civility. Students also have a number of opportunities through mid-term and final course evaluations, as well as through day-to-day class discussion, to comment on issues such as textbooks, course assignments, and other curriculum issues.

Faculty hold regular office hours, and most post e-mail office hours as well. They encourage students to come to them with any success stories or concerns. At the BSW Success Orientation when students first come into the program, the School Director also meets with new students and encourages them to come to her if they need to discuss issues.

Because Texas State is a public institution, the state Legislature is profoundly influential on students' experience here. We encourage students to be involved with their legislators to express needs and concerns. To this end, we organize Social Work Day at the Legislature as an opportunity for students to meet with legislators at the state capitol. This educational event has been very popular and is well-attended by our BSW students. The School supports it by

organizing the event, securing matching t-shirts for students to buy, and providing shuttles to Austin.

*Student Organizations.* The two major social work organizations to which students can belong follow:

- ❖ The **Organization of Student Social Workers (OSSW)** promotes a closer bond among social work students, and provides for students to have input into the degree programs. OSSW, which serves as an advocacy and service organization, is totally student-run, though a faculty advisor is assigned and assists the organization. Membership is open to all School students (including Pre-majors and minors). OSSW sponsors various activities, such as parties, fund-raisers, and community service projects. The group encourages student participation in presenting research as well.
- ❖ Many students also participate in **Texas State's Alpha Chi Chapter of Phi Alpha**, the National Social Work Honor Society. Undergraduate membership in Phi Alpha is open to junior and senior social work majors who have completed at least four social work courses with a Texas State social work GPA of 3.25 or above and an overall GPA of 3.0 or above. New Phi Alpha members are inducted in a recognition ceremony held in conjunction with OSSW. In addition to promoting academic achievement, Phi Alpha members also participate in service projects and in professional conferences and scholarly presentations.

Students may also affiliate with **Interruptions**, a multicultural antiracism peer-education group started by social work students some years ago. It is committed to educating the Texas State community about ways to recognize and interrupt racism at all levels. Though this is now a campus-wide organization, it is closely related to the School and offers a fine vehicle in which to encourage students to celebrate diversity.

*Empowering Students.* Students have been empowered to create a learning environment that meets their needs through these various organizations. For instance:

- ✓ Through OSSW, BSW students created a petition to change SOWK 4310 Diversity and Social Justice from an elective to a mandatory course for all social work majors. Students, meeting together, determined that this course content was so important that all students should capture it. They researched how the proposed change would effect the curriculum and gathered the requisite signatures to present to the BSW Committee, which, after discussion approved changing SOWK 4310 to a required course and changing SOWK 3350 Connecting Policy and Practice from required to elective status. The proposal was approved by the School Curriculum Committee and by the University, and is now in place.
- ✓ OSSW has also been successful in securing some funds from the University to support the educational Student Day at the Legislature experience.
- ✓ OSSW students were influential in initiating a series of brown-bag luncheons to discuss resume-writing and job-hunting for students.
- ✓ Student groups are also active in bringing various speakers to campus. The faculty teach students to value continuing education as professionals,

Dr. Jaime Chahin is Dean of the College of Applied Arts. He holds the MSW from University of Michigan as well as the doctorate. Dr. Chahin grew up in a migrant worker family and was never able to complete a full year of school until he was a young teenager. He has done a great deal of research with migrant communities.

---

always expanding the borders of their knowledge and skills as they continue through professional life.

***Evaluation of Student Performance.*** The School, working through its BSW Oversight Committee, prepares, reviews, and refines a master syllabus for each course in the curriculum. The Committee chooses core textbooks. The Committee also oversees the core assignments that measure competencies and practice behaviors. Faculty may use additional texts or readings and has freedom to alter the sequence of learning materials, or to add and refine assignments other than the core assignments. Faculty agree, however, to maintain the basic integrity of the course syllabus: course learning aims, core textbooks, core assignments, and various universal elements such as information on Office of Student Disability, basic expectations for attendance and classroom conduct, and adherence to social work ethics.

The resulting syllabi are comprehensive, and all course policies and expectations are carefully constructed. They clearly describe the variety of evaluative mechanisms that the School uses, such as group activities, tests, research and concept papers, discussions, role plays and simulations, tests, community projects, oral reports, and other strategies, to demonstrate their mastery of learning.

***Final Grade Appeals.*** Students who wish to appeal a course grade have due process to appeal to the faculty member, the Director, and the Dean. The appeals forms are available on the College website. The number of appeals which come through the School is small, but when a student files a grade appeal, the School looks to the syllabus as a key factor. Consequently, faculty are clear that syllabi must be clearly written and must be comprehensive.

***Evaluation of Student Fitness and Performance.*** Students occasionally have challenges in meeting standards of academic performance, professional behavior, or ethical conduct. In those cases, which are infrequent, we follow our Evaluation of Student Fitness and Performance Policy, available to students online. The policy points out that every student signs a contract upon entering studies in the School, 1) agreeing to adhere to the Code of Ethics and applicable state laws; and 2) acknowledging understanding that a student can be terminated from the program based on failing to satisfactorily achieve academic and professional standards. Faculty evaluate students' academic achievement and professional development based on CSWE EPAS, the University Honor Code, and the Texas State and School of Social Work Student Handbooks.

The University Registrar, Graduate College, or Academic Advisor will inform each student and the BSW or MSW Degree Coordinators in writing of any changes in the student's academic standing. Each student is responsible for contacting the Degree Coordinator, and submitting a corrective action plan to resolve any academic standing issue by the end of the semester in which the problem is identified.

If a faculty member has a serious concern about a student's professional behavior and/or development, the faculty member will:

Faculty actively recruit guest speakers who present diverse viewpoints. For instance, the Director of the Center for the Elimination of Disparities has spoken several times to social work classes on the issue of racial disproportionality in foster care.

Faculty represent diverse ways of approaching faith and spirituality. Dr. Catherine Hawkins is Faculty Advisor to the Texas State Buddhist Association. Dr. Betsy Wisner does many presentations on meditation, and leads professional groups in meditation. Dr. Anne Deepak shares her expertise with the University on how to recognize and deal with prejudice against Islam. Dave Henton, as a lay member of an Episcopal order, offers many insights on spirituality.

---

- Document the concern timely and submit it to the student's Faculty Advisor and the appropriate Degree Coordinator, who will determine if a corrective action plan is needed.
- If corrective action needed, the faculty member will meet with the student, discussing the concern and developing a corrective plan together. Absent the student's participation, the faculty member will develop the plan.
- The corrective action plan will be sent to the student, the Faculty Advisor, and the appropriate Degree Coordinator electronically.
- If the concern is resolved, the faculty member will document this change in behavior, inform the student's Faculty Advisor and appropriate Degree Coordinator, and no further action will be pursued on the matter.
- However, if the documented unprofessional behavior persists, the faculty member will consult with the student's Advisor and Degree Coordinator, who will refer the Student Concern Form, corrective action plan and any other supporting documentation to the Program Standards Committee for review and recommendations. All documentation will also be provided to the student.
- The Program Standards Committee will convene a hearing within ten (10) working days to make recommendations. The faculty member, student, and student's advisor will attend and air their responses to the situation.
- After deliberating, the Committee will report its decision(s) in writing within ten (10) working days to the student, the appropriate Degree Coordinator, and the School Director.
- The student has ten (10) working days to accept/reject the Committee's recommendation(s) in writing. If a student fails to respond, we assume that the student accepts the decision. The student may appeal the decision to the School Direct and the College Dean, whose decision is final.