

The Nature of Generalist Social Work Practice

The curriculum in our Bachelor of Social Work program prepares generalist social work practitioners and uses the ecological perspective as the theoretical foundation of generalist practice. Generalist social work entails training for services involving individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations and communities.

Regardless of the area (child and family welfare, corrections, health/mental health, aging, etc.) or level of practice (i.e., micro, mezzo or macro), social workers seek to promote social and economic justice and to improve the functioning of the varied populations they serve. Social work practitioners support individual self-determination and respect the dignity and worth of all people regardless of their age, disability, color, race, ethnicity, family structure, gender, sexual orientation, culture, national origin, religious preference, socioeconomic status, etc.

Social work practitioners advocate for those who have experienced various social problems that cut across cultural groups. Examples include:

- Poverty
- Crime and victimization
- Oppression
- Discrimination
- Mental illness
- Substance abuse
- Chronic physical illness
- Physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- Neglect

Given the breadth of their profession, social work practitioners also work with those who may not have experienced such social problems. Regardless of the population served, social workers recognize their legal and ethical responsibilities to clients and provide competent social work services. It is to this end that our program strives to educate a future generation of social work practitioners.

Program Mission

The mission of the social work program at Angelo State University is to provide quality social work education, based on the knowledge, values and skills of the social work profession, and to provide professional development opportunities for students who desire to promote the social, psychosocial or biopsychosocial functioning and well-being of individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations and communities via generalist social work practice.

Program Values

The social work program supports the core values of the social work profession, reflecting the six value elements of the [National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics](#) and two

additional value elements from the Council on Social Work Education. The elements include:

- Service
- Social justice
- The dignity and worth of the person
- The importance of human relationships
- Integrity
- Competence
- Human rights
- Scientific inquiry

These values provide the foundation for the mission and goals of the social work program and our social work curriculum.

Program Goals

The social work program provides a rigorous curriculum grounded in the liberal arts, using sound teaching practices to promote the knowledge, values and skills used in social work that can be applied across settings and diverse populations. It also promotes critical thinking skills as well as ethical and competent social work practice consistent with the mission and objectives of the social work profession. To this end, the goals of the program include:

1. To prepare entry-level, generalist social work practitioners to provide ethical and competent services utilizing the knowledge, values and skills of the social work profession
2. To equip students with critical thinking skills that are essential in the contemporary social service environment
3. To prepare students for continued graduate work in social work or related disciplines
4. To maintain a reciprocal relationship with social work practitioners, groups and organizations in the community