

MSSW Program Goals and Objectives

The **mission** of the MSSW program at WTAMU is to prepare advanced generalist practitioners who are equipped with an eclectic knowledge base, professional values, and a wide range of advanced skills to assume the professional responsibilities of change agents in our rapidly changing, culturally diverse, global society. She or he should enhance the social functioning and interactions of her/his client systems, help clients develop resources, alleviate human suffering in the pursuit of the improvement of quality of life and conditions of people living in the rural Texas panhandle region, the state, the nation, and the world.

The **goals** of the MSSW program at West Texas A&M University are to educate students who:

- *Become Advanced Generalist Practitioners;*
- *Use a variety of theoretical perspectives;*
- *Develop their interventions at all levels of systems practice, and*
- *Are knowledgeable in the unique aspects of rural communities.*

The goals of the social work program at WTAMU complement and support the mission of the program and are directly derived from that mission. To be effective change agents in a rapidly changing society, social workers must become advanced general practitioners, use a variety of theoretical perspectives, develop interventions at all levels of practice, and for our region of the country, they must be knowledgeable in the unique aspects of rural communities. All of these components work in concert with the knowledge base gleaned from the courses required, and with the self-awareness that is cultivated throughout the curriculum.

The proposed focus of **advanced generalist practice** is consistent with the mission and goals of the social work program. The goals, derived from the competencies, reflect the need to prepare practitioners who can practice across varying levels of practice. Advanced generalist graduates will be prepared to synthesize and apply a broad range of social work theories, determining those that best fit each specific client situation.

Graduates will be prepared with advanced practice skills which allow them to:

- differentially assess problems,
- employ specialized interventions,
- develop more rigorous evaluation techniques, and
- establish themselves as leaders

with systems of all sizes and levels of complexity.

This diversity, built upon the generalist foundation, but with a greater depth, breadth and ability to work independently, will prepare them to be advanced generalist practitioners in rural social work. This concentration is consistent with the needs and the demographics of the large geographical area, mostly rural, surrounding the location of the WTAMU campus. The ability to work with individuals and families, with groups, and with communities is essential. Students will be prepared to assume their place as change agents working within these different levels of practice.