



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

# **RULES OF GOVERNANCE**

**Approved  
By  
Department of Social Work Faculty  
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El Paso, Texas**

**University of Texas at El Paso**  
**Department of Social Work**  
**RULES OF GOVERNANCE**

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**University of Texas at El Paso**  
**Department of Social Work**

**RULES OF GOVERNANCE**

**PREAMBLE**

These Rules of Governance are developed to clarify roles and responsibilities and to establish a framework for faculty governance and participation. We, the Faculty of the Department of Social Work at UTEP, herein after referred to as the "Department," adopt the following rules of governance in order to provide for the orderly functioning of departmental affairs.

**ARTICLE 1: MISSION and GOALS**

***Section 1: Mission***

The mission of the University of Texas at El Paso Department of Social Work is “to educate culturally competent and community-engaged social work practitioners to provide services and promote social and economic justice in partnership with the unique multicultural, international population of the U.S.-Mexico border region and beyond. The Department of Social Work is dedicated to student success.” Graduates of the respective programs will possess the knowledge, values, and skills to competently and ethically perform social work services with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities using best evidence-based practices. The Department is committed to improving social conditions along the U.S.-Mexico border and beyond by promoting culturally responsive practice, social justice, and life-long learning reflecting the values of equity and inclusion.

***Section 2: Goals***

The Department is committed to the following goals, which are derived from our mission statement as well as from the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards set forth by the Council on Social Work Education. The program goals are to:

1. Prepare competent and ethical graduates for advanced generalist social work practice through the provision of content that reflects the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession.
2. Prepare competent and ethical graduates who can practice effectively within public and private agencies where they will work with diverse populations and client systems at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
3. Prepare graduates for practice within the social and political contexts of the organizations in which they work and for the changing social, economic, and physical environments in the region.

4. Provide an educational foundation with a practicum experience that prepares graduates to become aware of their lifelong responsibility to continue their professional growth and development.
5. Provide leadership in the development of service delivery systems.
6. Produce research and scholarship that further develop social work and interdisciplinary knowledge and promote application of knowledge into practice.
7. Conduct systematic evaluation of program activities that explore ways for continuous renewal, revision, and improvement.

The Department of Social Work Faculty strive to achieve the goals and objectives as written in Article 1.

## ARTICLE 2: SOCIAL WORK FACULTY

### *Section 1: Goals and Objectives*

Goals and objectives of the Department are congruent with those of the University and College of Health Sciences in terms of the specific expectations for teaching, scholarship, and service. The intent of these goals and objectives includes the following:

- 1) Promotion of excellence in social work education and teaching.
- 2) Support for scholarship and research.
- 3) Provision of service to the community, state, nation, and international settings.
- 4) Increasing opportunities for professional social work education among underrepresented groups.
- 5) Facilitation of dynamic interactions among social workers and other human service professionals of the region through community engagement, research and scholarship, and teaching.
- 6) Reevaluation of Department goals through committee participation and shared governance process.

#### 1.1: Promotion of excellence in social work education and teaching

To promote excellence in social work education and teaching, the faculty will:

- a. Maintain currency in methodology and course content.
- b. Integrate community-engaged scholarship in curriculum.
- c. Promote and participate in professional practice.
- d. Participate in recruitment and retention of excellent faculty with an effort to maintain a diverse faculty.

#### 1.2: Support for scholarship and research

To support scholarship and research, the faculty will:

- a. Conduct research studies that add to the body of social work knowledge.
- b. Disseminate research findings.

- c. Perform scholarly activities that may include grant writing, presentations at conferences, and publications.

1.3: Provision of service to communities in the region, state, nation and international settings

To serve communities, the faculty will:

- a. Provide expert support and guidance throughout community, state, nation, and international settings.
- b. Collaborate with community agencies for the promotion of social welfare.
- c. Facilitate continuing education for social workers in the community.
- d. Actively collaborate with academic faculty and community partners to promote the mission/goals of the Department and University.

1.4: Increasing opportunities for professional social work education among underrepresented groups

To increase opportunities for underrepresented groups, the faculty will:

- a. Focus recruitment efforts on underrepresented groups.
- b. Increase retention and graduation of underrepresented groups.
- c. Actively seek grants and scholarships that lessen financial burden.

1.5: Facilitation of dynamic interactions among social workers and other human service professionals of the region through community engagement, research and scholarship, and teaching.

To facilitate professional interactions, the faculty will:

- a. Provide opportunities for continued education for human service professionals through professional development opportunities at the university and in the community, community-engaged research, and professional advisement.
- b. Support and promote social work professional organizations.
- c. Support licensing of social workers.
- d. Support transdisciplinary educational activities and programs.

1.6: Reevaluation of Department goals through committee participation and shared governance processes

To reevaluate Department goals, the faculty will:

- a. Conduct periodic examination of the stated goals in relation to the mission of the Department, the College, and the University.

- b. Incorporate significant teaching, scholarship, service, and practice contributions of the faculty in reevaluation of Department goals and program improvement.

### ***Section 2: Functions***

The Social Work Faculty of the Department shall:

1. Have jurisdiction over matters of curricular, educational, and faculty policy affecting the Department within the regulations of the College, University, and the University of Texas System.
2. Receive regular reports from standing and ad hoc committees and engage in dialogue and action related to committee recommendations.
3. Make recommendations to the Chair of the Department concerning business affairs of the Department.

### ***Section 3: Membership to Social Work Faculty***

In processes requiring faculty voting, the voting body shall include:

1. All full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty in the Department of Social Work.
2. All full-time lecturers/clinical faculty in the Department of Social Work.

When determined appropriate by the faculty, voting shall also be open to:

1. Social work practitioners of contract agencies within the El Paso area (El Paso County and surrounding areas).
2. Adjunct faculty of the Department of Social Work.
3. Individual members of other departments in the University.

### ***Section 4: Meetings***

1. Department meetings shall be held at least once a month and more frequently as necessary.
2. Special Department meetings may be called at any time by the Chair of the Department of Social Work or the Chair's assigned designee, and shall be called by the Chair at the request of the majority of full-time tenure/tenure-track and clinical faculty.
3. The Chair of the Department or Chair's designee shall preside over all Department meetings.
4. A quorum for the conduct of business that requires voting approval at any Department meeting shall consist of at least one-half of the faculty, including at least one full-time tenure/tenure-track faculty and one full-time clinical faculty.
5. Meetings shall be conducted according to the most recently revised edition of *Roberts Rules of Order*, including the documentation and dissemination of minutes for faculty review and approval.

### ***Section 5: Voting***

Voting on all motions made and seconded shall be by open ballot unless a majority of voting members present at the meeting request a secret ballot or an emailed ballot. Policy issues shall be presented to faculty five working days before the voting takes place.

## **ARTICLE 3: COMMITTEES**

### ***Section 1: Standing Committees***

The standing committees of the Department include the following:

1. Curriculum and Instruction
2. Evaluation and Accreditation
3. Field Education
4. Faculty Development (including Retention, Promotion and Tenure)

Each standing committee shall appoint a chair of the committee, responsible for scheduling meetings, compiling agenda items, and facilitating completion of action items. Committees are responsible for making recommendations that will be discussed and voted on by the full faculty.

### ***Section 2: Ad hoc Committees***

The Chair may create ad hoc committees or task forces to handle matters on a temporary basis. Ad hoc committee assignments shall expire with the tenure or discretion of the Chair or at the completion of its charge.

### ***Section 3: Social Work Professional Advisory Council***

The duties and responsibilities of the Social Work Professional Advisory Council are detailed below.

### ***Section 4: Department Responsibilities***

Certain Department matters require the participation of the full faculty. These include admissions and scholarships, student status review, and all department policy decisions.

### ***Section 5: Role of Department Chair***

The Chair shall oversee the faculty committee selection and assignment process. All regular voting faculty shall submit to the Chair, in writing, their interest and willingness to serve on at least two standing committees. If the self-nomination process fails to ensure sufficient membership and expertise, the Chair shall work with faculty to ensure sufficient committee membership.



## ARTICLE 4: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

### ***Section 1: Membership***

Membership of the Curriculum and Instruction Committee shall consist of:

1. Up to five faculty members appointed by the Social Work Faculty and/or Department Chair
2. A representative from the Social Work Professional Advisory Council
3. The Department Chair will be an ex-officio member of the committee.

One faculty member shall be appointed by committee members to serve as the committee chair.

### ***Section 2: Functions***

The functions of the committee include:

1. Maintain a process for the systematic development, evaluation and modification of the Social Work curriculum based on the accepted mission, goals, and policies of the Department, the University, and the CSWE.
2. Foster, evaluate, and maintain accreditation standards in curriculum.
3. Develop and modify curricular policies.
4. Review the University catalog bi-annually.
5. Make recommendations related to curriculum changes and improvement to the social work faculty, and follow up on recommendations and decisions made by the Department.

### ***Section 3: Meetings***

The Curriculum and Instruction committee meets at least one time per semester, with the option to call “special” meetings as necessary. Special meetings may be called to discuss and act on issues related to curriculum revision and improvement.

## ARTICLE 5: EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

### ***Section 1: Membership***

Membership of the Evaluation and Accreditation shall consist of:

1. The Department Chair
2. The Coordinator of Bachelor of Social Work Program
3. The Coordinator of Master of Social Work Program
4. One Tenure/Tenure-Track Faculty
5. One Clinical Instructor/Faculty

6. One Representative of Field Education

One faculty member shall be appointed by committee members to serve as the committee chair.

***Section 2: Functions***

The functions of the committee to be overseen by Department Chair include:

1. Maintain a process for the preparation of reaccreditation of the Department of Social Work by CSWE.
2. Collect and aggregate necessary data for CSWE reaccreditation standards (i.e., self-study)
3. Collect and upload CSWE assessment data on the Social Work website on a bi-annual basis
4. Plan and prepare agenda for CSWE site visit for reaccreditation
5. Submit annual CSWE reports
6. Develop a process to maintain ongoing data collection and reporting on an annual basis
7. Submit final documents for CSWE reaccreditation process

***Section 3: Meetings***

The Evaluation and Accreditation committee meets monthly on a regular basis to assess program outcomes and inform the Department of those outcomes in order to enhance curriculum.

ARTICLE 6: FIELD EDUCATION COMMITTEE

***Section 1: Membership***

Membership of the Field Education Committee shall consist of:

1. The Director of Field Education
2. The Assistant Director of Field Education
3. The Title IV-E Coordinator
4. Two Field Instructors chosen by the Director of Field Education

One faculty member shall be appointed by committee members to serve as the committee chair.

***Section 2: Functions***

The functions of the committee include:

1. Maintain a process for the development of the Field Education Manual.
2. Assist in the process of recruiting and maintaining appropriate Field Placements.
3. Review and modify the Field Manual on an annual basis.

4. Make recommendations to the Director of Field Education for enhancements in field practicum placements.
5. Assist in the recruitment and training of Field Instructors.
6. Consult in the development and modification of the field education curriculum.

### ***Section 3: Meetings***

The Field Education committee meets at least one time per semester, with the option to call “special” meetings as necessary. Special meetings may be called to discuss and act on issues related to field education including changes in the field manual, changes in the field curriculum etc.

## **ARTICLE 7: FACULTY DEVELOPMENT (INCLUDING RETENTION, TENURE AND PROMOTION) COMMITTEE**

(this section may need work and input by faculty if we are going to have our own criterion)

UTEP consists of a community of scholars and teachers, each of who excels in research or creative activity as well as in teaching, which distinguishes a university from other institutions of higher education. As social work faculty, we are committed to Social Work values and distinguish ourselves to students by service to the community, the profession, and the university. Thus, a faculty member to be considered for promotion and/or tenure should have demonstrated excellence in all these three areas. Current evaluation procedures follow UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures section 4.4 Appointment, Promotion, Tenure, and Termination guidelines in conjunction with The College of Health Sciences Annual Performance Evaluation (APEs) criteria.

Based on the HoOP 4.4.8.2.6 and 4.4.8.2.7 Since the Department has a role in tenure decision, a committee of at least three tenured faculty (if the Department does not have three, then an appointment will be made of an outside reviewer) will review all tenure applications and make a recommendation to the Department Chair. This is in addition to the College of Health Sciences’ performance evaluation processes.

### ***Section 1: Membership***

Membership of the Faculty Development committee shall consist of:

1. At least three Tenured Faculty for Tenure-Track Faculty reviews.
2. At least three Clinical Instructors/Faculty to review Clinical Instructor/Faculty promotion and reviews

One faculty member shall be appointed by committee members to serve as the committee chair for each subcommittee: Tenure-Track and Clinical Instructor reviews.

### ***Section 2: Functions***

The functions of the committee to be overseen by Department Chair include:

1. Each subcommittee (Tenure-Track and Clinical) will review Annual Performance Evaluations of respective faculty in each ranking and make recommendations for areas of growth for faculty.
2. Make recommendation to the Department regarding department-level tenure and promotion criteria.
3. For Tenure-Track subcommittee, make recommendations for tenure-related decisions.
4. If there are not enough committee members for decision related to certain ranks, faculty from other departments may be recruited to serve in a review role.

### ***Section 3: Meetings***

The Faculty Development committee meets on a regular basis to assess faculty development needs.

## **ARTICLE 8: SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

### ***Section 1: Purpose***

The Social Work Advisory Council is a voluntary and advisory body of individuals committed to the success of the social work students, faculty, and program at The University of Texas at El Paso. The council will provide guidance to the Department about the needs of the community and how the Department might enhance the educational experience to prepare students to address community needs and be successful in their professional social work lives.

### ***Section 2: Membership***

The Social Work Advisory Council will be comprised of a 13 to 16-member body consisting of local community members and representatives from area social service agencies, including but not limited to those that address mental health, substance abuse, immigration, military social work, indigenous populations, health care, child welfare, policy and advocacy, aging, and academic activities.

The council will have ex-officio representation from the UTEP Department of Social Work by the Department Chair, a member of the BSW faculty/clinical instructors, and a member of the MSW faculty/clinical instructors (not counted as part of the member body).

### ***Section 3: Leadership***

The Social Work Advisory Council will elect a chair, vice chair, secretary, and other officers as the committee deems fit for the perusal and completion of the purpose of the council. The officers will serve as the executive committee.

The Executive Committee of the council will be responsible for the setting of the meeting agenda in conjunction with the Department Chair.

The Council Chair will oversee council meetings, represent the council at Department functions, recruit council members, and outreach.

The Vice Chair of the council will take on the responsibilities of the Chair when the Chair is not able to attend/participate in council meetings and assist setting of the meeting agenda, representing the council, recruitment, and outreach.

The Secretary of the council will be responsible for surveying members for and setting council meeting dates, taking minutes during council meetings, distribution of meeting agenda and meeting minutes.

Elections will be held at the second scheduled meeting of the calendar year. Nominations can come from the floor or through self-nomination from an interested individual. Selection of leadership will come from a simple majority – 50% +1. Elected leadership will serve a three-year term.

#### ***Section 4: Meetings***

The Social Work Advisory Council will meet at a minimum quarterly. The committee Chair may convene meetings more frequently if needed. Members will have the opportunity to attend the meeting in person or virtually through a designated meeting or call-in medium to be determined prior to the meeting. Council members are expected to attend 50% percent of the yearly scheduled meetings. Members should notify the council Chair or secretary if they will not be able to attend the scheduled meeting. If members are no longer able to attend meetings, they should seek to have another member of their agency serve as representative to the council rather than removing themselves from the council completely.

## ARTICLE 9: STUDENT STATUS REVIEW

### **Preamble**

Social work is based on the values of service; social justice; dignity and worth of the person; importance of human relationships; integrity; and competence. Social work students are expected to integrate and demonstrate these fundamental values; to act in accord with the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers; to adhere to the University of Texas at El Paso Standards for Student Conduct, and other applicable laws and regulations; to perform academically at either an undergraduate or graduate level; and to show appropriate progress in the demonstration of professional social work skills. A faculty member who believes that a student has not met these expectations may file a request in writing to the Department Chair for the student's case to be reviewed at a Department meeting. The full faculty shall be involved in the review of any concerns regarding student standing in the program, referring to the following guidelines and processes, whenever University policies and procedures do not indicate a specific course of action and process.

## Section 1: Guidelines

A single discrete episode that violates the Department's or University's Standards for Student Conduct, the National Association of Social Work Code of Ethics, or state regulations defining professional misconduct is grounds for review of a student's status. Also, a pattern of recurring behaviors that are inconsistent with the profession's expectations is grounds for review.

The following representative list offers examples of the kinds of behaviors that could justify a review of a student's status. The list is not an attempt to identify every circumstance that would justify a Student Status Review.

1. Does not consistently carry out departmental or practicum responsibilities.
2. Presents frequent personal crises such that tasks, assignments, tests, appointments, and field activities are not completed in a timely manner and/or require rescheduling.
3. Exhibits provocative behavior such that the behavior alienates the student from others, disrupts class or meetings or the flow of work in the practicum agency, or results in repeated complaints from the field instructor, students, faculty, or others in the academic or practicum environment or related agencies.
4. Frequently misinterprets or misrepresents others' communication or behaviors.
5. Displays frequent attention-seeking behavior, which disrupts the academic or practicum environment.
6. Displays erratic, disorganized, incoherent, or unpredictable behavior.
7. Lacks insight or is unable to perceive the negative consequences of own behavior.
8. Frequently blames others or external factors for failures and difficulties in the academic or practicum environment.
9. Takes the position that the student is justified in having hurt or mistreated another person.
10. Repeatedly fails to plan ahead or is impulsive, causing distress, disruption, or harm to others.
11. Is verbally or physically aggressive toward others.
12. Is disoriented to person, place, or time, such that the school or practicum responsibilities cannot be carried out.
13. Is unable to sustain harmonious school and practicum relationships as exhibited by recurring interpersonal conflicts.
14. Displays intoxication or impairment at the University or practicum agency, due to abuse of psychoactive substances.
15. Displays behavior that results in a consensus among faculty and/or field practicum personnel that the student would present a clear threat to others upon entering the professional field of social work practice.

16. Does not earn grades as required for good academic standing.

17. Is charged with a crime.

These standards for students apply to all aspects of the academic environment, including the field practicum. Certain offenses will fall under the University's rules and regulations related to student conduct. For those that do not, the faculty may place a student on probation or, when the faculty finds that a student has demonstrated behavior so contrary to the standards of the profession for which the student is preparing as to render him/her unfit for the profession, the faculty may dismiss the student from the program.

## **Section 2: Preliminary Procedures**

A faculty member who believes that a student has not met the Department's expectations may file a written request for review of the student's status with the Department Chair. The request for review shall be addressed to the Department Chair, and it shall contain a written description of the alleged violation and any associated evidence.

Upon receipt of the request, the Department Chair shall convene a faculty meeting to review the allegation within one work week. It is the responsibility of the reporting faculty member to present preliminary findings to the Department. The faculty shall determine whether any member has a conflict of interest in the case or is unable to serve, and, upon such determination, the remaining faculty shall participate in the process. The faculty shall then review the allegations. By a majority vote, the faculty may make one of the following decisions:

1. To recommend informal resolution within the department.
2. To hold a formal hearing to review evidence and make a determination of status.

If the decision is to refer the matter for informal resolution within the Department, the advisor shall follow up as appropriate to assure resolution.

If the decision is to hold a formal hearing, the Department Chair shall include a copy of these procedures with the written decision provided to the student, and schedule a formal hearing as soon as possible, given the need for notification and coordination of schedules.

Notification may be in person, by phone, or by email (with a return receipt). If reasonable efforts to notify the student in person, by phone, or by email are unsuccessful, notification shall be by registered mail, return receipt requested, and notification shall be presumed seven calendar days after posting the registered letter. A hearing may be held in the absence of a student once notice is given.

If the decision is to hold a formal hearing, the student may select an advocate to help the student in the meeting. The advocate shall assist the student in preparation for the hearing and may assist the student during the hearing. Since a student status review hearing is not a legal proceeding, and since the student has avenues of appeal through legal

proceedings, attorneys are excluded from the hearing, and the student advocate may not be an attorney.

### **Section 3: Formal Hearing Procedures**

The following individuals are expected to attend a formal hearing:

1. At least 3 regular full-time faculty members
2. The student
3. The student's advocate, selected by the student, if desired by the student
4. The student's witnesses, if any
5. One observer, selected by the student, if desired by the student, to assist the student with tracking the events of the proceeding
6. The individual who initiated the review
7. The faculty's witnesses, if any
8. A department designee to take notes on the proceedings

A formal hearing may be held without the student, the student advocate, the student's witnesses, or the student's observer if the student refuses to accept notice or if any of those individuals does not appear.

Steps in the hearing include the following:

1. Call to order
2. Introduction of participants as listed above.
3. Verification of due notice to the student of the allegations
4. Review of hearing procedures, and disposition of procedural questions, if any
5. Statement by the Department Chair of the allegations
6. Preliminary statement by the individual who initiated the hearing
7. Preliminary statement by the student or student's advocate
8. Presentation of the Department's evidence
9. Questioning of the Department's witnesses\*
10. Presentation of the student's evidence
11. Questioning of the student and student's witnesses\*
12. Executive session to review facts and determine decision

\*(At the discretion of the Department Chair, questioning may occur following each witness or following all witnesses for each side.)

The faculty may consider any evidence related to student performance or conduct and shall not be constrained by the terms of the initial allegation.

The faculty may make one of four decisions by simple majority vote: determine the student's behavior did not violate professional or Department guidelines and expectations, recommend the student participate in a corrective action plan, place the student on academic probation, or dismiss the student from the Department of Social Work.



#### **Section 4: Post-Hearing Procedures**

Within one work week following the hearing, the Department Chair shall deliver a written summary of the evidence and the decision to the individual filing the allegation, the student, the student's advisor, and the student's advocate.

The Department Chair shall oversee implementation of the committee's decision.

The student may appeal an adverse decision in the manner prescribed by the University. Upon a finding of error, the University may remand for review, but the University may not impose a decision on the Department.

If probation is the committee's decision, the committee must specify the duration and conditions of probation. At the conclusion of the probationary period, the Committee shall review the student's performance and make one of the following decisions: remove from probation, continue probation, or dismiss from the Department of Social Work. If it is the recommendation to dismiss, then the case will be referred to the Graduate School for MSW students and to the Student Support Center for BSW students.

### **ARTICLE 10: PURCHASING AND FINANCES**

#### ***Section 1: Purpose***

UTEP has a clear path for managing departmental finances with the management of financial issues needing to be approved by the Department Chair and then through the College's Dean's Office. This includes pre-authorization for any travel or access to any type of request for funding.

### **ARTICLE 11: AMENDMENT OF RULES OF GOVERNANCE**

#### ***Section 1: How to amend rules***

The Rules of Governance of the faculty in the Department of Social Work at UTEP may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the faculty members present who are eligible to vote (as specified in Article 2 section 5) at any meeting of the faculty provided written notice of such proposed action is sent to faculty members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

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