UTA

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

School of Social Work

PHD CANDIDATES

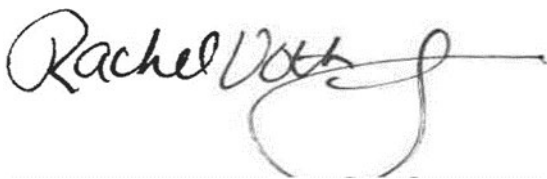# ON THE JOB MARKET

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to introduce this year's PhD candidates on the job market from the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA), School of Social Work. UTA strives to produce the highest quality of scholars and educators who are prepared and eager to promote change. At the UTA, our PhD students engage in community-based research on contemporary issues for the advancement of social work practice and social welfare policy. They collaborate with faculty and lead their own research initiatives, and also acquire experience teaching courses independently across the curriculum at the bachelors and masters level.

As you review their experience, interests, and curriculum vitae, you will see that these talented scholars and educators have great potential as additions to your faculty. They bring a wide diversity of knowledge and practice expertise that informs their research and teaching and are well suited to engage in impactful education and rigorous community-based research. They have already made significant contributions to social work research, and they recognize the importance of community voices in addressing important issues with broad-reaching implications. We are very proud of their accomplishments.

If you would like further information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or other members of the UTA faculty. We will be happy to discuss with you the strengths of each of these impressive candidates.

Sincerely,

Rachel Voth Schrag, PhD LCSW
PhD Program Director
University of Texas at Arlington
School of Social Work
Rachel.VothSchrag@uta.edu

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OUR PROGRAM

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The PhD program in the School of Social Work prepares students for careers in social work research, policy, and education.

We accept up to 10 students at the beginning of the fall semester each year that come from a variety of regional, cultural, educational, and practice backgrounds.

PROGRAM GOALS

SKILLS
To equip you with knowledge and skills in theory development, research methods, and data analysis.

DEVELOP
To develop your practice, policy, and social work education.

PREPARE
To prepare you for a career in higher education or advanced research.

PRIYANJALI CHAKRABORTY
priyanjali.chakraborty@uta.edu
PhD Candidate – May 2025

Research Interests
- Social & Structural Determinants of Reproductive Healthcare
- Health Disparities
- Feminist Theory

LACEY JENKINS, MSW
lacey.jenkins@uta.edu
PhD Candidate – May 2025

Research Interests
- Child Maltreatment Prevention
- Family Well-Being
- Child Welfare

ERICA ROBINSON, MSW
erica.robinson@mavs.uta.edu
PhD Candidate – 2025

Research Interests
- Economic Mobility & Stability
- Policies on Disparities in Economic Outcomes
- Data Analysis

GABRIELLE SCOTT
gabrielle.scott@uta.edu
PhD Candidate – May 2025

Research Interests
- Health Disparities
- Treatment Retention issues Psychiatric Settings
- Mental Health Services Research

MEGAN WESTMORE, LMSW
meganrose.westmore@uta.edu
PhD Candidate – May 2025

Research Interests
- Individuals With Disabilities
- Interpersonal Violence
- Safer Sexuality Education

PRIYANJALI CHAKRABORTY

priyanjali.chakraborty@uta.edu

Priyanjali Chakraborty (She/Her/Hers) earned a BA degree in Political Science from St. Xavier's College, Kolkata, India and a MA in Women's Studies from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Hyderabad, India. She also holds a Human Rights Duties and Education diploma from St. Xavier's College, Kolkata.

Her research uses a mixed-methods approach and is focused on unmet family-planning needs of low-income and immigrant populations in the United States, examining the role of health literacy interventions in healthcare access. This research is informed by her academic background and field experiences in community-based programs for women's reproductive and maternal health, and their economic empowerment in her roles with the National Rural Livelihoods Mission in Rajasthan as a Corporate Social Responsibility Manager. Her experience with grassroots NGOs in India, addressing mental health, disaster relief, and educational needs for all ages, has fortified her commitment to researching health disparities among vulnerable populations.

Through her work on federally funded research projects, she has furthered her training and expertise in policy data collection, secondary data analysis, survey research, and qualitative methods. She has co-authored seven peer-reviewed publications and presented at the Society for Social Work and Research, the Southwestern Social Science Association, and the American Public Health Association Conferences.

She also serves as a student member of the SSWR Doctoral Student Committee and the South Asian Social Work Educators Association and has served as a Treasurer for the School of Social Work's Doctoral Student's Association. She is committed to the cause of women's health and economic empowerment and is enthusiastic about helping social work students build a composite of awareness, values, knowledge, and skills needed to conduct practice with and research on social justice issues that transcend geographies.

Research Interests

- Social & Structural Determinants of Reproductive Healthcare
- Health Disparities
- Feminist Theory
- Violence Against Women
- Gender-Sensitive & Culturally Responsive Mental Health

Teaching Interests

- Research and Evaluation
- Social Policy
- Statistics
- Qualitative Methodology
- Theories of Human Behavior
- Immigrant and Refugee Populations

EDUCATION

PhD   University of Texas at Arlington, School of Social Work   Expected May 2025

MA   Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad   June 2016
Concentration: Women's Studies

BA   St. Xavier's College, Kolkata   June 2014
Psychology

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Creating Protective Environments and Promoting Social Norms that Protect Against Violence
Graduate Research Assistant   August 2023 – Present
School of Social Work, University of Texas at Arlington

Evaluating policy data

Extracting census data from youth surveys

Analysis of youth survey data using SPSS and Omnibus Statewide Survey data using STATA

Co-facilitated focus group and transcribed student and teacher/staff focus group data

SAMPLE PUBLICATION

Mauldin, R. L., Parekh, R., **Chakraborty, P.**, Messing, J. T., & Mattingly, S. (2024). Transportation, Routine Activities, and Unmet Travel Needs Among Older Vietnamese Immigrants in the United States. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 1-18

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Professor – University of Texas at Arlington, School of Social Work

SOCW 3301 Theories of Human Behavior   Fall 2024
SOCW 5308 Research and Evaluation   Summer 2022

VIEW PRIYANJALI'S FULL CURRICULUM VITAE

Lacey Jenkins, MSW

lacey.jenkins@uta.edu

Lacey is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Texas at Arlington, holding a Bachelor of Social Work from Texas Christian University and a Master of Social Work from the University of Denver. With five years of practice experience, Lacey has worked in various roles, including as a child welfare caseworker for Denver County, a school social worker, and a case manager for foster-to-adopt families. As a licensed social worker in Colorado, she gained firsthand experience working with children and families, providing her with a deep understanding of the barriers faced within the child welfare system. Her extensive practice experience has shaped her commitment to addressing these challenges and prepared her for teaching, as she brings practical knowledge and insights to her students.

Lacey's research centers on strengthening child well-being and preventing child maltreatment, with a particular emphasis on community-based interventions. During her doctoral studies, Lacey has spearheaded and collaborated on numerous child welfare projects with various faculty, resulting in five peer-reviewed manuscripts and five additional manuscripts under review. She is deeply intrigued by innovative strategies that empower communities to proactively address the needs of their families, aiming to prevent their involvement with the child welfare system. Through her research, Lacey seeks to contribute to the development of a more equitable system for all children and families.

Research Interests

- Child Maltreatment Prevention
- Family Well-Being
- Child Welfare

Teaching Interests

- Intro to Social Work
- Research Methods
- Children and Families
- Social Policy
- Human Behavior and the Social Environment

EDUCATION

PhD University of Texas at Arlington, School of Social Work   May 2024

MSW University of Denver, Graduate School of Social Work   June 2016
Concentration: *Family Systems*

BSW Texas Christian University, Department of Social Work   May 2015

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Title IV-E Child Welfare Education Program
Graduate Research Assistant   June 2022 – May 2024
School of Social Work, University of Texas at Arlington

Conducted qualitative interviews and focus groups, and performed data coding

Analyzed quantitative and qualitative Title IV-E data and contributed to the development of manuscripts

SAMPLE PUBLICATION

LaBrenz, C. A., **Jenkins, L.**, Huang, H., Ryan, S. D., Panisch, L. S., Kim, Y., & Baiden, P. (2023). State-level policies and reunification: a multi-level survival analysis. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 146, 106502. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106502

LaBrenz, C., **Jenkins, L.**, Choi, M. J., Kim, J., Ryan, S., & Wildberger, M. S. (2023). Sinking or swimming: perspectives of the children without placement crisis. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 1-27. https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2023.2237421

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Professor – University of Texas at Arlington, School of Social Work

SOCW 3308 Social Work Research Methods   Spring 2024
SOCW 2361 Introduction to Social Work   Fall 2023

VIEW LACEY'S FULL CURRICULUM VITAE

Erica Robinson, MSW

erica.robinson@mavs.uta.edu

As a practitioner, I have personally witnessed the positive impact that social workers can have on empowering historically marginalized communities to achieve more equitable outcomes, thereby altering the trajectory of their families for generations. Drawing from my practice experiences, my teaching philosophy is firmly centered on instilling in my students the knowledge and skills necessary to empower clients and communities, both during their college years and in their future professional endeavors across various social work practice areas.

My background as an academic adviser for university students, case manager for community college students, college adviser for high school students, and case manager for individuals applying for Medicaid and food stamps has equipped me with a deep understanding of the challenges students face beyond the classroom. Through independently teaching bachelor and graduate social work courses at The University of Texas at Arlington and Tarleton State University, I strived to engage students in course content, foster collaboration with their peers through group projects, and integrate students into their local community.

My aim when teaching social work students is to empower them to become compassionate practitioners who confidently apply their research, theory, and practice-based knowledge in various social work practice settings.

Research Interests

- Economic Mobility & Stability
- Policies on Disparities in Economic Outcomes
- Data Analysis

Teaching Interests

- Diverse Populations
- Social Policy
- Human Behavior
- Micro Practice

EDUCATION

PhD   The University of Texas at Arlington, School of Social Work   2025

MSW   The University of Texas at Arlington, Social Work   December 2011
Community and Administrative Practice

BSW   Texas Woman's University   August 2007
Emphasis: American Ethnic Studies

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

University of Texas at Arlington
Graduate Research Assistant   2020 - Present

Assisted faculty collect, analyze, write manuscripts, and present primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative data and published papers regarding research findings.

SAMPLE PUBLICATION

Kitchens, K., Mitschke, D. B., Labrenz, C., Thomas, L. A., & **Robinson, E. D.** (2024). Connections Tutoring Lab: Peer-led support in a virtual environment. *Journal of Social Work Education*. https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2024.2410801

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Professor – University of Texas at Arlington, School of Social Work

SOCW 4452 Field Seminar II   Spring 2023
SOCW 5304 Generalist Micro Practice   Fall 2022

VIEW ERICA'S FULL CURRICULUM VITAE

Gabrielle Scott

gabrielle.scott@uta.edu

Gabrielle Scott is originally from Los Angeles, California. She received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Arizona and her Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Northern Arizona University, focusing on addiction and mental health. Gabrielle is passionate about social advocacy for people of color and has actively participated in Diversity and Inclusion Committees in psychiatric inpatient settings, where she focused on integrating treatment methods to enhance healthcare for minorities. She has five years of experience in behavioral health settings and has provided therapy predominantly to underrepresented and marginalized patients, addressing a range of diagnoses including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and substance use disorders.

Gabrielle is currently a PhD candidate in her final year at The University of Texas at Arlington. Her research interests include treatment retention issues in psychiatric settings, social determinants of health and mental health, community-engaged research, cultural disparities and their influence on substance abuse and addiction, and cross-cultural factors among ethnic minority groups, as well as international social work. She has a special interest in community-engaged research aimed at improving mental health outcomes for underserved populations. To advance this interest, she has actively engaged in Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) and experiential learning studies.

Her primary research focus is on understanding the factors that contribute to treatment dropout in behavioral health settings and identifying both risk and protective factors that affect treatment retention among people of color. She hopes that her research will guide the implementation of evidence-based interventions and policies, so that mental health services can become more equitable, accessible, and effective for all individuals, regardless of their background or ethnicity.

Research Interests

- Health Disparities
- Treatment Retention issues Psychiatric Settings
- Mental Health Services Research
- Substance Abuse & Addiction Research
- Social Determinants of Health and Mental Health
- Community Engaged Research

Teaching Interests

- Introduction to Social Work
- Macro Social Work Practice and Theory
- Human behavior and the Social Environment
- Research Methods Courses
- Qualitative methodology
- Cultural and Racial Diversity
- Mental Health

EDUCATION

PhD University of Texas at Arlington, School of Social Work   Expected: May 2025

MA Northern Arizona University   December 2018
Concentration: *Clinical Mental Health Counseling*

BA The University of Arizona, Social Work   May 2016

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Social Work Faculty and Student Perspectives on Best Practices for Experiential Learning that Facilitates Multiculturalism

Graduate Research Assistant   February 2022 – November 2023

> Assisted with the recruitment process for student and faculty focus groups in the Social Work department at UT Arlington. Conducted qualitative analysis by manually synthesizing the data from focus group transcriptions. Also assisted with the member-checking process and maintained detailed records of all transcriptions throughout the project.

SAMPLE PUBLICATION

Scott, G., Montero-Zamora P., Vazquez C., Pinedo M. (accepted). The Association Between Immigration-Related Stress, COVID-19 Impact, and Drinking Motives Among US-Born Latinos During the Pandemic. *Journal of Drug Issues,0(0),1-16*. https://doi.org/10.1177/00220426241281272

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Professor – University of Texas at Arlington, School of Social Work

SOCW 5311 Advanced Micro Practice   Fall 2024

SOCW 3308 Social Work Research Methods   Summer 2024

SOCW 3307 Diverse Populations   Summer 2024

VIEW GABRIELLE'S FULL CURRICULUM VITAE

Megan Westmore, LMSW

meganrose.westmore@uta.edu

Megan R. Westmore, LMSW (she/her), received her Master of Science in Social Work degree with a concentration in Community and Administrative Leadership from the University of Texas at Austin in 2014. She additionally holds a BSW and a bachelor's degree in Spanish from UT Austin. She is a PhD candidate in her final year at the University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work and has received the prestigious Norman Pauling Fellowship from the University of Texas system in recognition of outstanding accomplishments during her graduate studies.

After completing her MSSW, Megan spent seven years in social work practice focusing on two primary areas: policy advocacy for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD), and prevention and healing services related to sexual violence. During this time, she developed an interest in primary prevention of violence against individuals with disabilities and co-authored a healthy relationship and safer sexuality curriculum for young adults with IDD entitled My Rights My Life, published in 2022.

Megan plans to continue this work through researching access to intimate partner and sexual violence prevention and healing services for individuals with IDD, and how such access impacts victimization. She is particularly interested in violence primary prevention programs such as healthy relationship and safer sexuality education. She utilizes mixed methods and social network analysis in her research, which allows her to answer important questions about victimization rates and prevention intervention effectiveness while also centering the voices of individuals with disabilities themselves. In addition, Megan seeks to train the next generation of social work practitioners in taking an intersectional approach to services that recognizes the strengths and needs of clients. She is passionate about incorporating open pedagogical practices into her classroom and has experience teaching both in-person and virtually.

Research Interests

- Interpersonal Violence and Disabilities
- Outcomes for Individuals with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (IDD)
- Primary Prevention of Interpersonal Violence
- Healthy Relationships & Safer Sexuality Education
- Open Pedagogies

Teaching Interests

- Social Work and Disability
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Statistics and Research Methods Courses
- Social Welfare Policy
- Human Behavior and the Social Environment
- Macro Practice

EDUCATION

PhD University of Texas at Arlington, School of Social Work   Expected: May 2025

MSSW University of Texas at Austin, School of Social Work   August 2014
Concentration: *Community and Administrative Leadership*

BSW University of Texas at Austin, School of Social Work   May 2013

BA University of Texas at Austin, Spanish   May 2013

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Building Community and Combatting Social Isolation among Assisted Living Residents: An Initial Evaluation of an Online Nature-Based Group Intervention for Older Adults with Disabilities

Graduate Research Assistant   June 2022 – May 2024

Responsible as project manager for coordinating all aspects of the ongoing research project, including delivering the intervention twice weekly at an assisted living community, managing the MSW-level GRA, serving as liaison with site personnel, and collecting quantitative survey, qualitative interview, and social network data.

SAMPLE PUBLICATION

Westmore, M. R., & Anderson, K. A. (2024). Adult day services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities: A scoping review. *Family and Community Health, 47(3), 209-218*. https://doi.org/10.1097/FCH.0000000000000406

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Professor – University of Texas at Arlington, School of Social Work

SOCW 3312 Disability and Social Work   Spring 2024
SOCW 2361 Introduction to Social Work   Fall 2023

VIEW MEGAN'S FULL CURRICULUM VITAE

Have Questions about The Program?
Want to learn more about our students?
Want to promote a job listing?

CONTACT

Rachel Voth Schrag, PHD

PhD Program Director

Associate Professor

Rachel.VothSchrag@uta.edu

UTA

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

School of Social Work

thrive.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINTON
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK & SMART HOSPITAL BUILDING

BOX 19129, 501 W. MITCHELL ST. ARLINGTON, TX 76019