OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

STUDENT ACCESS & SUCCESS
- Create an Infrastructure and Support System
- Increase Student Financial Assistance
- Foster Student Connectedness
- Increase the Number of Students Pursuing Theses
- Increase Opportunities for Collaboration
- Offer Cutting-Edge and Dynamic Curricula
- Recruit and Retain High Quality Students
- Support Activities to Decrease Time to Graduation

RESEARCH & CREATIVE WORKS
- Enhance Research Productivity and Generate Research Grants
- Promote and Disseminate Research and Creative Works
- Boost Internal and External Research Partnerships
- Recruit and Retain Highly Qualified Doctoral Students

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE
- Facilitate DEI Activities with the Leadership of DEI
- Create Opportunities to Increase Feelings of “Belonging”
- Promote Events Reflecting Our Diverse Community
- Improve Communication
- Encourage Faculty and Staff to Share Their Voice
- Enhance Our Positive Culture and Learning Environment
- Recognize Exemplary Work
- Hiring and Retention of Diverse Faculty and Staff
- Create a Safe, Collaborative Environment

ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY OUTREACH
- Enhance the School of Social Work’s Presence and Brand
- Increase Engagement with Alumni and Stakeholders
- Increase Opportunities for Professional Development
- Enhance Awareness About International Social Issues
- Enhance curriculum to Include Global Perspectives
- Expand Our Engagement with Potential Students
- Increase Community Partnerships and Engagement
- Increase the Continuing Education Offerings
- Increase Donor Investment in the School
Members of the School of Social Work’s Executive Committee worked meticulously to develop a strategic plan reflective of our values and priorities. The planning began with a central focus on student experience, access, learning, growth, and success.

The SSW Executive Committee initiated the process by surveying faculty and staff and gathering their input and assistance in providing a common framework for revising SSW’s Strategic Plan.

Using these data, the SSW Executive Committee, collaborating with two outside facilitators, held six subsequent special meetings during the previous academic year with faculty and staff and gathered additional input within the framework of UTA’s strategic plans.

Based on the feedback received, the SSW Executive Committee then expanded our planning to provide faculty and staff with goals and objectives to strengthen and expand academic programs, enhance research, improve connections to community development and outreach, and build a culture and climate allowing for all students, staff, and faculty to flourish.

Subsequently, we narrowed SSW’s Strategic Plan to Four Guiding Principles: Student Access and Success, Research and Creative Works, Inclusive Excellence, and Engagement and Community Outreach. We then reviewed our Four Guiding Principles to ensure they complement the UTA President’s Strategic Themes and five broad areas of focus: People and Culture, Student Success, Alumni and Engagement, Research and Innovation, and Finance and Infrastructure.

As with most strategic plans, this is a living document helping guide our growth over the next several years. We learned through the COVID pandemic we must be both focused and flexible. Therefore, we developed goals and measurable objectives to evaluate along the way our progression in meeting the overall strategic themes and our Four Guiding Principles.

It is our intention, as a community, to monitor our Four Guiding Principles and the supporting goals developed, update them as appropriate, and modify them as needed. In this way, we will be able to keep current and keep pushing our SSW, and its faculty, staff and students, to reach and exceed the target goals in the framework of the UTA President’s Strategic Themes and our Four Guiding Principles.

UTA is designated as an R1 - Carnegie Tier One Very High Research Activity institution, and this is reflected in our strategic planning as we continue to expand our Social Work research production.

Finally, not only does our strategic plan align with the UTA President’s Strategic Themes and university policy, it also incorporates the UTA Principles of Community, SSW’s Principles of Community, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion.
HSI & AANAPISI SERVING INSTITUTION

#1 BEST COLLEGE FOR SOCIAL WORK MAJORS IN TEXAS

MOST AFFORDABLE CSWE-ACCREDITED MSW PROGRAM

#1 BEST MSW ONLINE PROGRAM

#1 SSW, IN TEXAS FOR VETERAN FRIENDLINESS

TOP 5

MOST POPULAR SOCIAL WORK SCHOOL

HIGH DIVERSITY INDEX

MOST POPULAR BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

MOST POPULAR MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
VISION

Educating Leaders to create community partnerships for promoting a just society.

MISSION

The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work promotes the highest standards of integrity, and excellence in research, teaching and service, and creates collaborative scholarly and educational opportunities for students and the community, with the goal of achieving a just society.
The School of Social Work is committed to the academic success of all enrolled students. Retention, graduation and professional employment of students is paramount to the overall success of the School of Social Work, and, as such, we are focused on creating and maintaining a positive, inclusive, welcoming, and supportive environment for students to learn and develop both inside and outside the classroom.

We recognize the importance of student connectedness and well-being and dedicate efforts to promoting a sense of social belonging throughout the School, facilitating opportunities for students to connect with one another, faculty, staff, and the School and University. We offer dynamic and state of the art curricula that emphasizes student engagement through innovative teaching and learning strategies, service learning, and interprofessional education opportunities.

Finally, we celebrate that our students are uniquely diverse individuals with varying life experiences, privileges, and barriers, and we foster an inclusive and supportive academic infrastructure to facilitate the well-being and success of all students in the School.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1**

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**Create an infrastructure and support system to address barriers to accessing resources needed to successfully engage in social work education within the SSW**

- Enhance and adapt onboarding and orientation processes for students to meet the needs of our diverse student body.
- Create and maintain accessible online module-based orientation courses for students that are available upon initial acceptance.
- Develop a centralized repository and referral system of available resources within the SSW, UTA and community.
- Develop an academic support infrastructure to address the specific needs of social work students in the areas of writing, research, and policy.
- Develop and implement a peer-based academic support network and/or tutoring center.

**Foster student connectedness and sense of social belonging with one another, to faculty, and to the SSW and the University community**

- Support and maintain the Graduate Student Leader and Undergraduate Student Leader Programs, whose primary directives include facilitating connections between students in the School of Social Work, providing navigational support and fostering leadership opportunities.
- Create opportunities for faculty and students to connect with one another both inside and outside the classroom environment.
- Participate as a School in at least one University-sponsored event each semester to promote student connections with UTA.
- Support and foster growth in the existing student organizations within the SSW, and reassess the needs and opportunities for the development of new student organizations annually.

**Increase student financial assistance**

- Increase the amount and/or number of academic, field stipends and research scholarships offered through the SSW appropriate to each academic program.
- Explore and address potential barriers that may prevent students from applying for scholarships.
Increase the number of students pursuing the undergraduate thesis and graduate thesis options

Increase opportunities for faculty and students to collaborate through research, student organizations and experiential learning

Offer cutting-edge and dynamic curricula that are responsive to the changing needs and opportunities of social work and substance misuse professions

- Develop specialty and certificate courses in high-demand areas.
- Increase enrollment in undergraduate minors and certificate programs.
- Provide opportunities for service learning, interprofessional education, and other innovative learning strategies to foster knowledge and skill development and enhance career preparation.

Recruit and retain high quality BSSUT, BSW, MSW, and PhD students

In an effort to address disparities in graduation rates, support activities to decrease student’s time to graduation
Enhance research productivity and generate collaborative research grants and creative works.

- Identify and facilitate opportunities for students to engage in faculty research.
- Increase faculty affiliations within existing centers.
- Create and leverage resources across centers to provide faculty with access to resources such as project coordinators, technical writers, graphic designers, statisticians, and grant management.
- Expand and support synergistic grant writing activities - encourage/facilitate collaborative grant writing within and across departments.
- Create a space to collaborate, brainstorm ideas for thought leadership and seek inspiration from each other.

Promote and disseminate research and creative works in the media, social media, and across high profile outlets.

- Promote and disseminate research and creative works in the media, social media, and across high profile outlets.
- Develop technical and creative assistance, training, guidance, and best practices to leverage social media channels to publicize research, creative works and engage with a larger community.
- Enhance the online presence of PhD students and faculty to promote their scholarship.

Boost internal and external research partnerships with nonprofits and other community, state and federal agencies, other schools and universities and noteworthy institutions

- Build strong relationships with community partners to procure funds, promote new idea and conduct research for and within the community, nationally and internationally.
- Facilitate interdisciplinary and community partnership discussions hosted by the SSW to explore research opportunities and creative work, learn about new resources, community needs, and receive feedback.
- Centralize resources and information for researchers, stakeholders, students and community partners to drive partnerships and relationships in the community and support doctoral student employment after graduation.

Recruit and retain highly qualified doctoral students.

- Increase average number of doctoral student peer-reviewed journal articles.
- Increase average number of doctoral student external funding submissions.
- Support doctoral students in securing academic.
Facilitate DEI activities with the leadership of DEI

- Introspective training for faculty and staff.
- Teaching strategies and training on inclusiveness.
- Initiate professional development brown bags, seminars, or workshops in-house.
- Develop inclusive learning events for multiple communities (internal and external).

Create opportunities to increase feelings of “belonging”.

- Onboarding activities to include orientation for faculty and staff about the profession of Social Work, our School of Social Work, relationship building and mentoring.

Promote events reflecting the diversity of our community

- Monthly social activity/increase the number of formal and informal faculty and staff get-togethers.
- Gather for social connecting and building community before faculty and staff meetings.
- Initiate social and service events using faculty and staff volunteers.

Improve Communication

- Feature SSW teams/areas in the e-newsletter (external).
- Encourage faculty/staff to follow at least one of the SSW media platforms.
- More conversation with faculty/staff on best methods to improve communication.
- Maximize the number and breadth of communication vehicles (online and offline).

Increase opportunities for faculty/staff to have and share their voice

- Expand the structure/mechanisms for inclusion of staff voices.
- Build reciprocal relationships characterized by mutual respect.

Enhance the physical (built) environment to encourage a positive culture and learning environment

- Add in ‘socially engaging’ enhancements to physical spaces (i.e., photos, murals, prints).
- Reflect the diversity of our community in visual representations and spaces.
- Ensure the accessibility of signage, spaces and online learning environments.

Recognize exemplary work demonstrating integrity and mutual respect

- Evaluate and restructure/expand recognition and awards.

Build networks and collaborations for fostering the hiring and retention of diverse faculty and staff

- Create pipelines for identifying and recruiting diverse hires.
- Develop ongoing relationships and collaborative exchanges with diverse groups.
- Develop resources and supports that promote an inclusive community to retain faculty and staff.

Create a safe, collaborative environment for learning, mentoring, and professional growth

- Increase engagement social and professional opportunities throughout the academic year for students, staff, and faculty to interact.
- Facilitate universally accessible physical spaces that facilitate social interactions and networking, as well as spaces that support and affirm gender identity and expression and mothering needs.
- Promote accessible virtual spaces that facilitate social interactions and networking.

Guiding Principle

Guided by the NASW Code of Ethics, we will continue our goal to build our School into a diverse group of individuals committed to social justice and celebrate our various social identities that reflect our student body. To uplift inclusive excellence, we commit to equity, which means intentionally building conditions within the School that create more space and remove barriers for diverse, and historically excluded individuals. The following strategies that promote inclusion, equity, and diversity can help the SSW achieve inclusive excellence.
ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY OUTREACH
An essential function of our SSW is to be engaged in the larger community and responsive to social needs and policies. We seek to further the scale and scope of our research, teaching and service-focus external collaborations, as well as the diversity and variety of these collaborations.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4**

Enhance the School of Social Work’s presence and brand within UTA, profession and surrounding communities

- Create multiple methods for UTA SSW students, faculty, and staff to disseminate findings from community-based research back into the communities.
- Invite community members and adjunct instructors to participate in panels to share their agencies’ work, as well as present on innovative practices, training or research conducted.
- Foster effective collaborations that include students, faculty, advisory boards, and staff supporting effective outreach efforts and engaging the community.

Increase engagement with alumni and key community stakeholders

- Sponsoring major conferences and events in the community.
- Engaging alumni and key stakeholders through research and/or faculty.
- Inviting alumni to be guest speakers.

Increase opportunities for professional development and recognition among students, staff, faculty, alumni, and community partners

- Leveraging online platforms to promote staff development opportunities.

Enhance awareness about social issues internationally and educate our SSW community of the nuances of and differences in culture as it relates to social work policies and practice

- Developing a committee to lead and develop collaborative and transformative initiatives to increase engagement.
- Creating an environment where students, partners, and the SSW learn and grow together and drive meaningful social justice change.

Enhance curriculum to include global perspectives & enrich the study abroad program

- Addition of a class specifically on global social work which evolves around open discussions, speakers, and case studies.
- Including global topics that are relevant and current within the course.

Expand our engagement activities with potential students earlier to create a pipeline from high school and/or community college into the SSW

- Have current students present to high school and community college students.
- Leverage dual credit programs to increase partnerships to offer Intro to Social Work.

Increase community partnerships and engagement through service-learning and internships

- Expand IPE to include other disciplines and fields of study beyond traditional partners.

Increase the continuing education offering

- Creation of certificate programs for community members who are interested in social service fields.

Increase donor investment in the School

- Increase the percentage of donations and dollar amounts.
- Increase activities/media to enhance donor awareness of benefits of endowment and philanthropic potential.
- Increase events and forums to share academic value and social impact of the SSW with corporate and private foundations.
- Increase percentage of donors who make a financial contribution to the School for conducting research, establishing professorships, and increasing academic resources.