School of Social Work Ranked Among Nation's Best for Graduate Study

The School of Social Work has again been ranked one of the top graduate programs in the nation for students seeking advanced degrees in social work.

According to the 2016 U. S. News and World Report, UTA School of Social Work ranked No. 38 on the list of best social work graduate programs in the nation, a six point increase from last year. This latest ranking is a testament of the School of Social Work's growth and influence nationally and abroad.

GraduatePrograms.com named the School of Social Work No. 10 on the list of the Top 25 Social Work Schools based on student ratings and reviews. In July, Social Work Degree Guide.com ranked UTA No. 12 on its list of the top 25 online Master of Social Work programs.

"We are so very proud of what our faculty and staff have accomplished. Through their dedication, they have created a nationally recognized program that benefits our students, community and profession," said Scott Ryan, dean of the UTA School of Social Work. "We are delighted by this ranking and endorsement from students. We care deeply about their success and it shows." Visit UTA's news center to read more about the rankings.

In addition to being one of the top graduate programs in the nation, the School of Social Work played a significant role in UTA being ranked the best four-year college in Texas for military veterans and one of the
top 20 schools in the nation for individuals who served in the military and are working to earn a college degree, according to Military Times.

Military Times' Best for Vets: Colleges 2016 rankings placed UTA No. 16 of 125 four-year schools that offer bachelors, graduate degrees or both. That's up 20 spots from last year's No. 36 ranking.

This recognition is partially due to the School of Social Work leading the Student Veterans Project at UTA, which offers free services to veterans who are undergraduates or who are considering returning to college. Program staff members are available to help veterans enter the educational system and be successful in their studies at UTA, as well as create a welcoming place for student veterans while having the library’s resources at their fingertips.

Dr. Smith-Osborne, associate professor and director of the Center for Clinical Social Work, was previously awarded a $7,700 grant from the Vet Center Initiative Grant Program in January 2015 for the Student Veterans Organization to build a tribute for student veterans, which was commemorated by a ribbon-cutting ceremony in the Vet Lounge in UTA's Central Library in December. Smith-Osborne is the founding advisor for the Student Veterans Organization on UTA's campus.

The Student Veterans Program offers veterans assistance in many areas that include making decisions about their educational careers, applying for college, understanding and applying for benefits and financial aid, finding other resources to assist veterans and their family members and understanding the transition to student role and its effect on the family.

For more information on the Student Veterans Project and UTA’s top Texas school ranking for student veterans, visit UTA's news center.

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**Faculty Research**

**Student Research and Cross-Disciplinary Partnerships with School of Social Work Generate Insight on Emotions and Human Behavior**

Drs. J.-C. Chiao, Peter Lehmann, Anne Nordberg, Yuan Bo Peng, Jodi Tommerdahl and Shouyi Wang represent a partnership among the School of Social Work, College of Engineering and the College of Education at the University of Texas at Arlington for a preliminary study that explores the science of emotions.

The research team will build a wireless, wearable device, which will be embedded in a hat to identify brain signals related to anger. A person who is becoming angry will receive an alerting signal from their smart phone or watch to remind them to practice anger-management techniques learned in therapy sessions, and UTA’s system will help create a systematic method for helping individuals control anger responses.

The study contains a sample of 40 male student volunteers who will be examined to explore the electro cortical, electrical activity that take place in the cerebral cortex and cardiovascular systems during anger and happiness stimuli.
"We hope that this will lay the groundwork for follow-up studies in pursuit of a way to detect and alert people that they are about to become very anger," said Anne Nordberg, assistant professor at the School of Social Work and research associate for the Center for African American Studies.

Social work doctoral students and graduate research assistants, Anh Phuong Nguyen and Cecilia Mengo, were selected to assist with the study. The study has the potential to help individuals better understand human behavior as it relates to emotions, as well as develop recommendations and interventions for research, particularly intimate partner violence.

"The University of Texas at Arlington has incredible faculty members representing the highest level of scholarship in their disciplines. Their work and that of their students is among the best in research and innovation nationally," said UTA President Vistasp M. Karbhari.

Read more.

**Social Work Professor and UTA Research Team Show Need for Post-Cancer Care**

Years after going into remission, many adult cancer survivors still encounter challenges from the disease and its treatment.

A study by researchers at UTA and the University of Central Florida has found that survivors continue to experience anxiety about recurrence and loss of personal control related to physical problems such as sexual dysfunction and the inability to control bodily functions two, five, even 10 years after they’re treated.

“So often, the expectation is that a cancer survivor should be grateful for having survived the diagnosis of cancer,” says social work Assistant Professor Gail Adorno, a co-principal investigator. “And while this may be true, those survivors with debilitating, lingering effects of cancer and its treatment are not always acknowledged within health care systems as needing continued care based on their cancer survivor status.”

The study was published in the February issue of *Cancer*, a journal of the American Cancer Society.

Read more.

**Faculty Publications & Presentations**

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Dr. Vijayan Pillai, professor**


**Dr. Beverly Black, Jillian Michelle Smith Professor in Family Violence Research and Ph.D. Director**


**Dr. Maria Scannapieco, professor and director of the Center for Child Welfare**

Hegar, R. & Scannapieco,
Research Project in Response to Police Violence

Dr. Anne Nordberg, assistant professor at UTA’s School of Social Work and research associate of the Center for African American Studies (CAAS), introduced her research project entitled The Black Voice Matters on April 1, 2015 at a CAAS Power Hour lecture series. The Black Voice Matters project is a testimonial research development that gives UTA students and community members a platform to anonymously voice the impact of remote contemporary acts of violence in their lives, such as the death of Michael Brown.

Youth are the most watched group of people in the country, yet, the experiences of youth during encounters with police is very limited in research. The Black Voice Matters project will serve as a platform for individuals to voice their thoughts, opinions, and experiences about acts of violence. People who offer their testimonies help Dr. Nordberg and her research team increase and amplify voices of youth in research literature and archive stories for education, research, and activism. Eventually, those stories will be publicly available on a dedicated website.

Collaborators for The Black Voice Matters project include social work Associate Professor and CAAS Director, Dr. Schnavia Hatcher, and BSW student, Mr. Mark Stevens. The Black Voice Matters project was approved by UTA’s ethics review board. All students and community members over the age of 18 years are welcome to participate.

For more information on The Black Voice Matters project, contact Dr. Anne Nordberg at annenordberg@uta.edu or the Center for African American Studies at 817-272-9642.

Dr. Anne Nordberg is pictured on the left with Dr. Schnavia Hatcher.

Faculty Honors & Awards

Social Work Professor Awarded Grant

Dr. Noelle Fields, assistant professor


Dr. Catheleen Jordan, Cheryl Miles Moore Professor in Mental Health Research


PRESENTATIONS

Dr. John Bricout, professor and associate dean for research and professional development


Dr. Richard Hoefer, Roy E. Dulak Professor for Community Practice Research and director of Center for Advocacy, Nonprofit and Donor Organizations

Health Care Policy in the United States: Responding to Change.
The Royal Society for Public Health recognized Dr. Vijayan Pillai for his social and demographic work in Zambia, where he became actively involved in extensive research on women's health and reproductive rights led him to social demography work in Zambia, where he became actively involved in public health.

The Royal Society for Public Health recognized Pillai for his groundbreaking research and career commitment to the improvement of public health.


Dr. Noelle Fields and Ling Xu, assistant professors, with Rupal Parekh, doctoral student


GRANT AWARDS

Dr. Peter Lehmann, professor, and Dr. Anne Bain-Nordberg, assistant professor

Recipients of a research grant from the Interdisciplinary Research Program at UTA. This grant supports "A System for Neuro-Feedback Anger Management to Prevent Domestic Violence," a pilot study that explores the electrocortical and cardiovascular activities during anger and happiness stimuli in individuals through the use of electro-encephalogram. Co-investigators for the research project include Dr. J.C. Chiao, engineering professor, Dr. Jodi Tommerdahl, associate professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Yuan Peng, professor in the Psychology and Joint Biomedical Engineering Program, and Dr. Shouyi Wang, assistant engineering professor.

Dr. Noelle Fields and Ling Xu, assistant professors

Recipient of the Research Enhancement Program (REP) grant for study entitled: "Exploring Healthy Aging among Older Chinese Immigrants and their Family Caregivers in Dallas, Texas."

Dr. Marcela Gutierrez, assistant professor of practice

Recipient of a research grant from the University of North Texas Science Center to evaluate...
"Being a member of a group of select public health professionals in one of the oldest public health societies in the world is truly humbling," said Pillai. "I am profoundly grateful to be recognized in this manner, and this honor will help further my opportunities to collaborate professionally, while extending my reach to vulnerable populations here in the U.S. and abroad."

Read more about Pillai’s inspirational story that influenced his decision to research and become an advocate for women's rights and reproductive health.

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Social Work Professor Elected Fellow of Prestigious International Society

Dr. Alexa Smith-Osborne, a University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) associate professor of social work and expert in resilience research, military and veterans' health and mental health issues, has been named a Fellow of the Society for Social Work and Research. Dr. Smith-Osborne is also the director of the Center for Clinical Social Work at UTA.

The Society for Social Work and Research is a premier worldwide social work research organization.

The University of Texas at Arlington is the only Texas institution to have a new Fellow among the organization’s 53-member Class of 2016. The class includes universities in 21 states and Canada.

The Society invited Smith-Osborne because she has served with distinction to advance the mission of the Society: to advance, disseminate, and translate research that addresses issues of social work practice and policy, and promotes a diverse equitable and just society.

Read more.

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Professor Emeritus Receives Prestigious Award for Innovative Research and Social Work Practice

Dr. Wayne Duehn, professor emeritus in UTA's School of Social Work, was recently honored with the 2015 NASW Social Work Pioneers Award for his service and innovative research in the profession. The award is presented by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Foundation to honor social workers who have explored new territories and made significant contributions to social work research and practice.
Dr. Duehn is one of the prestigious NASW honorees who have paved the way for social workers in making contributions for the betterment of the human condition. His research is nationally and internationally recognized and focuses on sexuality, evidence-based practice, and trauma-informed care. Dr. Duehn’s renowned research also includes sexual safety innovations in adoption and foster care systems, as well as providing treatment options for victims of child abuse and establishing assessments for offenders.

Read more.

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Dr. Marcela Gutierrez, LMSW, social work assistant professor in practice, is one of five recipients for the 2016 Presidential Scholarship for the Academy Health Institute on Advocacy and Public Policy. Gutierrez attended the National Health Policy Conference in February in Washington, D.C. to network with stakeholders, review policies, and determine how to best leverage policy, research, and practice to improve and advance children’s health.

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Social Work Alumna Receives Doctoral Award for Dissertation Research

Dr. Arati Maleku, a 2015 alumna from the School of Social Work, received honorable mention for her dissertation entitled "The Social Determinants of Immigrant Well-Being in the United States: A Gendered Perspective."

Through a complex survey analysis of the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) 2012, Maleku's dissertation examines the overlapping effects of structural vulnerabilities that arise from an individual's position in a society characterized by gender, race, ethnicity, class, age, and marital status on the well-being of immigrants in the United States.

Her dissertation is significant in expanding theoretical and methodological advancement of health research, providing critical implications for social determinants of health frameworks, and policy implications for data disaggregation.

Read more.
Tuesday, March 22
Social Work Student Day at the Legislature Social Work students are invited to travel by bus to Austin, TX to speak with legislative representatives and advocate about issues concerning social work. The bus will depart from the School of Social Work parking lot at 6:00 a.m. For more information and to register, contact Jennifer Malone at jemalone@uta.edu.

Thursday, March 24
Preparation Workshop for the LMSW, LCSW and AP Exams Dr. Norman Cobb, social work associate professor, presents a two-day seminar preparing individuals for the Licensed Master Social Worker, Advanced Clinical, and Advanced Generalist Practice exams. 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., School of Social Work Complex, Room A104. Register here.

Friday, March 25
Creative Fundraising Workshop April Mitchell will present methods to use for fundraising purposes. 9 a.m. to noon, School of Social Work Complex, Room A104. Register here.

Friday, April 1
Ethics of Self-Care Workshop Dr. Janet Finch, social work assistant professor, will discuss ways for social workers to eliminate stress and implement personal self-care strategies to ensure high-quality services are provided. 9 a.m. to noon, School of Social Work Complex, Room A104. Register here.

Friday, April 15
LBSW Preparation Workshop Dr. Norman Cobb, social work associate professor, will present information, resources, and test-taking strategies to use for passing the LBSW exam. Content areas that will be reviewed are direct practice, human behavior, research, administration, ethics, and policy. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., School of Social Work Complex, Room A104. Register here.

Saturday, April 16
Liberation Among Landmines: Race and Culture in the Context of Adoption and Foster Care Katy Perkins and Krista Woods will facilitate an interactive workshop showing individuals how race and culture are important to the development and emotional well-being of children. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., School of Social Work Complex, Room A104. Register here.

Thursday and Friday, April 21-22
Preparation for the LMSW, LCSW, and AP Exams Dr. Norman Cobb, social work associate professor, will present information, resources, and test-taking strategies to assist individuals with passing the Intermediate, Advanced Clinical, and Advanced Generalist Practice exams. 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., School of Social Work Complex, Room A104. Register here.

Friday, May 13
Resolving Ethical Issues When Working with Ethnic Clients Richard
Gonzales, former adjunct professor at the School of Social Work, will examine ethical, racial, and political barriers that arise in social work when working with diverse populations. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., School of Social Work Complex, Room A104. Register here.

**Wednesday, April 27**

**Social Work Colloquium** Dr. Joanne Sobeck, associate dean for research and director of the Center for Social Work Research at Wayne State University, presents "Building Research Capacity." 1 p.m., School of Social Work Complex, Room B107. RSVP to Michael Olayiwole at michael.olayiwole@mavs.uta.edu.

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School of Social Work  
211 South Cooper St.  
Box 19129 Arlington, TX 76019  
Telephone 866-272-3181, Fax 817-272-3939  
https://www.uta.edu/ssw/

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