

Social Work Program Growing at SWOSU

03.23.2005

March is National Social Workers Month and Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford is one of only five Oklahoma universities that offer a Bachelor of Social Work degree.

Debbi McFarlin, director of the social work program at SWOSU, said the number of students who are majoring in social work has grown from 32 in 1994 to 65 in 2004. SWOSU has 24 seniors doing their internships this spring semester in various settings. Social work is a profession dealing with relationships between people and their environments. Social work helps people solve personal, group, family and community problems by providing vision and direction for addressing social problems, resolving interpersonal conflicts, confronting social issues and meeting human needs. A social worker's role is to promote human well-being and the alleviation of poverty and oppression among populations that are at risk.

To be called or use the title of "social worker" in Oklahoma, a person must have a professional social work degree from an accredited program and be licensed through the Oklahoma State Board of Licensed Social Workers.

Social work faculty member Alex Granados said social work is a field that offers diverse opportunities. Social workers work in such settings as: child and juvenile services, mental health services, crisis intervention programs, family service agencies, public health agencies, hospitals, aging services, domestic violence programs, criminal justice agencies, substance abuse treatment programs, legal services, adoptions, hospices, schools, developmental disabilities services, immigration service and community action agencies.

SWOSU does have a Social Work Organization that is involved in numerous activities throughout the year which benefits nursing homes, children's agencies and other charitable organizations.

Additional information about the social work program at SWOSU is available by calling 580.774.7087.