Master of Social Work Degree
University of Texas at El Paso
Feasibility Study and Needs Assessment

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THE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROJECT

Considerations to once again propose a Master of Social Work (MSW) Program for the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), were developed by several junior-level social work students in early 2005, after a series of incidents involving Child Protective Services (CPS) and Adult Protective Services (APS) occurred in the city of El Paso during the spring and summer 2004. During this time, the Governor of Texas, Rick Perry, saw these incidents as emergency issues within CPS and APS and on April 14, 2004, issued Executive Order RP33, Relating to Reforming the Adult Protective Services Program.

Since these two service areas are an important part of education in social work programs, it became apparent that there was a need for more trained master-level social workers in the El Paso area. Among those who worked within the El Paso area human service agencies and organizations, this led to the conclusion that a Master’s Program should be established at the UTEP. The MSW Program, if established at UTEP, would provide trained professionals for both CPS and APS, as well as other human service agencies and organizations in the community.

In January and February 2005, Girard E. Sanchez, a junior-level student in the Social Work Program, noticed the potential need for master-level social workers the city of El Paso would soon become even more acutely apparent because of state plans to reform and restructure CPS and APS. Mr. Sanchez began to investigate the circumstances surrounding the failed attempts at securing an MSW Program at UTEP. He also discovered that the closest accredited MSW Program in the El Paso region was at New Mexico State University (NMSU) in Las Cruces, New Mexico, approximately 40 miles north of El Paso, Texas. The closest Texas university with an accredited MSW Program is at West Texas A&M University in the town of Canyon, 14 miles south of Amarillo. This is a Cooperative Distance Program in conjunction with
Mr. Sanchez believed several key questions needed to be addressed by the Social Work Program and UTEP administration and, more importantly, that answers to these questions needed to be provided to the social work students and to the El Paso community. First, why does NSMU in the much smaller city of Las Cruces, with a population of only 74,267 that is equal to 13.2% of the city of El Paso, have the ability to sustain a successful MSW Program? And second, why is it that the UTEP administration has, over the past thirty years, ignored the needs of the El Paso community and human service workers by not fully supporting an MSW Program?

In March 2005, Mr. Sanchez, along with the support of other junior-level and senior-level social work students, drafted a letter of support for the Master of Social Work degree at UTEP, which was sent to Texas Governor Perry. In response, a letter dated March 30, 2005 was received from Dede Keith, Administration and Constituent Services, Office of the Governor. The Governor’s Office acknowledged “the duty of government to protect the innocent and vulnerable” and reiterated Governor Perry’s commitment toward his “proposal for complete restructuring and investment in CPS and APS,” thereby increasing the need for master-level social workers in the human service agencies and organizations in the state of Texas. However, the Governor’s Office admitted they have no control over what new degree programs any public university develops.

It was at this point, that Mr. Sanchez decided to work with the Director of the Social Work Program at UTEP in order to examine the feasibility of a Master of Social Work Program and to determine if UTEP would support an MSW Program. The first meeting conducted was with Dr. Kip Coggins, Director of Social Work Program, during April 2005. During the meeting,
Dr. Coggins was able to provide information on prior attempts to obtain a Master of Social Work degree at UTEP. The last attempt was during 2003-2004 academic year, which included a scaled-back version of a single concentration program (see Appendix A). Dr. Coggins informed Mr. Sanchez on the proper procedure related to following the “chain of command” within the university system. Interviews were conducted with the administration from UTEP to determine the need and support for an MSW, along with the history of any attempts made to secure a Master’s Program.

The first interview conducted was with Dr. Howard C. Daudistel, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, in May 2005. Dr. Daudistel indicated that at this point in time a Master’s Program in Social Work would not be cost effective to pursue for two reasons; first, because of the high financial costs to start up this program and second, because of the severe cutbacks in monies received from the state for the university. In addition, Dr. Daudistel indicated that the need for the program had to be researched to ensure the program would be able to maintain a steady flow of students.

Next, Dr. Charles H. Ambler, Dean of the Graduate School, was interviewed in September 2005. During the interview, Dr. Ambler provided information on the necessary steps in preparing a formal request to submit a program proposal for consideration. Dr. Ambler also stated that previous attempts to establish a Master of Social Work have not been successful at UTEP.

The next to be interviewed was Dr. Richard S. Jarvis, Provost of UTEP, in December 2005. Early in the interview, according to Mr. Sanchez, it became apparent that this interview was not going to be productive. The provost stated he was scheduled to attend another meeting and abruptly ended the interview. No follow-up meeting was scheduled.
The final interview conducted was with Dr. Diana Natalicio, President of UTEP, in January 2006. The interview sought to do two things: first, to seek the approval of collecting data, and second, to receive input from the president on pursuing a Master’s Program in Social Work.

**THE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK FEASIBILITY STUDY**

During the spring of 2006, eight senior-level social work (SOWK) students from the UTEP, Social Work Program conducted interviews with various organizations and individuals that provide social services to determine the need for an MSW at UTEP. The SOWK students developed a questionnaire with the assistance of Dr. Kip Coggins, an Associate Professor and Director of Social Work Program at UTEP (see Appendix B). The questionnaire focused on the social services provided from the various organizations in the El Paso region. The final questionnaire used structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and a section to add additional comments. The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine the need and feasibility of a Master of Social Work (MSW) Program. Along with the interviews, the students distributed questionnaires to various organizations in El Paso and the surrounding areas, which included Dona Ana County, New Mexico.

The questionnaire included the following:

1. The current levels of education among individuals providing social services.

2. The reason(s) for not pursuing an MSW, if one has not been earned.

3. The type of program that individuals would like to see developed for a Master’s Program. Along with class schedules that would be practical for individuals that are willing to pursue an MSW.
The SOWK students also developed a guideline of questions for use in interviews with agency supervisors (see Appendix C). The questions used in the interview were to help determine if the individuals would support an MSW at UTEP. In addition, questions were asked to determine if the individuals interviewed believed there was a need to bring a Master’s Program to UTEP, if this program would benefit the University and communities within the El Paso area, and the type of impact, if any, this type of program would have.

Interviews were conducted with various city and state representatives of the El Paso region to determine the general support of an MSW Program at UTEP for the citizens and the city of El Paso. Although the Mayor of El Paso, John Cook, recognizes the need for trained master-level social workers and it is his desire to keep more highly educated professionals in the area, he stated his “concerns are more toward economic development for the city.” However, Mayor Cook stated he would address the matter and acknowledge his support of an MSW Program with the President of UTEP.

Spokespersons from Congressman Silvestre Reyes’ office indicated that the congressman would be in support of a Master’s Program, if one were to be established at UTEP. The congressman’s office also stated that a Master’s Program would be of enormous benefit to the community because of our unique situation along the U.S. – Mexico border.

After interviews had been completed with the city and state representatives and UTEP administration, research was initiated to seek information on the prior attempts to obtain an MSW Program at UTEP. It was discovered that over the last 30 years, Social Work students and UTEP Social Work Program alumni have made numerous requests to the university and program as to when an MSW Program would be developed for the El Paso area.
The students that collected the data, researched past documentation to determine how long the desire for an MSW Program at UTEP has been requested by former graduates. The findings have exposed that approximately every eight to ten years, for the past 30 years, students have addressed the need and the desire for an MSW Program at UTEP. The first time an MSW Program was addressed, the University of Texas – Austin (UT Austin) was involved, by providing doctoral-level social work faculty to assist in developing the program, while conducting master-level classes for which students at UTEP received an MSW from UT Austin. During this time, the faculty from UT Austin wrote a proposal that provided an area of concentration to be established at UTEP. Unfortunately, the collaborative MSW Program ended 10 years later after both UT Austin and UTEP agreed to end the pilot program.

The last time that an attempt was made to bring an MSW Program to UTEP was in 1996, when a proposal was successfully defended before the UTEP Graduate Council. At this time, a community-wide conference “Puente a la Gente” (A Bridge of People) was held to receive input on the development of the Master’s Program (Coggins, 2005). The community conference, in which 200 people took part, was also added to the proposal in support of bringing the program to UTEP (Coggins, 2005). The proposal for the MSW Program was to go to the State Coordinating Board and unfortunately, the proposal submitted had never reached that point (Coggins, 2005). The research indicated that there have been three proposals offered in the past 30 years for the MSW Program to be instituted at UTEP. Each attempt to institute the MSW program has been met with controversy that stalled the process of establishing a program that would be beneficial to the university and surrounding communities.
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

This section of the feasibility study will focus on the demographic profile of the Paso Del Norte region. The boundaries of this report will be the Far West Texas counties of El Paso, Hudspeth, and Culberson; the Far South-central New Mexico counties of Dona Ana, Luna, and Otero; and El Paso’s sister city of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.

The Paso Del Norte region is the second largest community along the United States/Mexico border (U.S. Census, 2000). Although the San Diego/Tijuana borderplex community is considered the largest, the immediate border community of Tijuana is not San Diego, but is actually the much smaller community of San Ysidro. This means the actual borderplex population of their area is 1.2 million, far less than the 1.9 million that are found in the El Paso/Ciudad Juarez borderplex community. When focusing on the definition of two contiguous border communities, the El Paso/Ciudad Juarez area is actually the largest borderplex community along the U.S. – Mexico border and is the most populous metro area on any international boundary in the world (El Paso County, 2006).

El Paso is the 5th largest city in the state of Texas and the 23rd largest among all U.S. cities. Ciudad Juarez is the largest city in the state of Chihuahua and the 5th largest city in Mexico. Both El Paso and Ciudad Juarez are two of the fastest growing cities along the border. “Over the period 1990-2000, the region’s population grew at an annual rate of 3.7 percent, more than double the U.S. rate of 1.3 percent and almost twice Mexico’s 2 percent rate” (Coronado and Vargas, 2001). The total population of the Paso del Norte region and surrounding counties is approximately 2.2 million.

The demographic profile will include information and comparison statistics of the Paso del Norte region, including the surrounding counties of El Paso, the far south-central counties of
the State of New Mexico, and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. The information gathered was found in the 2000 U.S. Census, 2004 (Estimate) U.S. Census, XII Censo General de Poblacion y Vivienda, 2000 (2000 Mexican Census), Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, Texas Department of Labor, New Mexico Department of Labor, and the El Paso Public Library. The demographic profile will include: 1) age and gender, 2) race and ethnicity, 3) household characteristics, 4) citizenship and immigration, 5) employment/unemployment, and 6) poverty.

**Age and Gender**

In El Paso County, the 2000 U.S. Census reports the number and percentages of the age groups are as follows: 58,989 or 8.7 percent of children under the age of 5 years, 62,519 or 9.2 percent age 5 to 9 years, 59,842 or 8.8 percent age 10 to 14 years, 58,609 or 8.6 percent age 15 to 19 years, 49,503 or 7.3 percent age 20 to 24 years, 98,208 or 14.5 percent age 25 to 34 years, 100,790 or 14.8 percent age 35 to 44 years, 76,876 or 11.3 percent age 45 to 54 years, 25,938 or 3.8 percent age 55 to 59 years, 22,275 or 3.3 percent age 60 to 64 years, and a combined number for ages 65 years and over is 66,073 or 9.7 percent.

The El Paso County population is younger compared to the surrounding counties. The estimated median age for El Paso County is 30.5 years (U.S. Census, 2004), up from the median age of 30 years (U.S. Census, 2000). According to the 2000 U.S. Census figures, the El Paso County total population was 679,622, of which 289,462 or 42.6 percent was under the age of 25. In El Paso County, males account for 327,771 or 48.2 percent and females account for 351,851 or 51.8 percent of the total population (U.S. Census, 2000).

In Hudspeth County there are 288 or 8.6 percent of children under the age of 5 years, 328 or 9.8 percent age 5 to 9 years, 311 or 9.3 age 10 to 14 years, 327 or 9.8 percent age 15 to 19 years, 184 or 5.5 percent age 20 to 24 years, 451 or 13.5 percent age 25 to 34 years, 442 or 13.2
percent age 35 to 44 years, 378 or 11.3 percent age 45 to 54 years, 169 or 5.1 percent age 55 to 59 years, 135 or 4.0 percent age 60 to 64 years, and a combined number for ages 65 years and over is 331 or 9.9 percent (U.S. Census, 2000).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, in Hudspeth County the median age is 30.2 years and the total population is 3,344, of which 1,438 or 43 percent was under the age of 25. In Hudspeth County, males account for 1,696 or 50.7 percent and females account for 1,648 or 49.3 percent of the total population (U.S. Census, 2000).

In Culberson County there are 224 or 7.5 percent of children under the age of 5 years, 267 or 9.0 percent age 5 to 9 years, 270 or 9.1 percent age 10 to 14 years, 286 or 9.6 percent age 15 to 19 years, 143 or 4.8 percent age 20 to 24 years, 380 or 12.8 percent age 25 to 34 years, 387 or 13.0 percent age 35 to 44 years, 382 or 12.8 percent age 45 to 54 years, 153 or 5.1 percent age 55 to 59 years, 149 or 5.0 percent age 60 to 64 years, and a combined number for ages 65 years and over is 334 or 11.2 percent (U.S. Census, 2000).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, in Culberson County the median age is 32.8 years and the total population is 2,975, of which 1,190 or 40 percent was under the age of 25. In Culberson County, males account for 1,507 or 50.7 percent and females account for 1,468 or 49.3 percent of the total population (U.S. Census, 2000).

In Dona Ana County the median age is 30.2 years (U.S. Census, 2000). In Dona Ana County there are 13,569 or 7.8 percent of children under the age of 5 years, 14,686 or 8.4 percent age 5 to 9 years, 14,766 or 8.5 percent age 10 to 14 years, 16,290 or 9.3 percent age 15 to 19 years, 15,875 or 9.1 percent age 20 to 24 years, 22,611 or 12.9 percent age 25 to 34 years, 24,687 or 14.1 percent age 35 to 44 years, 20,166 or 11.5 percent age 45 to 54 years, 7,243 or 4.1
percent age 55 to 59 years, 6,277 or 3.6 percent age 60 to 64 years, and a combined number for ages 65 years and over is 18,512 or 10.6 percent (U.S. Census, 2000).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, in Dona Ana County the median age is 30.2 years and the total population is 174,682, of which 75,186 or 43 percent was under the age of 25. In Dona Ana County, males account for 85,782 or 49.1 percent and females account for 88,900 or 50.9 percent of the total population (U.S. Census, 2000).

In Luna County there are 1,925 or 7.7 percent of children under the age of 5 years, 2,137 or 8.5 percent age 5 to 9 years, 2,114 or 8.5 percent age 10 to 14 years, 1,964 or 7.9 percent age 15 to 19 years, 1,262 or 5.0 percent age 20 to 24 years, 2,595 or 10.4 percent age 25 to 34 years, 3,086 or 12.3 percent age 35 to 44 years, 2,784 or 11.1 percent age 45 to 54 years, 1,274 or 5.1 percent age 55 to 59 years, 1,325 or 5.3 percent age 60 to 64 years, and a combined number for ages 65 years and over is 4,550 or 18.2 percent (U.S. Census, 2000).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, in Luna County the median age is 36.7 years and the total population is 25,016, of which 9,402 or 37.6 percent was under the age of 25. In Luna County, males account for 12,198 or 48.8 percent and females account for 12,818 or 51.2 percent of the total population (U.S. Census, 2000).

In Otero County the median age is 33.8 years (U.S. Census, 2000). In Otero County there are 4,620 or 7.4 percent of children under the age of 5 years, 5,043 or 8.1 percent age 5 to 9 years, 5,478 or 8.8 percent age 10 to 14 years, 4,889 or 7.8 percent age 15 to 19 years, 4,091 or 6.6 percent age 20 to 24 years, 8,042 or 12.9 percent age 25 to 34 years, 9,778 or 15.7 percent age 35 to 44 years, 7,478 or 12 percent age 45 to 54 years, 2,865 or 4.6 percent age 55 to 59 years, 2,718 or 4.4 percent age 60 to 64 years, and a combined number for ages 65 years and over is 7,296 or 11.7 percent (U.S. Census, 2000).
According to the 2000 U.S. Census, in Otero County the median age is 33.8 years and the total population is 62,298, of which 24,121 or 38.7 percent was under the age of 25. In Otero County, males account for 30,994 or 49.8 percent and females account for 31,304 or 50.2 percent of the total population (U.S. Census, 2000).

In Ciudad Juarez, there are 137,342 or 11.3 percent of children 0 – 4 years, 129,398 or 10.6 percent age 5 to 9 years, 108,578 or 8.9 percent age 10 to 14 years, 110,486 or 9.1 percent age 15 to 19 years, 122,520 or 10 percent age 20 to 24 years, 225,227 or 18.5 percent age 25 to 34 years, 141,435 or 11.6 percent age 35 to 44 years, 77,924 or 6.4 percent age 45 to 54 years, 25,798 or 2.1 percent age 55 to 59 years, 21,635 or 1.8 percent age 60 to 64 years, a combined number for ages 65 years and over is 39,608 or 3.3 percent, and those that did not specify an age is 78,866 or 6.5 percent (XII Censo General Poblacion y Vivienda, 2000).

The median age in Ciudad Juarez is 23 years and the total population is 1,218,817, of which 608,324 or 49.9 percent of the population was under the age of 25 (XII Censo General Poblacion y Vivienda, 2000). In Ciudad Juarez, the gender distribution was almost evenly divided with males accounting for 612,799 or 50.3 percent and females accounting for 606,018 or 49.7 percent of the total population.

**Race and Ethnicity**

For El Paso County the 2000 U.S. Census, in the category of race alone or in combination with one or more races a total of 521,892 or 76.8 percent of the total population are White, 23,482 or 3.5 percent are Black or African American, 7,684 or 1.1 percent are American Indian and Alaska Native, 9,043 or 1.3 percent are Asian, 1,211 or 0.2 percent are Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, while 138,674 or 20.4 percent are some other race.
According to the 2000 U.S. Census, El Paso County has a Hispanic or Latino population of 531,654 or 78.2 percent; of which 447,065 or 65.8 percent are Mexicans, 4,286 or 0.6 percent are Puerto Rican, 534 or 0.1 percent are Cuban, 79,769 or 11.7 percent are Other Hispanic or Latino, and 147,968 or 21.8 percent are not Hispanic or Latino, of which 115,535 or 17.0 percent are White alone (non-Hispanic).

For Hudspeth County the 2000 U.S. Census, in the category of race alone or in combination with one or more races, a total of 2,986 or 89.3 percent are White, 12 or 0.4 percent are Black or African American, 65 or 1.9 percent are American Indian and Alaska Native, 7 or 0.2 percent are Asian, 1 or 0.0 percent are Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 346 or 10.3 percent are some other race.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Hudspeth County has a Hispanic or Latino Population of 2,509 or 75 percent; of which 2,386 or 71.4 percent are Mexican, 7 or 0.2 percent are Puerto Rican, no Cuban, 116 or 3.5 percent are other Hispanic or Latino, and 835 or 25 percent are not Hispanic or Latino, of which 770 or 23.0 percent are White alone (non-Hispanic).

For Culberson County the 2000 U.S. Census, in the category of race alone or in combination with one or more races, a total of 2,110 or 70.9 percent are White, 22 or 0.7 percent are Black or African American, 24 or 0.8 percent are American Indian and Alaska Native, 22 or 0.7 percent are Asian, and 863 or 29 percent are some other race.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Culberson County has a Hispanic or Latino Population of 2,149 or 72.2 percent; of which 1,917 or 64.4 percent are Mexican, 4 or 0.1 percent are Puerto Rican, 3 or 0.1 percent are Cuban, 225 or 7.6 percent are other Hispanic or Latino, and 826 or 27.8 percent are not Hispanic or Latino, of which 733 or 24.6 percent are White alone (non-Hispanic).
For **Dona Ana County** the 2000 U.S. Census, in the category of race alone or in combination with one or more races, a total of 124,039 or 71.0 percent are White, 3,412 or 2.0 percent are Black or African American, 3,879 or 2.2 are American Indian and Alaska Native, 1,995 or 1.1 percent are Asian, 301 or 0.2 percent are Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 47,625 or 27.3 percent are some other race.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Dona Ana County has a Hispanic or Latino Population of 110,665 or 63.4 percent; of which 78,632 or 45.0 percent are Mexican, 506 or 0.3 percent are Puerto Rican, 97 or 0.1 percent are Cuban, 31,430 or 18.0 percent are other Hispanic or Latino, and 64,017 or 36.6 percent are not Hispanic or Latino, of which 56,688 or 32.5 percent are White alone (non-Hispanic).

For **Luna County** the 2000 U.S. Census, in the category of race alone or in combination with one or more races, a total of 19,289 or 77.1 percent are White, 304 or 1.2 percent are Black or African American, 466 or 1.9 percent are American Indian and Alaska Native, 134 or 0.5 percent are Asian, 4 or 0.0 percent are Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and 5,614 or 22.4 are some other race.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Luna County has a Hispanic or Latino Population of 14,435 or 57.7 percent; of which 10,877 or 43.5 percent are Mexican, 26 or 0.1 percent are Puerto Rican, 9 or 0.0 percent are Cuban, 3,523 or 14.1 percent are other Hispanic or Latino, and 10,581 or 42.3 percent are not Hispanic or Latino, of which 9,921 or 39.7 percent are White alone (non-Hispanic).

For **Otero County** the 2000 U.S. Census, in the category of race alone or in combination with one or more races, a total of 47,911 or 76.9 percent are White, 2,823 or 4.5 percent are Black or African American, 4,136 or 6.6 percent are American Indian and Alaska Native, 1,117
or 1.8 percent are Asian, 159 or 0.3 percent are Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and 8,526 or 13.7 percent are some other race.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Otero County has a Hispanic or Latino Population of 20,033 or 32.2 percent; of which 14,091 or 22.6 percent are Mexican, 330 or 0.5 percent are Puerto Rican, 38 or 0.1 percent are Cuban, 5,574 or 8.9 percent are other Hispanic or Latino, and 42,265 or 67.8 percent are not Hispanic or Latino, of which 34,728 or 55.7 percent are White alone (non-Hispanic).

In Ciudad Juarez, as in the country of Mexico, the ethnic identity of the Mexican people is something hard to distinguish. Mexicans, by and large evolved from many indigenous nations five centuries ago into a single national entity, with Spanish as its primary language (Schmal, 2004). Very few pure forms of the indigenous cultures still exist, but many are still present in some form. According to the 2000 Mexican Census, between two and five percent of Chihuahuans speak an indigenous language. Within the city of Ciudad Juarez, there is a sizable settlement of Tarahumaras (Raramuri), an indigenous group from the Copper Canyon region.

**Household Characteristics**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, in El Paso County there were a total of 224,447 housing units, of which 210,022 or 93.6 percent were occupied; for Hudspeth County there were a total of 1,471 housing units, of which 1,092 or 74.2 percent were occupied; for Culberson County there were a total of 1,321 housing units, of which 1,052 or 79.6 percent were occupied; for Dona Ana County there were a total of 65,210 housing units, of which 59,556 or 91.3 percent were occupied; for Luna County there were a total of 11,291 housing units, of which 9,397 or 83.2 percent were occupied; and for Otero County there were a total of 29,272 housing units, of which 22,984 or 78.5 percent were occupied.
As stated in the 2000 U.S. Census, for El Paso County there were 210,022 total households, with an average household size of 3.18 and an average family size of 3.63; for Hudspeth County there were 1,092 total households, with an average household size of 3.03 and an average family size of 3.56; for Culberson County there were 1,052 total households, with an average household size of 2.82 and an average family size of 3.30; for Dona Ana County there were 59,556 total households, with an average household size of 2.85 and an average family size of 3.36; for Luna County there were 9,397 total households, with an average household size of 2.64 and an average family size of 3.20; and for Otero County there were 22,984 total households, with an average household size of 2.66 and an average family size of 3.14. In Ciudad Juarez, the number of occupied households is 293,752, with an average of 4.1 occupants per household.

Citizenship and Immigration

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, El Paso County had a total population of 679,622, of which 493,454 or 72.6 percent were native born and 186,168 or 27.4 percent were foreign born. Of those foreign born, 172,999 or 92.9 percent were born in Latin America. Naturalized citizens account for 77,821 or 11.5 percent. Those “not a citizen” account for 108,347 or 15.9 percent. El Paso County reports a total population age five years and over of 621,288, of which 31,468 or 5.1 percent resided “elsewhere in 1995,” other than in the United States.

For Hudspeth County the 2000 U.S. Census reported a total population of 3,344, of which 2,234 or 66.8 percent were native born and 1,110 or 33.2 percent were foreign born. Of those foreign born, 1,104 or 99.5 percent were born in Latin America. Naturalized citizens account for 311 or 9.3 percent. Those “not a citizen” account for 799 or 23.9 percent. Hudspeth County
reports a total population age five years and over of 3,056, of which 86 or 2.8 percent resided “elsewhere in 1995,” other than in the United States.

For **Culberson County** the 2000 U.S. Census reported a total population of 2,975, of which 2,512 or 84.4 percent were native born and 463 or 15.6 percent were foreign born. Of those foreign born, 436 or 94.2 percent were born in Latin America. Naturalized citizens account for 295 or 9.9 percent. Those “not a citizen” account for 168 or 5.6 percent. Culberson County reports a total population age five years and over of 2,754, of which 36 or 1.3 percent resided “elsewhere in 1995,” other than in the United States.

For **Dona Ana County** the 2000 U.S. Census reported a total population of 174,682, of which 142,059 or 81.3 percent were native born and 32,623 or 18.7 percent were foreign born. Of those foreign born, 30,163 or 92.5 percent were born in Latin America. Naturalized citizens account for 11,233 or 6.4 percent. Those “not a citizen” account for 21,390 or 12.2 percent. Dona Ana County reports a total population age five years and over of 161,181, of which 4,670 or 2.9 percent resided “elsewhere in 1995,” other than in the United States.

For **Luna County** the 2000 U.S. Census reported a total population of 25,016, of which 20,132 or 80.5 percent were native born and 4,884 or 19.5 percent were foreign born. Of those foreign born, 4,650 or 95.2 percent were born in Latin America. Naturalized citizens account for 1,216 or 4.9 percent. Those “not a citizen” account for 3,668 or 14.7 percent. Luna County reports a total population age five years and over of 23,130, of which 740 or 3.2 percent resided “elsewhere in 1995,” other than in the United States.

For **Otero County** the 2000 U.S. Census reported a total population of 62,298, of which 55,359 or 88.9 percent were native born and 6,939 or 11.1 percent were foreign born. Of those foreign born, 4,225 or 60.9 percent were born in Latin America. Naturalized citizens account for
2,105 or 3.4 percent. Those “not a citizen” account for 4,834 or 7.8 percent. Otero County reports a total population age five years and over of 57,857, of which 4,268 or 7.4 percent resided “elsewhere in 1995,” other than in the United States.

In Ciudad Juárez, the 2000 Mexican Census reported a total population of 1,218,817, of which 717,819 or 58.9 percent were in-state origin and 390,125 or 32 percent were out-of-state origin (Coronado and Vargas, 2001). Because of Ciudad Juárez’s location on the border, this city is seeing an increasing in-migration from other Mexican states. These migrants originated from the states of Durango with 120,074 or 9.9 percent, Coahuila with 76,458 or 6.3 percent, Veracruz with 45,225 or 3.7 percent, Zacatecas with 42,971 or 3.5 percent, Distrito Federal with 21,056 or 1.7 percent, other states in Mexico with 84,341 or 6.9 percent, other countries with 31,276 or 2.6 percent, and state or country not specified with 79,597 or 6.5 percent (Coronado and Vargas, 2001).

**Employment/Unemployment**

At the time of the 2000 U.S. Census, El Paso County had a total population 16 years and over of 486,398, of which 240,723 or 49.5 percent were employed in the civilian labor force, 211,587 or 43.5 percent were not in the labor force, and 8,859 or 1.8 percent were employed in the Armed Forces. Those unemployed in the civilian labor force account for the remaining 25,229 or 5.2 percent. According to the Texas Department of Labor (TDL) – Texas Labor Market, County Unemployment Rates for February 2006, El Paso County, had 6.9 percent unemployment.

For Hudspeth County the 2000 U.S. Census reported a total population 16 years and over of 2,331, of which 1,127 or 48.3 percent were employed in the civilian labor force, 1,103 or 47.3 percent were not in the labor force, and none were employed in the Armed Forces. Those
unemployed in the civilian labor force account for the remaining 101 or 4.3 percent. The TDL reported that for February 2006, Hudspeth County had 9.4 percent unemployment (County Unemployment Rates, February 2006).

For Culberson County the 2000 U.S. Census reported a total population 16 years and over of 2,183, of which 1,293 or 59.2 percent were employed in the civilian labor force, 806 or 36.9 percent were not in the labor force, and none were in the Armed Forces. Those unemployed in the civilian labor force account for the remaining 84 or 3.8 percent. The TDL reported that for February 2006, Culberson County had 4.1 percent unemployment (County Unemployment Rates, February 2006).

For Dona Ana County the 2000 U.S. Census reported a total population 16 years and over of 128,197, of which 67,685 or 52.8 percent were employed in the civilian labor force, 53,223 or 41.5 percent were not in the labor force, and 428 or 0.3 percent were in the Armed Forces. Those unemployed in the civilian labor force account for the remaining 6,861 or 5.4 percent. According to the New Mexico Department of Labor (NMDL) – County Unemployment Rate Rankings for March 2006, the city of Las Cruces, which was listed in place of Dona Ana County, had 4.6 percent unemployment.

For Luna County the 2000 U.S. Census reported a total population 16 years and over of 18,423, of which 7,161 or 38.9 percent were employed in the civilian labor force, 9,790 or 53.1 percent were not in the labor force, and none were in the Armed Forces. Those unemployed in the civilian labor force account for the remaining 1,472 or 8 percent. The NMDL reported that for March 2006, Luna County had 14.7 percent unemployment (County Unemployment Rate Rankings, March 2006).
For **Otero County** the 2000 U.S. Census reported a total population 16 years and over of 45,925, of which 21,934 or 47.8 percent were employed in the civilian labor force, 18,447 or 40.2 were not in the labor force, and 3,599 or 7.8 percent were in the Armed Forces. Those unemployed in the civilian labor force account for the remaining 1,945 or 4.2 percent. The NMDL reported for March 2006, Otero County had 3.9 percent unemployment (County Unemployment Rate Rankings, March 2006).

**Ciudad Juarez**, the largest city in Mexico’s largest state of Chihuahua, is credited with taking the lead in promoting the maquiladora industry. Over the past ten years, the Ciudad Juarez maquilas have increased 45.6 percent. Ciudad Juarez has the highest concentration of maquiladoras on the U.S. – Mexico border. With more than 302 factories in operation these maquilas provide a combined citywide employment total of 195,418. Typically maquilas have a high turnover rate, with estimates between 5 – 15 percent per month. However, many reduce the turnover rate by locating to newer industrial areas, which are typically closer to the housing growth and labor source. Maquilas are also becoming more technologically sophisticated and many are hiring experienced professionals and highly skilled technical laborers. In order to reduce the unemployment among the youth of Mexico, the establishment of the Maquila Decree in 1970 set the hiring age for maquila workers at 16 years to 24 years of age (Wikipedia, 2006). Mostly because of the number of maquilas in the city, Ciudad Juarez experiences an unemployment rate of 5 – 8 percent.

**Poverty**

In **El Paso County**, as of the 2000 U.S. Census, the total households were 210,034 and the total family households were 167,276. The median household income was $31,051 and the median family income was $33,410. The median earnings showed male, full-time/year-round
workers earned $26,882, while female, full-time/year-round workers earned $20,722. The per capita income was $13,421.

The total of families below the poverty level accounted for 34,264 or 20.5 percent; the total of families, with related children under 18 years below the poverty level accounted for 28,685 or 26.6 percent; and the total of families, with related children under five years below the poverty level accounted for 14,293 or 30.6 percent (U.S. Census, 2000). The total number of individuals below poverty level was 158,722 or 23.8 percent; those related children under 18 years below poverty level was 67,282 or 31.5 percent; and those 65 years and older below poverty level was 12,029 or 18.5 percent (U.S. Census, 2000).

In Hudspeth County, as of the 2000 U.S. Census, the total households were 1,100 and the total family households were 853. The median household income was $21,045 and the median family income was $22,314. The median earnings showed male, full-time/year-round workers earned $22,862, while female, full-time/year-round workers earned $18,594. The per capita income was $9,549.

The total of families below the poverty level accounted for 278 or 32.6 percent; the total of families, with related children under 18 years below the poverty level accounted for 215 or 36.9 percent; and the total of families, with related children under five years below the poverty level accounted for 101 or 39 percent (U.S. Census, 2000). The total number of individuals below poverty level was 1,180 or 35.8 percent; those related children under 18 years below poverty level was 463 or 41.3 percent; and those 65 years and older below poverty level was 139 or 42.6 percent (U.S. Census, 2000).

In Culberson County, as of the 2000 U.S. Census, the total households were 1,060 and the total family households were 809. The median household income was $25,882 and the
median family income was $28,547. The median earnings showed male, full-time/year-round workers earned $22,500, while female, full-time/year-round workers earned $14,817. The per capita income was $11,493.

The total of families below the poverty level accounted for 174 or 21.5 percent; the total of families, with related children under 18 years below the poverty level accounted for 130 or 27.5 percent; and the total of families, with related children under five years below the poverty level accounted for 81 or 42.2 percent (U.S. Census, 2000). The total number of individuals below poverty level was 743 or 25.1 percent; those related children under 18 years below poverty level was 281 or 30.2 percent; and those 65 years and older below poverty level was 61 or 19.4 percent (U.S. Census, 2000).

In Dona Ana County, as of the 2000 U.S. Census, the total households were 59,479 and the total family households were 42,983. The median household income was $29,808 and the median family income was $33,576. The median earnings showed male, full-time/year-round workers earned $27,215, while female, full-time/year-round workers earned $20,883. The per capita income was $13,999.

The total of families below the poverty level accounted for 8,676 or 20.2 percent; the total of families, with related children under 18 years below the poverty level accounted for 7,293 or 28.9 percent; and the total of families, with related children under five years below the poverty level accounted for 3,864 or 35.6 percent (U.S. Census, 2000). The total number of individuals below poverty level was 43,054 or 25.4 percent; those related children under 18 years below poverty level was 17,498 or 34.4 percent; and those 65 years and older below poverty level was 2,323 or 12.7 percent (U.S. Census, 2000).
In **Luna County**, as of the 2000 U.S. Census, the total households were 9,387 and the total family households were 6,611. The median household income was $20,784 and the median family income was $24,252. The median earnings showed male, full-time/year-round workers earned $25,008, while female, full-time/year-round workers earned $16,883. The per capita income was $11,218.

The total of families below the poverty level accounted for 1,797 or 27.2 percent; the total of families, with related children under 18 years below the poverty level accounted for 1,432 or 39.9 percent; and the total of families, with related children under five years below the poverty level accounted for 807 or 53 percent (U.S. Census, 2000). The total number of individuals below poverty level was 8,129 or 32.9 percent; those related children under 18 years below poverty level was 3,451 or 46.8 percent; and those 65 years and older below poverty level was 704 or 15.8 percent (U.S. Census, 2000).

In **Otero County**, as of the 2000 U.S. Census, the total households were 22,984, and the total family households were 16,979. The median household income was $30,861 and the median family income was $34,781. The median earnings showed male, full-time/year-round workers earned $27,657, while female, full-time/year-round workers earned $18,470. The per capita income was $14,345.

The total of families below the poverty level accounted for 2,644 or 15.6 percent; the total of families, with related children under 18 years below the poverty level accounted for 2,112 or 22.7 percent; and the total of families, with related children under five years below the poverty level accounted for 976 or 26.8 percent (U.S. Census, 2000). The total number of individuals below poverty level was 11,737 or 19.3 percent; those related children under 18 years...
below poverty level was 5,018 or 27.9 percent; and those 65 years and older below poverty level was 895 or 12.8 percent (U.S. Census, 2000).

Ciudad Juarez has about 25 percent of Mexico’s maquiladora employment (Dillon, 1998). In December 2005, the Mexican minimum wage was adopted and is now 47 pesos a day or about $4.50 U.S. dollars (USD) (La Botz, 2005). According to Migration News, in 1996 the average monthly income in Mexico was 5,100 pesos or about $575 USD based on the 1998 exchange rate. Of the 20 million households in Mexico, 80 percent of households earn an average monthly income of 5,835 pesos and below, with the poorest living in rural areas. The United Nations and other organizations report that 50 percent of all Mexicans live in poverty and 20 percent live in extreme poverty (La Botz, 2005).

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS PROFILE

Cultural Influences

For more than 1,000 years the Paso del Norte has been an important crossroads for trade, as people travel through the region. The Spanish town of Paso del Norte was settled on the south side of the Rio Grande – Rio Bravo in 1659. In the 1680s, inhabitants of the Paso del Norte region were joined by Piro, Manso, and Pueblo Indians, along with Spanish colonists driven from the north in the Pueblo Revolt.

In 1827, Spaniard Juan Maria Ponce de Leon founded a settlement on the site of present day El Paso, Texas, on the north side of the Rio Grande. In the 1840s, Anglo-Americans from the north began moving to El Paso (Forster, 2005). Following the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, in 1848, and the subsequent Gadsden Purchase in 1853, the current borders between the United States and Mexico were formed. Although the war between the U.S. and Mexico had ceased, civil war continued for many years south of the border. As a result, Mexican
migration to El Paso and Las Cruces continued. From the late 1800s, through the first decade of the 1900s many Mexican nationals moved north to escape war and poverty.

In 1942, the Bracero Program began. This 22-year long program attracted more Mexican nationals from the interior states of Mexico to the border. More recently, the rapid expansion of the maquiladora industry in Ciudad Juárez, along with the dream of crossing the border and achieving the “American Dream,” has attracted more Mexican nationals.

The contemporary Paso del Norte region has a distinctive blend of border culture that reflects more than a two centuries of contact between Indigenous North Americans groups, Hispanic populations that are primarily Mestizo (of mixed Spanish and Indigenous Mexican origin) and North or Anglo-American populations that had migrated to what is now the U.S. Southwest (Forster, 2005). Along with the larger Mestizo and Anglo populations that dominate the region are a variety of indigenous communities.

Within El Paso is an African American population of nearly 18,000 (U.S. Census, 2000), as well as substantial remnants of Chinese and Puerto Rican populations. Across the border in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, peripheral colonias contain a mix of Mestizo and indigenous populations from interior Mexico and Central America. Also within the Ciudad Juarez municipal region is a substantial Tarahumara (Raramuri) settlement.

The similarities and differences between the cities and counties of the region are what make it unique. It is the differences in politics, economics, culture, and the environmental issues and concerns that divide the Paso del Norte region into many socio-political enclaves. The boundaries between areas impact the planning and management of urban growth as well as the utilization of the region’s natural resources. Further comparison and contrast among the villages, towns, and cities that make up the Paso del Norte region will help explain why the villages,
towns, and cities constitute a single environmental region that is politically, socially, ethnically, and economically segmented.

**Indigenous Populations and Communities**

Within the city of El Paso there are approximately 1,200 members of the federally recognized Tigua Tribe at Ysleta del Sur Pueblo. Members of this Pueblo are related to the Tiwas at Isleta Pueblo south of Albuquerque, New Mexico (Campbell, 2006). Directly south of Las Cruces are remnants of Piro, Manso, and Tiwa populations that had migrated to the El Paso area in 1680, and later north to the outskirts of present day Las Cruces, New Mexico. Although not federally recognized, this indigenous population has maintained a distinct identity (Campbell, 2006). Farther north and east, in Otero County, are the more than 4,000 members of the federally recognized Mescalero Apache Tribe (Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort and Casino, 2005-2006).

**Mexican-American Populations and Culture**

The Paso del Norte region has a large diversity of cultures. El Paso County has a largest percentage of Hispanics, with 78.2 percent. While the surrounding Texas counties of Hudspeth and Culberson have slightly lower Mexican-American percentages of 75 and 72.2 percent, respectively. In the surrounding New Mexico counties of Dona Ana, Luna, and Otero, these percentages vary to a much larger degree, with the Hispanic population at 63.4, 57.7, and 32.2 percent, respectively.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the White, not Hispanic population within these six counties are as follows: El Paso with 17 percent, Hudspeth with 23 percent, Culberson with 24.6 percent, Dona Ana with 32.5 percent, Luna with 39.7 percent, and Otero with 55.7 percent;
while the African American, American Indian, Asian, and those of some other race make up the remaining percentage of the county populations.

Because of the growing number of Hispanics within the Paso del Norte region, the Mexican-American influence can be observed in many areas. From the unique flavor of the foods and restaurants, to the “music of Mexico” which can be heard on the streets, to the unique style of buildings, to the deep religious culture, the Paso del Norte region is rich in the culture of Mexico. There is a deep commitment to family and family values in the area, which is in stark contrast to the individualistic attitude of the U.S. in general.

Ciudad Juarez, Mexico

Ciudad Juarez, Mexico is also experiencing many cultural changes within the city. With increased out-of-state immigrants, approximately 32 percent of the total city population, these new arrivals from the interior states of Mexico are making a cultural impact on the city of Juarez. Ciudad Juárez is the largest city in the State of Chihuahua and the 5th largest city in Mexico. According to the 2000 Mexican Census, Ciudad Juarez has a population of 1,218,817 and 390,125 or 32 percent were people from out-of-state origin.

Military Culture and Influence

With Biggs Army Airfield and Fort Bliss, that is also the host to the German Armed Forces, in El Paso, the Fort Bliss Military Reservation that stretches across the three counties of El Paso, Dona Ana, and Otero, the White Sands Missile Range in Dona Ana and Otero Counties, and Holloman U.S. Air Force Base in Otero County, the military culture permeates throughout this region. The various military installations have a unique and diverse culture of their own and without a doubt have an observable influence on the area. The majority of soldiers that are
stationed at these various installations come from different parts of the United States and bring with them their own set of values and cultural identity.

Few disciplines provide the opportunity to become so keenly aware of the interplay and interaction of all these intricate factors that impact the lives of a community, as does the discipline of social work. Furthermore, master-level social workers are uniquely prepared and skilled in the processes of well thought out research, problem identification, and proper resource allocation related to problem resolution. Without a doubt, master-level social workers also provide the added bonus of acting as actual direct service providers for the communities they serve.

**Gaps In Service Provision For MSW Practitioners**

The Paso del Norte region is uniquely situated. The area encompasses parts of two nations, and three states; Texas, New Mexico, and the Mexican state of Chihuahua. The Texas counties specifically covered by this region are El Paso, Hudspeth, and Culberson; the New Mexico counties of Doña Ana, Luna, and Otero; and the Ciudad Juárez municipal region. Texas and New Mexico are part of a developed country, the United States, while the rapidly developing city, Ciudad Juárez is in Mexico.

With this in mind, several topics worthy of consideration will help understand the complex socio-cultural interplay that exists in this border region. Furthermore, this mindset of topics will help demonstrate the need for master-level social workers in this region. For example, when taking into consideration the diversity of the region it would be very important, to have master-level social workers who are native to this region or have been longtime residents. Having a clear understanding and personal familiarity with border issues will facilitate intervention with various target populations. Indeed, if master-level social workers that receive
training in this area have an understanding of the diversity of culture and belief systems of the region, it would greatly facilitate quality service provision.

There are several gaps in services for many populations. One area in particular is service to the elderly population. The National Institute on Aging has predicted that the United States will need 70,000 gerontology-trained workers by the year 2010. This institute has estimated that currently fewer than 30,000 social workers are working with the elderly, of those only 3,000 are professionally trained in gerontology (Florida State University, 2006).

**Populations in Need**

El Paso has several different populations who have a clear need for mental health services. One of the more vulnerable populations is the aging population, because it is hard for the elderly to find the resources and access to affordable healthcare services. El Paso County has a population of age 65 years and over of 66,073 or 9.7 percent (U.S. Census, 2000). According to the Mental Health/Mental Retardation (MH/MR) Annual Report for 2005, within this population in the city of El Paso, there are approximately 29 percent who need mental health services. Another population with the need for services is children with mental illness or mental retardation. In El Paso County, 25 percent of children need services due to a mental illness or mental retardation (MH/MR Annual Report, 2005).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, in El Paso County, the total number of families below the poverty level accounted for 34,264 or 20.5 percent, those families, with related children under 18 years below the poverty level accounted for 28,685 or 26.6 percent, and those families, with related children under five years below the poverty level was 14,293 or 30.6 percent. The widespread poverty in this region creates the necessity for social services and agencies that will provide support to this population.
El Paso has multiple and various populations-at-risk that consist of displaced workers, non-citizen residents, undocumented immigrants, and our youth. The Texas Department of Labor (TDL) reported for the month of February 2006, the unemployment rate for El Paso County was 6.9 percent (County Unemployment Rates, February 2006). However, this department does not take into account those individuals that are underemployed, meaning those earning wages severely below the federal minimum wage, or those no longer eligible for unemployment benefits and therefore not counted in the unemployment rate. Both, unemployed and displaced workers are in need of various social services, which will not only assist them in seeking new opportunities for employment, but also provide services to train and increase their skills to make them eligible for many other types of employment.

The undocumented immigrants represent the hardest of this group to assist. Because social services require proof of citizenship or legal residence for any government assistance, this makes this group especially vulnerable. Although, there are some services that can be provided, this group especially needs the highly trained professionals in human services agencies and organizations to navigate the system and advocate for any assistance that can be found and provided.

Another population-at-risk is our youth. According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), students who do not meet the following criteria qualify for extra services during the school year until their grades improve. The criteria are 1) students who do not meet a grade average, and who have not advanced from one grade level to another for one or more school year, 2) students who are pregnant, and 3) students who have been placed in an alternative program in the preceding or current school year. School districts need the help of both bachelor-
level and master-level social workers to be more effective in serving the students and their families. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, El Paso County has a population three years and over of 226,320 enrolled in area schools, of which 85 percent qualify under TEA regulations as students at-risk for extra services.

If an MSW Program were to be offered locally, there would be a higher percentage of graduates in this field to provide adequate service to this border region. For the reasons stated above, if an MSW Program is offered at UTEP, the region would retain more master-level professionals who are experienced and knowledgeable regarding the border region, thus benefiting the overall border population.

**Political and Economic Issues and Concerns**

**Political**

The Paso del Norte region is composed of three states and two countries that have very different political views. Texas and New Mexico are part of an industrialized country with a two-party form of government, while Ciudad Juárez is part of a rapidly growing country that has been governed, by many years, by the same political party. From 1946 to the year 2000, the presidents governing Mexico have been from the same political party, Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). However, in recent years this has begun to change. Currently Vicente Fox, from the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), holds the presidency of Mexico. For the most part, Ciudad Juárez has oriented itself to vote for the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN). The current Mayor of Juárez, Hector Murguía, is from the PAN political party, as well. The Governor of the State of Chihuahua is José Reyes Baeza, and he also is from the PAN political party.

El Paso in particular voted in the 2004 presidential elections more Democrat than Republican. Democrat Presidential nominee, John Kerry, received 56.08% of the popular vote,
while (Republican) President George Bush received 43.18% of the popular vote (El Paso County Texas, 2006). The Texas Governor Rick Perry is Republican, while New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson is Democrat. The Paso del Norte region, as a whole, tends to vote Democrat.

**Economic**

In the past, two of the major areas of the metropolitan Paso del Norte region, El Paso and Ciudad Juárez, have risen and fallen together economically. For example, the depression of the 1920s and 1930s affected both economies. Later, military personnel stationed at Fort Bliss during World War II helped raise the economies of both cities in the early 1940s (Forster, 2005). Although El Paso had been characterized by its manufacturing industrialization, the economic stability of the border has changed drastically after the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Consequently, NAFTA caused the city of El Paso to lose most of the manufacturing jobs in the apparel industry. On the other hand, Ciudad Juárez, with the first significant maquiladora (factory) established by the Mexico Border Industrialization Program in 1967 and the Maquila Decree in 1970, and with the help of NAFTA, had a total combined employment of more than 1,055,343 persons in the year 2000 (Forster, 2005).

El Paso continued to show a decline in this arena. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, of the El Paso County’s total population 16 years and over, 240,743 or 49.5 percent were employed in the civilian labor force, and only 34,835 or 14.5 percent worked in the manufacturing industry. The largest employment sectors, educational, health, and social services employed 55,282 or 23 percent of the civilian population (U.S. Census, 2000). Hudspeth and Culberson counties combined total of 2,420 or 53.6 percent employed in the civilian labor force are much smaller than those of El Paso County. Both Hudspeth and Culberson counties are similar in the number of employed, they vary in dominant industries. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, both
Hudspeth and Culberson counties had lower percentages than El Paso County for those employed in the manufacturing industry, with 10.3 and 4.5 percent, respectively. The largest industry in Hudspeth County was the agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining industry, with 18 percent employed, while the largest employment sectors in Culberson County were in the educational, health, and social services, with 20 percent employed.

As part of the Paso del Norte region, the New Mexico counties of Doña Ana, Luna, and Otero are also different in population size and employed civilian population. The manufacturing industry makes up a combined total of 6,886 or 7.1 percent employed, as opposed to the educational, health and social services employment sectors with a combined total of 23,640 or 24.4 percent employed. More recently the downturn in the U.S. economy in the years 2000-2002 caused reduced demand for maquila products manufactured in Ciudad Juárez, leading to a decrease in retail sales in El Paso (Forster, 2005-6).

Ciudad Juárez is characterized by its low incomes, typical of developing countries, yet it is the wealthiest region in México. It is also more industrial and more urban than most other regions of México. On the other hand, the U.S. borderplex communities are among the poorest in the United States. The per capita income is less than 80% of the national average and about 60% of the national average if San Diego is excluded. Unemployment is 50% greater than the national average. The poverty rate on the border is 25% compared to 13% for the United States as a whole (Erickson, 2006).

**Health and Environmental Issues and Concerns**

The historical Paso del Norte region is situated in a high desert environment traversed by the Rio Grande River. The geography of this region leads to its Spanish name, Paso del Norte meaning “the pass of the north.” Sitting at 3,760 feet above sea level it is surrounded by
mountains that rise more than 7,000 feet above sea level. In past centuries, this pass of the extension of the Rocky Mountains attracted Spaniards traveling between Mexico City to Santa Fe (Forster, 2006).

This desert environment of the region, in particular El Paso, has average temperatures of 95 degrees in the summer with very low humidity and average winter high temperatures of 55-60 degrees. The annual rainfall is only 8.65 inches (City of El Paso, 2006). The spring and summer months are especially susceptible to conditions that create severe weather, such as severe thunderstorms, lightning strikes, flash floods, and extreme heat. These rising temperatures have caused heat-related illnesses and deaths among some El Paso residents. In the past three years, El Paso has seen 32 heat-related deaths in the area (City of El Paso, 2006).

Furthermore, the water supply and wastewater systems, along with the high level of air pollution, lead to unhealthy conditions and poor quality of life for many Paso del Norte residents (Forster, 2006). In fact, El Paso is the only city in the state of Texas in violation of national standards for both particulate matter and carbon monoxide. According to the Texas Environmental Profile of 2000, the city of El Paso has been in compliance with national standards for nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and lead.

Modeling studies designed by the state of Texas have shown that air pollution originating in Ciudad Juárez contributes as much or more to overall air pollution in El Paso than pollution originating on the U.S. side of the border. In fact, according to the Texas Environmental Profile of 2000, pollution levels monitored in Ciudad Juárez are significantly higher than those in El Paso. Apart from the expected higher level of particulate related to weather conditions in the region, pollutants in the air released from contributing factors, such as border crossing congestion, mixed with traffic, and other pollutants, air quality conditions exceed regulatory
thresholds, creating a potential for heightened incidence of respiratory diseases, including asthma (Forster, 2006).

According to a December 2000 Briefing Paper, produced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the rapid growth of the Paso del Norte region has made it impossible for the region to keep up with the demand for water. To meet the needs of this community, both residential and agricultural, this area depends on the both surface water and groundwater supplies, specifically from the Rio Grande and the aquifers that stretch beneath both borders. Add to this demand, the fact that wastewater from the cities and return flows from the farms have a negative impact on the river and aquifers. Ciudad Juarez, as recently as 2005, has begun to face serious water shortages (EPA, 2000). During the spring and summer months, the city of El Paso imposes strict “water days” for its residents, in which numbered addresses do outdoor watering on predetermined days.

With the misuse and abuse of water and water rights, come threats to health and the environment. The border region suffers from a disproportionate amount of waterborne diseases, such as hepatitis, and respiratory diseases, such as asthma (EPA, 2000). Also, serious environmental concerns include the inadequate roads, drainage, and water services in many areas, illegal waste dumps, the lack of proper hazardous waste facilities, and the treatment of wastewater. Since 1995 with the passage of NAFTA, significant progress has been made to address these concerns. However, the fact remains that this border region does not receive the financial assistance that is necessary to fully address the growing environmental problems and concerns (EPA, 2000).
THE SURVEY

A survey questionnaire was created to determine the feasibility of a Master’s of Social Work (MSW) Program at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) that would benefit the Paso del Norte Region, which includes El Paso, Hudspeth, and Culberson counties in far west Texas, Dona Ana, Luna, and Otero counties in south-central New Mexico, and Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. Eight senior-level social work students developed ten questions each, that they felt necessary to be part of the survey questionnaire. Of the 80 questions submitted, all were reviewed to ensure that there were no duplicates. The final questions on the survey were selected by the social work students conducting the research with the assistance of Dr. Coggins, Director of the Social Work Program. The final product agreed upon was to be a simple survey that was mostly quantitative and time efficient as not to be a burden on respondents (see Appendix B).

There were two survey questionnaires developed, a caseworker level and a supervisor’s level. The data collection methodologies that were used consisted of structured-quantitative and semi-structured qualitative items. The casework questionnaires consisted of 18 structured questions, with an additional qualitative comment box for any suggestions that professionals felt might contribute to the development of an MSW.

Agency supervisors’ questionnaires were designed and consisted of six questions. The questions were structured for interviews with supervisors’ from agencies and organizations involved in the provision of social services to the Paso del Norte region (see Appendix C). The focus of the agency supervisors’ questionnaire was to determine if the agencies were in need of master-level social workers. Another point, which the supervisor questionnaires focused on, was the need for licensure and the need for skill development in social work. In addition, agencies were being targeted for possible future internships at the master’s level.
The MSW survey questionnaires were distributed to designated supervisors with instructions that questionnaires would be picked up within one week’s time. Agency supervisors were to oversee the distribution and collection of MSW questionnaires among their employees and would be the point of contact for completed survey questionnaires. The focus of the caseworker questionnaire was to determine the educational level of individuals performing casework at the time of survey distribution. The survey also focused on reasons for individuals not pursuing higher education in the social work field. In addition, the questionnaire also gave professionals the opportunity to choose the type of concentration to be considered for the MSW Program.

A total of 300 questionnaires were printed. Of the 300 questionnaires, 264 questionnaires were returned and determined “usable,” meaning that a majority of the questions had been answered. Thirty agencies were given survey questionnaires for completion. Of the 30 agencies, 27 agency supervisors were selected for interviews. In addition, two public officials were also included in the interview process.

Initial difficulties that were encountered in collection of data included problems, such as arranging appointments with supervisors for survey distributions and interviews or scheduling conflicts between the student and the professional. Other problems encountered included, supervisors not returning telephone calls to the students; supervisors that were targeted for interviews were not available at agreed appointment times, and the lack of support from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)/Texas Chapter – El Paso Branch.

Students applied different methods to correct difficulties, such as appearing at agencies unexpectedly or offering to conduct surveys via email. Students would also call and leave
messages with agencies daily. With the persistence of the students, agency supervisors agreed upon meeting times to complete the interviews.

Although limited in number, difficulties that were noted included, agency supervisors not pushing for completion of surveys with agency employees; supervisors not responding to follow-up telephone calls and/or e-mail correspondence; agency supervisors failure to meet deadlines set for the completion of the surveys; and agency supervisors failure to distribute surveys to their agency caseworkers.

THE FINDINGS

Section #1 – General Statistics:

The number of surveys copied and handed out for this project was 300. The number of surveys returned was 264; this translates to an 88% percent return rate on surveys. The number and percentage of returned surveys that were deemed usable were 264 and 88% respectively. Some surveys were incompletely filled out, but none were incorrectly filled out. The number of agencies targeted was 30 and the number of agencies interviewed was 27 (see Appendix D).

Section #2 – The Survey – Quantitative Data:

During examination of the 264 returned surveys it was determined that a number of these surveys were incompletely filled out. To remedy this oversight on the part of survey participants, an adjusted value for \( n \) will be used when addressing each of the questions in the survey. To arrive at the adjusted \( n \) figure for each question, the starting number is \( 264 = n \); the adjusted \( n \) is arrived at by subtracting the missing responses from the starting total of 264 to arrive at an adjusted \( n \). For example: \( 264-59 \) (missing responses) = \( n = 205 \). The percentages will then be
calculated from the adjusted $n$ value. This method was used so as to enable the group to use the maximum number of surveys returned.

**Question #1: Do you currently have an associate’s degree in social work or human services?**

$(n = 264)$

A total of 10 respondents answered in the affirmative, for possessing an associate’s degree in social work or human services, for a total percentage of 3.7%.

**Question #2: How long have you been at your current position?**

$(n = 264)$

The shortest period of time in a position was 5 months; the longest time in a current position was 30 years. The average length of time in the current position was 3.75 years.

**Question #3: Do you currently have a bachelor’s degree in social work?**

$(n = 264)$

There were 75 respondents who answered in the affirmative that they possessed a bachelor’s degree in social work. This yielded a percentage of 28.4% of the total. Some of the colleges listed included the University of Texas at El Paso, Boston University, the University of Houston, New Mexico Highlands University, New Mexico State University (Las Cruces), and Our Lady of the Lake, San Antonio, Texas.
Question #4: Do you have a master’s degree in social work?

\((n = 264)\)

There were 20 respondents who answered in the affirmative that they possessed a master’s degree in social work. This yielded a percentage of 7.5% of the total. Some of the colleges listed included the University of Texas at Austin, and New Mexico State University (Las Cruces).

Question #4b: If a master’s degree program in social work had been available in El Paso when you went to graduate school, would you have completed your MSW in El Paso?

For this question an adjusted value of \(n\) is used. There were 119 missing responses recorded for this question; \(264-119= 145\) (adjusted \(n\)). There were a total of 125 affirmative responses to this question for a rate of 86.2% that would have attended a master’s program here in El Paso. 20 respondents answered this question in the negative for a rate of 13.7%. The respondents who answered in the negative for this question, and also left a comment, cited the lack of pay in El Paso.

Question #5: If you do not have a bachelor’s or master’s degree in social work, do you have a college degree in some other field (counseling, psychology, human services, etc)?

\((n = 264)\)

Only 25 participants responded to this question for a rate of 9.4% who possess a college degree in some other field. Some of the fields mentioned were criminal justice, psychology, counseling and guidance, and sociology.
Question #6: Do you currently have a desire to get a master’s degree in social work?

There were 59 missing responses to this question, yielding an adjusted $n$ rate of $264-59 = 205 = n$. There were 175 affirmative responses to this question, for a rate of 85.4%. There were 30 negative responses to this question, for a rate of 14.6%.

Question #7: Are you planning to return to school to work on a master’s degree in social work within the next twelve months?

There were 44 missing responses to this question, yielding an adjusted $n$ rate of $264-44 = 220 = n$. There were 100 affirmative responses to this question, for a rate of 45.5%. There were 120 negative responses to this question, for a rate of 54.5%.

Question #7b: If no, what are the main reasons you are not planning to return to school to work on your master’s degree in social work during the coming year? (n = 120)

Due to responses in multiple categories, percentages will not add up to 100%.

For this question:

- Financial considerations: 50 = 41.6%
- No MSW program is available in El Paso: 65 = 54.1%
- Unable to quit work to go to school: 25 = 20.8%
- Family issues: 10 = 8.3%
- Unable to relocate to another city to complete my MSW: 34 = 28.3%
- The commute to New Mexico State University is too long: 50 = 41.6%
- No desire to get a master’s degree at this time: 15 = 12.5%
- My job does not require a master’s degree in social work: 15 = 12.5%
Question #8: If an MSW Program is started at UTEP would you be interested in attending the program?

There were 94 missing responses to this question, yielding an adjusted $n$ rate of $264-94 = 170 = n$. There were 155 affirmative responses to this question, for a rate of 91.1%. There were 15 negative responses to this question, for a rate of 8.8%.

Question #9: If UTEP did offer a master’s degree in social work, what format would you prefer?

There were 15 missing responses to this question, yielding an adjusted $n$ rate of $264-15 = 249 = n$.

- Classes offered during the day: 20 = 8.0%
- Classes offered in the evening: 48 = 19.3%
- Classes offered online: 55 = 22.0%
- Classes offered on the weekend: 35 = 14.1%
- A combination of evening and online courses: 48 = 19.3%
- A combination of weekend and online courses: 43 = 17.3%
- A combination of daytime and online courses: zero

Question #10: Would you be interested in a part time MSW program?

There were 64 missing responses to this question, yielding an adjusted $n$ rate of $264-64 = 200 = n$. There were 180 affirmative responses to this question, for a rate of 90%. There were 20 negative responses to this question, for a rate of 10%.
Question #11: What area of concentration would you prefer the master’s in social work to cover? (n = 264)

- Advanced Multicultural Generalist Practice: 8 = 3.0%
- Clinical Social Work: 60 = 22.7%
- Social Work in Medical Settings: 20 = 7.5%
- Aging: 30 = 11.3%
- Child Welfare: 28 = 10.6%
- Family-Centered Practice: 16 = 6.0%
- Mental Health: 20 = 7.5%
- Corrections: 12 = 4.5%
- Administration and Program Evaluation: 30 = 11.3%
- School Social Work: 40 = 15.1%

Question #12: Would you prefer to complete your field practicum placement (internship) in a block format? (meaning during the semester you are in the field, this will be your only class)

There were 49 missing responses to this question, yielding an adjusted n rate of 264 - 49 = 215 = n. There were 170 affirmative responses to this question, for a rate of 79%.

Question #13: Would you prefer to complete your field practicum placement (internship) in a concurrent format? (meaning that during the semester(s) you are in field, you will also be enrolled in other classes)

There were 49 missing responses to this question, yielding an adjusted n rate of 264 - 49 = 215 = n. There were 45 affirmative responses to this question, for a rate of 20.9%.

Question #14: If you graduated with a Masters degree in Social Work from UTEP, would you remain in the El Paso area?

There were 59 missing responses to this question, yielding an adjusted n rate of 264 - 59 = 205 = n. There were 170 affirmative responses to this question, for a rate of 83%. There were 35
negative responses to this question, for a rate of 17%. The participants who responded that they would remain in the El Paso area overwhelmingly cited family reasons/ties. The participants who responded that they would not remain in the El Paso area cited the low salaries paid in this city in all negative responses.

**Question #15:** Have you ever been denied a promotion because you did not possess a master’s degree in social work?  

\( n = 264 \)

There were 30 affirmative responses to this question, for a rate of 11.3%.

**Question #16:** Have you ever been unable to apply for a job because you did not possess a master’s degree in social work?  

\( n = 264 \)

There were 95 affirmative responses to this question, for a rate of 35.9%.

**Question #17:** Do you believe that your financial status would improve if you had a master’s degree in social work?  

There were 44 missing responses to this question, yielding an adjusted \( n \) rate of 264-44 = 220 = \( n \). There were 205 affirmative responses to this question, for a rate of 93.2%. There were 15 negative responses to this question, for a rate of 6.8%.
Question #18: Do you believe that a master’s degree in social work program at UTEP would benefit the Far West Texas region?

There were 44 missing responses to this question, yielding an adjusted $n$ rate of $264-44 = 220 = n$. There were 215 affirmative responses to this question, for a rate of 97.7%. There were 5 negative responses to this question, for a rate of 2.2%.

Section #3 – The Survey – Qualitative Data

The qualitative data in this report is taken from the interviews with the section/department heads/directors of the 27 agencies that were personally interviewed. 100% percent of the agency directors interviewed stated that the University of Texas at El Paso should consider concentrating on clinical studies for the Masters of Social Work Program.

Selected Comments

The Director of the Veterans Administration Behavioral Health Science stated, “that the pursuit of clinical studies appears to be the wave of the future. Clinical social workers are able to bill third party payers for patient services rendered.”

The Director of Lutheran Social Services stated that she does support a Master’s of Social Work degree program for UTEP, and sees a need for Masters Level Social Workers at her agency.

The Director of Southwest Key stated that students at UTEP are unable to earn a Masters in Social Work, so the students try to earn Masters in Counseling or an LPC instead.
An Instructor at El Paso Community College and Adjunct Faculty Member for the Social Work Program at UTEP stated that UTEP should consider concentrating on clinical studies, with classes on substance abuse and the DSM IV. He also feels that a Masters program is definitely needed in El Paso.

The Director for the Border Children Mental Health Collaborative (BCMHC) sees a need for master’s level social workers in her agency, but is only able to hire bachelor’s level social workers because that is all that is available in the local employee pool. She states that she can accept both bachelors and masters levels interns, and would like to see a concentration in Mental Health.

The Director for the Center Against Family Violence stated that she would hire a new employee with a Masters Degree in Social Work over an applicant who possessed only a Bachelors Degree in Social Work. She also states that she would take both bachelors and masters’ level interns at her agency from a program at UTEP. She would like to see the program concentrate on the clinical aspect, and maybe child welfare and/or domestic violence.

The Director for the El Paso Center for Children stated that they wouldn’t hire masters over bachelors’ level job seekers; but also stated that masters’ level applicants are just not available. She sees the need for a masters program at UTEP and would accept interns at both levels. She wants the program to concentrate on the clinical side with child welfare, and some family centered teaching.

The Director of El Paso Mental Health/Mental Retardation (MH/MR) would hire masters over bachelors’ level applicants, and definitely sees a need for a masters program in El Paso. She states that she would accept interns at both levels and would like the program to concentrate on the clinical aspect, child welfare, family centered, and mental health.
The **Director of Southern New Mexico Human Development** would hire masters over bachelors’ level candidates, and definitely sees a need for a masters program in social work in El Paso. She would like to see clinical concentration with a family orientation.

The **Director of Communities in Schools** stated that she would hire masters over bachelors’ level applicants. She sees a need for a masters program at UTEP. As long as her people had masters, she would accept master-level interns. She would like to see the program concentrate on the clinical aspect.

The **Director of Thomason Hospital, Social Work Manager** would hire master-level over bachelor-level applicants. She sees a need for a masters program at UTEP. She would accept both bachelors and masters level interns. She would like to see the program concentrate on the clinical aspect.

**IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY AND OBSTACLES TO PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

The data that were received through the interviews done with agency supervisors revealed that all agency supervisors see a clear need for an MSW Program at UTEP. All admitted they would hire an MSW over a BSW if they had the budget to do so. The only differences with the agencies were whether the MSW or BSW was required to be licensed. Some agencies do not require that a social worker hold a license, while others do. According to the interviews with supervisors all stated that the concentration for the program should be clinical. The agencies varied in the specialization of clinical concentration according to the populations they served, such as: child behavior, sexual abuse, domestic violence and substance abuse to
name a few. The data also revealed that all supervisors would accept master's level interns at their agency.

The task environment within which this MSW Program is being proposed would include the Far West Texas counties of El Paso, Hudspeth, and Culberson; the Far South-central New Mexico counties of Dona Ana, Luna, and Otero; and the Ciudad Juarez municipal region. Within these counties this would include agencies that use the services of social workers. This also includes all social workers within this region. The “task environment,” also includes all people who seek social services. UTEP is also within this task environment, in that they not only employ social workers, but also provide a BSW program that is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The Paso Del Norte region would greatly benefit from UTEP if there were an MSW Program.

This region is a multicultural border region. Many universities are interested in this region. Due to the large immigrant population and the diverse number of cultures within our country, other universities are interested in researching multiculturalism. At a recent recruiting function, during the 2005 Fall Semester, a representative from the University of Michigan expressed an interest in working in conjunction with UTEP to gain better knowledge of its own multicultural community.

As was mentioned above the data revealed that supervisors of agencies support the creation of an MSW Program at UTEP. Social workers desiring to study for an MSW also overwhelmingly support the creation of an MSW Program. Faculty from the Social Work Program at UTEP have also expressed that they support the creation of an MSW Program.

There were some who opposed the creation of an MSW Program. During discussions with the members of this feasibility study, it was stated that some respondents opposed the
creation of an MSW because it would increase competition for jobs. New Mexico State University (NMSU), in Las Cruces, New Mexico, would be likely to oppose a stand-alone MSW Program at UTEP. According to the UTEP, Social Work Program website SACS Accreditation Report (Coggins, 2004), NMSU already has master-level programs in Las Cruces and Albuquerque, and satellite programs in other areas throughout New Mexico. Supporters of NMSU would also likely oppose a stand-alone MSW Program at UTEP because they would likely want the resources to go to NMSU. Approximately 40 – 50 percent of NMSU MSW graduate students are from El Paso and have graduated with a BSW from UTEP.

A collaborative effort to create a joint MSW program between UTEP and NMSU was proposed by UTEP President, Diana Natalicio, according to Dr. Coggins, Director and Associate Professor of the UTEP, Social Work Program (Personal Communication, Coggins 2006). This strategy is useful if UTEP and the Social Work Program faculty hope to create an MSW Program. According to Netting, Kettner and McMurtry (2004), “collaborative strategies include instances when the target and action systems agree that change is needed” and by joining together the target and action systems may provide a single program or service with shared resources. In this case, UTEP and NMSU would make the commitment to form a partnership, in order to share the resources of faculty, funding, and areas of concentration for the purpose of producing an MSW Program. According to Dr. Coggins, there are discussions occurring between the two universities about this possible collaboration (Personal Communication, Coggins 2006).

According to the UTEP, Social Work Program website, Compact, in the 2004 report, an MSW program was not stated as a priority of the College of Liberal Arts or the University (Coggins, 2004). This proves to be one of the biggest obstacles to creating an MSW Program at UTEP. Due the stringent guidelines for accreditation by both the University and the CSWE, there
must be a minimum number of faculty members who are tenure or tenure track committed to the Social Work Program (Personal Communication, Coggins 2006). According to the report prepared for the SACS (Coggins, 2004), the Social Work Program was at its minimum number of faculty in 2004, thus the University reduced their amount of funding to the department.

Without a joint effort between the two universities, NMSU would be an obstacle as well. As was stated above in relation to those who would oppose the MSW Program at UTEP, NMSU already has a strong MSW Program in place and is able to expand throughout New Mexico by satellite programs offered (Coggins, 2004). Many UTEP Social Work BSW graduates receive their MSW degrees at NMSU, but have stated that they would probably have gone to UTEP if there were an MSW Program.

El Paso is the 5th largest city in Texas and the 23rd largest city in the United States (U.S. Census, 2000). The combined population of the metropolitan areas of El Paso and Ciudad Juarez is over 1.9 million (City of El Paso, 2006). These numbers alone demonstrate the need for the creation of an MSW Program at UTEP.
REFERENCES


Executive Order RP33, Relating to Reforming the Adult Protective Services Program. State of Texas, Office of the Governor, Executive Department, Austin, Texas. (April 14, 2004). Website: www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/press/exorders/rp33


Appendix A

University of Texas at El Paso
Graduate Degree Program Proposal

Revised 2003-2004
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAM
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

CONCENTRATION

UTEP
Advanced Multicultural Generalist Practitioner (AMGP)
The MSSW/AMGP at UTEP will emphasize the development of culturally sensitive, effective, and appropriate skills related to direct practice with individuals, families, and groups; as well as community-based intervention in the U.S./Mexico borderland environment. Students who enroll in the UTEP MSSW/AMGP concentration will receive education in the following areas:

1.) Advanced assessment and diagnosis that utilizes a person-in-environment perspective based in both ecological and systems theory. In addition, the multicultural nature of the concentration will necessitate the inclusion of education related to differing theoretical models and approaches that facilitate an understanding of the influence of culture on behavior and the importance of culture in developing intervention strategies.

2.) Intervention strategies that range from work with individuals and families, to work with groups, organizations, and communities; and that draw from several schools of thought, including cognitive-behavioral, social learning, psychodynamic, humanistic, family systems, feminist, organizational, and community theory.

3.) Advanced case management capability with special emphasis on multiple factors such as, client need, service availability, eligibility criteria, formal and informal support networks, citizenship and/or residency status, cultural congruity between clients and service providers, resources development, social justice, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

4.) Anthropological theory and concepts as important foundations for guiding culturally sensitive assessment processes, and fashioning culturally appropriate interventions at the micro, mezzo, and macro level.

Social workers graduating from the UTEP MSSW/AMGP program will be prepared to work as:

1.) Client services/case managers
2.) Clinicians/therapists
3.) Community workers involved in community empowerment and resource development efforts
4.) School social workers
5.) Program and project directors
Social workers graduating from the UTEP MSSW program as advanced multicultural generalist practitioners will be prepared to work in settings such as:

1.) Hospitals
2.) Correctional facilities
3.) Juvenile justice centers
4.) Child protective services
5.) Adult protective services
6.) Facilities for the elderly
7.) Community mental health departments
8.) Private non-profit family, social service and mental health agencies
9.) Chemical dependency treatment centers and facilities
10.) University counseling centers
11.) Women’s shelters
12.) Employee assistance programs
13.) Hospice organizations
14.) Military social and mental health service departments
15.) Probate court
16.) Community development and service centers

**FOUNDATION CURRICULUM**

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<tr>
<td>HBSE I</td>
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<td>3 CR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLICY</td>
<td>3 CR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Diversity and the Human Condition: A Social Work Perspective</td>
<td>3 CR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBSE II</td>
<td>3 CR</td>
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<tr>
<td>RESEARCH</td>
<td>3 CR</td>
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<td>PRACTICE II</td>
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24 CREDIT HOURS

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<td>SUMMER BLOCK PLACEMENT</td>
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30 CREDIT HOURS [TOTAL]
CONCENTRATION CURRICULUM

All course selections will emphasize the importance of practice skill development specific to social work along the U.S./Mexico border, as well as multicultural skill building that can be generalized to settings far beyond the Texas, New Mexico, Chihuahua region.

3 Cr. Hrs. Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention with Individuals
3 Cr. Hrs. Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention with Families
3 Cr. Hrs. Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention with Groups
3 Cr. Hrs. Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention within Organizations and Communities [Special emphasis on colonias, bi-national border issues]
3 Cr. Hrs. Research, Evaluation, and Multiculturalism in Service Delivery

15 CREDIT HOURS

In conjunction with the 15 concentration hours listed above, all students will take the following three courses, or nine (9) credit hours.

3 Cr. Hrs. Cultural Competence and Practice in Mental Health Settings
3 Cr. Hrs. Cultural Competence and Practice in Health Care Settings
3 Cr. Hrs. Cultural Competence and Practice in Chemical Dependency Treatment Settings

AND

6 Cr. Hrs. Concentration Field Practicum

30 credit hours total for the Concentration in Advanced Multicultural Generalist Practice

60 total credit hours for the MSSW
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

HBSE I
Lifespan and development theories with a focus on culture, social diversity, gender, and human behavior from birth through adolescence.

HBSE II
Lifespan and development theories with a focus on culture, social diversity, gender, and human behavior from early adulthood through old age and death.

Policy
The history of social welfare in North America from Pre-Columbian times to present will be examined. Canadian, U.S., and Mexican social welfare policy will be compared with an emphasis on differences in national cultures, values, and social welfare priorities.

Human Diversity and the Human Condition: A Social Work Perspective
This course will examine the broad range of human diversity. Addressing topics such as, but not limited to: culture; gender; race; disability/ability; ethnicity; alternative family constellation; religion/spirituality; concerns or issues specific to gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans-gendered or intersex persons; and socioeconomic status.

Research
Research, Evaluation, and Issues of Cultural/Social Diversity is a course that emphasizes acquisition of basic skills related to research methods and the analysis of research findings related to practice with systems of various sizes. Issues of social justice and research among racial, ethnic, social, cultural and sexual minority populations will be emphasized.

Practice I
This initial social work practice course will focus on the acquisition of knowledge and the development of intervention skills for work with individuals, families, and small groups. Cultural sensitivity and culturally appropriate approaches to intervention will be emphasized.

Practice II
The second social work practice course in the foundation year will focus on the acquisition of knowledge and the development of intervention skills for work with and within organizations and communities. Issues of social and economic justice, environmental racism, citizenship/residency status and social service eligibility, and cultural sensitivity of community workers or agency policy developers will be addressed.
Application of Theory to Practice
Traditional and alternative or critical theories from the fields of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and social work will be featured with an emphasis on the application of theory to social work practice.

**FOUNDATION PRACTICUM**

**Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention with Individuals**
Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention with Individuals will prepare students to assess and intervene with individuals along a broad continuum ranging from advanced case management to clinical assessment and treatment. Attention to and the inclusion of cultural and social diversity in the assessment and treatment phases of intervention will be emphasized.

**Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention with Families**
Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention with families is designed to prepare students for intervention with culturally and socially defined family systems of various sizes and constellations. Advanced family case management and family intervention/treatment will be emphasized with the additional inclusion of attention to cultural and social diversity in the assessment and treatment phases of intervention.

**Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention with Groups**
Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention with groups will prepare students for work with a variety of groups and group types. Approaches to group intervention will emphasize the importance of cultural and social variability in the development and delivery of social work services to groups.

**Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention within Organizations and Communities**
Multicultural Skill Building and Intervention within Organizations and Communities will prepare students for intervention within and on behalf of organizations and communities. Both ecological and systems theoretical perspectives will be utilized in analyzing and understanding organizations and communities. Special emphasis will be placed on issues of cultural and social justice with a particular focus on colonias and bi-national border concerns.

**Research, Evaluation, and Multiculturalism in Service Delivery**
This course will build on foundation research knowledge and skills, and will include the completion of a research project related to mental health, health care, or chemical dependency, with special emphasis being placed on issues of concern to cultural, social, racial, ethnic, or sexual minority populations as well as those populations considered to be vulnerable or at-risk.
Cultural Competence and Practice in *Mental Health Setting*
This course will emphasize knowledge acquisition and skill building in the areas of clinical assessment and management or treatment of a broad range of mental health problems. Special focus will be placed on the development of skill in fashioning culturally sensitive and appropriate intervention strategies that address the needs of diverse populations.

Cultural Competence and Practice in *Health Care Settings*
Social Work in Health Care Settings will prepare students for intervention with clients in health care service delivery settings. Knowledge and skill necessary for effective intervention will be combined with cultural skill building that emphasizes the importance of improving health outcomes through the development of culturally sensitive and appropriate intervention strategies.

Cultural Competence and Practice in *Chemical Dependency Treatment Settings*
Social Work and Chemical Dependency will prepare students for intervention in the field of addictions management and treatment. Knowledge and skill necessary for effective intervention will be combined with cultural skill building that emphasizes the importance of improving treatment outcomes through the development of culturally sensitive and appropriate approaches to intervention and treatment.
## CONCENTRATION PRACTICUM

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<td>MENTAL HEALTH 6:30-9:20 p.m.</td>
<td>HEALTH CARE 6:30-9:20 p.m.</td>
<td>CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY 6:30-9:20 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMER 2nd Year</td>
<td>PRACTICUM 8:00 a.m. To 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>PRACTICUM 8:00 a.m. To 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>PRACTICUM 8:00 a.m. To 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>PRACTICUM 8:00 a.m. To 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>PRACTICUM 8:00 a.m. To 5:00 p.m.</td>
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Appendix B

MSW Questionnaire
MSW QUESTIONNAIRE

1.) Do you currently have an Associate’s degree in Social Work or Human Services?
   [ ] YES  [ ] NO

2.) How long have you been at your current position?

3.) Do you have a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work (BSW)?
   [ ] YES  [ ] NO

3a.) If yes, when did you receive your degree?
   Month/Year __________ / _______________

   Also, where did you receive your degree?
   Name of college or university _____________________________________________
   Location (city and state) ________________________ / ________________________

4.) Do you have a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW)?
   [ ] YES  [ ] NO

4a.) If yes, when did you receive your degree?
   Month/Year __________ / _______________

   Also, where did you receive your degree?
   Name of college or university _____________________________________________
   Location (city and state) ________________________ / ________________________

4b.) If a Master’s Degree Program in Social Work (MSW) had been available in El Paso when you went to graduate school, would you have completed your MSW in El Paso?
   [ ] YES  [ ] NO

IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED ITEMS 4, 4A, AND 4B, YOU ARE FINISHED. THANK YOU.
5.) IF YOU HAVE A BSW OR MSW, PROCEED TO QUESTION 6

If you DO NOT have a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in Social Work (BSW/MSW), do you have a college degree in some other field (psychology, human services, etc.)?

[ ] YES [ ] NO

If yes, what type of college degree(s) do you have?

_____________________________________________

6.)

Do you currently have a desire to get a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW)?

[ ] YES [ ] NO

7.)

Are you planning to return to school to work on a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW) within the next twelve months?

[ ] YES [ ] NO

7a.)

If yes, where will you go to get your Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW)?

________________________________________________________________________

7b.)

If no, what are the main reasons you are not planning to return to school to work on your Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW) during the coming year?

(select all that apply)

[ ] Financial considerations [ ] No MSW program is available in El Paso
[ ] Unable to quit work to go to school [ ] Family issues
[ ] Unable to relocate to another city to complete my MSW
[ ] The commute to New Mexico State University (NMSU) is too long
[ ] No desire to get a Master’s degree at this time
[ ] My job does not require a master’s degree in social work
[ ] Other ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
8.)
If an MSW Program is started at UTEP, would you be interested an attending the program?
   [ ] YES   [ ] NO

9.)
If UTEP did offer a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW), what format would you prefer?
   [ ] Classes offered during the day   [ ] Classes offered in the evening
   [ ] Classes offered online   [ ] Classes offered on the weekend
   [ ] A combination of evening and online courses
   [ ] A combination of weekend and online courses
   [ ] A combination of daytime and online courses
   [ ] Other
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

10.)
Would you be interested in a part-time MSW program?
   [ ] YES   [ ] NO

11.)
What area of concentration would you prefer the Master’s in Social Work (MSW) to cover?
(Select one)
   [ ] Advanced Multicultural Generalist Practice
   [ ] Clinical Social Work
   [ ] Social Work in Medical Settings
   [ ] Aging
   [ ] Child Welfare
   [ ] Family-Centered Practice
   [ ] Mental Health
   [ ] Corrections
   [ ] Administration and Program Evaluation
   [ ] School Social Work
12.) Would you prefer to complete your field practicum placement (internship) in a block format? (Meaning that during the semester(s) you are in field, this will be your only class.)
   [ ] YES [ ] NO

13.) Would you prefer to complete your field practicum placement (internship) in a concurrent format? (Meaning that during the semester(s) you are in field, you will also be enrolled in other classes.)
   [ ] YES [ ] NO

14.) If you graduated with a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW) from UTEP, would you remain in the El Paso area?
   [ ] YES [ ] NO

14a.) If yes, why?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

14b.) If no, why not?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

15.) Have you ever been denied a promotion because you did not possess a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW)?
   [ ] YES [ ] NO
16.)
Have you ever been unable to apply for a job because you did not possess a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW)?

[ ] YES [ ] NO

17.)
Do you believe that your financial status would improve if you had a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW)?

[ ] YES [ ] NO

18.)
Do you believe that a Master’s degree in Social Work (MSW) program at UTEP would benefit the Far West Texas region?

[ ] YES [ ] NO

Additional comments:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
Appendix C

Supervisor’s Questionnaire
Supervisor’s Questionnaire

1. Would you hire a master’s level of social worker over someone with a bachelor’s degree?

2. As a program director or supervisor, do you see the need for master’s level social workers in your agency?

3. If a MSW were started at UTEP, would you be able to accept student interns at the master’s level?

4. How many people do you employ that possess a social work degree?

5. Does your agency require social workers to be licensed?

6. What should UTEP consider when offering this MSW program?
Appendix D

Agencies that Participated in Survey
Agencies that Participated in Survey

1. El Paso Center for Children
2. Runaway Center of El Paso
3. Communities in Schools (CIS)
4. Child Crisis Center
5. El Paso Academy West
6. El Paso Community College
7. Border Children Mental Health Collaborative
8. Center Against Family Violence
9. Mental Health Mental Retardation (MH/MR) Champs
10. Mesa Hills Specialty Hospital
11. Department of Aging and Disability Services
12. Alzheimer’s Association of El Paso
13. Early Childhood Association
14. Southern New Mexico Human Development
15. DISMASS Charities
16. Domestic Relations Office
17. Project BRAVO
18. Highlands Specialty Hospital
19. R.E. Thomason General Hospital
20. Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center
21. Southwest Key Inc.
22. Lutheran Social Services
23. LULAC (League of Latin American Citizens)
24. Army Community Services
25. Department of Health and Human Services
26. Child Protective Services (Texas Department of Family and Protective Services)
27. Adult Protective Services (Texas Department of Family and Protective Services)