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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **UTPB SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM GETS FULL ACCREDITATION**

*Contact: Melanie Nicholas, Public Information Officer, 552-2806*

The University of Texas of the Permian Basin has received initial accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education.

"This is very exciting news for us because social work programs must be fully accredited for graduates to be eligible to be licensed," explained UTPB professor and program coordinator Kay Ketzenberger.

UTPB has been working toward full accreditation for the last four years, and the university began accepting students into the bachelor of social work program two years ago. Seventeen students have graduated in that time, and Ketzenberger said the accreditation is fully retroactive.

"These graduates are completely eligible to take the state licensure test," Ketzenberger added.

UTPB is the only university within 140 miles that has a nationally accredited social work program.

"This is a major need in West Texas, there are literally hundreds of social service positions in this area. UTPB will be a major supplier of qualified employees for this field not only in West Texas, but across the state," she added.

Research shows that people trained to work in social services tend to last longer in the field.

"Trained social workers know what to expect, they have realistic ideas about what they can accomplish. Social work is very demanding and can take its toll. We want to prepare our students for this field so that they can do the very best job, not only for the people that they help but also for themselves," Ketzenberger said.

UTPB President David Watts said the accreditation news could not have come at a better time.

"This news comes at a great time for those considering social work as a career choice. Registration for fall classes is gearing up and we have scholarships, transfer scholarships and financial aid available right now. There are more options than ever before for licensed social workers, from adoption services to adult and child protection services. Nursing homes, prisons and many hospitals also have social work positions. This is a wonderful time to consider social work as a way to give back," Watts said.

For more information about the program, please call Kay Ketzenberger at 552-2353 or e-mail [ketzenberger\\_k@utpb.edu](mailto:ketzenberger_k@utpb.edu).

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