

Division of Social Work
BSW Program Assessment
June 28, 2013

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BASW Program Annual Assessment
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The Division of Social Work curriculum is guided by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), specifically the Educational Policy Accreditation Standards (EPAS). The EPAS, like curriculum, continue to evolve and reflect the changing nature of the field of Social Work as well as the latest data regarding Social Work pedagogy. Our last accreditation in 2008 was based on CSWE's 2001 evaluation criteria. Shortly after our re-accreditation, CSWE introduced the 2008 EPAS criteria, which will apply to our next accreditation in 2016. Historically, we have assessed our programs on "educational program objectives;" the new 2008 accreditation standards brings further definition to our outcome measures in addressing "practice competencies." Over the last 3 years, the Division has been incrementally incorporating these new standards. The Division has historically used three means of evaluation: 1) Field evaluations (wherein field instructors and students measure behavioral outcomes of professional education); 2) the alumni survey (past students are asked about their professional experience: skills and challenges, what their education prepared them for and what was lacking); and 3) course embedded assignments in all core courses which are designed to measure a student's competency in specific learning objectives across the curriculum. The three means of assessment incorporate both direct and indirect measures as well as formative and summative methods. All measures are tied to the Division and University's mission and are linked to accreditation standards.

In 2011-12, the Social Work Assessment Committee decided to narrow and refine the current collection of data surrounding the BSW Program Assessment. The decision was to discontinue the use of course embedded assignments in favor of focusing our resources on refinement of the Student Field Evaluation and beginning administration of The Foundation Curriculum Assessment Instrument (exit, given at the end of the senior year). While the Alumni Survey has been revised and administered, the current sample is MSW alumni only.

The Foundation Curriculum Assessment Instrument

The Foundation Curriculum Assessment Instrument (FCAI) is a standardized assessment developed by Social Work Education Assessment Project at the University of Utah, and widely used among BASW programs nationwide to assess student knowledge about the five main areas of social work education: practice, human behavior and social environment, policy, research, ethics/values, diversity and social and economic justice. The FCAI enables BSW programs (and foundation year MSW programs) to measure how well their curriculum is preparing their students for social work practice. The FCAI is designed to be administered to students entering (measuring baseline social work knowledge) and/or exiting (measuring knowledge of the social work profession) a BSW program.

The Foundation Curriculum Assessment Instrument was administered to a small sample of graduating seniors at the end of the Spring 2012 semester. While this sample provides a starting point for measuring competencies as we move forward in the curriculum revision, a good baseline, there is little to report from the first round of data. Most students scored within one standard deviation of the national average. This coming Fall (2013), we will be administering the FCAI (entrance) to 120 incoming BSW majors, along with administering the FCAI (exit) in Spring (2014) to 120 graduating BSW students. Faculty members of selected classes (SWRK 125A at the entrance into the major, and SWRK 140C at the end of the senior year) volunteer to administer the FCAI to all the students in their class. As we continue to gather data from incoming and graduating students, we hope to get a clearer picture of the strengths and challenges of faculty, students and curriculum.

Student Field Evaluation

Student Field Evaluation data are completed by field instructors at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters for all students enrolled in Field classes. On-site agency field instructors and practice faculty review the results of each student's evaluation, and adjust course content and practicum learning activities to help students strengthen the competencies as needed. In addition, field evaluation data are aggregated and presented to the faculty on an annual basis. The data are used to update course content, particularly in the practice sequence (SWRK 204A, 204B, 204C

& 204D.) This instrument was updated in Fall 2011 to reflect the new professional competency-based accreditation standards.

The *Student Field Evaluation* is constructed to mirror the student *Learning Agreement*, which outlines 9 competencies. Under each competency, a range of behavioral indicators are identified. Students are expected to score between 3-5 in each competency by the end of their second semester of field. In addition, we expect 90% of the students to score 3 or above in each of the competencies by the beginning of the second semester of field. Competencies that don't meet the 90% benchmark are targeted for curriculum review.

Field instructors (agency supervisors of the student's practicum) rate the student and students rate themselves on all behavioral indicators, according to a 5 point scale:

- 1=Unacceptable performance
- 2= Beginning Skill Development
- 3= Progressing in Demonstration
- 4= Consistent Demonstration of High Level of Skill Development
- 5= Exceptional Demonstration of Skill Development

2012-13 BSW Program Assessment

The Social Work Faculty will be meeting in curricular sequence meetings this year to look at the current learning objectives used in each course and the assignments used to measure learning. Over the next two years, each course in the curriculum will change from learning objectives to practice competencies, accompanied with a means of measuring mastery of the competencies. In 2012-13, the Social Work Assessment Committee prioritized "practice skills" as the focus of this year's assessment. The goal for Spring semester competencies was set at 4.

The Student Field Evaluation measures an overall competency referred to as Practice Skills which include three areas or components: *Engagement, Assessment, and Intervention*. Each of these areas has four behavioral indicators or means of measuring the competency: *Engagement*: 1) Establishes effective working relationships with clients/client systems; 2) able to develop and maintain trust, communicate empathy, and respect; 3) effectively prepares for work with clients; and 4) develops mutually agreed upon focus of work and desired outcomes with clients.

Assessment: 1) Collects, organizes and interprets client data; 2) assesses client's strengths and limitations; 3) develops mutually agreed on intervention goals and objectives; and 4) selects appropriate intervention strategies. *Intervention:* 1) implements intervention strategies; 2) helps clients resolve problems; 3) negotiates, mediates, and advocates for clients; 4) facilitates transitions and endings for clients.

There are four scores attached to each of the questions: Student's self-assessment and the Field Instructors assessment at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters. Scores from the completed field evaluation forms for Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 were input manually into an Excel spreadsheet. For this analysis, the following data sets are used:

	# of Students and Field Instructors		
	BSW/FI	MSW I/FI	MSWII/FI
Fall 2012	68/68	72/72	93/93
Spring 2013	68/68	72/72	93/93

Table 1: Differences in Rating Between Semesters – Students and Field Instructors

		Mean	SD	Paired t-score	df	p	Sig
BSW Students	Fall 2012	3.0	0.493	14.18	135	.00001	*
	Spring 2013	4.02	0.154				
BSW Field Instructors	Fall 2012	2.5	0.589	14.78	135	.00001	*
	Spring 2013	3.52	0.487				

Statistically significant findings:

1. All BSW students and their field instructors indicated a significant increase ($p < .01$) students' performance between Fall and Spring semesters.
2. The increases are about one (1) point for BSW (3.0 to 4.0 for students, 2.5 to 3.5 for FI).

Table 2: Overall Differences Between BSW Students' and Field Instructors' Ratings

		Mean	Independent t-score	df	P (two)	Sig
BSW Students vs. Field Instructors	Fall 2012 students	1.8529	0.78	134	0.436766	Not
	Fall 2012 FI	1.6618				
BSW Students vs. Field Instructors	Spring 2013 Students	2.7903	1.08	122	0.282273	Not

Findings:

- 1 There are no statistically significant differences between students' self-ratings and FI's ratings.
- 2 On an average, BSW students rate themselves higher than how their field instructors rate them (Student 2.8 vs. FI 2.4 for Fall; Student 2.8 vs. FI 2.4 for Spring.)

Table 3: BSW Changes from Fall to Spring semester within competencies

COMPETENCIES	BSW Fall	BSW Spring	Change
	Area Mean	Area Mean	
1. Student identifies as a professional social worker and conducts self accordingly:	3.10	4.00	0.90
2. Student applies social work ethical principles to guide professional practice:	3.17	4.00	0.83
3. Student applies critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments:	3.00	4.00	1.00
4. Student engages diversity and difference in practice:	3.33	4.33	1.00
5. Student advances human rights and social and economic justice:	2.00	4.00	2.00*
6. Student engages in research-informed practice and practice-informed research:	3.00	4.00	1.00
7. Student applies knowledge of human behavior and the social environment:	3.00	4.00	1.00
8. Student engages in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being, and deliver effective social work services:	2.00	4.00	2.00*
9. Client engagement	3.00	4.00	1.00
10. Client Assessment	3.00	4.00	1.00
11. Intervention	3.00	4.00	1.00
Average	2.87	4.03	1.16

*Largest changes

The overall scores from all the items on the Student Field Evaluation indicate social work competencies improved over the course of their senior year, i.e., students' Spring semester scores were higher than Fall semester scores. Importantly, students met the 4.0 goal for end-of-the-year competency in each of the categories.

Table 4 Comparison of BSW, MSWI and MSWII Students

COMPETENCIES	BSW Change	MSWI Change	MSWII Change
1. Student identifies as a professional social worker and conducts self accordingly:	0.90	0.70	0.60
2. Student applies social work ethical principles to guide professional practice:	0.83	0.76	0.55
3. Student applies critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments:	1.00	0.94	0.62
4. Student engages diversity and difference in practice:	1.00	0.97	0.59
5. Student advances human rights and social and economic justice:	2.00*	1.12*	0.64
6. Student engages in research-informed practice and practice-informed research:	1.00	0.91	0.66
7. Student applies knowledge of human behavior and the social environment:	1.00	0.89	0.70
8. Student engages in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being, and deliver effective social work services:	2.00*	0.90	0.69
9. Engagement	1.00	0.99	0.59
10. Assessment	1.00	1.00	0.70
11. Intervention:	1.00	1.03*	0.76*
12. Leadership			0.93*
Average	1.16	0.93	0.67

Findings:

1. BSW students had larger changes than MSWI or MSWII students. BSW changes were most noteworthy in the areas of human rights and social justice; MSWI changes were greater in human rights and intervention skills, and MSWII's were more in the area of intervention skills.
2. Critical thinking changes were greater for BSW (1) than MSWI (.94) and MSWII (.62).

3. Leadership is a MSW II only variable.

Summary

The Division has historically used three means of evaluation: Field evaluations, alumni surveys and course embedded assignments. In accordance with the new EPAS and the emphasis on assessing student competencies, the Division has most recently focused its attention on updating curriculum to reflect “competencies.” This has been most evident in the refinement of the Student Field Evaluation. Although the Practice courses have not been updated to reflect the CSWE change from “learning objectives” to “competencies,” our data indicate that the current curriculum content is teaching “competencies.” Importantly, the Division’s goal of all BSW students achieving a mean score of 4 in Spring semester on all competencies in their Field evaluation was reached. More specifically, the Assessment Committee’s analysis of competencies regarding the Practice Skills: Engagement, Assessment and Intervention revealed that the goal of 4 was reached with an average increase of 1.0 between Fall and Spring evaluations. .

The Curriculum Sequence Committees will meet at the annual Social Work Fall retreat in August to look at this year’s results from the Student Field Evaluation. As the Division moves forward in updating the current curriculum to reflect “competencies,” the results of the Field Evaluation become particularly important.

The 2013-14 competency focus will be determined by the Assessment Committee when they meet in the Fall 2013.