OVERVIEW

The AY 12-13 Assessment Report contains evaluation data for each of the ten program competencies, analyzed by faculty with recommendations for program improvement. Both the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and Seattle University require assessment activities to support continuous improvement.

CSWE’s Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of 2008 identify 10 competencies and 41 generalist practice behaviors for all BSW programs. The Social Work program has been in the process of implementing curriculum changes over the past 3 years to reflect the focus of the 2008 EPAS on competency-based outcomes.

Our assessment includes a review of the program’s Explicit Curriculum that is the degree to which our students are prepared to meet the competencies and practice behaviors and the Implicit Curriculum, that is the context in which our students learn.

GRADUATING CLASS OF 2013: EMPLOYED, GRADUATE SCHOOL, AND SERVICE

The 2013 Cohort had 19 members. Eighteen (18) Bachelor of Social Work graduates have successfully launched into social work practice, graduate school, and service. Specifically:

- 55.5% (10) obtained full-time employment in the field of Social Work
  - 50% (5) of those employed were hired by their senior year field practicum sites
- 22% (4) are in graduate school
- 16.6% (3) are volunteering with Americorp, Jesuit Volunteer Corp -England, Mexican consulate
- 5% (1) was unable to be reached

One student, a Sullivan scholar is finishing her senior year with an experience in the International Development Internship Program (IDIP).

SAMPLE OF FINAL SUMMARY COMMENTS FROM EXIT SURVEY

“I love this program so much. I wouldn’t be the person I am today…I can’t imagine doing anything else.
I feel that I have learned so much and have so many tangible skills”.

“Professors…have changed my life….Each one of these women embodied the values of the profession in a way that was inspiring”.

“I have loved my time at Seattle University and could not speak higher of the Social Work program. It has made my time here meaningful and I feel like my tuition dollars were worth it. I feel I am graduating with greater knowledge about social justice and how to work toward the well-being of others than many of my peers”.
ASSESSMENT PLAN

The Social Work program systematically assesses both explicit and implicit curriculum annually through multiple measures to ensure continuous review for program improvement. The measures employ direct and indirect methods yielding quantitative and qualitative data.

Each faculty member is responsible for coordinating an assessment measure of program’s assessment plan. The assessment data is compiled by the program director within the Assessment Report table (contained in this report). Social Work faculty then analyze and discuss data, and identify areas and actions for program improvement during the annual fall retreat, this year on September 16, 2013. Proposed actions are based on faculty agreement. The program director summarizes and writes final Assessment Report. The annual Assessment Report is disseminated to the program’s Community Advisory Committee, Practicum Advisory Board, the College and University Assessment coordinators, and various College and University administrators each fall. It is also available on the program’s website. All individual summary reports of collected data by measure are available upon request.

EXPLICIT CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT METHODS

The program’s assessment plan employs four measures used to evaluate the 10 program competencies. In addition, a senior focus group was held in June 2013, discussing overall curriculum coherence, program strengths and areas of growth, and other implicit programmatic activities (i.e., advising, accessibility, attentiveness to diversity within program and university).

EXPLICIT CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT MEASURES

1. **Attainment of individual course learning objectives** as rated by students within university course evaluation. An average of each individual course objective attainment is calculated. Course objectives are linked to program competency outcomes. Means of achievement are then calculated for each program outcome. Students rate attainment on a likert scale of 1-5 (1=Not at all, 3 partially, 5 fully). Benchmark is mean of 4.2/5.

2. **Final Field Performance Evaluation of students as rated by MSW Field Instructor** on each practice behavior. A likert scale of 1-5 (1= Unsatisfactory, 3 = Satisfactory, 5 = Excellent) is used. Practice behavior ratings are averaged to gain a rating on the competency. Benchmark is 90% of all students will receive a rating of 3.0 or above on each competency.

3. **Final Field Performance Evaluation self-rating by students** on each practice behavior. A likert scale of 1-5 (1= Unsatisfactory, 3 = Satisfactory, 5 = Excellent) is used. Practice behavior ratings are averaged to gain a rating on the competency. Benchmark is 90% of all students will receive a rating of 3.0 or above on each competency.

4. **Capstone paper** is an embedded assignment in program’s senior synthesis course, SOCW 490 Research III: Capstone. As rated by faculty, 90% of students’ Capstone papers are at or above 74% of rubric total. University assessment “aspirational” standard is percentage of students at or above 90% of rubric total and “minimally meets or fails to meet” standard is defined as at or below 30% of rubric total.
IMPLICIT CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT METHODS

The Social Work program monitors and evaluates how we deliver and administer our educational program, termed the implicit curriculum. The implicit curriculum as conceived by CSWE and explicated by Holloway (2009) “suggests that student learning outcomes are not only affected by the formal course instruction but also the policies and procedures which govern program conduct and guide social interaction within the educational setting.” It is the larger context or climate in which our students learn.

EXPLICIT CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT MEASURE

Senior Exit Survey: During spring quarter of their senior year, students are asked to complete a 21 item questionnaire using Survey Monkey. Evaluation questions contain rating scales (5 point Likert scale: 1=strongly disagree, 3=neutral, 5=strongly agree) as well as open ended comment sections. Elements contained in the Senior Exit Survey are thought to potentially impact or have implications for educational outcomes. The elements are:

- Commitment to diversity
- Advising
- Participation in service (including academic service learning)
- Capacity and capabilities for leadership
- Resource and supports utilization
- Identification of program strengths, weaknesses, and areas of needed improvement

SUPPLEMENTAL ASSESSMENT MEASURES

There are several supplemental measures utilized by the Social Work program including:

- Senior Focus group,
- College Course Evaluations
- Multiple Field Practicum administration rating tools.

These additional measures are drawn upon when analyzing curriculum competencies.

Field Education Annual Report

The Field Education component of the curriculum, as led by the Field Director assesses its own functioning including suitability of sites, field practicum instructors’ competencies, quality of liaison services, and quality of offered trainings each year. Students evaluate the quality of their field site, practicum instructor, and field liaison. Agency-based Practicum Instructors are asked to evaluate the overall quality of the program and its field liaison. Field Liaisons are asked to evaluate the quality of the agencies’ experience and Practicum Instructors. Data findings from the evaluations are analyzed and used to improve the field education component. A summary of findings is presented to faculty and the Practicum Advisory Board each fall and contained in the Field Education Annual Report.
EXPlicit CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT FINDINGS: AFFIRMING PROGRAM

Overall, the program is pleased with the outcomes of the program annual assessment. The program soundly met established benchmarks for the following program competencies:

**Competency 1: Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.**
Practicum Instructors rated all of our students satisfactory or above, with 90% receiving “good” or above. Overall students felt very prepared for professional practice citing their practice course sequence, field seminar, and practicum supervision. Courses mentioned in addition to Capstone all use case studies, role plays, and peer consultation models as teaching strategies.

**Competency 4: Engage diversity and difference in practice.**
There is particularly strong attainment of this competency on all measures. Attainment of course objectives as rated by students on diversity and difference had a mean of 4.39/5. Practicum Instructors rated 95% of our students “good” or above with 68% receiving “excellent”. Within the focus group, student responses mentioned most courses in the curriculum, which is affirming in that all courses have required content and outcomes on diversity in addition to the required Race and Ethnicity course. In addition, practice experiences with diverse populations within service learning, community-based projects, and field practicum were noted.

**Competency 5: Advance human rights and social and economic justice**
Students and their Practicum Instructors report strong attainment of this competency respectively, 80% and 95% rated “good” or above. Students particularly note their core classes and the Race and Ethnicity course as places in which inequality, oppression, and social and economic justice education occurred. The program has continually benefited from a strong mission-fit with Seattle University’s focus on social justice and hence its co-curricular programming.

Of note, the program’s newest faculty member joining in the fall 2013, Prof. Ameila Derr has scholarly research and expertise in the infusion of social justice content in social work curriculum. To that end, program faculty, led by Derr will systematically examine the current curriculum content on human rights and social and economic justice to ensure inclusion of most recent theories, research, and best possible teaching practice.

**Competency 8: Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and social work services.**
The program has historically remained very strong in policy for social justice advocacy. Attainment of course objectives rated at 4.66/5 and Practicum Instructor rating 82% of seniors’ macro practice as “good” or above. Seniors noted their annual participation on NASW Lobby Day in Olympia which is organized by the Social Work Club as one of the contributors to their preparation. However, while all benchmarks were attained, within the focus group students did mention desired improvements in their policy advocacy preparation and in the macro practice course. A new full-time adjunct faculty member, Dr. Morna McEachern with extensive policy practice experience will be reviewing the primary course content and learning assignments and making recommendations to faculty. During the faculty retreat it was decided that SOCW 304 Contemporary Social Policy and Services will be re-titled, Policy Advocacy for Social Change.
**Competency 9: Respond to contexts that shape practice**
The intention of this competency is to prompt students to remain current with the many contexts that shape and inform service delivery and practice resulting in the improvement of the quality and relevancy of services. It is our intention to support and provide our students with opportunities for leadership formation and hence the development of informed self agency in the program, college, university, community and ultimately in the field of social work.

All three of the benchmarks were met for this competency, with particular strength noted in the field by their Practicum Instructors with 95% receiving a rating of “good” or above. In addition, within the Senior Survey, 88% of seniors stated that they demonstrated leadership capacity and capabilities to improve human well being at their field practicum site. Notably, seniors are additionally providing leadership in various capacities on campus in their communities including:

- 53% campus club,
- 47% Community Involvement
- 18% Seattle University Youth Initiative
- 12% Residence Life
- 12% New Student Orientation
- 12% Student Governance

**Program Strengths**
Explicit and implicit curriculum strengths as noted in the Senior Exit Survey and Senior Focus Group include:

- Majority of respondents noted the quality of the Social Work faculty, specifically
  - “personable and accessible…who are committed to excellence in academia and student development”,
  - their “tireless” engagement, support, and mentoring of students through email, phone calls, office hours),
  - excellent lecture/ teaching style
- Curriculum students highlighted
  - “…students are very well educated to engage n ethically guided practice
  - “Curriculum (books, lecture content, etc.) that focuses on non-dominant perspectives and paradigms; deep exploration of issues that have the potential to divide (race, politics, class, etc.)…”
  - Research Methods and Capstone sequence
- Cohort size and structure
- Focus on values and ethics that guide practice:
  - HBSE course - values paper assignment
  - Focus that demands honest self reflection
  - Field Practicum and seminar- journals, case studies, ethical field dilemmas
- Preparation for generalist practice:
  - Service learning courses with sites “relevant to the mission of the program and profession”.
  - Diverse practicum placement settings
  - Practice classes
- Social Work program events
IMPLICIT CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT FINDINGS: AFFIRMING PROGRAM

Diversity
Students for the most part felt their classes were places that they could raise and discuss issues about diversity and difference. They saw overwhelmingly a commitment to diversity in the curriculum and in selection of field settings. Students were treated respectfully by faculty, staff, and their fellow students.
- 89% of students felt social work classes encouraged discussions about diversity and difference
- 79% of students felt free to raise issues about diversity that were important to them in their social work course
- Program’s demonstration to a commitment to diversity, as rated by students, in its
  - Curriculum - 94% students agree or strongly agree
  - Selection of field settings and their clientele – 89% of students agree or strongly agree
- Are treated with respect in SU’s Social Work program by:
  - Faculty – 94% students agree or strongly agree
  - Administration and staff – 88% students agree or strongly agree
  - Fellow classmates – 83% students agree or strongly agree; 11% neutral
- Comment, “Coming from a minority group, I can tell one of the few positive experiences I have had as feeling welcome in a place is at Seattle University”

Advising
In general students received timely and accurate advising. In the comment section of the survey, there were not consistent responses to collectively summarize of the few who did not have strong experiences.
- 83% of students were able to access timely advising in the Social Work program and / or the College’s Advising Center
- 79% received accurate and helpful advising within the Social Work program and / or the College’s Advising Center.

Service
Students overwhelmingly continue to participate in service related activities, excluding their field practicum while at Seattle University, which faculty and students see as excellent preparation for the field and provide increased opportunities for learning.
- 100% of our students participated in service (i.e., academic service learning, international service, or volunteerism) including the following types of service:
  - 100% Academic Service Learning in Social Work class
  - 77% Volunteer
  - 65% Service learning in other classes
  - 47% Social Work club
  - 47% NASW Lobby Day
  - 29% SU Youth Initiative
  - 17% in international service,
  - Examples Service sites included: Campus Ministry – Belize, Catholic Community Services, Child Haven, Children’s Literacy Project, First Place, King Co Coalition on Homelessness, Providence Hospitality House, Real Change, and Triangle Club.
Leadership
Students demonstrated leadership capacities and capabilities to improve human well-being in a variety of on campus and off campus settings, including:

- 88% while in their field practicum
- 53% in a campus club
- 47% in other community settings
- 18% in SUYI,
- 12% in each resident life, New Student Orientation, and Student Governance

Utilization of Resources & Supports
Over three quarters of social work students used faculty for references and receive financial aid while in school. Half of our students used the Career center, though all receive one workshops – resume writing within seminar and are invited to a Professional Development night which has alumni and agency directors. At least half of our students use the Writing Center, up by 10% from last year, which is a desired outcome.

- 78% used faculty for a written reference or recommendation
- 78% received financial aid and 61% scholarships
- 53% used the Career Center
- 50% Writing Center
- 38% Collegiums
- 17% Disability Services

Graduate School
In the graduating senior class, 28% immediately applied and were accepted to graduate Social Work schools (i.e., University of Washington, Washburn, Loyola University of Chicago, and University of Denver. Of the remaining students, 87% said they plan to attend graduate school in the future.

EXPLICIT CURRICULUM SUMMARY FINDINGS: PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

The program did not meet or partially met benchmarks for the following program outcomes and after discussion propose the following improvements:

Competency 2: Apply social work ethical principles to guide social work practice.
The program met benchmarks in 2 of 3 measures; the two met were in Field Practicum. It seems upon analysis the linked course value & ethic learning objectives in three courses were significantly below the benchmark. Within the Senior Focus Group, students noted strong preparation mentioning HBSE values paper, SOCW 310 Practice I case studies, Field seminar and Practicum. Therefore, it would appear that students are able to demonstrate application of social work values and ethics in the field. However, the teaching of values and ethics is uneven throughout the curriculum.

Faculty teaching Human Development, Data Analysis, and macro practice will review, identify, and if indicated strengthen content and assignments that address this area. Other courses will maintain current strategies teaching social work professional values and ethics for practice throughout curriculum.
Competency 3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
This competency was met benchmarks in 3 of 4 measures. The benchmark for Capstone paper was not met with 79% exceeding 74% of rubric total short of the 90% goal. This attainment does though represent an improvement from last in which 67% of papers met benchmark. In addition, AY 12-13, Capstone paper writing, specifically “overall document quality” did not meet the benchmark. Academic writing as measured by our rigorous Capstone paper continues to be a challenge for our students. One bright spot was that half of our students utilized the Writing Center resource as a support.

Faculty will sustain efforts started in the “Writing Across the Curriculum” initiative, which contains scaffold assignments across the curriculum, incorporating the submittal of multiple drafts, peer review, use of Writing Center, and library in-service. Given Social Work has two new faculty members, time in faculty meetings will be devoted to discussion of preceding scaffold assignments including: Library / Scholarly Data bases Orientation and annotated bibliography in Introduction to Social Work (sophomore year); policy analysis paper in Contemporary Policy (winter of junior year); literature review in Human Development (spring of junior year); and literature review as part of a group proposal in Group Practice (fall of senior year).

Competency 6: Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
The program met benchmark in 3 of 4 measures. Upon further analysis of individual rubric sections within the Capstone paper, 63.2% of students attained a “8” or above in the Introduction and & Literature review; 84% in Methods; and 68.4% in Results sections. Within the rating of course learning objectives Research Methods and Capstone courses were well above the benchmark with Data Analysis significantly below. Within the Senior Focus, students reported feeling prepared and cited literature review assignments, and Data Analysis and Research Methods courses. Mention was made of need for increased time in Research Methods which was 3 credits.

This analysis indicates students are generally able to utilize research to inform practice and practice-informed research. Constructing a Capstone paper that encompasses a literature review and evaluation of their practice still remains a significant challenge for 26% of our seniors in AY 12-13. Data Analysis is also very challenging, though most students utilize a single subject design with basic statistics or qualitative method, therefore is not thought to be at the root of this difficult. In the coming academic year, both Research Methods and Data Analysis will increase from 3 to 5 credits allowing for increased contact time with content. In addition, faculty will continue to emphasize the use and application of research throughout the curriculum is key assignments at the 200, 300, and 400 levels.

Competency 7: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
The program met benchmark in 3 of 4 measures, again with the Capstone paper not meeting the benchmark connected to this competency. Upon further analysis of individual rubric sections of Capstone paper, 74% of papers received “8” or above in the subsection on Theoretical Frameworks.

Students are asked to identify theoretical frameworks that informed their Capstone project, which proved to be difficult for 26% of the students. Faculty teaching HBSE and Human Development will continue to make explicit central theories and within practice courses and field seminar highlight theory application. Also, in AY 13-14, Human Development will increase from 3 to 5 credits implementing a prior year program improvement. In addition, the Human Development course will incorporate biology content at each developmental stage, which addresses the EPAS requirement and thereby eliminates the
need for Introduction to Biology as a prerequisite CORE course. Within practice courses, when describing interventions tracing back to the informing theories will also be more explicit.

**Competency 10.1 -10.4: Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities**
The program met benchmark in 2 of 4 measures; those met measures were in the Field Practicum. Upon further analysis of individual rubric sections in Capstone paper, 90% of papers received “8” or above in the Assessment, Goals, Objectives, and Intervention section. Within the linked course learning objectives which also was a measure that did not met the benchmark, SOCW 411 Practice III had a total of four objectives with a range of 2.63-3.12, and significantly skewing the otherwise attained learning objectives.

Students excelled in the field demonstrating their ability to use generalist practice skills as rated by themselves and practicum instructors. The new faculty member teaching the macro practice course will examine and restructure course as needed and institute mid-quarter reviews. Overall, the program efforts are viewed as affirmed in teaching the practice of planned change as the micro and mezzo practice courses, and field practicum are often cited as program strengths, with noted strategic focus for improvement.

**IMPLICIT CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT FINDINGS: PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT**

**Diversity**
Gleaning from the Senior Exit Survey a little over half of students thought the program displayed a commitment to diversity through its hiring of faculty and membership of the cohort. Students noted the lack of gender diversity in faculty.

- Program’s demonstration to a commitment to diversity, as rated by students, in its
  - Faculty - 56% students agree or strongly agree
  - Student Cohort - 61% students agree or strongly agree
  - Co-curricular activities – 47% students agree or strongly agree

While the faculty search conducted in AY 12-13, recruited and sought a diverse hiring pool of candidates and resulting finalists, our top candidate and eventual hire did not contribute to racial and gender diversity of the faculty. However, her primary area of scholarship (i.e., Support Systems for Immigrant and Refugee Communities), teaching expertise (oppression, diverse populations, justice, and intergroup dialog) and practice experience with immigrant and refugee communities will contribute greatly to our curriculum. The program will continue efforts to enhance faculty diversity through adjunct hires (currently 4 men hold appointments), guest lectures, and speakers.

**Program Improvements**
In addition to above improvements, students were asked in the Senior Exit Survey and Senior Focus Group for areas where the program could improve. There were several single comments that did not seem to have larger consensus with exception of identifying professor / course content “fit” in Data Analysis having more options for field placements.