

### Institutional Effectiveness Plan 2013-2014 Institutional Effectiveness Report 2012-2013 Social Work: MSW Program

#### I. Social Work-MSW Program

#### II. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Graduate College of Social Work is to educate professionals for social work practice, research, and leadership. We advocate for innovative, collaborative, inclusive, and humane policies and solutions that promote social, economic, and political justice. Our College generates new knowledge through critical thinking that links rigorous scientific inquiry, ethical social work practice, and community engagement.

#### III. PROGRAM GOALS

##### **GOALS 1 & 2**

1. MSW graduates will demonstrate a sound base of knowledge and skills for ethical, and advanced professional practice.
2. MSW graduates will demonstrate critical thinking and understanding of the relationships among social, economic and political justice, and the impact of racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, ethnocentrism, and classism on individuals, groups, social policies, and institutions.

##### **How do you measure this goal?**

1. First Time Pass Rates: All of our students take the State of Texas licensure Exam for MSW graduates. This is a measure of foundational knowledge and skills required for professional practice. It provides important First Time Pass rate data.
2. Field Practicum Evaluations: All of our students must participate in field practicum experiences. Their performance in field activities is rated using the following 12-item, five-point Likert-like scale assessing: Professional Identity, Values and Ethics, Critical Thinking, Diversity, Human Rights and Social Justice, Research, HBSE/Theory, Social Policy, Professional Context, Practice, and Professional Behavior. Students are rated by their practicum instructors on each of the 12 domains using a 5-point Likert-like scale where 5 = Advanced Competency, 4= Competency, 3= Emerging Competency, 2= Insufficient Progress; and 1 = Unacceptable Progress. Students must score a 3 or above to be considered passing. We will analyze the total pass rate across all scales for current students in field practicum to produce a pass/fail score.

### **What is the standard?**

1. First Time Pass Rates: The national First Time pass rate average was 84%. Our standard is to be at or above the national average for the First Time Pass Rate for all schools of social work graduates who take the licensure examination.
2. Field Practicum Evaluations: The standard for success in field education is that 98% of our students will successfully pass field practicum.

### **What were the actual results? (2012 - Most recent data available from testing service)**

1. First Time Pass Rates: In 12-13 on the State of Texas Licensing Exam, 84% (N size was not published) of GCSW graduates passed on their First Time.
2. Field Practicum Evaluations: In 12-13 on the Field Practicum ratings, 99.8% of GCSW students (N=599) passed field practicum with a combined passing score.

### **What was the process for analyzing results?**

Program administrators receive the scores for their students and review them. Field Practicum ratings are assigned by practicum instructors, reviewed by the students, and submitted to the program evaluators for review.

### **What do the results mean?**

1. First Time Pass Rates: In 12-13, the standard for meeting the national average for First Time Pass Rates was met.
2. Field Practicum Evaluations: In 12-13, the standard for Field Practicum ratings was met. Current students are learning and applying skills for ethical and advanced professional practice.

### **What needs to be improved?**

For 2011, the GCSW first time pass rate (79%) was lower than the national first time pass rate (83%). However, in 2012, the GCSW first time pass rate (84%) matched the national first time pass rate (84%). Although these data indicate that significant improvements were made compared to year 2011, there is room for improvement and surpassing the national average would be a logical next step toward improvement. We would like to see that the remaining 16% will pass in the future. However, currently, there is no mechanism that we can monitor these 16% as the data were kept confidential by the Licensing Board.

### **What is the plan for improvement?**

In 2011, we redesigned and restructured our foundation curriculum (first semester) to be more congruent with licensure content and “best practices” professional knowledge. In addition, we initiated a CE class (“Licensure Prep Course”) to help prepare our

graduates for successfully completing the licensing examination. This course was offered at no cost to all graduating MSW students in the fall of 2011 and the spring of 2012. We will continue to offer CE classes at no cost to all graduating MSW students in the fall of 2012 and the spring of 2013. In 2012, an Ad Hoc Committee (chaired by Professor Monit Cheung) was formed to develop a Licensing Prep Exam Center. This Center provides online practice questions for graduating students and alumni to have access to a set of exam questions in order to prepare the students and alumni for the licensing exam at their own pace. The "Licensure Prep Course" and "Test Prep Center" have produced promising results as reflected in the 2011 and 2012 data. We anticipate that our pass rates will continue to improve as a result of continuing these effective measures.

### **GOALS 3 & 4**

3. MSW graduates will demonstrate their understanding, skills, competency and commitment to the field of social work.

4. MSW graduates will contribute to the social work profession through knowledge-building and research activities aimed toward improving social work practice, policies, programs, services and community engagement.

### **How do you measure goals 3 & 4?**

1. Field Practicum Evaluations: All of our students must participate in a field practicum experiences. Their performance on field activities is rated on twelve scales: Professional Identity, Values and Ethics, Critical Thinking, Diversity, Human Rights and Social Justice, Research, HBSE/Theory, Social Policy, Professional Context, Practice, and Professional Behavior. Students are rated by their practicum instructors on each of the 12 domains using a 5-point Likert-like scale where 5 = Advanced Competency, 4= Competency, 3= Emerging Competency, 2= Insufficient Progress; and 1 = Unacceptable Progress. Students must score a 3 or above to be considered passing. We will calculate total field practicum pass rates and analyze student evaluations for all 12 items. We will also monitor and assess student progress by comparing Field I scores (first practicum assessment) to their Field IV scores (last practicum assessment).

2. GCSW Student Exit Survey: this instrument was developed and administered to the graduating classes in spring 2012 to help assess the quality of the program. Since then, each year, graduating students are asked to self-report their understanding of the social worker's role in affecting social change. A total of 118 students completed the survey in May 2013. Of these 118 students, 72% (N = 85) began in the fall of 2010, 20% (N = 23) began the program in the fall of 2009; 1.7% (N = 2) began in the fall of 2008, and 6.8% (N = 8) in a semester not specified. The survey is calibrated so that a score of 0= cannot do it at all; 50= moderately certain can do; and 100= very certain can do) for each item. Graduating students completing the survey are asked to self-rate their knowledge, skills, competency and commitment both at the start of the program and upon completion (pre/post evaluations).

### **What is the standard?**

1. Field Practicum Evaluations: We expect that 98% of our students be rated passing on their field practicum evaluations and that significant improvements occur between students' first field practicum and their final practicum.

2. GCSW Student Exit Survey: We expect that 85% of our students will report a mean score of at least 85 on all items from the "**GCSW Student Exit Survey**" after completing the program.

### **What were the actual results?**

1. Field Practicum Evaluations: In 12-13, 99% of MSW students (N=83) were rated as passing on the practicum evaluations. Furthermore, meaningful and statistically significant increases in the mean evaluation scores were detected between Field I and Field IV evaluations across all of the 12 items ( $P < 0.004$ ).

2. GCSW Student Exit Survey: In 12-13, the mean post-program student scores (N=118) exceeded 85 for three of the six items assessed (commitment to the social work profession, its value base, and code of ethics; Engage in critical thinking; Understand the social worker's role in affecting social change). The mean scores for the other 3 items were: 83.3 for "knowledge and skills for ethical, advanced professional practice"; 84.3 for "Understand the relationships among social, economic and political justice"; and 82.2 for "Contribute to the social work profession through knowledge-building and research activities". Meaningful and significant differences were also detected between pre-program and post-program scores.

### **What was the process for analyzing results?**

1. Field Practicum Evaluations: Field data assessing student competency across several domains are completed by Field Instructors who supervise student field placements at the end of each semester. Field data are entered into a centralized field data coordinated by the GCSW office of field practicums and later analyzed by the GCSW evaluation committee using descriptive statistics and paired sample T-tests.

2. GCSW Student Exit Survey: Students were administered a "GCSW Student Exit Survey" at graduation rehearsal in May 2012 to determine their self-reported academic achievement and satisfaction with the program at GCSW. Survey data were entered into an Excel database by the Dean's office. Data were sent to the GCSW Evaluation Committee for analyses and report development.

### **What do the results mean?**

1. Field Practicum Evaluations: In 12-13, the standards for passing the field practicum and student improvements across time points were met.

2. GCSW Student Exit Survey: In 12-13, the standard was not met. The standard of mean competency on the Exit survey was met in three of the six domains assessed and nearly met for the remaining three domains.

### **What needs to be improved?**

The significant improvements observed across time points using both an instructor rated evaluation tool and a student self-reported tool (i.e., from baseline, either Field I or beginning of the program, to last assessment, either Field IV or graduation) strongly suggest that our MSW program is effective in its mission of educating professionals for social work practice, research, and leadership. However, there is room for improvement related to some of the items. Specifically, the lowest rated domain from the Field data was “Research” and the lowest rated domain from the Exit Survey items was “Contribute to the social work profession through knowledge-building and research activities”.

#### **What is the plan for improvement?**

Faculty should meet to revisit current course content and consider how to strengthen both the explicit and implicit curriculum to further increase students’ knowledge, skills and competencies related to social work practice, research, and leadership. Special attention should be given to those areas rated the weakest by Field Instructors and graduating students. For instance, we plan to expand the Social Work Research Conference to incorporate a larger number of both MSW and doctoral students and the larger university community. Faculty and staff should also meet with students to discuss how best to promote activities, such as the alumni and career services, the use of Social Work Research Conference, the benefits of the study abroad trips, the activities organized by the Student Association; and the availability of the Work Study and GA opportunities at GCSW. Thus, we will continue to expand upon our implicit curriculum activities to further enhance student learning, skills, competencies and commitment to the values and profession of social work.

#### **IV. Please describe changes you have made to the program as a result of last year’s assessments?**

We continued to enhance strategies we developed such as the Licensing Prep Exam Center and the Licensure Prep Course to continue to improve our student pass rates. We also continued to institute longitudinal tracking to monitor and evaluate student development in field as they progress through the program.

#### **V. What significant accomplishments of this department or program should be noted?**

1. The GCSW has two official multidisciplinary research centers that are supported by NIH funds engaging students and faculty in research geared to contributing to the university’s Tier 1 goal: The Center for Drug and Social Policy Research (CDSPR), Dr. Patrick Bordnick, Director; and Child and Family Center for Innovative Research, Dr. Patrick Bordnick.
2. Dr. Sheara Williams was awarded a sub award from a HRSA grant; Hype 2.0, Helping Youth Prevent Engaging in Risky Behavior. This overall goal of this research is to develop and test prevention interventions to reduce risky behaviors among youth.

3. Dr. Luis Torres was awarded a sub award from Mathematica Policy Research; Parents and Children Together. The overall goal of this research is to evaluate programs developed for Hispanic/Latino Fathers.
4. Dr. Sarah Narendorf was awarded a grant through the new faculty research program at the University of Houston; Service Use Patterns and Preferences Among Young Adults Accessing Psychiatric Emergency Services. The overall goal of this research is to assess behavioral health service use patterns among youth who utilized psychiatric emergencies services. This study will serve as pilot data for a larger NIH grant proposal.
5. Dr. Sarah Narendorf was awarded a grant from the Hogg Foundation; Young Adults Accessing Psychiatric Services. The overall goal of this research is to understand the pathways youth use to access psychiatric services and their preferences.
6. Dr. Marissa Hansen was awarded a grant from UTHSC Houston; Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation Geriatric Studies for Junior Faculty.
7. Dr. Marissa Hansen was awarded a subcontract from Baylor College of Medicine; Primary Care Innovation Center. The overall goal of this research is to develop a Primary Care Innovation Health Center in Houston.
8. Dr. Monit Cheung was awarded a renewed training grant; Child Welfare Education Project (CWEP). The University of Houston, Graduate College of Social Work (GCSW) through its Child Welfare Education Project (CWEP) will assist Child Protective Services (CPS) of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to meet the Title IV-E training goals for FY 2013-2014 by faculty and curriculum development, student education, and partnership activities. Total amount awarded from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014: \$1,014,000.
9. Dr. Isabel Torres was awarded a renewed grant; Grant Number: 5K01CA151785-05; Project Title: End-of-life treatment preferences of Latino Medicare beneficiaries with cancer. Budget Period: 09/01/2013 – 08/31/2014; Amount: \$150,070.
10. Hired three new tenure earning faculty to teach and conduct research in the centers.
11. Graduated our first 5 classes (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013) of MSW students under our new curriculum model.
12. Expanded the Core Research Facility, and Virtual Reality Clinical Research Laboratory.
13. Conducted three international study courses over the summer of 2013: Turkey, El Salvador and Cambodia.
14. Completed international field placement in Hong Kong over the summer of 2013.

15. A total of 23 grants were submitted in FY 2013.

Prepared by the GCSW Evaluation Committee on September 27, 2013  
(Patrick Leung, Chair; Isabel Torres and Patrick Bordnick)