

Assessment Plan for the BSW and MSW Programs

Introduction

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the national accrediting body for baccalaureate and master's degree programs, has moved to a competency-based education which emphasizes an outcome performance approach for the assessment of student achievement of curriculum objectives. These competencies consist of knowledge, values, and skills and it is expected that programs demonstrate the integration and application of these competencies. The CSWE has mandated ten (10) core competencies and a programs can elaborate or add additional competencies consistent with their mission and goals. These core competencies are as follows:

1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly
2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice
3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments
4. Engage diversity and difference in practice
5. Advance human rights and social justice
6. Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research
7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment
8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services
9. Respond to and shape an ever-changing professional context
10. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

The School of Social Work has a strategic plan which consists of a mission and goals which are used to inform specific curriculum competencies for the graduate and undergraduate programs. These core competencies are delineated within the assessment plan.

Overview of the Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programs

The mission of the School of Social Work is to further social and economic justice, achieve progressive social change, and uphold the human dignity and personal freedom. To this end, our School strives to provide leadership: 1) in graduate,

undergraduate, and continuing education, 2) in applied research, and 3) in academic and community service with support from public and private partnerships. Consistent with our mission the goals of the School of Social Work are:

1. enhance the School's academic distinction in teaching and scholarship
2. enhance the School's ability to deliver degree programs with integrity and sufficient resources
3. enhance the School's visibility and active involvement in the professional and social service community
4. enhance the cultural competence of all of those associated with the School of Social Work
5. enhance external funding from grants and outside donors to the School of Social Work

The curriculum goals of the BSW program and the MSW program flow from this mission and are consistent with the profession's purpose, are grounded in the core professional values, and take into account the programs context. In this context the goals of the baccalaureate social work program is as follows:

1. provide premier undergraduate social work education that embodies the profession's historical philosophy and the ideals of equality, personal freedom, and social justice
2. embody in the curriculum respect and concern for the needs of diverse cultural groups and the oppressed
3. graduate highly qualified social work practitioners for beginning level generalist practice with and on behalf of clients
4. prepare students for graduate school
5. contribute to citizen awareness of social welfare
6. foster research and knowledge development and dissemination
7. develop and advance public and private partnerships with practice, policy, research, and educational institutions and agencies
8. revitalize the program by making changes in response to information gained through the program's avenues of renewal

9. engage in social and organizational change

The goals of the master's degree program are as follows:

1. help students to identify with the history of the profession and its early commitment to social justice, as well as to provide experience with developing theory and practice in the promotion of justice
2. ensure that students build upon a breadth of foundation theory with depth in advanced theory to inform advanced social work practice
3. promote students' knowledge and skills for working with various sizes and types of client systems
4. promote students' knowledge and skills for working with the strengths of all levels of client systems such as individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, and communities
5. challenge students to see the value conflicts inherent in a society that continues to oppress vulnerable populations
6. promote students' abilities to affect the well being of all levels of client systems within each system's social environment
7. enable students to integrate the values of Illinois State with those of the profession of social work--especially in valuing the dignity of all people
8. make students aware of their responsibility to continue their professional growth and development upon graduation
9. facilitate students' engagement in social and organizational change

Assessment Plan

The explicit curriculum consists of the courses and the curriculum structure designed to achieve the program's competencies. The explicit curriculum includes the foundation offered at the baccalaureate and master's levels and the advanced offered at the master's level. The BSW curriculum prepares its graduates for generalist practice through mastery of the core competencies and the MSW curriculum prepares its graduates for advanced practice through mastery of the core competencies augmented by the knowledge and skills of specific concentrations. The competencies delineated by the School of Social Work's baccalaureate and master's programs are as follows:

1. apply critical thinking within the context of professional social work practice
2. function within a continuously changing organizational, community, and societal context
3. practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession
4. practice with respect for social and cultural differences and without discrimination
5. advance human rights and social justice
6. use knowledge of the bio-psycho-social variables to understand human behavior and the social environment
7. use theoretical frameworks to understand interactions among individuals and between individuals and social systems
8. understand the history of social work profession and its current structures and issues
9. analyze the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies
10. use skills to influence the formulation of social welfare policy and to bring about organizational change
11. function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems
12. evaluate research studies for their contribution to social work practice
13. assess how practice wisdom contributes to the development of research investigations
14. apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with systems of all sizes

Advanced Competencies

15. apply advanced knowledge and skills in the practice of professional social work practice
16. engage in the discovery, integration, application, dissemination, and evaluation of knowledge informing social work practice
17. conduct self-evaluations of their practices for the purpose of improving their practice

The assessment of the competencies of the foundation and the advanced curricula in the School of Social Work are as follows:

- The use of rubrics to assess the attainment of course objectives for respective courses in the curriculum
- Student self-reports of the attainment of course objectives
- Field Instructors assessment of student performance in the field agency
- Student Exit Survey of attainment of respective program competencies
- Alumni Survey of students self-report on the competencies

Course objectives related to respective core competencies have been developed for each course and rubrics for the assessment of student performance on course objectives have been developed for each assignment related to the course objectives. Student self-reports of their attainment of each course objective is given at the completion of each course. These data are summarized and aggregated for their consistency with the faculty's determination of student performance. Field Instructors are assessing students for their attainment of skills and values related to practice of these skills and students assess themselves at the completion of the program for their attainment of respective program competencies. The alumni survey is another measure of how well students believe they have been prepared for the program competencies a few years after graduation.