



Department/Program Name: School of Social Work

**Abstract:** Assessment activities for the 1997-98 academic year took place in three of the School's four degree programs; the undergraduate B.A./B.S. Social Work major and the two graduate degree programs: the Master's of Science in Social Work (M.S.S.W.) program and the Ph.D. program in Social Welfare. The School's professional degree programs (B.A./B.S. Social Work, M.S.S.W.) continued gathering data utilizing assessment instruments described in previous reports to the College. The Ph.D. program began implementation of a newly revised curriculum design based on two-year assessment of the previous programs strengths and weaknesses. In 1997 the professional programs completed a successful external accreditation review.

In 1998 national test data on our Wisconsin graduates will become available for the first time. The School will add this Direct Indicator to its assessment inventory for its undergraduate Social Work major and its graduate program in Social Work.

<u>Assessment Tools Used:</u>	<i>Direct Indicators</i>	
	Undergraduate Major	Graduate Program
National Exams <sup>1</sup>	1998-99	1998-99
Pre and Post Testing <sup>2</sup>	2000-01	2000-01
	<i>Indirect Indicators<sup>3</sup></i>	
	Undergraduate Major	Graduate Program
Student Surveys	1993 to present	1993 to present
Exit Interviews	1997 to present	1997 to present
Alumni Surveys	1996 to present	1996 to present
External Reviews	1974 to present	1952 to present
Other: Faculty-Student Dialogue	1997-98	1997-98

<sup>1</sup> National Social Work license examinations results have recently become available for Wisconsin for purchase. The data are for graduates of the Undergraduate and Graduate degree programs in Social Work. We intend to add summative measure to our assessment repertoire.

<sup>2</sup> The School's master plan for systematic program evaluation includes a pre-post test experimental design. It includes testing at T<sub>1</sub>=entry, T<sub>2</sub>=graduation, and T<sub>3</sub>=two-five years after graduation. Our plan calls for implementation by the year 2001.

<sup>3</sup> Indicators limited to the undergraduate and graduate professional degree programs.

Narrative: In 1988 the School began development of a model for systematic program evaluation of its professional degree programs (the undergraduate B.A./B.S. Social Work major and the Master's of Science in Social Work [M.S.S.W.] program). In 1997, these efforts expanded to include the Ph.D. program in Social Welfare. All programs' assessment data is fed back to influence program/school administrative processes, committees and faculty as a whole for policy making and continuous program improvement.

Program Goals: The Professional Degree programs (Social Work major and M.S.S.W.) have a well defined set of educational goals including overall program goals and objectives as well as, goals and objectives for each curriculum sequence within the programs. These are detailed in School curriculum policy documents. The programs' educational goals are in consonance with 15 master's programs outcomes and 13 undergraduate program outcomes specified by the Council on Social Work education, our external accrediting body.

In May of 1997 faculty approved a major revision of the Ph.D. program in Social Welfare. A central component of the curriculum reform was the articulation and adoption of program educational goals and objectives. These had not been critically evaluated for many years. Ph.D. faculty and students played a major role in the revised program's goal development. A Ph.D. program policy document detailing the program's goals as adopted by faculty is available for review.

1997 Assessment Activities: The major focus for assessment this past year was in the **Professional Degree programs**; the undergraduate social work major and the M.S.S.W. program. The two programs successfully underwent **external review** by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Commission on Accreditation (external review takes place every eight years). In November, we were notified that the two programs were reaccredited for another eight-year cycle. Like the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges, CSWE is a member of CORPA, it emphasizes outcomes evaluation in its accreditation standards. Our programs' reaccreditation suggests we meet or exceed CORPA standards in this area.

In our presentation to our five CSWE site evaluators, and in our accreditation self-study documents, we presented our model for our Professional Programs evaluation of outcomes. Since 1993 we have implemented a variety of outcome measures which will ultimately become core components of a yearly program outcome study. The framework for the evaluation study called "Model for Outcome Evaluation Study" includes both formative and summative components which incorporate **indirect indicators** such as student and alumni surveys.

Specifically, we annually administer an end-of-the-year **student survey** to ascertain acquisition of knowledge, skills, and experiences in the program; we continue, as part of a national consortia of Social Work programs, to administer a standardized **alumni post/graduate job status survey**. Data generated provides information on alumni job status, a profile of the job market and job characteristics of our recent graduates. In addition to these ongoing activities we have also piloted a measure to ascertain student satisfaction with their program and a measure to evaluate student performance in the field and integrative seminar portion of the professional degree programs. Finally, our Academic Advisor has begun to conduct **exit interviews** with

graduating students.

Future assessment activities for the Professional Programs include refinement of survey instruments so that by the year 2001 we will be positioned to administer the **pre-post test** evaluation design. In the short term, we have recently learned that we can now obtain **national test** result data relative to passage of the national social work exam for state licensure and certification for social work practice. Social Work Practice Examinations were not required in Wisconsin until May 1, 1995. Test result data will be an important component of our summative outcome measures in our outcome study model.

At the Doctoral level, the culmination of a two-year major program evaluation, the faculty revised the **Ph.D. in Social Welfare** curriculum (May, 1997). The newly revised program is in the midst of the first year of implementation. By Spring 1999, an evaluation is to be presented to faculty before program revisions are ratified as permanent changes. The Ph.D. Committee is currently designing its evaluation measures based upon the new program educational goals and objectives. The evaluation design and initial assessment activities will be presented in next year's Assessment Report.

Finally, a new **School-wide dialogue group** representing all the school's constituencies (faculty, staff, students, community practitioners) began in Spring 1998. The purpose of the dialogue is to begin to revisit the School's mission and to set the stage for a major program and curricular reform effort in 1999.

Feedback Loop: The School has had a number of feedback mechanisms across program levels in place for many years. At the administrative level there is the Administrative Implementation Committee (AIC). Comprised of School administrators, AIC is responsible for receipt and dissemination of program outcome data and for implementation policy changes/program revisions adopted by faculty as derived from program evaluation assessments.

At the programmatic level, data is fed back to Curriculum Committee for the professional programs and to the Ph.D. Committee for the doctoral program. However, when appropriate, special committees and task groups are called upon to resolve a question or design a programmatic reform. The professional programs' Curriculum Committee is a particularly important component of ongoing evaluation of school programs. The Committee is comprised of representatives of all the School's constituencies: faculty, students, academic staff and community social workers. The Committee regularly assesses, monitors and evaluates curriculum directed toward evaluation, feedback and design change. That is, faculty delegate to this and other Committees the expectation that they will initiate those actions necessary to institute program change/adaptation based upon the program evaluation data generated.

For example, student survey results regarding knowledge of research and research skills at graduation provided data for the Curriculum Committee to make recommendations to the faculty for revisions in our professional program's research sequence. The Curriculum Committee led the faculty in an examination of one of our formative evaluation measures: grades and grading patterns; and a major discussion of diversity content across the curriculum.

Faculty Commitment to Assessment: As we indicated, outcome evaluation is a major part of our programs' accreditation requirements. We have had and continue to have a strong interest in and commitment to assessment activities because it is in our best interest to be an accredited school of social work. Thus, we perhaps are ahead of other departments in some ways in this area. Regardless, faculty are responsive to program inputs such as those generated through assessment activities is clear and documented in our faculty and curriculum minutes and program documents. Finally, the value of assessment activities is consistent with social work goals and values. We believe we must model what we teach.