School of Social Work:
L&S Assessment Plan Update Project

The School of Social Work employs multiple mechanisms to measure program outcomes. These range from individual course evaluations to student self-assessment surveys at program entry and exit to faculty assessment of student progress. In 2004-05 the School's M.S.S.W. program and B.A./B.S. major in Social Work successfully passed its Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) re-accreditation review. In preparation for this review, program assessment activities focused on these two programs.

INTRODUCTION

The School offers four academic programs: the Undergraduate Major in Social Work; Undergraduate Major in Social Welfare; Masters of Science in Social Work; and Ph.D. in Social Welfare. The undergraduate B.A./B.S. and masters degrees in social work are professional degrees accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

Mission, Goals, Objectives

The mission of the UW-Madison School of Social Work is to enhance human well-being and promote social and economic justice for people who are disadvantaged to achieve an equitable, healthy, and productive society. The school aims to:

• Create, advance, strengthen, and integrate interdisciplinary knowledge for students and the profession through research, scholarship, teaching and practice.

• Educate students to become highly skilled, culturally competent and ethical practitioners who will provide effective leadership for the profession of social work within the State of Wisconsin and nationally.

• Promote change at levels ranging from the individual to national policy, including empowering communities and populations that are disadvantaged and developing humane service delivery systems.

• Create and disseminate knowledge regarding the prevention and amelioration of social problems.

Goals

A. Professional Degree Programs: Three goals are derived from our mission for our two professional programs (undergraduate major in Social Work and Masters in Social Work). They are:

1. Students will train in a professional foundation content for entry-level practice that builds upon a liberal arts base, reinforces the mission and the educational goals of the School of

Social Work, and fosters the values, ethics, and purposes of the profession;

2. Students will acquire advanced practice knowledge, skills and values to be autonomous social work practitioners prepared to confront the realities of a changing social and human services environment and to be leaders in the development of new approaches for practice.

3. Students will become skilled at a generalist social work framework for practice; foster a commitment to social and economic justice; and be prepared with the requisite knowledge, skills and values for culturally competent practice.

B. Ph.D. Program: The goal of our doctoral program in social welfare is to facilitate our students' development as scholars and educators who will advance knowledge about human development, social welfare, and intervention strategies from a behavioral and social science perspective to improve the quality of life of individuals and families.

C. Undergraduate Social Welfare Major: Goals for this major are to:

1. Students will learn to apply a liberal arts education grounded in the social and behavioral sciences to human problems;

2. Students will learn to seek out information and to think critically about their world as informed citizens who are aware of human services or social welfare problems and policies;

3. Students will learn to view social welfare in its broad social, economic and political contexts.

Objectives

Each program operates under sets of objectives that flow from the program's goals. In the case of our professional degree programs, there are extensive formalized sets of objectives. Social Work accreditation standards in part, drive their construction. One set objectives is referred to as the "professional foundation". Foundation objectives are concerned with the undergraduate social work major and the first year of our masters program. A second set of objectives is referred to as Advanced Practice Concentration Objectives. Concentration objectives are concerned with the second year of our masters program.

As noted above, priorities for assessment activities have centered on our professional programs. A result of our emphases on re-accreditation activities is that our two Social Welfare programs do not have clearly defined sets of program objectives.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Our main mechanism to assess the extent to which we are meeting the objectives of our B.A./B.S. Social Work Major (Professional Foundation) and M.S.S.W. (Professional Foundation

and Concentration year) programs is an Outcome Study, which is in its fourth year of implementation. Some program objectives are also measured by student evaluations of courses. Additionally, our job placement survey and student pass rates of licensure exams provide a summary assessment of the extent to which we are meeting program objectives. We evaluate our PhD program through statistics on students' progress with coursework, preliminary exams, total time in the program, and course evaluations, as well as yearly progress reports on each student (completed by both the student and the faculty adviser). We are in the process of instituting a formal evaluation of our Social Welfare program which is currently evaluated solely via student course evaluations. All of these tools are designed to provide the data necessary for regular assessment and continuous improvement.

Assessment plan and procedures for program evaluation

<u>Outcome Study</u>

The Social Work Education Outcome Study is a longitudinal study of both undergraduate and graduate students that aims to provide insight about whether we are achieving general and specific program objectives. The Outcome Study includes students rating their knowledge and skills in the first months of each academic year. The same questions are then asked at the end of each academic year. This pre-post design enables us to examine three types of questions:

·   How do students rate the programs and concentrations as having fulfilled their missions (as defined by program objectives)?

·   Do students assess themselves as prepared to assume entry-level practice (B.A./B.S. Social Work Major) or advanced practice in their area of concentration (M.S.S.W.)? What are the areas in which students feel most or least prepared?

·   To what extent are students satisfied with their respective programs and fieldwork?

The Outcome Study baseline instruments were first administered at the start of the Fall 2001-02 academic year and have been administered since (although the actual items have changed over time). Response rates have been over 85% seven of the eight times we have administered the instruments. The design includes students[1] responding to a detailed survey at the beginning and end of the academic year, assessing their own knowledge and skills, extent to which their program has met its objectives, and satisfaction with the program and their fieldwork.[2] The

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[1]The exit survey is administered in the field seminar. Thus, it is administered to senior undergraduate students and both first- and second-year M.S.S.W. students. We believe that collecting data at the end of an academic year in which students are enrolled in the field means students responses should reflect knowledge and skills gained in both the classroom and the field experience.

Study participation is voluntary and the student's consent is obtained before their participation. In the consent students are informed that we guarantee confidentiality but not anonymity since we also obtain their permission to follow them along during their time in our program. We also ask for information that will allow us to find them after graduation as we may follow them in their social work careers. Only aggregated data are used in our reports.

[2]To assess the validity of self-ratings, we have compared all students' self-ratings with the ratings given

questions were designed to reflect whether the curriculum in both the B.A./B.S. Social Work Major and M.S.S.W., foundation (i.e., first year of the M.S.S.W. program and final year of the B.A./B.S. Social Work Major program) and concentration (i.e., second year of the M.S.S.W. program) years, are meeting their purposes. They were also designed to reflect different areas of concentrations (Child, Youth, and Family Welfare; Health, Aging, and Disability; and Mental Health and Substance Abuse), student competencies and practice roles, and program satisfaction. Instruments for students in professional foundation as well as in each concentration were developed.

A total of 136 items were developed for the project, organized into a set of 5 scales listed in Table 1. Two scales were designed to yield overall program level satisfaction data and include: Program Satisfaction (e.g., quality of advising, availability of courses, accessibility of faculty), and Fieldwork Satisfaction (e.g., support given to students by agency staff, variety of practice methods used). These scales were common to both the foundation and concentration year instruments. The Fieldwork Satisfaction measure was only administered at the end of the academic year. Two additional scales, Foundation Objectives and Concentration Objectives, focused on the extent to which each program's curriculum met its objectives across multiple dimensions. Finally, students in our Title IV-E Public Child Welfare Training Program were asked to complete an additional Child Welfare Task Scale. All questions included 5-point Likert responses. For example, in the Program Satisfaction Scales students were asked to indicate the level of their satisfaction about the program ranging from 1 (extremely dissatisfied) to 5 (extremely satisfied).

Table 1. Outcome Study 04-05 Scales

Scales (number of items)	Professional Foundation	Concentration
Program Satisfaction (10)	√	√
Fieldwork Satisfaction (16)	√	√
Foundation Objectives (36)	√	
Concentration Objectives (27)		√
Child Welfare Task Scale (47)		√ (IV-E Trainees Only)

We have been pleased with the reliability of the scales. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the 2004-2005 exit cohort are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Outcome Study: Exit 04-05 Summary of Scale Reliability

Scales	N. of items	N. of cases	Alpha
Foundation Objectives (Bachelor's)	36	26	.9397

them by the faculty who taught their integrative field seminar. The results of this procedure revealed that none of the correlations between a student's perception and the faculty field instructor's evaluation of that student were statistically significant. In exploring this further, several concerns arose about the utility of this approach. Faculty raters found the instrument difficult and lengthy to complete. Moreover, most field faculty had not observed each student in a substantial number of different practice situations, so they reported difficulty making an assessment of several detailed skills. As a result we are no longer using this measure. We are exploring other methods for assessing the validity of self-reports.

Foundation Objectives (Master's)	36	58	.9722
Concentration Objectives	27	84	.9553
Child Welfare Task Scale	47	9	.9842

The study has gone through several refinements. In the first years of implementation, the study included a large number of questions, assessing Professional programs outcomes at the entry and advanced levels. This instrument proved unwieldy. Also, the earlier versions of the instruments were too diffuse and not explicitly tied to program objectives, so our assessment of whether we were meeting objectives was sometimes based on indirect data. In contrast, the 2004-05 version of our Outcome Study is substantially shortened and specifically assesses outcomes on Foundation and Concentration Program Objectives. A final change involved eliminating concentration-specific questions (e.g., How well are you prepared to work with acute health care issues). These were replaced with questions that cut across concentrations (e.g., How well are you prepared to formulate and apply intervention strategies that address the cultural and special needs of diverse social work clientele at community and organizational levels?). This approach allows us to assess outcomes on the concentration requirements and to compare outcomes across concentrations. Thus, the 2004-05 instruments are more targeted, including 73 items at baseline. The collection of the 2005-2006 exit scores for the new instruments is not scheduled until late April 2006, so in this document we report 2004-2005 results.

Student Evaluation of Courses

A second mechanism for assessing the extent to which we are meeting program objectives is the student evaluation of courses. Every student is asked to evaluate each course and instructor at the end of the semester, using a standard form.[3] Many of these questions do not *directly* reflect a specific program objective (e.g., they assess instructor skill level or level of satisfaction with the course). But one of the questions on our revised form, implemented fall of 2003,[4] is the extent to which a course met the course objectives. Another question on the form asks the extent to which the course expanded knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. These two questions do provide useful information on whether we are meeting a program objective when program objectives are primarily implemented in a single course or sequence of courses.

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[3] To ensure confidentiality, School policy dictates that the students themselves distribute the Instructor and Course Evaluation Forms and return them to the social work office. Faculty and teaching assistants must leave the classroom when students are completing the forms. Students are assured that faculty and teaching assistants will only be given their evaluations, including students' open-ended comments, after they have submitted their final grades. The results of the evaluations and the summary sheets are routinely distributed several weeks after the end of each semester.

[4] Historically our student evaluations of faculty instruction have focused on an assessment of the *instructor's* skills and teaching abilities, rather than whether *course* objectives were being met. In 2003, the curriculum committee recommended two changes: (a) changing the teaching evaluation form to reflect separate assessments of the instructor and of the course content; and (b) including a new item on social and economic justice and revising our items on content related to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons; people of color; and women. After faculty discussion, instrument refinement, pre-testing, and additional revision, a revised Instructor and Course Evaluation Form was approved by the faculty in November, 2003 and distributed for all classroom courses for the fall 2003 semester.

Some of our courses are primarily focused on specific program objectives. For example, our Foundation Program Objectives in the content areas (e.g., SWAPS, HBSE, and Social Work Practice) all have clearly identified courses that primarily deliver the required curriculum content. Student evaluations provide less useful information related to program objectives when the required content is integrated across the curriculum. For example, many foundation courses provide required content on values and ethics.[5] In this document, we use student evaluations from the 2004-05 academic year, the period that matches the outcome data. We also use course evaluations to assess the quality of instruction.

Job Placement Survey

Each fall, the School of Social Work conducts a Job Market Placement Survey of those who graduated during the previous year. Our survey includes common questions also asked by other Schools of Social Work that participate in the Social Work Career Development Group survey.[6] The survey collects data on fields of practice, job functions, settings, credentials required for positions, sources of jobs, application process, and salary range. In addition, our School has added an item for graduate students asking if their positions are related to their area of concentration. We also adapt the survey for use with graduates of our undergraduate program.

Licensure

Whether or not graduates pass the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) national exams for state licensure is another indicator of program success.

Implementation of Plan and Evaluating the Program

Assessing Program Objectives

In this section, we first examine the 15 foundation objectives, presenting our method of measuring the extent to which they are being achieved. When there are multiple objectives related to the same construct (e.g., two professional foundation values and ethics objectives), we discuss them together. We then present measurement strategies and assessment results for each of the 10 concentration objectives.

In each case, we use results from the Outcome Study and, in selected cases, we also use results

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[5]Another limitation of this method is that all courses have multiple objectives. For example, Social Work 605 primarily provide a history and overview of the profession, but it also has objectives related to understanding oppression, becoming knowledgeable of at risk populations, obtaining knowledge of the values and ethics of the profession, etc. A low score on whether the course met its objectives could be because the information on any one of these sections was weak; with this assessment method, we would not be able to differentiate between competing hypotheses. For this reason, we do not use course evaluations in isolation, but in each case we use course evaluations together with the Outcome Study in our assessment of whether we are meeting program objectives.

[6] Carol Nesslein Doelling and Barbara Matz, *Social Work Career Development Group, Job Market Report On 2002 M.S.W. Graduates*, 2002.

from student evaluations. While we consider multiple factors in our assessment of whether we are achieving an objective, we have general benchmarks. We generally consider that we have done a very good job in meeting a program objective when student ratings of a course on two items, "Achieving the course objectives" and "Expanding your knowledge and understanding of the subject matter," are at least 4.0 on a five-point scale. A rating below 2.5 would signal a serious concern. When we examine the Outcome Study results, we assess both student rankings at exit and the growth between entry and exit. Our benchmark for very good performance is an exit score of at least 4.0 on a five-point scale, with a score below 2.5 again signaling a serious concern. Our benchmark for success on the growth between entry and exit is whether there was a statistically significant difference.

Overall Assessment of Entry to Exit Change 2004-2005

Table 3 presents summary statistics for changes between entry and exit on each of these scales. Exit scores ranged from 3.42 (Program Satisfaction) to 3.96 (Foundation Objectives (B.A./B.S. Social Work Major)) on a 5 point scale. In general, both entry and exit scores were relatively high and scores increased over time in most areas. Statistically significant improvements were observed on 4 of the 5 scales. There was no significant change on the 1 scale (Program Satisfaction).

Table 3: Outcome Study 04-05 Time Series Analysis of Scale Totals

Scales	N	Exit Mean/Item	Baseline Mean/Item	Difference
Program Satisfaction	159	3.42	3.50	-.07
Foundation Objectives (B.A./B.S. Social Work Major)	23	3.96	3.04	.92***
Foundation Objectives (M.S.S.W.)	57	3.85	2.72	1.13***
Concentration objectives	78	3.93	3.46	.48***
Child Welfare Task Scale	9	3.76	2.78	.99***

Assessment of Entry to Exit Change: Program Satisfaction

Analyses of individual items on the Program Satisfaction scale are presented on Table 4. Exit scores for each group ranged from 2.72 to 4.19 for PF(B) students; 2.88 to 3.98 for PF(M) students; and 3.06 to 4.01 for Concentration students. There were very few significant changes from entry to exit. PF(B) reported increased satisfaction with the times at which courses were offered. PF(M) reported decreased satisfaction with overall quality of advising and the process used to assign field units. Concentration students reported decreased satisfaction with the relevance of coursework to field experiences. Overall, these results suggest that student satisfaction with the many aspects of the program could use improvement.

Table 4. 2004-2005 Time Series Analysis of Program Satisfaction Scale

	PF (B)			PF (M)			Concentrations		
	N	E	D	N	E	D	N	E	D

1. Overall quality of advising.	26	3.92	-.12	61	3.08	-.42*	82	3.67	.21
2. Availability of advisors.	26	4.19	.12	60	3.65	-.13	82	3.89	.10
3. Times the social work courses are offered.	26	3.42	.38*	62	3.03	.10	83	3.24	-.20
4. Availability of courses.	26	3.54	.08	62	3.26	-.13	83	3.23	-.23
5. Social work library hours.	25	2.72	.16	61	3.02	.08	80	3.06	-.02
6. Relevance of coursework to your field practice experience.	26	3.50	.23	61	3.15	-.05	83	3.30	-.34**
7. Choices available to you for field units.	26	3.73	.00	62	3.27	-.21	83	3.77	.02
8. Process used to assign students to field units.	26	3.81	.23	59	2.88	-.58**	82	3.34	.00
9. Accessibility of faculty you approach for help.	26	3.96	-.15	61	3.98	-.20	83	4.01	.05

PF(B)=B.A./B.S. Social Work Major students; PF(M)=M.S.S.W. students (first year); Concentrations=M.S.S.W. students in concentration (second) year. N=number of observations; E=mean score on exit survey; D=Difference in mean score from entry (exit-entry); * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Assessment of Entry to Exit Change: Foundation Program Objectives

Table 4 presents mean statistics, as well the difference in these means from entry, for the individual items in the Foundation Objectives Scale for both M.S.S.W. (PF(M)) and B.A./B.S. Social Work Major (PF(B)) students. We find statistically significant increases between baseline and exit on each of the 36 items for each group. These results suggest considerable progress toward meeting foundation year objectives.

Table 5. 2004-2005 Time Series Analysis on Professional Foundation Objectives Scale

	PF (B)			PF (M)		
	N	E	D	N	E	D
1. Understand the generalist social work perspective.	26	4.19	.73**	62	4.18	1.21***
2. Understand how to apply the generalist social work perspective to practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, and groups.	26	4.00	1.15***	62	4.03	1.65***
3. Understand how to apply the generalist social work perspective to practice with and on behalf of organizations and communities.	26	3.85	1.27***	62	3.79	1.61***
4. Demonstrate the skills of generalist social work practice with and on behalf of individuals, families, and groups.	26	4.00	1.31***	62	3.84	1.61***
5. Demonstrate the skills of generalist social work practice with and on behalf of organizations and communities.	26	3.62	1.19***	62	3.65	1.74***

6. Understand theoretical frameworks on individual development and behavior across the life course.	26	3.73	.88**	61	3.89	.80***
7. Understand theoretical frameworks on the interactions among and between individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.	26	3.60	.71**	62	3.71	.85***
8. Use knowledge of normal human behavior and development in the assessment of client functioning.	26	3.96	.65*	61	4.00	1.05***
9. Apply knowledge of social problems and issues to immediate entry level practice situations.	26	4.19	1.04***	62	4.05	1.16***
10. Assess client needs and resources and choose the appropriate interventions in helping clients meet needs.	26	4.00	1.46***	62	3.95	1.37***
11. Use community resources for the benefit of clients and their communities.	26	4.35	1.62***	62	3.66	.97***
12. Develop community resources for the benefit of clients and their communities.	26	3.62	1.54***	62	3.31	1.27***
13. Communicate across client populations, colleagues, and communities.	26	4.31	1.50***	61	3.84	.93***
14. Develop constructive professional relationships with clients, service personnel and target systems.	26	4.38	1.31***	62	4.02	.98***
15. Work within an organization.	26	4.23	.69***	62	4.18	.68***
16. Facilitate organizational changes.	26	3.54	1.19***	62	3.35	1.08***
17. Provide leadership in working with social agencies and the community.	25	3.52	.92***	61	3.49	1.16***
18. Understand social work history and current issues in the profession.	26	4.15	.46*	62	3.92	1.03***
19. Assess the impact of social policies on individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.	26	3.85	.73**	62	3.90	1.29***
20. Understand and be aware of your personal values and attitudes that affect social work practice.	25	4.68	.60**	61	4.25	.69***
21. Understand the values and ethics of the profession and of ethical decision making principles.	26	4.62	.73***	61	4.43	1.08***
22. Apply and promote social work values.	26	4.62	.92***	61	4.23	1.11***
23. Apply values, principles of ethical decision making, and the NASW Code of Ethics to ethical dilemmas in social work practice.	26	4.46	1.15***	61	4.11	1.20***
24. Apply critical thinking skills within social work practice contexts.	26	4.08	.73**	61	4.05	.79***
25. Use the expertise of supervisors and other colleagues for ideas, feedback, and support.	26	4.35	.58*	61	4.30	.69***
26. Formulate and apply intervention strategies that address the cultural and special needs of diverse	25	3.76	.96***	61	3.70	1.26***

	N	E	D	N	E	D
social work clientele at individual, family, and group levels.						
27. Formulate and apply intervention strategies that address the cultural and special needs of diverse social work clientele at community and organizational levels.	26	3.42	.77**	61	3.43	1.21***
28. Understand intersecting oppressions linked to race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and other marginalized statuses.	26	4.38	.54*	60	4.07	.68***
29. Understand strategies to assist at-risk populations.	26	3.77	.77**	61	3.82	1.20***
30. Identify and understand strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, and economic deprivation.	26	3.85	.85**	61	3.75	1.08***
31. Identify and understand strategies to promote social and economic justice.	26	3.81	.73**	61	3.75	1.08***
32. Design and implement strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, and economic deprivation.	26	3.42	.81***	61	3.36	1.20***
33. Design and implement strategies to promote social and economic justice.	26	3.35	.77***	61	3.31	1.25***
34. Understand research methods so that you are a critical consumer of research.	26	3.88	.73**	60	3.85	.70***
35. Understand research methods so that you can evaluate your own practice.	26	3.73	.77**	60	3.80	.93***
36. Overall, how well have you been prepared for [**BPF** work in the field of social work], or [**MPF** further social work education in an area of concentration]?	26	3.96	.92***	61	3.75	1.30***

PF(B)=B.A./B.S. Social Work Major students; PF(M)=M.S.S.W. students (first year); N=number of observations; E=mean score on exit survey; D=Difference in mean score from entry (exit-entry); * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Assessment of Entry to Exit Change: Concentration Objectives

Table 4 presents mean statistics, as well the difference in these means from entry, for the individual items in the Foundation Objectives Scale for the CYWF, HAD, and MHSA concentrations. We find statistically significant increases between baseline and exit on 14 of the 27 items for CYWF, 7 of the 27 items for HAD (note, however, the small sample size (N=8) for this group), and 26 of the 27 items for MHSA. Furthermore, for item #27, "Overall, how well have you been prepared for social work practice in your concentration?," we see increases from baseline to exit for all 3 groups, and statistically significant increases for CYWF and MHSA. Given a considerable number of items with significant improvements for the two concentrations (CYWF and MHSA) with adequate sample sizes, as well as the relatively high exit scores on most items, we interpret these results to suggest adequate success in meeting concentration

objectives.

Table 6. 2004-2005 Time Series Analysis on Concentration Objectives Scale

	CYFW			HAD			MHSA		
	N	E	D	N	E	D	N	E	D
1. Apply knowledge of human behavior relevant to your concentration.	36	4.03	.36**	8	3.63	-.25	39	3.95	.23
2. Apply knowledge of social problems relevant to your concentration.	36	4.03	.19	8	4.00	.13	39	4.18	.38*
3. Apply practice knowledge relevant to the populations and/or problems addressed in your concentration.	35	4.03	.51**	8	4.00	.13	39	4.00	.59***
4. Apply knowledge of social services, policies, and programs relevant to your concentration, including the identification of gaps, barriers, and alternatives.	36	3.82	.57**	8	3.63	.25	39	3.77	.59***
5. Assess client needs and resources and choose the appropriate interventions in helping clients meet needs.	36	3.94	.44**	8	4.25	.63*	39	3.97	.69***
6. Intervene in complex direct practice situations involving individuals, families, and groups (e.g. as a case manager, counselor, advocate, etc.).	36	3.69	.39*	8	4.00	.63*	39	3.95	.72***
7. Intervene in complex direct practice situations involving organizations and communities (e.g. as a case manager, resource developer, advocate, etc).	36	3.42	.36*	8	3.50	.50	39	3.67	.59**
8. Demonstrate the ability to conduct organizational assessment and analysis in order to modify policy and programs and improve service delivery.	36	3.11	.31*	8	3.38	.88*	39	3.31	.62**
9. Provide leadership in working with social agencies and the community.	36	3.56	.25	7	3.57	.57	39	3.72	.69**
10. Practice as an autonomous social worker.	36	4.03	.58***	8	4.50	1.00**	39	4.29	1.09***
11. Understand and be aware of	36	4.56	.33*	8	4.63	.25	38	4.71	.50**

your personal values and attitudes that affect social work practice.								
12. Understand the values and ethics of the profession and of ethical decision making principles.	36	4.53	.19	8	4.50	.50*	39	4.46	.31*
13. Apply and promote social work values.	36	4.50	.08	8	4.50	.38	39	4.56	.36**
14. Apply values, principles of ethical decision making, and the NASW Code of Ethics to ethical dilemmas in social work practice.	36	4.36	-.03	8	4.50	.38	39	4.33	.36*
15. Articulate mission of social work to others, e.g., interdisciplinary team members, volunteers, the broader community, the news media, and political leaders.	36	4.22	.28	8	4.13	.38	39	4.15	.49**
16. Formulate and apply intervention strategies that address the cultural and special needs of diverse social work clientele at individual, family, and group levels.	36	3.78	.17	8	3.88	.63*	39	3.92	.54**
17. Formulate and apply intervention strategies that address the cultural and special needs of diverse social work clientele at community and organizational levels.	36	3.61	.25	8	3.75	.50*	39	3.85	.67***
18. Understand intersecting oppressions linked to race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and other marginalized statuses.	36	4.19	.22	8	4.50	.63*	39	4.21	.36*
19. Understand strategies to assist at-risk populations.	34	3.79	.24	8	4.00	1.00*	39	3.99	.65***
20. Identify and understand strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, and economic deprivation.	34	3.82	.41*	8	3.75	.63	39	3.77	.51**
21. Identify and understand strategies to promote social and economic justice.	34	3.74	.29	8	3.38	.13	39	3.87	.63***
22. Design and implement	34	3.41	.38*	8	3.38	.50	39	3.64	.92***

Item	N	E	D	N	E	D	N	E	D
strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, and economic deprivation.									
23. Design and implement strategies to promote social and economic justice.	34	3.29	.35*	8	3.38	.50	39	3.46	.79***
24. Evaluate and utilize theoretical and empirical research relevant to the problems and/or populations addressed in your concentration.	34	3.74	.26	8	3.50	.38	39	3.90	.85***
25. Evaluate your practice utilizing research methods.	34	3.59	.29	8	3.25	-.13	39	3.62	.69***
26. Evaluate your practice utilizing feedback from supervisors and colleagues.	34	4.47	.59***	8	4.50	.13	39	4.44	.56**
27. Overall, how well have you been prepared for social work practice in your concentration?	34	3.96	.56***	8	3.63	.13	39	3.95	.68***

CYFW=Child, Youth, and Family Welfare; HAD=Health, Aging, and Disability; MHSA=Mental Health and Substance Abuse; N=number of observations; E=mean score on exit survey; D=Difference in mean score from entry (exit-entry); * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Assessment of Entry to Exit Change: Child Welfare Tasks

In 2004-2005, 9 students participated in our Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Program. These students were administered a "Child Welfare Task Scale." Results for items on this scale are presented in Table 7. Despite the small number of observations, we find statistically significant increases on 43 of the 47 items, as well as relatively high exit scores on most items, suggesting that the abilities of these students to engage in productive child welfare practice improved between considerably entry and baseline.

Table 7. 2004-2005 Time Series Analysis on Child Welfare Tasks Scale (N = 9)

Item	E	D	Item	E	D
1. Assess family functioning (economic, social, psychological)	4.22	.67**	25. Assess the match between special needs children and potential adoptive families	3.11	1.22**
2. Conduct preventive outreach to families at risk	4.00	1.00*	26. Provide racially and culturally sensitive adoption services to minority groups	2.89	.89**
3. Work with involuntary clients	3.89	1.22*	27. Provide Post-adoption services	2.78	.78**
4. Work with victims of different types of maltreatment	3.78	.56*	28. Assess appropriateness of potential adoptive families for special needs children	3.00	1.00***

5. Detect different forms of maltreatment	3.89	1.00***	29. Assess the degree of openness between biological parent(s) and adoptive parent(s) in infant adoption	3.33	.89**
6. Work with families with cultural, racial and social class differences in child rearing	4.11	.78*	30. Facilitate the appropriate level of openness between biological parent(s) and adoptive parent(s) in infant adoption	3.22	1.00*
7. Refer families to supplemental services (day care, respite care, home health aides, home-makers, etc)	4.44	.56	31. Assess needs and strengths of single parents and refer to available resources	4.22	.78**
8. Work with maltreating families	4.22	1.44*	32. Assess needs and strengths of teen parents and refer to available resources	4.22	.78**
9. Teach parenting skills	3.56	.56	33. Assist children with identity issues in adoption	3.67	.89**
10. Work with self-help groups	3.56	.44	34. Work with troubled adolescents	4.11	.67*
11. Decision-making in child placement	4.33	1.56**	35. Refer runaway youth and their families to services	3.78	.44
12. Prepare for judicial hearings	3.56	1.11*	36. Develop and implement training for child welfare workers	3.78	1.56**
13. Work with families toward reunification	4.22	1.33**	37. Manage workload in child welfare	4.11	.89*
14. Determine need for child placement	4.00	1.11**	38. Work with community groups around child welfare concerns	4.11	1.00*
15. Utilize appropriate procedures for placement	4.22	1.33**	39. Coordinate public agency resources and voluntary agency (purchase of service) resources in child welfare	3.89	1.33**
16. Facilitate child's attachment to new caregivers	3.78	1.00*	40. Plan racially and culturally sensitive services for minority families and children	4.00	1.22*
17. Detect, and intervene in, institutional abuse and neglect	3.56	.78*	41. Apply knowledge of child welfare legislation (e. g., Indian Child Welfare Act, Adoption and Safe Families Act) to practice	4.33	1.56**
18. Assess coping skills	4.11	1.33**	42. Work with parents who	4.22	1.11**

	E	D		E	D
associated with separation and loss			abuse substances		
19. Facilitate foster parents' role with biological parents (visitation, help with reunification, role modeling)	4.44	1.78**	43. Apply knowledge about causes and consequences of child maltreatment	4.33	1.00**
20. Plan case reviews and monitor services for children in care	4.11	1.11**	44. Apply knowledge about international issues in child maltreatment	3.44	1.11**
21. Assess the need for group and/or institutional care	3.67	1.11**	45. Apply knowledge about issues impacting gay, lesbian, bisexual adoptive or foster parents	3.67	.89*
22. Prepare families and children for termination of parental rights	3.11	.78**	46. Recruit foster parents	3.00	.78**
23. Recruit adoptive families	2.56	.67**	47. Assess the presence of domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health issues	3.78	.67**
24. Recruit adoptive families with special attention to minority families	2.78	.89**			

N=number of observations; E=mean score on exit survey; D=Difference in mean score from entry (exit-entry); * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Course/Teaching Evaluations

In the above section, we discussed our use of selected questions in course evaluation forms to measure program objectives. In this section, we provide a brief discussion of broader uses of the teaching evaluations (Appendix 4).

Teaching evaluations are used to assist instructors in improving their skills. They include items on the quality of the teaching and on students "overall level of satisfaction with the course." They are also used administratively in evaluations of performance (including salary and promotion decisions for regular faculty and re-appointment decisions for short-term staff).

Poor teaching evaluations alert those responsible for reviewing and implementing the program to gather additional evidence to assess the extent to which program objectives are not being met and to decide what might be needed to improve educational outcomes in that course or content area. In most cases, problems are addressed by improving the teaching methods of the instructor or by having another person teach the course.

Faculty meeting discussions of issues and strategies regarding inclusion of content on race/ethnicity and on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons are also examples of teaching evaluations highlighting programmatic concerns which are then evaluated through the open exchange of ideas among the faculty as a group. Such discussions have led to planned workshops, invited speakers, referral of specific tasks to committees, and plans to have additional open exchanges in future faculty meetings.

Job Placement Survey

We mail a Placement Survey to our graduates each fall. Since 1999, when our return rate was 50%, we have had return rates of 59-65% among our M.S.S.W. graduates. These return rates generally compare favorably with other Schools nationally, who report return rates ranging from 15% to 69% from 2000 to 2002.[7] Our return rates among our undergraduate Social Work majors ranged from a low of 14% in 2000 to a high of 45% in 2004. With such a small undergraduate program, developing strategies to encourage higher return rates is especially important if this survey is to provide us with meaningful feedback.

Table 8 shows the key results. It is difficult to draw many conclusions about the undergraduate program with a small response rate. Nonetheless, almost all of the students who responded were either in graduate school or employed in social work, a highly positive outcome. The overwhelming majority of our M.S.S.W. graduates are employed as social workers. Moreover, across all years of data, on average 84% are employed in their area of concentration.

Table 8. Job Market Placement Survey Results, 1999-2004

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
BA./BS. SW Graduates						
# surveys distributed and returned	12/35	5/32	7/32	11/34	9/29	10/22
Employed in social work	58%	75%	29%	36%	44%	40%
In Graduate School	33%	25%	71%	55%	56%	60%
Other	8%	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%
M.S.S.W. Graduates						
# surveys returned/#distributed	52/103	66/110	50/83	70/108	72/121	62/105
Employed in social work	96%	96%	98%	99%	97%	100%
Position related to area of concentration	83%	87%	75%	88%	91%	81%

Our M.S.S.W. graduates were also asked in what job functions they were employed. Like the national profile, most reported working in direct practice positions: (case management: crisis intervention, counseling, referral, advocacy; clinical practice; and 50/50 case management &

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[7] Carol Nesslein Doelling and Barbara Matz, *Social Work Career Development Group, Job Market Report On 2002 MSW Graduates*, 2002.

clinical practice). Our graduates are more likely to report the job function of case management (which on the survey is listed as including crisis intervention, counseling, referral, and advocacy) than graduates nationally. This suggests that we have achieved a major goal of our concentration year, that is, to provide students with advanced generalist social work practice knowledge and skills in an area of concentration.

Licensure Exams

Licensure exams are another measure of the strength of our overall program. Our students do very well on these exams. The rate at which our graduates pass these exams is consistently better than the national rate, as shown in Table 9 *Pass Rates on Social Work Board Exams, 1997-2003* (our most recent data). Our graduates score particularly highly on the Basic Exam (for graduating Baccalaureate students) and the Intermediate Exam (for graduating M.S.S.W.s). This provides additional evidence that our graduates are prepared for practice within the field.

Table 9 Pass Rates on Social Work Board Exams, 1997-2003

	UW- Madison		National
	N	Pass Rate	Pass Rate
Basic Exam	80	99%	79%
Intermediate	423	92%	77%
Advanced Exam	46	67%	57%
Clinical Exam	286	85%	70%

Note: Sample size is not given for the national figures; average pass rates are calculated as if an equal number took the exam in each year. Both UW-Madison and national figures include both first-time and repeat candidates.

Undergraduate Social Welfare Major

Currently, our Undergraduate Social Welfare Major is evaluated solely via teaching/course evaluations (see above) and it is not possible to separate Social Welfare students' evaluations from B.A./B.S. in Social Work students' evaluations as they are anonymously completed and both groups of students participate in the same courses (although they are subject to different degree requirements and Social Work Majors take additional courses). Beginning in the Fall of 2007, we plan to institute a web-based survey to collect additional evaluative data on the Social Welfare Major.

Ph.D Program

The Ph.D program is evaluated in three primary ways. First, individual students and their faculty advisers complete yearly progress reports that are then reviewed by the full Ph.D faculty in its annual spring meeting. The progress reports assesses the extent to which students have completed critical program benchmarks: required coursework; progress toward, or completion of, the preliminary exam proposal and exam; dissertation proposal and dissertation. These progress reports also track student participation in TA, RA, and PA-ships. Students also provide open ended comments on progress achieved in the previous academic year and academic and

professional goals for the upcoming year. Finally, faculty advisers evaluate student progress in the program. This process is used to: (1) help the Ph.D program track student progress, (2) facilitate communication between students and faculty advisors, (3) encourage students to articulate plans that will help them move through the program efficiently, and (4) provide students with timely feedback on their progress.

Our second method of evaluating the Ph.D program is to track the average time at which students attain each of these program milestones. For those students who graduated between 2000 and 2006, the mean time to course work completion was 2.9 years; these students also took, on average, 3.5 years to complete the preliminary examination proposal, 4.3 years to complete the preliminary examination, 5.5 years to complete the dissertation proposal, and 7.6 years to complete the dissertation.

Finally, Ph.D students also complete teaching/course evaluations (described above).

Informal Review Mechanisms, Data Review and Program Improvement

We close with selected examples of how our assessments have resulted in program improvement. We have a continual strategic assessment process, although it has taken different forms in different years. In response to the changing environment of the university and the School of Social Work, in 1998-99, then-Director Joan Robertson initiated a new round of Strategic Planning to engage the faculty, staff, students, and representatives of our practice community in examining and making decisions with respect to the mission, curriculum, and resource base of the School. The results of these efforts included a reaffirmation of our mission and clarification of our Professional Program goals and objectives over the next few years. In addition, in 1999, as a result of this strategic planning process and in recognition of the reduced size of our faculty (which reflected the mandated downsizing of the tenure-track faculty at the UW-Madison in the 1990's), our faculty voted to reduce the number of concentrations in the advanced curriculum from five concentrations and two sub-concentrations to three concentrations. The design of the new concentrations was developed by members of the Curriculum Committee, who consulted with members of the faculty, field instructors, the Student Union, and the Professional Consultative Committee. The design of the advanced curriculum included a macro practice requirement, which responded to a specific recommendation that had emerged out of Strategic Planning and in discussions with the Professional Consultative Committee (community advisory committee) and the Student Union.

Another issue identified in our assessment processes was overlap in professional foundation courses. The assessment was also based on student feedback through a variety of mechanisms. In 2000-01, the Curriculum Committee identified specific areas of overlap and redundancy in foundation courses and recommended that instructors meet regularly to address this concern. Instructors shared syllabi and the Associate Director and Assistant to the Director reviewed syllabi to identify areas of overlap. Faculty teaching foundation courses continue to meet to discuss where and how foundation content is being taught and to solicit feedback from students to assess our progress in eliminating redundancy.

To increase content on practice models and methods in the foundation year, and to ensure that all foundation year students have the same preparation, the foundation year practice curriculum was revised to require a sequence of three courses on generalist social work practice. Again, this change in the curriculum was based on feedback from students, faculty, and practitioners, all suggesting that we should provide a more coherent curriculum that increased content on social work practice.

Above, we discussed that the Outcome Study is our main mechanism for assessing the extent to which we are meeting professional program objectives. We summarize here ways in which the results of the Outcome Study have been disseminated. In the fall of 2002, 2003, and 2004, the Director presented the results of the Outcome Study in faculty meetings. The results of the Outcome Study are reviewed by the Director, Associate Director/Undergraduate Program Director, Director of Field Education, and Assistant to the Director and issues and concerns are either addressed by the administrative team and/or referred to the appropriate committees. Also, selected results from the Outcome Study were presented to students during orientation, agency supervisors, and the Professional Consultative Committee.

The School has used student focus groups to help us identify issues and concerns and to receive feedback on School initiatives and proposals. Meetings sponsored by the School's Committee for the Recruitment and Retention of Students of Color with students of color solicit their feedback on School climate and how well the School meets the needs of students of color. The Director and Associate Director have held open meetings for our students, inviting feedback on the curriculum. For example, in February, 2004, they held a "listening session," inviting all foundation students to join them for a pizza lunch and "have a dialogue, ask questions, and hear from a variety of perspectives" on the curriculum. The Director has also met with students to solicit feedback on the revised Outcome Study.

Summary

The School employs multiple formal mechanisms to measure program outcomes on an ongoing basis. Formal mechanisms include the Outcome Study, student evaluation of courses, the Job Placement Survey, and licensure pass rates. There are also informal mechanisms as well; students, staff, instructors, and community professionals all provide feedback on the extent to which we are achieving our program objectives. We believe we have an effective and ongoing process through which we recognize the strengths of our Professional Program, analyze areas that require attention, and continuously affirm and improve our educational program.