Two years ago, the Bachelor of Social Work (BSSW) Program implemented new assessment processes in response to new standards implemented by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The plan below outlines the BSSW Program’s assessment process which flows from our mission statement, program goals and the competencies and practice behaviors. These competencies and practice behaviors are key elements of our accountability relationship with the CSWE. The University of North Dakota (UND) Bachelor of Science in Social Work Program has instituted an assessment process based upon the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) competencies and corresponding practice behaviors that operationalize the competencies. This revised assessment process was implemented during calendar year 2012, replacing our previous assessment process.

Per CSWE requirements, students must demonstrate sufficient mastery of ten required competencies (consisting of knowledge, values, and skills), operationalized by 41 practice behaviors that are grouped under the ten competencies.

The ten competencies are as follows:
2.1.1: Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
2.1.2: Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
2.1.3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
2.1.4: Engage diversity and difference in practice.
2.1.5: Advance human rights and social and economic justice.
2.1.6: Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
2.1.7: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
2.1.8: Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
2.1.9: Respond to contexts that shape practice.
2.1.10 (a-d): Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Assessment Methods Used to Collect Data

The EPAS standards require that social work programs conduct periodic assessments of students to ensure that they acquire the competencies needed for effective generalist practice. In response to this standard the BSSW Program uses two instruments to track the mastery of practice competencies with one measure being a direct assessment of student learning. These measures include the use of an indirect measure that is a self-efficacy survey and a direct measure that is the field evaluation. A self-efficacy survey was implemented during the spring semester of 2012. The survey being used is the Course Outcome Assessment Tool (COAT). This survey was developed by the University of St. Thomas and is being used with permission.

The BSSW Program uses two indirect assessment measures and one direct assessment measure. The first indirect assessment measure is a self-efficacy survey, the Course Outcome Assessment Tool (COAT). The COAT is a self-rating survey given to students upon admission to the program, and again just before graduation. This scale was derived from the ten core competencies and the corresponding practice
behaviors delineated by the Council on Social Work Education. The survey consists of 98 questions that measure 41 practice behaviors. The responses to the questions are then averaged to create a competency score for each of the ten competencies. The survey also includes student perceptions on the implicit curriculum, including diversity, social justice and respect, advisement, program operations, student participation and resources.

Two benchmarks exist related to the COAT survey. The first is an expectation that student COAT scores will demonstrate a statistically significant change at program entry and program exit. The second benchmark is that at least 80% of exiting seniors will rate themselves an average score of 4.0 or higher on each competency upon program exit. Pre-test data were collected for students during spring semester 2012, fall semester 2012, and spring 2013 (Table 1); post-test data is now beginning to be collected as those students now prepare for graduation. A five-point Likert-type scale is used by the student to rank their perceived level of competency with the practice behaviors.

The other two BSSW Program measures occur within the students’ field internships. All BSSW students must complete 450 hours in an approved agency setting under the supervision of a licensed social worker in their senior year. Students gain experience in an agency setting with tasks required outlined in a Learning Plan. Field instructors receive training from faculty on how to evaluate students using the practice behaviors and competencies. Field instructors then rate students on their attainment of the required competencies when students are in their field internships. These ratings occur at the conclusion of the student’s field internship, and comprise the program’s direct assessment measure.

Student self-rating of practice behavior attainment comprises the BSSW Program’s second indirect assessment measure. It also employs a five-point Likert-type scale completed by the field instructors upon program completion of the student’s field internship.

The 41 practice behaviors are grouped beneath each of the ten competencies, and practice behavior data must be aggregated accordingly. In accordance with CSWE’s requirements, a measurement benchmark is set by the respective social work program for each competency. An assessment score at or above that benchmark is considered by the program to represent mastery of that particular competency.

CSWE also requires that certain quantitative assessment data be posted on our department website in a required format. This information must be updated at least biennially. Field Education is viewed by the Council on Social Work Education to be the “signature pedagogy” of social work education, and is the capstone course for the bachelor of social work degree. To assure that students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of the core competencies, they are instructed to develop a Learning Plan with their field instructor and faculty field liaison.

The Learning Plan is based on the ten competencies and integrated throughout the curriculum. Each competency has identified practice behaviors specific to the competency. The field instructor helps the student identify practice opportunities, including timelines, related to the competency which will be identified and assessed during the semester in concert with an assigned faculty field liaison from the Department of Social Work. The practice behaviors are closely related to each other and may be addressed with the same internship activities.

The students are then evaluated by their field instructor assessing the student’s growth and development of the ten competency areas. Field instructors are trained on the use of this evaluation
instrument and Learning Plan. Guidance is provided on the direct assessment aspects as part of their orientation training. By the end of the internship, the student will have demonstrated competency in each of the arenas of performance as a generalist social worker. For students who do not demonstrate the designated benchmark in any practice behavior, the instructors are asked to make comments, and outline specific plans to support student need for development in these areas. For students who are unable to meet the benchmark on practice behaviors across three or more competencies, a remedial plan is required. If there is a need for a remedial plan to assist the student in achieving a competency, the faculty field liaison will meet with the student and field instructor to develop the plan. Students may exceed a benchmark if they meet the criteria defined in practice behaviors.

The data that are collected are posted on the departmental website and shared with the BSSW Committee, full faculty, students and the advisory board of the department. The intent is to promote the use of data to inform strategic decisions within the department and allow our curriculum to meet the demands of the profession within our state and region.

Results for Academic Year 2012-13

For the BSSW program, Field data were collected, and faculty considered whether or not remedial action was required for those competencies where fewer than 80% of students attained the benchmark. With three semesters of aggregated data, four competencies may merit additional attention.

80% of the students attained Competency #3 (applying critical thinking) and Competency #9 (responding to changing contexts) exactly at the benchmark. A much lower percentage, at 70%, attained Competency #6 (the research competency) and Competency #8 (policy practice) at 74%. These last two competency areas are typically among those that challenge social work students and programs. See the next subsection for information about how these data were used to inform program changes.

Statistical analyses comparing field instructor and student self-ratings on the Practice Behavior Rating Scale have also been completed for all three semesters for Field Education. For each semester, end-of-semester mean competency scores from field instructors and students were compared using an independent samples t-test. Within each of the semesters, there were no statistically significant differences between field instructor and student ratings (p<.05). This finding may support the assumption that instructors and students interpret the scale in a fairly consistent way.

Next, mean competency scores for both field instructors and students were compared across semesters for each program using a one-way ANOVA analysis. For the BSSW Program, there were no statistically significant differences between the cohorts in Field Education over the three-semester time frame (p<.05). This is not an unexpected finding, given the consistency of the on-campus student population in the BSSW Program.

The pre-test COAT survey data collected pointed to some concerns related to student advising. See subsection below for more information about how these data were used to inform program changes.

How the Program Has Used These Data to “Close the Loop”

Each semester, the department’s Administrative Team (the Chair, Program Directors, and the Assessment Coordinator) works as a coordinating body in concert with the BSSW Committee to develop
plans to utilizing assessment data to improve curriculum, field education, and other aspects of the BSSW program that may need improvement.

Pre-test COAT survey data were used to develop faculty in-service training around student advisement. This training was implemented at the beginning of the fall semester 2012. Based upon subsequent data, it appears that there has been some improvement regarding student satisfaction with advisement processes. In addition, fewer issues requiring administrative attention emerged around faculty advisement during the 2012-2013 academic year.

When reviewing COAT survey and field education data, it was determined that the use of research to inform practice (Competency #6) and engaging with policy (Competency #8) have been areas that are consistently below our desired outcome level. In response to this finding, we have made the following changes:

- doubled sectioned the undergraduate research class, resulting in smaller class sizes, and allowing more opportunity for more intensive practice behavior skill development
- revised the research syllabus and course to place a greater emphasis on applied research within agency settings
- changed the undergraduate research requirement from a three-credit course to a four-credit course
- double-sectioned the undergraduate policy course
- initiated “Lunch in the Field” monthly for field instructors with a special emphasis on incorporation of research and policy competencies into the filed education setting
Two years ago, the Master of Social Work (MSW) Program implemented new assessment processes in response to new standards implemented by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The plan below outlines the BSSW Program’s assessment process which flows from our mission statement, program goals and the competencies and practice behaviors. These competencies and practice behaviors are key elements of our accountability relationship with the CSWE. The University of North Dakota (UND) Bachelor of Science in Social Work Program has instituted an assessment process based upon the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) competencies and corresponding practice behaviors that operationalize the competencies. This revised assessment process was implemented during calendar year 2012, replacing our previous assessment process.

Per CSWE requirements, students must demonstrate sufficient mastery of ten required competencies (consisting of knowledge, values, and skills), operationalized by 41 advanced practice behaviors that are grouped under the ten competencies.

The ten competencies are as follows:
2.1.1: Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
2.1.2: Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
2.1.3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
2.1.4: Engage diversity and difference in practice.
2.1.5: Advance human rights and social and economic justice.
2.1.6: Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
2.1.7: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
2.1.8: Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
2.1.9: Respond to contexts that shape practice.
2.1.10 (a-d): Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Assessment Methods Used to Collect Data

The MSW Program’s plan for assessing the attainment of each EPAS competency consists of a cyclical series of assessment measures, procedures, and processes conducted each semester.

The assessment plan’s major elements are implemented each semester and are as follows:
- Multiple measurements for each practice behavior are collected, analyzed, and put to use in a continuous quality improvement (CQI) process. Three direct measures are utilized and occur when students are assessed either by classroom instructors or field instructors. Each practice behavior is assessed at least twice using a direct measure while students are in the foundation portion of the curriculum (once in the classroom and once again in field), and on at least three separate occasions while students are in the concentration (classroom, field, and the comprehensive exam). In addition, two indirect measures (where students assess themselves) are also utilized in both the foundation and the concentration (classroom and field).
measures are used to offset weaknesses in reliability that may be presented by any single measure (e.g., Holloway, 2012). Each of these measures is specified in detail in this section.

- **Benchmarks** are employed and reviewed by faculty each semester to assess the attainment of each of the program’s competencies.
- **CQI processes** are specified for how assessment data are interpreted and then utilized to monitor previous changes, and to plan future modifications for the next cycle.

Following is a more detailed description of each of the major assessment plan elements: the multiple measures of each practice behavior, the procedures for collecting and analyzing these data, and the benchmarks employed to assess students’ attainment of the competencies, are discussed.

**Multiple Means to Measure Practice Behaviors**

The MSW Program has implemented four separate assessment measures at the foundation level, and five measures at the concentration level. At the foundation level, two measures are direct (assessed by classroom or field instructor), and two are indirect (student self-assessment). At the concentration level, three of these measures are direct, and two are indirect. These measures are further specified below:

**Foundation:**

1) **Embedded Measures – Instructor Ratings (Direct Measure):** Instructors rate student attainment of specific practice behaviors at the end of each core graduate course. A uniform rubric is employed by all instructors.

2) **Embedded Measures – Student Self-Ratings (Indirect Measure):** Students rate themselves on their attainment of the practice behaviors using retrospective pre/post questionnaires at the end of each core graduate course.

3) **Field Instructor Practice Behaviors Ratings (Direct Measure):** Field instructors rate students on the attainment of specific practice behaviors during their field placements at the midway point, and upon completion.

4) **Field Student Practice Behavior Self-Ratings (Indirect Measure):** Students rate themselves on the attainment of specific practice behaviors midway through their field placements, and at completion.

**Concentration:**

1) **Embedded Measures – Instructor Ratings (Direct Measure):** Instructors rate student attainment of specific practice behaviors at the end of each core graduate course. A uniform rubric is employed by all instructors.

2) **Embedded Measures – Student Self-Ratings (Indirect Measure):** Students rate themselves on their attainment of the practice behaviors using retrospective pre/post questionnaires at the end of each core graduate course.

3) **Comprehensive Exam (Direct Measure):** Instructors give students a “meets expectations/does not meet expectations” grade on essays relating to each of the ten competencies. The benchmark is “meets expectations”.

4) **Field Instructor Practice Behaviors Ratings (Direct Measure):** Field instructors rate students on the attainment of specific practice behaviors during their field placements at the midway point, and upon completion.

5) **Field Student Practice Behavior Self-Ratings (Indirect Measure):** Students rate themselves on the attainment of specific practice behaviors midway through their field placements, and at completion.
Benchmarks Employed to Assess the Attainment of Each of the Program’s Competencies

After careful evaluation of embedded measures data from our two pilot semesters in 2011, and continued monitoring each semester since this assessment method was adopted across the curriculum in Spring Semester, 2012, competency attainment for each student has been benchmarked at 3.00 for both the foundation and for the concentration. To review competency attainment against these benchmarks each semester, Practice Behavior Questionnaire data are collected using Qualtrics software, and are then imported into SPSS for analysis. A “Close the Loop” assessment meeting is held early each semester, once the previous semester’s data have been compiled and analyzed, to share outcomes with both individual MSW Program faculty who are teaching courses, and with all members of the MSW Committee for CQI (continuous quality improvement) purposes.

The benchmark for the comprehensive exam is that students must “meet expectations” for each of the ten competencies in order to pass the exam; passage of the exam is required for student graduation. If a student cannot meet the benchmark after two additional attempts, a remediation plan is developed in consultation with the student, the student’s advisor, appropriate field faculty, and the MSW Program Director.

Both MSW foundation and concentration students in their field internships must attain a field instructor mean rating of at least 2.00 for each competency at the midterm evaluation to progress without remediation through their field placements. If any student is not meeting this midterm benchmark, the faculty field liaison alerts the field director. Thus, the process of implementing a plan for remediation, where necessary, can be addressed in a timely manner. This plan is designed in collaboration with the student, field instructor, faculty field liaison, and field director, and is developed to create opportunities for the student to successfully strengthen the deficient knowledge, value or skills. Once a plan is created, the faculty field liaison works with the field instructor to closely monitor student progress toward remediation.

Upon field internship completion, a field instructor mean rating of 3.50 has been established as the benchmark for the foundation; 3.00 has been established as the benchmark for the concentration. Students (foundation or concentration) whose cumulative scores on their final evaluations are below 2.00 will not receive a passing grade for their field internship.

Summary of Results for Academic Year 2012-13 and How Data Were Used to “Close the Loop”

Following is a summary of specific program changes made based on specific outcome data. Embedded measures and field internship assessment data are discussed first for the foundation, followed by a discussion of how these data and comprehensive exam results informed specific changes for the concentration.

Foundation-level Changes

Embedded measures data from instructors indicated that faculty should focus course-level efforts with particular attention on four of the core competencies: applying critical thinking, engaging diversity and difference, research, and policy practice. While students’ self-ratings did not concur that that there might be any concerns in relation to engaging diversity and difference, faculty agreed that it might still be beneficial to make some course-level adjustments in relation to this competency.

The following is a summary of specific course-level adjustments in response to this analysis:
• SWK 507 (Research Methods and Analysis) was re-structured to more tightly focus on the two practice behaviors that contributed to the lower scores, specifically practice behaviors "distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge" and "analyze models of assessment, prevention, and evaluation". The instructor decided to streamline content and include more case studies. The syllabus was revised for Spring Semester, 2013.

• SWK 502 (Human Behavior and the Social Environment II) has been modified for the next time it is taught over Summer Semester, 2013 (see Volume II) to change the timing of an assignment that addressed oppression and privilege. The instructor felt that he had “lost” a few students by introducing quite powerful material too soon in the course before a foundation had been laid to facilitate a discussion in which all students would feel ready to engage. Additionally, content relative to Native American populations has been added to SWK 505 (Communities and Organizations) for Summer Semester, 2013.

• The research competency also yielded one of the lower percentages of students attaining the benchmark (65%). Once again, SWK 507 (Research Methods and Analysis) was the course where the scores were lower in relation to this competency’s two practice behaviors. Similar to the discussion in the first bulleted paragraph above, the instructor felt this course was too content-driven and too abstract. Modifications made for Spring Semester, 2013 including helping students identify and analyze an evidence-based practice model, and introducing case scenarios to help students make more concrete connections between research and practice. SWK 501 (Human Behavior and the Social Environment I) provides additional coverage for this competency’s practice behaviors. The course syllabus was substantively revised for Spring Semester, 2013, and a number of focused Discussion Assignments was added to help students connect research literature to their understanding of human behavior across the lifespan.

• Finally, 74% of students met the benchmark for the policy competency, rendering it less of a concern than the critical thinking or research competencies for the foundation. A modification was made to SWK 505 (Communities and Organizations), which provides additional coverage for this competency. Students practice group decision-making skills as part of an introduction to collaboration in this course. The case scenario previously used was changed to address a policy scenario during lab week in Summer Semester, 2013, to help students make the connection between collective action and policy advocacy.

Unlike the embedded measures scores, where student means are typically higher than instructors, student means from self-ratings in their field internships are typically lower than their field instructors. In a recent “Close the Loop with Classroom and Field Faculty” meeting, faculty hypothesized that this may be because students in the classroom are not as aware of what they may not know; additionally, they may experience some loss of confidence when faced with the challenges of being novices in an unfamiliar setting.

Instructor ratings results showed students falling below the averaged percentage (85%) on four of the core competencies: research, applying knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, policy practice, and responding to contexts. Interestingly, there was no overlap with student self-ratings in their field placements in the foundation. Students fell below the averaged percentage for student self-ratings (91%) on three of the core competencies: identify as a professional social worker, apply critical thinking, and advance human rights and social justice. With 81% rating themselves at the benchmark level, the competency of advancing human rights and social justice had the lowest student self-rating.

Faculty noted that foundation field instructor concerns were much more consistent with concerns noted for field students in the concentration (discussed below), especially with the addition of the competency...
about advancing human rights and social justice, where students’ scored lowest on self-ratings. Thus, they felt that field education was best focused on these competencies, although the discrepancy between field instructor and student scores will be closely monitored upon obtaining results from Spring Semester, 2013.

Given these factors, faculty determined that the CQI changes planned to address concerns in the concentration would also be appropriate for the foundation. These changes are discussed under the subheading “Concentration-level Changes” below.

At the program level, classroom and field faculty acknowledged that the research and policy areas overlapped when comparing instructor embedded measures ratings to instructor field internship ratings. This is not surprising, given the well-documented challenges for social work students relative to research, and the strong micro-level practice orientations of the majority of MSW students.

Concentration-level Changes

Embedded measures data from instructors indicated that faculty should focus course-level efforts with particular attention on four of the core competencies: advance human rights and social justice, research, apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, and practice. Student self-ratings overlapped on two of the competencies, with "advance human rights and social justice" and "engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate" having somewhat lower means. Students also had a bit less confidence than did instructors on self-ratings of "policy" and "respond to contexts."

One of the lower rates of benchmark attainment relative to classroom instructor ratings for the concentration was "advance human rights and social justice" at 64% overall. Although students did not note this as much of a concern, faculty analysis of practice behavior data showed somewhat lower means in relation to all three practice behaviors associated with this competency, and implemented the following curricular changes.

- SWK 528 (Advanced Generalist Human Behavior and the Social Environment II) implemented an anti-bullying class activity Spring Semester, 2012, in response to assessment data from piloting embedded measures in 2011 in order to better address practice behavior "helping clients and colleagues understand the mechanisms of oppression and plan and implement strategies to address them." In relation to SWK 535 (Advanced Generalist Practice with Communities), discussions about how to engage colleagues (not just clients) in gaining greater understanding of the mechanisms of oppression is being infused throughout the course Spring Semester, 2013. Additionally, a question requiring students to develop strategies for addressing the mechanisms of oppression was added to the Think Tank Activity (Week 16).
- To better address practice behavior "advance specific principles from national and international documents", SWK 535 (Advanced Generalist Practice with Communities) faculty were concerned that the material was presented too abstractly, as students did not note meaningful learning moments from this course in relation to this practice behavior in the comprehensive exams. An additional hands-on class activity involving the National Association of Social Workers, Canadian Association of Social Work, and International Federation of Social Workers Codes of Ethics was added to Week 15 for Spring Semester, 2013.
- Faculty noted that teaching practice behavior "social and economic justice leadership skills" has been challenging to address at the classroom level. Comprehensive exam data indicated that the Legislative Testimony Assignment noted by students was helpful in relation to this practice behavior. SWK 536 (Advanced Generalist Practice with Organizations) implemented a System
Improvement focus to help target this practice behavior Spring Semester, 2013, and SWK 535 (Advanced Generalist Practice with Communities) modified Reading Analysis #8 in Week 16 to focus student reflection on leadership roles.

The lowest rate of benchmark attainment with regard to instructor embedded measure ratings was research at 59%. While comprehensive exam results noted powerful learning in relation to this competency in all of the courses that addressed its practice behaviors, faculty felt there were still challenges in terms of helping students develop greater knowledge and skills in the classroom. The following course-level improvements are planned for Fall Semester, 2013:

- Over the past two years, the concentration research course (SWK 529, Advanced Generalist Research Methods & Analysis) has increasingly focused on more practical applications for practice, especially single-subject design and program evaluation methods. Faculty believe that this is the right direction for this course, and they are currently considering the adoption of a different text and/or supplemental readings for the course for summer semester to better align the class with the real world of social work practice. Additionally, both of these instructors are actively engaged in service work with agencies around program evaluation. Finding additional ways to integrate their “real-time” service efforts into this advanced course is an additional element in the planning stages.

- An additional concern raised by faculty with regard to this competency is that student attainment also needs to be captured for assessment purposes with their final research project, SWK 997 (Independent Study Project) or SWK 998 (Thesis). Additionally, some graduate faculty thought they could use more guidance for advising students on these projects, as well as improved methods for assessing student outcomes. As a result, new syllabi for SWK 997 and SWK 998 were implemented Spring Semester, 2013, and a grading rubric tied to the practice behaviors was developed. The first students to use these new syllabi registered for SWK 997 or 998 Summer Semester, 2013. Prior to that, the MSW Committee developed a forum for training graduate faculty how to utilize these new syllabi, to better articulate minimum expectations for final research projects, and to share successes and challenges related to this aspect of graduate advisement. Developing a mechanism for integrating these student outcomes with current assessment procedures has yet to be developed.

Students attained a benchmark per instructor of 69% for the competency "addresses knowledge application of human behavior and the social environment." The courses primarily assigned to address this practice behavior are the two Advanced Generalist Human Behavior and the Social Environment courses (HBSE I & HBSE II), and Advanced Generalist Practice with Families (SWK 533). Student comprehensive exam results revealed that students who were able to address this competency and the related practice behaviors appreciated the variety of assignments across these three courses, and the complementary nature of the curriculum with regard to this competency. Students who struggled with this comprehensive exam, however, frequently had difficulty articulating their understanding of this competency.

- Faculty acknowledged that this content is conceptually rich and challenging, and their improvement ideas focused more on pedagogical adjustments to make the content more accessible than on content changes. These pedagogical adjustments are intended to render the material a bit less abstract to students who find it more conceptually challenging. These changes have included experimenting with a “flipped classroom” approach in SWK 533, grading criteria tied more concretely to the practice behaviors in SWK 529, and ensuring that all students have an opportunity to verbalize application of HBSE knowledge in class discussions in SWK 528.
SWK 997 (Independent Study Project) and SWK 998 (Thesis) were also added as additional support to practice behavior "synthesize a broad understanding of multi-disciplinary knowledge", and this was added to the assessment matrix for these courses.

Finally, the competency "engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate" at 71% was slightly below the overall percentage of students who attained the competency benchmarks (74%). Faculty overall have been comfortable with the benchmark attainment in their practice courses in relation to this competency, and interpret this practice behavior as one of the most challenging to assess in the classroom. Student data in relation to the comprehensive exams indicated that their learning aligned well with the distribution of practice behaviors among the practice courses. Students also noted that they found the variety of writing assignments, readings, and class discussions promoted powerful learning in addition to the more experiential activities, such as role plays and small group activities.

Adjustments that faculty have planned or already implemented in relation to this competency have been largely related to continued pedagogical improvements, including maximizing the use of role plays in the practice courses and experimenting with new technologies. Additional changes to the concentration practice courses based on assessment data for Program Year 2012 are as follows:

- The SWK 530 (Advanced Generalist Practice with Individuals) instructor noted a discrepancy between instructor and student ratings with regard to social work values and ethics. He attributed the problem to assignment grading criteria; adjustments to the syllabus for Summer Semester, 2013, were made.
- SWK 534 (Advanced Generalist Practice with Treatment Groups) faculty noticed a fairly large difference between student and instructor ratings in relation to facilitating transitions and endings. Consideration of transition and termination has been integrated into an existing group assignment in the next iteration of the syllabus (Summer Semester, 2013).
- SWK 535 (Advanced Generalist Practice with Communities): The strengths-based and empowerment-oriented focus of assessment for this course was not as strong as expected Spring Semester, 2012, as students confused a major assignment with a similar one in SWK 536 (Advanced Generalist Practice with Organizations) that addressed different practice behaviors. The System Improvement Assignment in SWK 536 replaced an assignment given the previous year to address this issue.
- SWK 536 (Advanced Generalist Practice with Organizations): Faculty are currently searching for an improved textbook for this course that might better align with the practice behaviors in relation to this competency. The current textbook feels somewhat fragmented and choppy. This improvement would be implemented Spring Semester, 2014.

As indicated in section 4.0.2, instructor ratings results showed students falling below the average percentage of 92% on four of the core competencies: advancing human rights and social justice, research, policy practice, and responding to context. These results were closely mirrored by concentration students’ self-ratings. Students fell below the average percentage on self-ratings on the same competencies, with the addition of a fourth, "apply knowledge of the human behavior and social environment."

Given these outcomes, field faculty determined in the recent “Close the Loop with Classroom and Field Faculty” meeting to focus attention on five competencies for Program Year 2013, including three in which there was overlap between field internship outcomes and embedded measures outcomes:
• **Advance human rights and social and economic justice:** (embedded measures, field internship instructor and student self-ratings)
• **Research:** (embedded measures, field internship instructor and student self-ratings)
• **Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment:** (embedded measures, field internship student self-ratings, comprehensive exam)
• **Policy:** (field internship instructor and student self-ratings)
• **Respond to contexts that shape practice:** (field internship instructor and student self-ratings)

At this meeting, classroom and field faculty jointly developed the following recommendations to support benchmark attainment by students in their field internships in relation to the five competencies listed above:

1) Provide sample tasks and activities for field instructors to help illustrate how practice behaviors associated with the above competencies may be translated into varied field settings and across practice levels. All graduate faculty can help with this task.

2) Consider developing additional training for Faculty Field Liaisons, including video training modules, as some liaisons are not as connected to the curriculum as are others.

3) Look for opportunities to integrate assignments into the classroom that will help students get a “head start” on translating the practice behaviors into field internship settings. Such an assignment was implemented in SWK 537 (“Tools for Policy”) Summer Semester, 2012, and could serve as a model for others.

Field faculty then shared program year assessment data with field instructors in a “Close the Loop with Field Instructors” held March 22, and sought their opinions for possible improvements. Field instructors noted their appreciation of the “Lunch in the Field” series to bring them up-to-date routinely on accreditation-related curricular changes, and urged continuance of these well-attended activities, which are also recorded and available to field instructors supervising students at a distance. Field instructors thought the continued discussions about the competencies and practice behaviors were helpful, and asked for additional tools to accompany the learning plans that were very similar to the recommendations developed jointly by classroom and field faculty above. Field instructors recommended that field faculty:

1) Provide simplified language for the Advanced Generalist Practice Behaviors to ensure that they are accurately comprehending their meaning;

2) Provide sample tasks and activities illustrating how practice behaviors associated with the five competencies listed above may be translated into varied field settings and across practice levels; and

3) Ensure that Faculty Field Liaisons can support this “translation” work from classroom to field as students and instructors jointly develop student learning plans.

These recommendations will be the focus of CQI improvements for field education for 2014. A Faculty Field Liaison training will be conducted before the end of Spring Semester, 2013.

While the focus of assessment has been on specific changes made based on specific outcome data, it should not be overlooked that faculty and students continue to learn and become more adept at the use of the practice behaviors and competencies over time, as well as how to better assess student outcomes and utilize assessment data. These significant organizational adaptations require attention to processes, as well as outcomes. These more process-oriented CQI adjustments merited equal attention from faculty. Those listed below were summarized from several “Close the Loop” meetings held over Program year 2012:
• Helping students “connect the dots” between practice behaviors, competencies, course readings, assignments, and activities, is one of the greatest challenges under the new accreditation standards. Methods for doing so should include the following:
  - At the beginning of each course, instructors must be more specific when reviewing the syllabus with students to communicate which readings, assignments, lectures, and activities are focused on which practice behaviors to help make these connections for students more explicit. (Monitor – ongoing)
  - Instructors should also be mindful of this at the beginning of each class, and can even integrate this information into PowerPoints or other teaching materials used, as this repetition assists students (and instructors) to integrate this information more deeply. (Monitor – ongoing)
  - Most instructors are now using the practice behavior language very explicitly in their course assignment descriptions. These changes should continue and expand as instructors also continue to gain experience and sophistication in teaching to the practice behaviors. (Monitor – ongoing)
  - Students should be provided with a chart during their new orientation sessions to preview which practice behaviors will be addressed in which courses. This will also help improve the quality of the comprehensive exams. (Implemented Spring Semester, 2013).
  - The syllabus format should be modified to make this information more readily accessible to students and instructors; it is likely that the quality of the comprehensive exams will also improve from such changes. (Implemented Fall Semester, 2012).
• Instructors could use some tools for simplifying embedded measures assessment. (To be implemented Fall Semester, 2013).
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
BSSW (UNDERGRADUATE) ASSESSMENT PLAN
OCTOBER, 2013

Two years ago, the Bachelor of Social Work (BSSW) Program implemented new assessment processes in response to new standards implemented by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The plan below outlines the BSSW Program’s assessment process which flows from our mission statement, program goals and the competencies and practice behaviors. These competencies and practice behaviors are key elements of our accountability relationship with the CSWE. The University of North Dakota (UND) Bachelor of Science in Social Work Program has instituted an assessment process based upon the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) competencies and corresponding practice behaviors that operationalize the competencies. This revised assessment process was implemented during calendar year 2012, replacing our previous assessment process.

Per CSWE requirements, students must demonstrate sufficient mastery of ten required competencies (consisting of knowledge, values, and skills), operationalized by 41 practice behaviors that are grouped under the ten competencies.

The ten competencies are as follows:
2.1.1: Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
2.1.2: Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
2.1.3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
2.1.4: Engage diversity and difference in practice.
2.1.5: Advance human rights and social and economic justice.
2.1.6: Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
2.1.7: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
2.1.8: Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
2.1.9: Respond to contexts that shape practice.
2.1.10 (a-d): Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Assessment Methods Used to Collect Data

The EPAS standards require that social work programs conduct periodic assessments of students to ensure that they acquire the competencies needed for effective generalist practice. In response to this standard the BSSW Program uses two instruments to track the mastery of practice competencies with one measure being a direct assessment of student learning. These measures include the use of an indirect measure that is a self-efficacy survey and a direct measure that is the field evaluation. A self-efficacy survey was implemented during the spring semester of 2012. The survey being used is the Course Outcome Assessment Tool (COAT). This survey was developed by the University of St. Thomas and is being used with permission.

The BSSW Program uses two indirect assessment measures and one direct assessment measure. The first indirect assessment measure is a self-efficacy survey, the Course Outcome Assessment Tool (COAT). The COAT is a self-rating survey given to students upon admission to the program, and again just before graduation. This scale was derived from the ten core competencies and the corresponding practice
behaviors delineated by the Council on Social Work Education. The survey consists of 98 questions that measure 41 practice behaviors. The responses to the questions are then averaged to create a competency score for each of the ten competencies. The survey also includes student perceptions on the implicit curriculum, including diversity, social justice and respect, advisement, program operations, student participation and resources.

Two benchmarks exist related to the COAT survey. The first is an expectation that student COAT scores will demonstrate a statistically significant change at program entry and program exit. The second benchmark is that at least 80% of exiting seniors will rate themselves an average score of 4.0 or higher on each competency upon program exit. Pre-test data were collected for students during spring semester 2012, fall semester 2012, and spring 2013 (Table 1); post-test data is now beginning to be collected as those students now prepare for graduation. A five-point Likert-type scale is used by the student to rank their perceived level of competency with the practice behaviors.

The other two BSSW Program measures occur within the students’ field internships. All BSSW students must complete 450 hours in an approved agency setting under the supervision of a licensed social worker in their senior year. Students gain experience in an agency setting with tasks required outlined in a Learning Plan. Field instructors receive training from faculty on how to evaluate students using the practice behaviors and competencies. Field instructors then rate students on their attainment of the required competencies when students are in their field internships. These ratings occur at the conclusion of the student’s field internship, and comprise the program’s direct assessment measure.

Student self-rating of practice behavior attainment comprises the BSSW Program’s second indirect assessment measure. It also employs a five-point Likert-type scale completed by the field instructors upon program completion of the student’s field internship.

The 41 practice behaviors are grouped beneath each of the ten competencies, and practice behavior data must be aggregated accordingly. In accordance with CSWE’s requirements, a measurement benchmark is set by the respective social work program for each competency. An assessment score at or above that benchmark is considered by the program to represent mastery of that particular competency.

CSWE also requires that certain quantitative assessment data be posted on our department website in a required format. This information must be updated at least biennially. Field Education is viewed by the Council on Social Work Education to be the “signature pedagogy” of social work education, and is the capstone course for the bachelor of social work degree. To assure that students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of the core competencies, they are instructed to develop a Learning Plan with their field instructor and faculty field liaison.

The Learning Plan is based on the ten competencies and integrated throughout the curriculum. Each competency has identified practice behaviors specific to the competency. The field instructor helps the student identify practice opportunities, including timelines, related to the competency which will be identified and assessed during the semester in concert with an assigned faculty field liaison from the Department of Social Work. The practice behaviors are closely related to each other and may be addressed with the same internship activities.

The students are then evaluated by their field instructor assessing the student’s growth and development of the ten competency areas. Field instructors are trained on the use of this evaluation
instrument and Learning Plan. Guidance is provided on the direct assessment aspects as part of their orientation training. By the end of the internship, the student will have demonstrated competency in each of the arenas of performance as a generalist social worker. For students who do not demonstrate the designated benchmark in any practice behavior, the instructors are asked to make comments, and outline specific plans to support student need for development in these areas. For students who are unable to meet the benchmark on practice behaviors across three or more competencies, a remedial plan is required. If there is a need for a remedial plan to assist the student in achieving a competency, the faculty field liaison will meet with the student and field instructor to develop the plan. Students may exceed a benchmark if they meet the criteria defined in practice behaviors.

The data that are collected are posted on the departmental website and shared with the BSSW Committee, full faculty, students and the advisory board of the department. The intent is to promote the use of data to inform strategic decisions within the department and allow our curriculum to meet the demands of the profession within our state and region.

Results for Academic Year 2012-13

For the BSSW program, Field data were collected, and faculty considered whether or not remedial action was required for those competencies where fewer than 80% of students attained the benchmark. With three semesters of aggregated data, four competencies may merit additional attention.

80% of the students attained Competency #3 (applying critical thinking) and Competency #9 (responding to changing contexts) exactly at the benchmark. A much lower percentage, at 70%, attained Competency #6 (the research competency) and Competency #8 (policy practice) at 74%. These last two competency areas are typically among those that challenge social work students and programs. See the next subsection for information about how these data were used to inform program changes.

Statistical analyses comparing field instructor and student self-ratings on the Practice Behavior Rating Scale have also been completed for all three semesters for Field Education. For each semester, end-of-semester mean competency scores from field instructors and students were compared using an independent samples t-test. Within each of the semesters, there were no statistically significant differences between field instructor and student ratings (p<.05). This finding may support the assumption that instructors and students interpret the scale in a fairly consistent way.

Next, mean competency scores for both field instructors and students were compared across semesters for each program using a one-way ANOVA analysis. For the BSSW Program, there were no statistically significant differences between the cohorts in Field Education over the three-semester time frame (p<.05). This is not an unexpected finding, given the consistency of the on-campus student population in the BSSW Program.

The pre-test COAT survey data collected pointed to some concerns related to student advising. See subsection below for more information about how these data were used to inform program changes.

How the Program Has Used These Data to “Close the Loop”

Each semester, the department’s Administrative Team (the Chair, Program Directors, and the Assessment Coordinator) works as a coordinating body in concert with the BSSW Committee to develop
plans to utilizing assessment data to improve curriculum, field education, and other aspects of the BSSW program that may need improvement.

Pre-test COAT survey data were used to develop faculty in-service training around student advisement. This training was implemented at the beginning of the fall semester 2012. Based upon subsequent data, it appears that there has been some improvement regarding student satisfaction with advisement processes. In addition, fewer issues requiring administrative attention emerged around faculty advisement during the 2012-2013 academic year.

When reviewing COAT survey and field education data, it was determined that the use of research to inform practice (Competency #6) and engaging with policy (Competency #8) have been areas that are consistently below our desired outcome level. In response to this finding, we have made the following changes:

- doubled sectioned the undergraduate research class, resulting in smaller class sizes, and allowing more opportunity for more intensive practice behavior skill development
- revised the research syllabus and course to place a greater emphasis on applied research within agency settings
- changed the undergraduate research requirement from a three-credit course to a four-credit course
- double-sectioned the undergraduate policy course
- initiated “Lunch in the Field” monthly for field instructors with a special emphasis on incorporation of research and policy competencies into the filed education setting
Plan for Assessment of Student Learning
Y2012-Y2013

Department: Social Work

Program: BSSW

Background

The Bachelor of Social Work (BSSW) program has been actively involved with assessment processes in response to new standards implemented by our accreditation organization, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), and the promotion of student learning outcomes. The plan below outlines the BSSW program’s assessment process which flows from our mission statement, program goals and our competencies and practice behaviors. These competencies and practice behaviors are key elements of our accountability relationship with our accreditation organization, CSWE.

Mission Statement

The University of North Dakota Bachelors of Science in Social Work Program provides student with knowledge, values, and skills for generalist social work, with an emphasis culturally responsive practice in rural communities.

The Department of Social Work has dedicated itself to teaching students strategies for creating and sustaining social and economic justice for over 50 years. The mission statement recognizes our roots in public education and meeting the needs of rural communities. Our clear intention is to prepare students for entry level practice in many environments. The BSSW program’s mission statements is grounded in social work values. Education for service and leadership in the field, and culturally responsive practice are the cornerstone. Recognizing that on-going professional development must occur is also stated.

Program Goals

1) Build upon students’ liberal arts foundation to provide the knowledge, values and skills necessary for competent social work generalist practice.
2) Prepare students for culturally responsive practice in rural communities.
3) Prepare students for service and leadership within the community and the social work profession.
4) Prepare students for continued professional development opportunities.

Program Structure

The Bachelor of Science in Social Work (BSSW) program is structured to prepare students to enter generalist practice environments. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in 2008 implemented new Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). These standards have
promoted the movement towards a competency-based curriculum that emphasizes the
development of practice behaviors and skills for students. The Council on Social Work
Education’s Commission on Accreditation demands that student learning outcome assessments
be integrated into the overall curriculum. The EPAS standards outline the competencies and
practice behaviors that undergraduates must demonstrate mastery of during the course of their
academic study. These competencies and practice behaviors have been integrated into the BSSW
program course syllabi.

The competencies and practice behaviors are presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Practice Behaviors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly</td>
<td>1 – advocate for client access to the services of social work</td>
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<td>2 – practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 – attend to professional roles and boundaries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4 – demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication</td>
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<td>5 – engage in career-long learning</td>
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<td>6 – use supervision and consultation</td>
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<td>Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice</td>
<td>1. recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>guide practice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Statement of Principles</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments</td>
<td>1. distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including</td>
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<td>research-based knowledge and practice wisdom</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Engage diversity and difference in practice | 1. recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power  
2. gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups  
3. recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences  
4. view themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Advance human rights and social and economic justice | 1. understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination  
2. advocate for human rights and social and economic justice  
3. engage in practices that advance social and economic justice |
| Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research | 1. use practice experiences to inform scientific inquiry  
2. use research evidence to inform practice |
| Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment | 1. utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention and evaluation  
2. critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment |
| Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services | 1. analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being  
2. collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action |
| Respond to contexts that shape practice | 1. continually discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services  
2. provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services |
| Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities | Engagement 1. substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, |
Curriculum Assessment Plan

The EPAS standards require that social work programs conduct periodic assessments of students to ensure that students acquire the competencies needed for effective generalist practice. In response to this standard the BSSW program uses two measures to track the mastery of practice competencies with one measure being a direct assessment of student learning. These measures include the use of an indirect measure that is a self-efficacy survey and a direct measure that is the field evaluation. A self-efficacy survey was implemented during the spring semester based of 2012. The survey being used is the Course Objective Assessment Tool (COAT). This survey was developed by the University of St. Thomas and is being used with permission. Of significance is the requirement that the University of North Dakota submit a self-study in March 2013 that includes one years’ worth of assessment data. The Department of Social Work will be using the 2012 calendar year for our data collection year. The use of the self-efficacy scale will however continue beyond the 2012 data collection year.

The COAT is a self-rating survey given to students upon admission to the program and again just before graduation. The COAT was derived from the course competencies and the corresponding practice behaviors delineated by the Council on Social Work Education. There are two benchmarks related to the COAT survey. The first is that there will be a statistically significant change in perceived competencies between entering and exiting students. The second benchmark is that at least 75% of exiting seniors will rate themselves an average score of 4.0 or higher on each competency. The results are analyzed each semester and a full report of results is shared.
with key constituents on a regular basis. These constituencies include departmental Faculty and Students, Field Instructors, Departmental Advisory Board members, College and University committees and others who wish to view the results. The survey also includes student perceptions on the implicit curriculum including advisement, responsiveness of departmental administration and faculty, curriculum and respect for diversity.

Field Assessment Plan

The Field Education Program is viewed by the Council on Social Work Education to be the “signature pedagogy” of social work education, and is the capstone course for the Bachelor of Social Work degree. To assure that students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of the core competencies, they are instructed to develop a Learning Plan with their Field Instructor and Faculty Field Liaison.

The learning plan is based on the 10 competencies (outlined above) and integrated throughout the curriculum. Each competency has identified practice behaviors specific to the competency. The Field Instructor helps the student identify practice opportunities, including timelines, related to the competency which will be identified and assessed during the semester in concert with an assigned faculty liaison from the Department of Social Work. The practice behaviors are closely related to each other and may be addressed with the same internship activities.

The students are then evaluated by their field instructor assessing the student’s growth and development of the 10 competency areas. Field instructors are trained on the use of this evaluation instrument and learning plan. Guidance is provided on the direct assessment aspects as part of their orientation training. By the end of the internship, the student will have demonstrated competency in each of the arenas of performance as a generalist social worker. For students who do not demonstrate the designated benchmark in any practice behavior, the instructors are asked to make comments, and outline specific plans to support student need for development in these areas. For students who are unable to meet the benchmark on practice behaviors across three or more competencies, a remedial plan is required. If there is a need for a remedial plan to assist the student in achieving a competency, the Faculty Liaison will meet with the student and field instructor to develop the plan. Students may exceed a benchmark if they meet the criteria defined in practice behaviors.

For each evaluation item, BSSW students are rated according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No Knowledge:</th>
<th>Knows:</th>
<th>Knows How:</th>
<th>Shows How:</th>
<th>Does:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Student has no knowledge at all.</td>
<td>Student knows what is required to carry out professional functions.</td>
<td>Student knows how to use the knowledge that has been accumulated and is able to verbally describe the process.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates the “know how” with support and/or supervision.</td>
<td>Student can demonstrate the behavior independently.</td>
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</table>

*Desired benchmark for first half of internship. **Desired benchmark for second half of internship.
Student evaluation is intended to give the student feedback about her or his performance. Final scores will contribute to the determination of final grade (Pass/Fail). While enrolled in field, students participate in an integrative seminar allowing faculty to monitor the placement and the learning that is occurring.
DEPARTMENTAL PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING
2004-2005 ACADEMIC YEAR AND BEYOND

Department: Social Work

Programs: BSSW and MSW

Mission Statement

North Dakota, and the region surrounding North Dakota, is characterized by large, agriculturally dependent areas and small towns, as well as small cities which support agriculture along with other economic pursuits. The populations of the more rural areas are often aging, making access to services and opportunities more difficult. The small cities and American Indian populations of the state contain larger proportions of children and youth. Groups, such as American Indians and gays and lesbians, have been and continue to be subject to discrimination and injustice. Economic, social, and recreational opportunities are often lacking in the region.

The Department of Social Work has been established to serve this region, in part with the goal of reducing these problems and injustices and enhancing the quality of life within the region. The Department envisions a future state of North Dakota, along with the surrounding region, in which all people will have the opportunity to maximize their fulfillment. This means that basic needs and the capability of organizations to address these needs will be met so that the viability and vitality of communities will be enhanced. The Department specifically envisions a better life for those who have been disadvantaged or subject to social injustice, including but not limited to rural people, American Indians, Hispanics, the elderly, children and youth (as well as their families), gays and lesbians, and people with disabilities.

To these ends, it is the mission of the Department of Social Work to provide education to prepare professional service providers to develop knowledge, through research, and to provide service, technical assistance, and advocacy which will serve the region by addressing significant human needs and injustices that exist. The Department of Social Work will contain and support programs that provide personnel, knowledge and assistance for meeting the needs of the people, groups, families, organizations, and communities of the region. This includes educational programs and training programs, along with centers which support research and service. In this frontier area,
learning, service, and assistance must be delivered flexibly, on campus as well as to areas distant from the Grand Forks campus.

Consistent with this mission, the Department of Social Work will support social work education as well as research and training programs. Each of these programs and centers shall establish its own mission consistent with the general mission stated above. Each program may also maintain additional documentation of the elaboration and specification of the individual program mission and particular contributions to the department mission.

The Department of Social Work contains educational programs and service centers which are intended to provide a strong knowledge base and well-trained personnel that together promote the quality of life and viability of social structures of the people of North Dakota and the region.

**Program Structure**

The Bachelor of Science in Social Work (BSSW) and the Master of Social Work (MSW) programs are structured as generalist programs. There are two main components, the foundation and the concentration. The foundation consists of either the required BSSW curriculum, or an alternative set of MSW course for those who have not completed a foundation in a BSSW program. The concentration consists of the advanced generalist curriculum of the MSW program. Accreditation of social work programs requires objectives which must be the basis of the required curriculum. The objectives for each level are presented in the following table.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Foundation Objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Use critical thinking as an entry level professional social worker.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Understand the value base of social work, and practice based on social work’s ethical standards and principles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to age, class, color, culture, ability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice, especially in a region with sparsely populated areas, with women, and with people who are Native American.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Understand and interpret the history of the social work profession, including the long heritage of bachelors’ level social work education in the Midwest, and social work’s contemporary structures and issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice using the problem solving approach with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations as an entry level social worker. This includes the entire process of intervening, from assessment to implementation to evaluation of practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities. Broad frameworks, such as systems theory and conflict theory, are presented, as well as those frameworks designed to support practice, such as cognitive behavioral theory and role theory.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Analyze, formulate, and influence social policies.</td>
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<td>9. Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to entry level practice, and evaluate entry level practice interventions.</td>
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<td>10. Use communication skills appropriately and differentially with clients (individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations) and colleagues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Use supervision and consultation appropriate to entry level social work practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change</td>
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**Advanced Concentration Objectives**

1. Use critical thinking skills when engaging in advanced generalist practice.
2. Conduct advanced generalist practice within the value base of social work, and practice based on social work’s ethical standards and principles.
3. Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to age, class, color, culture, ability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice, especially in a region with sparsely populated areas, with women, and with people who are Native American.
5. Understand the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues and be able to use this knowledge to inform current practice.
6. Apply the knowledge and skills of this program’s advanced generalist social work perspective to practice with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations.
7. Understand traditional theories regarding atypical development of systems and systems change and be able to critically evaluate those theories using research and current theories such as complexity theory.
8. Complete a policy analysis and develop strategies for policy change.
10. Use communication skills effectively with a variety of clients.
11. Demonstrate the professional use of self.
12. Synthesize knowledge learned across MSW classes and apply it in practice settings.
13. Provide practice leadership across levels of client systems, particularly in rural settings.

**State of Assessment**

The Department of Social Work has been executing an assessment program established in 1996. That program has yielded large amounts of student self-report data. That data will constitute the program assessment for a reaccreditation self-study to be submitted in the summer of 2006. The plan below will also be part of that self-study, and will define assessment going forward from 2006.
### Assessment Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Goals &amp; Objectives</th>
<th>Educational Experiences</th>
<th>Assessment Methods</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Use of Results and Process for Documentation &amp; Decision-Making</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are our program’s goals and objectives? What will students be able to think, know, do or feel because of a given educational experience?</td>
<td>How will the goals and objectives be met? What program experiences (courses, seminars, research, etc.) help students achieve the desired outcomes?</td>
<td>What assessment methods will we use to collect data about what our students have learned? What are our criteria for success? How will we know the objectives have been met? What level of performance meets each objective? How will we interpret and evaluate the data?</td>
<td>When will we collect data? How often?</td>
<td>Who will be responsible for collecting, interpreting and reporting the results?</td>
<td>How will the results of assessment be used? Who needs to know the results? How can we convince them that the goals and objectives have been met? How can we improve our program and assessment process?</td>
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<tr>
<td>See above table of objectives.</td>
<td>Each required course will specify an adaptation of most or all of the above objectives for either the foundation or concentration. Then, a series of activities ranging from theorizing to social work practice will be specified in each course in relation to each relevant objective.</td>
<td>We will use emphasize two kinds of data. One will be testing data, on objective tests which we will develop. The other will be the use of rubrics in capstone areas. We will interpret the results in relative terms, “on a curve,” seeking to improve areas that seem to represent low achievement. We will not assume an ability to rationally establish or empirically predict levels of performance.</td>
<td>We will collect data for every cohort of graduates, at least “after” data near graduation. This will vary, depending on the schedule for graduation.</td>
<td>The Department will maintain an assessment committee and will designate a responsible person, normally the chair of the committee, to oversee data collection and application.</td>
<td>The faculty who teach the various courses and curriculum areas will need to know the results of assessment. They will compare the relevant areas of the curriculum, and apparent levels of achievement. Then, they will discuss reform of the curriculum, and undertake such reform in an attempt to reinforce areas of high achievement and improve areas of low achievement.</td>
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