

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2014-15 (Academic Year)

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT Social Work

DATE 4/6/2016

PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Ken Flanagan, Devon Hansen, Shari Nelson

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-----|-------------|----|-------------|---------------|
| • Were any goals referenced? | <u>X</u> | Yes | <u> </u> | No | <u> </u> | Qualified Y/N |
| • If so, were goals well-articulated? | <u>X</u> | Yes | <u> </u> | No | <u> </u> | Qualified Y/N |
| • Do goals address student learning? | <u>X</u> | Yes | <u> </u> | No | <u> </u> | Qualified Y/N |

Comments:

The department has an assessment plan, dated October 2013, which clearly outlines the department's goals, assessment methods, result, and closing the loop activities. The plan states "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." These ten competencies are listed below:

- 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: Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.*

These competencies are required by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)'s Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to be integrated into the overall BSW curriculum.

In addition to program goals, please also consider UND's institutional and Essential Studies goals for student learning (shown in alignment within parentheses). Identify UND/Essential Studies goals which are similar to the referenced program goals.

- | | | |
|----------|----|--|
| <u>X</u> | 1. | Communication – written or oral (“able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience”) |
| <u>X</u> | 2. | Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or “be intellectually curious”; analyze, synthesize, evaluate) |
| <u>X</u> | 3. | Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or “be intellectually creative”; explore, discover, engage) |
| <u>X</u> | 4. | Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning (“apply empirical data...analyze graphical information”) |
| <u>X</u> | 5. | Information literacy (“be able to access and evaluate...for effective, efficient, and ethical use”) |
| <u>X</u> | 6. | Diversity (“demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding...”) |
| <u>X</u> | 7. | Lifelong learning (“commit themselves to lifelong learning”) |
| <u>X</u> | 8. | Service/citizenship (“share responsibility both for their communities and for the world”) |

Comments regarding program goals and alignment with institutional and Essential Studies goals:

In the plan itself, it would be helpful to see what the practice behaviors are, so that the expected results for meeting a goal are clear. For example, without knowledge of the practice behaviors, it is difficult for an outside reader to see the alignment with Essential Studies Goal #3 (Thinking and Reasoning – Critical Thinking). However, with input from a UAC Committee member from the Social Work department, it was confirmed that this alignment is apparent within the practice behaviors.

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

Were any specific assessment methods referenced?	<u>X</u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• If so, were specifically chosen assessment methods appropriately aligned with individual goals?	<u>X</u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a “multiple measures” approach?	<u>X</u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N

Comments:

The department’s assessment plan identifies the following assessment methods:

Direct

A field evaluation is conducted by the field instructor at the midpoint of the field experience and again at its conclusion. (The field education program is the capstone course in the degree program. Students develop a learning plan that is based on the ten competency areas and practice behaviors.) The evaluation assesses each practice behavior grouped by competency using a rubric instrument. Benchmarks of 80%, achieving at least a 3.5 (on a 5-point scale) are set in accordance with CSWE requirements. “For students who are unable to meet the benchmark on practice behaviors across three or more competencies, a remedial plan is required.”

Indirect

- 1. Self-Efficacy Survey (Course Outcome Assessment Tool/COAT)– This survey is given to students upon admission to the program, and again just before graduation. This scale was derived from the course competencies and the practice behaviors identified by CSWE.*
- 2. Self-Assessment – Students complete a self-assessment of their practice behaviors at midterm and the completion of the experience using the same rubric as the field instructors.*

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Were any assessment results reported?	<u>X</u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals?	<u>X</u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement?	<u>X</u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• Were the results tied to goals of student learning?	<u>X</u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N

Comments:

Course Outcome Assessment Tool/COAT (Indirect)

The goal 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 (using a 5-point Likert scale). Results show that, on the most recent survey, scores improved on nearly every measure, with the exception of lower scores in areas of engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation.

Field Evaluation (Direct)

The results clearly indicate in which of the competency areas an average of 80% of students receiving a 3.5 was not attained.

In addition to program goals, some assessment results may be applicable to institutional and Essential Studies goals. Please identify those results which are applicable to institutional/Essential Studies goal achievement. For indicated items, please describe findings below.

<u> X </u>	1. Communication – written or oral (“able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience”)
<u> X </u>	2. Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or “be intellectually curious”; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)
<u> X </u>	3. Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or “be intellectually creative”; explore, discover, engage)
<u> X </u>	4. Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning (“apply empirical data...analyze graphical information”)
<u> X </u>	5. Information literacy (“be able to access and evaluate...for effective, efficient, and ethical use”)
<u> X </u>	6. Diversity (“demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding...”)
<u> </u>	7. Lifelong learning (“commit themselves to lifelong learning”)
<u> X </u>	8. Service/citizenship (“share responsibility both for their communities and for the world”)

Comments regarding results and the application of results to programmatic, institutional, and Essential Studies goals:

Listing the practice behaviors will make it helpful to see the alignment with the Essential Studies goals. (ex. Lifelong learning). Our understanding from committee member, Ken Flanagan, is that Lifelong Learning is embedded in the competency areas but this is difficult to see to an outside reader. As indicated in Section I, it would be beneficial to see the practice behaviors reported in the results.

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken?	<u> X </u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• If so, were they based on assessment results?	<u> X </u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• If so, do curricular or other improvements/changes arising from assessment results directly address goals for student learning?	<u> X </u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N

Comments:

The Social Work Department’s annual report indicates that the department will continue to discuss ways of increasing competency scores in those areas not reaching the 80% benchmark. In addition, the report indicates that the “department’s Administrative Team (the Chair, Programs Directors, and the Assessment Coordinator) works as a coordinating body, in concert with the BSSW Committee, to develop plans to utilize assessment data to improve curriculum, field education, and other aspects of the BSSW program that may need improvement.” Per Ken Flanagan, UAC committee member, the committee also learned that changes were made to the research course; i.e. statistics were taken out of the course and now students take a stats course outside of the department.

In addition, based on the discovery that the current self-assessment measure, COAT, is an “imperfect fit” with their program, the department has made the decision to move to a new nationally-normed tool that is being used by BSSW programs in many schools. They plan to report on the new measures in their next accreditation cycle.

SUMMARY

Strengths

<u> X </u>	A specific plan for assessment is in place.
<u> X </u>	Student learning goals are well-articulated.
<u> X </u>	Assessment methods are clearly described.
<u> X </u>	Assessment methods are appropriately selected.
<u> X </u>	Assessment methods are well-implemented.
<u> X </u>	Direct and indirect methods are implemented.
<u> X </u>	Results are reported.
<u> X </u>	Results are tied to closing the loop. (Decision-making is tied to evidence.)

Areas for Improvement

<u> </u>	No specific plan for assessment is in place.
<u> </u>	Student learning goals are not well-articulated.
<u> </u>	Assessment methods are not clearly described.
<u> </u>	Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
<u> </u>	Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
<u> </u>	A single type of assessment methods predominates.
<u> </u>	No results are reported.
<u> </u>	Results are not clearly tied to closing the loop. (Decision-making is not directly tied to evidence.)

OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is clear that the Social Work department takes student learning outcomes and assessment seriously in its undergraduate program, and it is to be commended on its assessment methods and data collection. As indicated in the assessment report, faculty work consistently to link practice behaviors to assignments and to adjust curriculum as needed to reach their benchmarks. It is again encouraged to clearly specify the practice behaviors under each competency area to make alignment clearer to the outside reader.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

☒ Annual assessment report
☒ Assessment plan (as posted)
☒ Previous assessment review
☐ Other (please describe)

Reviewers	Name	<u>Shari Nelson</u>	<u>Devon Hansen</u>	<u>Ken Flanagan</u>
	Department	<u>Student Academic Services</u>	<u>Geography</u>	<u>Social Work</u>
	Phone Number	<u>777-0562</u>	<u>777-4587</u>	<u>777-2669</u>
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Section 1: Y Section 2: Y Section 3: Y Section 4: Y

Coding Key:

Y = yes, this is done appropriately and well (bearing in mind the kind of program(s) reviewed and recognizing that assessment is a cyclical process, i.e., with additional kinds of data to be collected in other years)
Q = qualified yes as action or progress is apparent; however, evidence is lacking that this is completely and appropriately done
N= no, it is unclear whether it was done at all, or it is not done in relationship to student learning

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2014-15 (Academic Year)

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT Social Work

DATE 4/19/16

PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW Master of Social Work (MSW)

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Ken Flanagan, Devon Hansen, Shari Nelson

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-----|-------------|----|-------------|---------------|
| • Were any goals referenced? | <u>X</u> | Yes | <u> </u> | No | <u> </u> | Qualified Y/N |
| • If so, were goals well-articulated? | <u>X</u> | Yes | <u> </u> | No | <u> </u> | Qualified Y/N |
| • Do goals address student learning? | <u>X</u> | Yes | <u> </u> | No | <u> </u> | Qualified Y/N |

Comments:

The MSW program has two programs:

- *The **MSW Foundation Program** is designed for individuals without a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) but who have a bachelor's degree in a related field (only offered through the distance program).*
- *The **MSW Concentration Program** requires the individual to have completed their Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree from a CSWE (Council on Social Work Education) accredited program prior to being accepted into the MSW program.*

The department's October, 2013 assessment plan indicates that they reviewed the assessment process and implemented the new process during the calendar year 2012.

Similar to the Bachelor of Social, "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." These ten competencies are listed below:

- 2.1.1: Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.*
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- 2.1.9: Respond to contexts that shape practice.*
- 2.1.10: Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.*

In the plan itself, it would be helpful to see what the practice behaviors are, so that the expected results for meeting a goal are clear. However, with input from a UAC Committee member from the Social Work department, it was confirmed that this alignment is apparent within the practice behaviors.

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

Were any specific assessment methods referenced?	<u> X </u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• If so, were specifically chosen assessment methods appropriately aligned with individual goals?	<u> X </u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a “multiple measures” approach?	<u> X </u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N

Comments:

In 2012, the MSW committee assigned several of the 41 different practice behaviors to each of the core courses. Each practice behavior was covered by a minimum of two courses and they were measured by the following measures:

Direct: *Instructors used a rubric rate student attainment of specific practice behavior.*

- *Foundation program - Each practice behavior is assessed at least twice (classroom and field).*
- *Concentration program – Each practice behavior is assessed at least three times (classroom, field, and comprehensive exam).at the end of each core graduate course.*

Indirect: *Using a retrospective pre/post questionnaire, at the end of each core graduate course and in the field, students rated themselves on the attainment of the specific practice behavior(s).*

Competency benchmarks are as follows:

- *Courses*
 - *3.0 for both the foundation and concentration*
- *Field internship*
 - *Midterm Evaluation*
 - *Mean rating of at least 2.0 for each competency in order to progress without remediation through field placement.*
 - *Internship Completion*
 - *Foundation – Field instructor mean rating of 3.50 must be met.*
 - *Concentration – 3.00 has been established as the benchmark.*
 - *Students (both foundation and concentration) will not receive a passing grade for cumulative scores below 2.00.*
- *Comprehensive exam*
 - *Students must “meet expectation” for each of the ten competencies in order to pass the exam.*

It would be helpful to see the rubric used in the courses and field internship, as without this information, it is difficult to understand the meanings of the benchmarks.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Were any assessment results reported?	<u> X </u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals?	<u> X </u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement?	<u> X </u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• Were the results tied to goals of student learning?	<u> X </u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N

Comments:

The department's assessment report is very transparent in its reporting of results indicating that "percentage of students achieving benchmark decreased in several areas from the previous year, with two areas where benchmark attainment was not adequate." A sample of the results in areas receiving low ratings is indicated below:

- Contexts That Shape Practice = 54% overall field instructor ratings in concentration segment of program
- Engage, Assess, Intervene, and Evaluate with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities = 48% instructor ratings in foundation and 62% in concentration

With both of the above, substantial improvement was evidenced at the conclusion of the field placements (96% in foundation and 93% in concentration).

As referenced in the report, it appears clear to the department and faculty how the results affirm achievement of goals and they indicate need for improvement. Again, however, including rating rubrics would make this more apparent to the outside reader who does not know what the rankings refer to, i.e. 2.50, 3.00, 3.50.

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken?	<u>X</u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• If so, were they based on assessment results?	<u>X</u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N
• If so, do curricular or other improvements/changes arising from assessment results directly address goals for student learning?	<u>X</u>	Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> </u>	Qualified Y/N

Comments:

The assessment report indicates that no significant changes were made regarding assessment methods, as the MSW committee felt the instruments and methods were still useful and valid. The committee did engage in a closing the loop session and graduate faculty continue to receive practice behavior ratings on students in every course. Based on this data, modifications to course structure and/or teaching emphasis are made in a formative fashion.

The department also had a discussion regarding scales and benchmark attainment, which was helpful in norming new instructors' responses and increasing inter-rater reliability.

SUMMARY

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Areas for Improvement</i>
<u>X</u> A specific plan for assessment is in place.	<u> </u> No specific plan for assessment is in place.
<u>X</u> Student learning goals are well-articulated.	<u> </u> Student learning goals are not well-articulated.
<u>X</u> Assessment methods are clearly described.	<u> </u> Assessment methods are not clearly described.
<u>X</u> Assessment methods are appropriately selected.	<u> </u> Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
<u>X</u> Assessment methods are well-implemented.	<u> </u> Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
<u>X</u> Direct and indirect methods are implemented.	<u> </u> A single type of assessment methods predominates.
<u>X</u> Results are reported.	<u> </u> No results are reported.
<u>X</u> Results are tied to closing the loop. (Decision-making is tied to evidence.)	<u> </u> Results are not clearly tied to closing the loop. (Decision-making is not directly tied to evidence.)

OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The department's assessment plan and corresponding report is well written and easy to read. It is clear that the department is committed to assessment and that its faculty are engaged and invested in the assessment cycle. This is reflected by to ratings from the faculty such as, "Based on these numbers, I think the students do a fairly good job of recognizing the changes that occur in these behaviors. My assessment of how they are doing is a bit higher than theirs, which tells me I can strengthen how we talk about the behaviors and how they can evaluate what they are doing."

It is also clear the department and its faculty continually monitor its assessment plan and methods to ensure that the plan and methods stay current and align with the curriculum and the requirements of its accrediting body.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

 X Annual assessment report
 X Assessment plan (as posted)
 X Previous assessment review
 Other (please describe)

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