

# Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements

## National Catholic School of Social Service (NCSSS)

### Master of Social Work (MSW)

#### Key Assessment Findings

2010-2011

#### *Comprehensive Exams*

Comprehensive exams are required for all MSW students at the end of the foundation year. The exam covers the core knowledge base of each required course.

#### *Foundation Year Comprehensive Exams*

The foundation year comprehensive exam consists of five sections: policy, macro practice, research, diversity and oppression, and assessment and intervention. All questions refer to a case example that is common across all students. In order to pass, a minimum of 70% for each section, and an overall minimum of 80% must be achieved. If these two criteria are not achieved the student has the options of taking an oral exam in which each student is offered the opportunity to show their grasp of the content areas they did not pass. If the oral exam is not a pass, the student can retake the written exam during the summer and must pass in order to move into the advanced year.

For the academic year 2010-2011, 85 students took the foundation year comprehensive exam. The pass rate at the written exam was 91.7% with 8.3% failing. Of those who took the oral exam, 71% passed with 29% failing. Of those who were scheduled to take the second written exam 50%, or one student, did take the exam and this student failed and withdrew from the MSW program. The one student who decided not to take the second written exam also withdrew from the MSW program. Please see Table 1 for results. Table 2 provides further detail about the comprehensive exams.

Table 1

*Foundation Year Comprehensive Exam Pass Rate by Section and Overall (n = 85)*

	Failed 1 Written Exam	Passed Written Exam	Passed Oral Exam	Passed second Written Exam
Foundation Year Comprehensive Exam	8.3%	91.7%	71.4%	0.0%

Table 2:

*Foundation Year Comprehensive Exam Pass Rate by Section and Overall (n = 85)*

Name of Section		Points	Mean (S.D.)	Below Expectations less than 70% on one or less than 80% on Total	Meets or Exceeds Expectations
Section I	Policy	25	22.5 (3.1)	3.5%	96.5
Section II	Macro Practice	20	18.4 (2.1)	3.5%	96.5
Section III	Research	10	8.9 (0.9)	4.7%	95.3
Section IV	Diversity and Oppression	15	13.7 (0.9)	1.2%	98.8
Section V	Assessment and Intervention	30	25.6 (3.4)	3.5%	96.5
Overall		100	89.1 (6.8)	8.3%	91.7%

### ***Field Evaluation Findings***

#### **Foundation Year**

In 2010-2011, we had a total of 100 foundation year MSW students begin their field internships. Of these students, 71 were full-time, 10 changed to part-time, dropping their internships, withdrew, or took leaves of absence. We had 61 full-time foundation year students complete their field internships. We had 29 part-time students in field. Of these, six withdrew, took a leave of absence mid-year, or were terminated.

A total of 84 foundation year students successfully completed their internships – this is 84% of the 100 students who began placements in the fall semester.

#### **Advanced Year**

In 2010-2011, we had a total of 94 advanced year MSW students begin their field internships. The breakdown by full-time/part-time/advanced standing was as follows:

- 65 full-time
- 10 part-time
- 18 advanced standing full-time
- 1 advanced standing part-time

There were two full-time students who dropped out of field, requested a leave of absence, or changed to part-time status. Three part-time advanced year students dropped field or withdrew.

A total of 90 advanced year students completed field, 95.7% of 94.

### **Curricular Improvements**

For the upcoming year our curriculum improvements include the offering of two new courses in the advanced year. These courses are *Drug Abuse: Public Health and Public Policy*

*Consideration and Instrument Development, Measurement, and Use: The Theory and Practice.* The first new course is being added as the topic is important to social workers, in both the clinical and social change concentrations. The second course is being developed to strengthen the research foundation for advanced year students. Subsequent to our last reaffirmation, the Council on Social Work Education modified the standards that all social work programs must respond to in their self-studies. Once we have developed competency statements to replace the objectives, we will review our assessment measures and develop new rubrics.