

National Catholic School of Social Service (NCSSS) Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements

Master's Program in Social Work (MSW)

Assessment Measures

NCSSS has maintained an ongoing commitment to evaluating the outcomes of all of its educational programs and to using assessment findings to identify and sustain program strengths and inform program changes. The NCSSS MSW Program uses the following measures to assess student learning outcomes:

1. Admission
2. Advanced standing/qualifying examinations
3. Course work/GPA
4. Field Student Self-Assessment
5. Foundation Student Field Evaluation
6. Foundation comprehensive examination
7. Foundation Exit Survey
8. Advanced Year Field Evaluations
9. Concentration comprehensive examination
10. M.S.W. thesis option:
11. Graduation Exit Survey (GES)
12. Student course/faculty evaluations
13. Alumni Survey (AS)
14. Licensed Graduate Social Work (LGSW) Pass Rates

Assessment Findings Foundation Year

Foundation Field Student Self-Assessment and Field Educator Assessment Forms

The Foundation “Field Student Self-Assessment” and “Field Educator Assessment” gather ratings on student attainment of Foundation Curriculum Objectives from the perspective of both students and Field Educators. The benchmark for success has been set at 3, or “adequate.” This assessment process will be used in subsequent years to allow for yearly comparisons and track changes over time, and is expected to play a key role in ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Foundation Curriculum Objectives.

Assessment information from the MSW Foundation Curriculum Field Student Self-Assessment and Field Educator Assessment forms is available for the 2006-2007 academic year. 58 students and 30 Field Educators provided ratings on these outcome measures, representing a 91% and 47% participation rate, respectively. Review of these data indicates that both students and Field Educators generally report successful student attainment of expected competencies. Specifically, student self-ratings showed means of greater than the benchmark (3 or “adequate”) for all 12 MSW Foundation Program Objectives. Field Educators’ ratings of student competencies also reached the benchmark for all program objectives. **It should be noted that for 11 of the 12 program objectives, Field Educators rated students higher than students rated themselves.**

Analysis included identification of the **objectives rated as the “top three”** among both students and Field Educators. The program objectives rated highest by students were program objectives **#7** (*Practices with sensitivity and respect for all client differences, M = 4.52*), **#3** (*Engage in practice that is grounded in the values and ethics of the profession, M = 4.18*), and **#8** (*Use appropriate communication skills with clients, colleagues, and communities, M = 4.13*). Field Educators also rated program objectives **#7** and **#3** as the top two ($M = 4.58$ and $M = 4.40$, respectively), but rated objective **#12** (*Demonstrate the professional use of self as adult learners in ongoing supervision and consultation, M = 4.32*) as the third highest.

Students and field instructors were not in agreement as to the **two lowest rated objectives**, with students rating program objective **#2** the lowest (*Apply critical thinking skills to policy analysis, administration and management, M = 3.31*), followed by objective **#1** (*Apply critical thinking skills to analysis of various theories of development and change in the assessment of client system needs, and the facilitation of client system growth., M = 3.43*), whereas Field Educators rated objective **#10** (*Apply critical thinking skills to the evaluation of research and its application to practice, M = 3.70*) and **#4** (*Place knowledge of the current structure and issues of society within the historical context of the profession, M = 3.73*) as the lowest.

Percentages of each rating also were examined to determine if the MSW Foundation Curriculum was achieving the **benchmark of “adequate” for the majority of students in all areas**. Review of student ratings showed that the majority (83.9% to 98.2%) of students reported ratings at or above the benchmark for each of the 12 program objectives, with ratings generally falling between 3 (“adequate”) and 5 (“excellent”). However, at least one student reported ratings below the benchmark on each program objective. Specifically, only 1 or 2 students (1.8% to 3.6%) rated program objectives **#1, #2, #3, #6, #9, #10, and #12** as 1 or “unsatisfactory”, and from 1 to 8 students (1.8% to 14.3%) rated objectives **#1, #2, and #4** through **#12** as 2 or “less than adequate.” In terms of Field Educator ratings, again a substantial majority (92.1% to 97.4%) rated all program objectives as meeting or exceeding the benchmark. Only 1 to 3 (2.6% to 7.9%) Field Educators rated 11 of the 12 program objectives as 2 or “less than adequate.” Objective **#7** (*Practice with respect and sensitivity to all client differences*) was the only exception to this, receiving ratings from 3 to 5 from all Field Educators. **No Field Educator rated a student as 1 or “unsatisfactory” for any of the 12 program objectives.**

These findings show that the majority of both student self-assessment and Field Educator ratings reveal at least adequate achievement of Foundation program objectives. Combined with the group mean ratings on each program objective, assessment data suggest that the MSW Foundation Curriculum has been successful in achieving expected student competencies.

Foundation Student Field Evaluation Form

All MSW Foundation students are evaluated by their Field Educators at the end of the spring semester after completing 480 hours of foundation field education. This assessment is conducted using a comprehensive, 47-item, 10-point “Student Field Evaluation” form. It contains 5 standardized sections (*Student Use of Self, Social Work Processes, Understanding of the Agency, Supervisory Process, and Professional Behaviors*) and 1 section that is individualized for each student (*Professional Skills*). Field Educators provide both quantitative ratings and qualitative feedback, including ratings on 16 “threshold items”, which are central to successful completion of field placement. Different areas of the Student Field Evaluation form allow assessment of various aspects of 9 of the 12 Foundation Program Objectives.

Table 1***Foundation Student Field Evaluation Form: Assessment Areas, Number of Total and Threshold Items, and Program Objectives Addressed***

| Assessment Area | Total Number of Items | Number of Threshold Items | Foundation Objectives Assessed |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Student Use of Self | 7 | 3 | #1, #2, #3, #7, #8, #11 |
| Social Work Processes | 11 | 4 | #1, #2, #6, #8 |
| Understanding of the Agency | 9 | 2 | #1, #2, #4 |
| Supervisory Process | 9 | 3 | #1, #2, #8, #12 |
| Professional Behavior | 11 | 4 | #1, #2, #3, #8 |
| Professional Skills | Varies | N/A | N/A |

Data from the Foundation Student Field Evaluation form have been compiled for the past seven years. NCSSS program faculty have set the benchmark for acceptable student performance as receiving a rating of 5 or more on each of the 16 threshold items included in the evaluation form. Table 2 shows percentages of students who passed, withdrew, or failed field for academic years from 2000-2001 to 2006-2007. **As indicated by the data below, although the majority of students achieved the targeted benchmark during all academic years, from 1% to 4% of students received a failing grade during four of these years.** The MSW Program considers these outcomes to be consistent with the professional gate-keeping responsibility of social work education. The higher percentages of students withdrawing (4% to 24%) reflect multiple factors, most often involving personal circumstances. Overall, these data reveal that students are generally obtaining targeted competencies that are operationalized in the field experience.

Table 2***Foundation Student Outcomes on the Student Field Evaluation Threshold Items***

| Academic Year | Percentage Passing | Percentage Withdrawing | Percentage Failing |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2006-2007 | 84%, <i>n</i> = 61 | 12%, <i>n</i> = 09 | 4%, <i>n</i> = 03 |
| 2005-2006 | 75%, <i>n</i> = 59 | 24%, <i>n</i> = 19 | 1%, <i>n</i> = 01 |
| 2004-2005 | 86%, <i>n</i> = 64 | 13%, <i>n</i> = 10 | 1%, <i>n</i> = 01 |
| 2003-2004 | 96%, <i>n</i> = 66 | 4%, <i>n</i> = 03 | 0 |
| 2002-2003 | 96%, <i>n</i> = 65 | 4%, <i>n</i> = 03 | 0 |
| 2001-2002 | 98%, <i>n</i> = 41 | 0 | 2%, <i>n</i> = 01 |
| 2000-2001 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 58 | 0 | 0 |

Foundation Comprehensive Examination

The MSW “Foundation Comprehensive Examination” is a 4-hour, in-class examination that students take in March of the year that they are enrolled in the *Foundation Field Education and Integrative Seminar* (SSS 674). It is comprised of five sections: *Micro Practice*, *Mezzo Practice*, *Research*, *Macro Practice*, and *Policy*. Different sections of the exam allow assessment of 8 of the 12 Foundation Program Objectives. Students must earn at least 80 out of a possible 100 points in order to pass the exam. If students fail the written examination, they have the opportunity to take an oral examination. Should a student fail the oral exam, he or she will have one more opportunity to take the written exam

in its entirety. A second oral examination is not offered. Students must demonstrate mastery of foundation content through a passing grade on the Foundation Comprehensive Examination before advancing in the program. Table 59 provides an overview of assessment areas and the Foundation Curriculum Objectives addressed by each area.

Table 3

Foundation Comprehensive Examination: Assessment Areas and Program Objectives Addressed

| Assessment Area | Foundation Objectives Assessed |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Micro Practice | #1, #6 |
| Mezzo Practice | #1, #5, #6, #7 |
| Research | #10 |
| Macro Practice | #2, #4, #6 |
| Policy | #2, #9 |

Data from the Foundation Comprehensive Examination are available for six years from 2001-2002 to 2006-2007 academic years. **The majority of students pass these exams**, although some must take an oral examination and/or a second written examination before they are successful. These results provide additional indicators of student competencies relative to the Foundation Curriculum Objectives.

Table 4

Student Outcomes on the Foundation Comprehensive Examination

| Academic Year | Written Exam: Pass/Fail | Oral Exam: Pass/Fail | Total Pass/Fail |
|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2006-2007 | 89% (n = 54)/ 11% (n = 7) | 71% (n = 5)/ 29% (n = 2) | 97% (n = 59)/ 3% (n = 2) |
| 2005-2006 | 88% (n = 53)/ 12% (n = 7) | 86% (n = 6)/ 4% (n = 1) | 98% (n = 59)/ 2% (n = 1) |
| 2004-2005 | 95% (n = 57)/ 5% (n = 3) | 100% (n = 3)/ 0 | 100% (n = 60)/ 0 |
| 2003-2004 | 94% (n = 61)/ 6% (n = 4) | 100% (n = 4)/ 0 | 100% (n = 65)/ 0 |
| 2002-2003 | 89% (n = 58)/ 11% (n = 7) | 75% (n = 3)/ 25% (n = 1) | 96% (n = 64)/ 4% (n = 1) |
| 2001-2002 | 95% (n = 37)/ 5% (n = 2) | 100% (n = 2)/ 0 | 100% (n = 39)/ 0 |

Foundation Exit Survey

The “Foundation Exit Survey” (FES) has been conducted at NCSSS for the past two academic years (2005-2006 and 2006-2007). The decision to collect data regarding Foundation Curriculum Objectives was based on the proximity of the survey to the completion of coursework. It was believed that this would yield more useful information about the Foundation Curriculum Objectives than the retrospective results the program had been obtaining from the Graduating Exit Survey (GES), as it gathers data one to two years following completion of foundation courses. Developed as a web-based

survey, the FES investigates four areas: 1) ratings on how well the Foundation Curriculum Objectives have been addressed; 2) experiences with five aspects of the School; 3) program strengths and areas for improvement; and 4) various demographic items. The specific items measuring the Foundation Curriculum Objectives are different for the two years based on modifications made to these objectives during 2006-2007.

The survey is distributed by the MSW Program Director who sends it to all upcoming advanced-level students after completion of their foundation courses. Students receive a short description of the purpose of the survey, statements regarding the voluntary and confidential nature of the survey, and directions to connect with a link to the survey. Items related to Foundation Curriculum Objectives used a 5-point response format: (1 = *very poorly*; 2 = *poorly*; 3 = *adequately*; 4 = *well*; 5 = *very well*). The stimulus question for quantitative data was “*How well has your experience at NCSSS addressed...?*” followed by a listing of the Foundation Curriculum Objectives. (See Appendix D for a copy of this survey instrument.)

Once data are analyzed, findings are presented to the MSW Program Committee for review during the first meeting of the following academic year. The Committee reviews the suggestions for improvements, makes suggestions as necessary, and votes to move the report to the full faculty. At the first full faculty meeting following the first MSW Program Committee Meeting the reports are dispersed and discussed.

Table 5 reports the results from the 35 respondents to the 2006-2007 Foundation Exit Survey, including means, standard deviations, and the range of scores for each of the 12 Foundation Curriculum Objectives. A review of these data indicates that, as a group, respondents felt that NCSSS addressed each objective at or above the benchmark of 3 or “adequately.”

Table 5

2006-2007 Foundation Exit Survey Results

| Foundation Program Objectives | Mean | S.D. | Range |
|---|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Apply critical thinking skills to analysis of various theories of development and change in the assessment of client system needs, and the facilitation of client system growth. | 3.51 | 1.20 | 1 - 5 |
| 2. Apply critical thinking skills to policy analysis, administration, and management. | 3.54 | 1.09 | 1 - 5 |
| 3. Engage in practice that is grounded in the values and ethics of the profession. | 4.11 | .93 | 1 - 5 |
| 4. Place knowledge of the current structure and issues of society within the historical context of the profession. | 4.03 | 1.04 | 1 - 5 |
| 5. Understand the effect of oppression and discrimination on client systems and apply this knowledge to the promotion of social justice. | 4.03 | .96 | 1 - 5 |
| 6. Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes. | 3.60 | .98 | 1 - 5 |
| 7. Practice with sensitivity and respect for all client differences. | 4.31 | .93 | 1 - 5 |
| 8. Use appropriate communication skills with clients, colleagues, and communities. | 3.80 | 1.05 | 1 - 5 |
| 9. Know the impact of government and agency policy on human systems, specifically on vulnerable populations. | 3.83 | .99 | 1 - 5 |
| 10. Apply critical thinking skills to the evaluation of research and its application to practice | 3.40 | 1.04 | 1 - 5 |
| 11. Demonstrate the professional use of the self in effective communication with | 3.59 | 1.13 | 1 - 5 |

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|--|------|------|-------|
| clients. | | | |
| 12. Demonstrate the professional use of self as adult learners in ongoing supervision and consultation | 3.60 | 1.19 | 1 - 5 |

Analysis included identification of the **objectives rated as the “top three”**. The program objectives rated highest by respondents were program objectives **#7** (*Practices with sensitivity and respect for all client differences, M = 4.31*) and **#3** (*Engage in practice that is grounded in the values and ethics of the profession, M = 4.11*), with objective **#4** (*Place knowledge of the current structure and issues of society within the historical context of the profession*) and **#5** (*Understand the effect of oppression and discrimination on client systems and apply this knowledge to the promotion of social justice*) as the third highest ($M = 4.03$ in both areas).

The **two lowest rated objectives** were objective **#2** (*Apply critical thinking skills to the evaluation of research and its application to practice, M = 3.40*) and **#1** (*Apply critical thinking skills to analysis of various theories of development and change in the assessment of client system needs, and the facilitation of client system growth, M = 3.51*). These findings are generally in agreement with findings from the “Field Student Self-Assessment” form, which also rated objectives **#3** (values and ethics) and **#7** (sensitivity and respect for differences) as two of the highest and objectives **#1** (critical thinking in analysis of human behavior and development theory) and **#10** (research methods) as the two lowest. This congruence is noteworthy in that the Foundation Exit Survey asks respondents to rate how well each objective *was addressed*, while the Field Student Self-Assessment asks students to indicate *their own perceived abilities* in each area.

Table 6 presents respondent ratings on Foundation objectives from the 2005-2006 academic year. Foundation objectives were revised in 2006-2007 and, thus, the data presented below are for comparison reasons only. **As with the 2006-2007 respondents, these respondents rated all objectives at or beyond the benchmark of 3, or “adequately.”** There is continued consistency in regards to the three highest rated objectives in that they address issues of “societal issues and professional historical context”, “oppression, discrimination and social justice,” and “values and ethics”; areas that are also the focus of the 2006-2007 highest rated objectives. Similarly, one of the lowest rated objectives for this academic year concerns “research”, which was also one of the lower rated objectives in 2006-2007. Taken together, data from multiple years of Foundation Exit Surveys respondents provide useful information regarding trends in program strengths and limitations, which is invaluable for efforts aimed toward ongoing program improvement.

Table 6

2005-2006 Foundation Year Exit Survey Results

| Foundation Program Objectives | Mean | S.D. | Range |
|--|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Societal issues within the historical context of the profession | 4.10 | .76 | 2-5 |
| 2. Knowing the impact of policy on vulnerable human systems | 3.79 | .95 | 1-5 |
| 3. Knowing the effect of oppression and discrimination on clients and promoting social justice | 4.10 | .81 | 2-5 |
| 4. Applying critical thinking to analysis of theories of development and change in assessment | 3.83 | .88 | 2-5 |
| 5. Understanding and conducting generalist practice | 3.86 | .90 | 1-5 |
| 6. Grounding practice in the values and ethics of the profession | 4.10 | .66 | 3-5 |

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| 7. Demonstrating the professional use of one's self with clients and in supervision | 3.98 | .87 | 2-5 |
| 8. Integrating knowledge and skills from academic experiences with practicum | 3.86 | .87 | 1-5 |
| 9. Applying critical thinking skills to policy analysis, administration, and management | 3.50 | .83 | 1-5 |
| 10. Using appropriate communication skills with clients, colleagues, and communities | 3.90 | .82 | 2-5 |
| 11. Applying critical thinking skills to the evaluation of research and its application to practice | 3.49 | .87 | 2-5 |

Graduating Exit Survey

The “Graduating Exit Survey” (GES) has been a part of the continuing improvement evaluation process at NCSSS for seven years. It includes questions that directly assess accomplishment of Foundation Curriculum Objectives. The survey consists of five sections: 1) information regarding the length of time in the program, the student’s chosen concentration, and how the student financed their education; 2) ratings on how well both the MSW Program Foundation and Concentration Objectives were addressed; 3) ratings on experiences with various offices and support programs at NCSSS; 4) program strengths and areas for improvements; and 5) various demographic items.

As with the Foundation Exit Survey, the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 GES was distributed by the MSW Program Director via email, with information on its purpose and voluntary and confidential nature, and directions for connecting with the survey link. Items related to Foundation Curriculum Objectives used the same 5-point response format (1 = *very poorly* to 5 = *very well*) and same stimulus question (“*How well has your experience at NCSSS addressed...?*”) as the FES. (See Appendix D for a copy of this survey instrument.) As with the FES, findings on the GES are presented to both the MSW Program Committee and the full Faculty.

Table 7 illustrates the 2007 Graduating Exit Survey results for the Foundation Curriculum Objectives ($n = 37$), including means, standard deviations, and range of scores for each objective. A review of these data indicates that, as a group, respondents felt that NCSSS addressed each objective at or above the benchmark of 3 or “adequately.”

Table 7

2006-2007 Graduating Exit Survey Results: Foundation Curriculum Objectives

| Foundation Curriculum Objectives | Mean | S.D. | Range |
|---|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Apply critical thinking skills to analysis of various theories of development and change in the assessment of client system needs, and the facilitation of client system growth. | 4.08 | .92 | 2 – 5 |
| 2. Apply critical thinking skills to policy analysis, administration, and management. | 3.35 | .82 | 2 – 5 |
| 3. Engage in practice that is grounded in the values and ethics of the profession. | 4.19 | .91 | 2 – 5 |
| 4. Place knowledge of the current structure and issues of society within the historical context of the profession. | 3.92 | .86 | 2 – 5 |
| 5. Understand the effect of oppression and discrimination on client systems and apply this knowledge to the promotion of social justice. | 4.05 | 1.05 | 1 – 5 |
| 6. Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes. | 3.89 | .88 | 2 – 5 |
| 7. Practice with sensitivity and respect for all client differences. | 4.24 | .86 | 2 – 5 |
| 8. Use appropriate communication skills with clients, colleagues, and | 4.00 | .82 | 2 – 5 |

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|--|------|------|-------|
| communities. | | | |
| 9. Know the impact of government and agency policy on human systems, specifically on vulnerable populations. | 3.92 | .92 | 2 – 5 |
| 10. Apply critical thinking skills to the evaluation of research and its application to practice | 3.78 | 1.00 | 2 – 5 |
| 11. Demonstrate the professional use of the self in effective communication with clients. | 4.05 | .85 | 2 – 5 |
| 12. Demonstrate the professional use of self as adult learners in ongoing supervision and consultation | 3.76 | .90 | 2 – 5 |

Analysis included identification of the **objectives rated as the “top three”**. The program objectives rated highest by respondents were program objectives #7 (*Practices with sensitivity and respect for all client differences, M = 4.24*), #3 (*Engage in practice that is grounded in the values and ethics of the profession, M = 4.19*), and #1 (*Apply critical thinking skills to analysis of various theories of development and change in the assessment of client system needs, and the facilitation of client system growth, M = 4.08*). The **two lowest rated objectives** were objective #2 (*Apply critical thinking skills to policy analysis, administration, and management, M = 3.35*) and #12 (*Demonstrate the professional use of self as adult learners in ongoing supervision and consultation, M = 3.76*).

Again, objectives related to “values and ethics” and “sensitivity and respect for differences” emerged as the highest. Differing from previous respondents, these graduating respondents rated “critical thinking in analysis of human behavior and development theory” as one of the top three, even though it was rated as one of the lowest on the 2006-2007 Field Student Assessment Form. In 2005-2006, two other objectives (“critical thinking skills in policy analysis, administration, and management” and “use of self in supervision and consultation”) emerged as the lowest; two areas that had not been rated similarly by other samples. Again, it should be noted that items on the GES ask respondents to rate how well each objective *was addressed*, while the Field Student Self-Assessment asks students to indicate *their own perceived abilities* in each area.

Table 8 presents respondent mean ratings from the GES on Foundation Curriculum Objectives for six academic years (2000-2001 to 2005-2006). Foundation objectives have gone through several revisions during this time period, with the most recent changes occurring in 2006-2007. Thus, the wording of objectives in Table 8 represents a compilation and data presented below are offered for purposes of comparison only. **Respondents from the six cohorts rated all objectives at or beyond the benchmark of 3, or “adequately.”** Beyond this consistency, it is striking that the most highly rated objectives in all six years focus on the same three areas: “applying critical thinking to analysis of human behavior and developmental theories”, “values and ethics”, and “the professional use of self.” A pattern is not quite so apparent in terms of the lowest rated area, but generally speaking, objectives related to “knowing the impact of policy” received lower ratings in most years.

Table 8

2001-2006 Graduating Exit Survey Results: Foundation Curriculum Objectives

| Foundation Curriculum Objective | 2000-2001 | 2001-2002 | 2002-2003 | 2003-2004 | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Societal issues within the historical context of the profession. | 3.6 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 4.0 | 3.7 | 4.1 |
| 2. Knowing the impact of policy on vulnerable human systems. | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3.7 | 3.8 | 3.7 | 3.9 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 3. Knowing the impact of oppression and discrimination on clients and promoting social justice. | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 4.1 | 3.7 | 4.0 |
| 4. Applying critical thinking to analysis of theories of development and change in assessment. | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.2 | 4.1 |
| 5. Applying critical thinking skills in evaluation and research studies. | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.1 | 4.4 | 4.1 | 4.0 |
| 6. Conducting competent evaluation of one's practice for the purpose of improving practice. | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.1 |
| 7. Understanding and conducting generalist practice. | 3.9 | 3.9 | 4.3 | 4.0 | 4.7 | 3.9 |
| 8. Grounding practice in the values and ethics of the profession. | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.2 | 4.3 |
| 9. Demonstrating the professional use of one's self with clients and in supervision. | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.2 | 4.3 |
| 10. Integrating knowledge and skills from academic experiences with practicum. | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.0 | 4.1 |

Assessment Findings Advanced Year: Clinical Concentration

Clinical Concentration Field Student Self-Assessment and Field Educator Assessment Forms

The Clinical Concentration “Field Student Self-Assessment” and “Field Educator Assessment” forms are similar to the tools described earlier in that they ask for ratings on each objective using a 5-point response format (1 = *unsatisfactory*; 2 = *less than adequate*; 3 = *adequate*; 4 = *more than adequate*; and 5 = *excellent*). The benchmark indicating success was set at 3, or “adequate.” These assessment tools provide information concerning student attainment of objectives from the perspective of both students and Field Educators (see Appendix D for copies of these two assessment forms). Similar to corresponding processes used to track trends in attainment of student competencies in the Foundation Curriculum, this evaluative process will be used in subsequent years to identify patterns in the Clinical Concentration.

Assessment information from the MSW Clinical Concentration Field Student Self-Assessment and Field Educator Assessment forms is available for the 2006-2007 academic year. Fifty-seven students and thirty Field Educators provided ratings on these outcome measures for the general Clinical Concentration, representing a 95% and 30% participation rate, respectively. Eleven students and nine Field Educators within the Health Care Specialization provided ratings, representing a 100% and 82% participation rate, respectively. A review of these data indicates that both students and Field Educators generally report successful student attainment of expected competencies.

Specifically, student self-ratings showed means of greater than the benchmark (3 or “adequate”) for all 6 Clinical Concentration Objectives. Field Educators’ ratings of student competencies also reached the benchmark for all program objectives. **It should be noted that for all 6 of the general Clinical Concentration objectives and the 1 Health Care Specialization objective, Field Educators rated students higher than students rated themselves.**

Analysis included identification of the **objectives rated as the “top two”** among both students and Field Educators. The program objectives rated highest by both students and Field Educators were program objectives #5 (*Apply professional values and ethical principles to clinical practice within a chosen field of practice*, $M = 4.33$ and $M = 4.40$, respectively), and #1 (*Apply advanced clinical*

practice theory to understand the development and needs of individuals as bio-psycho-social-spiritual beings functioning in a family or family-like structure, within a chosen field of practice, $M = 4.00$ and $M = 4.27$, respectively). Objective #7, which relates to the Health Care Specialization only, was also highly rated by students and Field Educators involved in this specialization ($M = 4.18$ and $M = 4.56$, respectively). Students and Field Educators were also in agreement as to the **lowest rated objective**: objective #4 (*Expand the depth, breadth, and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods, to evaluate practice with client systems within a chosen field of practice*, $M = 3.42$ and $M = 3.85$, respectively).

Percentages for each possible rating also were examined to determine if the Clinical Concentration was achieving the **benchmark of “adequate” for the majority of students in all areas**. Review of student ratings showed that the majority (93% to 98.2%) reported ratings at or above the benchmark for each of the 6 program objectives, with ratings generally falling between 3 (“adequate”) and 5 (“excellent”). However, one student (1.8%) rated objective #4 as 1 or “unsatisfactory” and from 1 to 4 students (1.8% to 7%) rated objectives 1, #4, or #6 as 2 or “less than adequate.” Although two Field Educators (6.7%) rated two objectives (objective #2 and #4) as 2 or “less than adequate”, the majority (93.3% to 100%) rated the 6 program objectives as meeting or exceeding the benchmark. As for objective #7, which specifically addresses the Health Care Specialization, no student or Field Educator reported ratings below “adequate.”

These findings show that the majority of both student self-assessment and Field Educator ratings show at least adequate achievement of all Concentration Objectives. Combined with the group mean ratings on each program objective, assessment data suggest that the MSW Clinical Concentration has been successful in achieving expected student competencies.

Clinical Concentration Student Field Evaluation Form

All Clinical Concentration students are evaluated by their agency Field Educators at the end of the spring semester after completing 600 hours of concentration-specific field education. This assessment is conducted using a comprehensive, 52-item, 10-point “Student Field Evaluation” form (see Appendix D). It contains 5 standardized sections (*Student Use of Self, Social Work Processes, Understanding of the Agency, Supervisory Process, and Professional Behaviors*) and 1 section that is individualized for each student (*Professional Skills*). Field Educators provide both quantitative ratings and qualitative feedback, including ratings on identified 21 “threshold items”, which are central in determining successful completion of the field placement. Different areas of the Student Field Evaluation form allow assessment of 4 of the 6 the Clinical Concentration Objectives. Table 9 provides an overview of evaluation areas, total number of items, number of threshold items, and specific objectives addressed in each area.

Table 9

Clinical Student Field Evaluation Form: Assessment Areas, Number of Total and Threshold Items, and Program Objectives Addressed

| Assessment Area | Total Number of Items | Number of Threshold Items | Concentration Objectives Assessed |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Student Use of Self | 10 | 4 | #3, #5 |
| Social Work Processes | 14 | 6 | #1, #2, #3 |
| Understanding of the Agency | 8 | 4 | #3 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------|-----|--------|
| Supervisory Process | 7 | 4 | #3 |
| Professional Behavior | 13 | 3 | #3, #5 |
| Professional Skills | Varies | N/A | N/A |

Data from the Clinical Student Field Evaluation form have been compiled for the past seven years. NCSSS program faculty have set the benchmark for acceptable student performance as receiving a rating of 5 or more on each of the 21 threshold items included in the evaluation form. As displayed in Table 10, **although the majority of students have achieved the targeted benchmark during the last seven years, a few students (2% to 3%) were not able to pass successfully during three of the targeted years.** Again, the MSW Program considers these figures as reflective of its professional gate-keeping function. Small percentages of students (2% to 3%) also withdrew from field during five of the seven years.

Table 10

Clinical Student Outcomes on the Student Field Evaluation Threshold Items

| Academic Year | Percentage Passing | Percentage Withdrawing | Percentage Failing |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2006-2007 | 97%, n = 66 | 3%, n = 02 | 0 |
| 2005-2006 | 97%, n = 57 | 0 | 3%, n = 02 |
| 2004-2005 | 96%, n = 57 | 2%, n = 01 | 2%, n = 01 |
| 2003-2004 | 98%, n = 57 | 2%, n = 01 | 0 |
| 2002-2003 | 97%, n = 35 | 3%, n = 01 | 0 |
| 2001-2002 | 100%, n = 39 | 0 | 0 |
| 2000-2001 | 96%, n = 52 | 2%, n = 01 | 2%, n = 01 |

Advanced Clinical Comprehensive Examination

The MSW “Advanced Clinical Comprehensive Examination” is a take-home examination that students take in March of the year in which they are enrolled in the *Clinical Field Education and Integrative Seminar* (SSS 872) or the *Health Care Field Education and Integrative Seminar* (SSS 878). It is comprised of five sections: *Practice Theory, Application of Theory to Practice – Individuals, Application of Theory to Practice – Families, Ethics, and Practice Evaluation* (see Appendix D for a copy of this examination). Different sections of the exam allow assessment of various aspects of 5 the 6 Clinical Concentration Objectives and the 1 Health Care Specialization Objective (Objective #7). As with the Foundation Comprehensive Examination, students must earn at least 80 out of a possible 100 points in order to pass the Clinical Comprehensive exam. They have an opportunity to take an oral exam and/or a second written exam if they fail the first time. Students must pass this exam in order to graduate from the program. Table 11 provides an overview of assessment areas and the particular objective addressed by each area.

Table 11

Clinical Comprehensive Examination: Assessment Areas and Program Objectives Addressed

| Assessment Area | Foundation Objectives Assessed |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Practice Theory | #1, #6 |
| Application of Theory to Practice - Family | #1, #7 |

| | |
|--|--------|
| Application of Theory to Practice - Individual | #2, #7 |
| Ethics | #5 |
| Practice Evaluation | #4 |

Data from the Clinical Comprehensive Examination are available for six years from 2001 to 2007. **The majority of students generally pass these exams, although some must take an oral examination and/or a second written examination before they are successful** (see Table 12).

Table 12

Student Outcomes on the Clinical Comprehensive Examination

| Academic Year | Written Exam: Pass/Fail | Oral Exam: Pass/Fail | Total Pass/Fail |
|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2006-2007 | 98% (n = 62)/ 2% (n = 1) | 100% (n = 1)/ 0 | 100% (n = 63)/ 0 |
| 2005-2006 | 98% (n = 53)/ 2% (n = 1) | 0/ 100% (n = 1) | 98% (n = 53)/ 2% (n = 1) |
| 2004-2005 | 93% (n = 52)/ 7% (n = 4) | 100% (n = 4)/ 0 | 100% (n = 56)/ 0 |
| 2003-2004 | 93% (n = 55)/ 7% (n = 3) | 100% (n = 3)/ 0 | 100% (n = 58)/ 0 |
| 2002-2003 | 92% (n = 33)/ 8% (n = 3) | 75% (n = 3)/ 25% (n = 1) | 97% (n = 35)/ 3% (n = 1) |
| 2001-2002 | 83% (n = 29)/ 17% (n = 6) | 100% (n = 6)/ 0 | 100% (n = 35)/ 0 |

Graduating Exit Survey

The “Graduating Exit Survey” (GES) has been described previously in presentation of the Foundation Curriculum and this information will not be repeated here. Its contribution to assessment of the Clinical Concentration centers on responses to 6 items that ask students to indicate how well their experience at NCSST addressed each of the Clinical Concentration Objectives.

Table 13 presents findings from the 2006-2007 Graduating Exit Survey relative to the Clinical Concentration objectives (n = 45), including means, standard deviations, and range of responses for each objective. Respondents included both Clinical /Health Care Specialization and Combined concentrators. A review of these data shows that, **as a group, respondents felt that NCSST addressed each objective at or above the benchmark of 3 of “adequately.”**

Table 13

2006-2007 Graduating Exit Survey Results: Clinical Concentration Objectives

| Clinical Concentration Objectives | Mean | S.D. | Range |
|--|------|------|-------|
| 1. Apply advanced clinical practice theory to understand the development and needs of <i>individuals</i> as bio-psycho-social-spiritual beings functioning in a <i>family</i> or family-like structure, within a chosen field of practice. | 4.23 | .88 | 2 – 5 |
| 2. Apply advanced clinical skills to facilitate change in individuals as bio-psycho-social-spiritual beings, within a chosen field of practice. | 4.03 | 1.05 | 2 – 5 |

| | | | |
|---|------|------|-------|
| 3. Integrate the knowledge and skills learned from the academic educational experiences with those of the practicum, within a chosen field of practice. | 3.97 | .93 | 2 – 5 |
| 4. Expand the depth, breadth, and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods, to evaluate practice with client systems within a chosen field of practice. | 3.61 | 1.09 | 2 – 5 |
| 5. Apply professional values and ethical principles to clinical practice within a chosen field of practice. | 4.26 | .86 | 2 – 5 |
| 6. Apply knowledge of the impact of difference and the mechanisms of oppression on populations-at-risk, including use of strategies for promoting social and economic justice within clinical social work practice. | 3.77 | 1.01 | 2 – 5 |
| Health Care Specialization Only: | | | |
| 7. Integrate the knowledge and skills of the bio-psycho-social-spiritual issues of health and illness within the health care field. | 4.44 | .73 | 3 – 5 |

Analysis included identification of the **objectives rated as the “top two”** (highlighted in Table 13). The program objectives rated highest by respondents were program objectives **#5** (*Apply professional values and ethical principles to clinical practice within a chosen field of practice, M = 4.26*) and **#1** (*Apply advanced clinical practice theory to understand the development and needs of individuals as bio-psycho-social-spiritual beings functioning in a family or family-like structure, within a chosen field of practice, M = 4.23*). The **lowest rated objective** was objective **#4** (*Expand the depth, breadth, and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods, to evaluate practice with client systems within a chosen field of practice, M = 3.61*). These areas were also identified as “highest” and “lowest” in student responses to the “Field Student Self-Assessment” form among Clinical concentrators. It is important to remember that the focus is different on these two assessment mechanisms, with the field form asking students to rate *their own perceived abilities* in each area, while respondents to the Graduating Exit Survey were asked to rate *how well each objective was addressed* at NCSSS.

Table 14 presents respondent mean ratings from the GES on Clinical Concentration Objectives for six academic years (2000-2001 to 2005-2006). **There is little variation in ratings in these objectives across previous academic years, with average scores being well above the benchmark of 3 or “adequately.”** Because these objectives have gone through substantial revisions, it is difficult to make comparisons between this time period and 2006-20007 results. NCSSS will continue to track responses to the GES as one assessment measure of Concentration objectives.

Table 14

2001-2006 Graduating Exit Survey Results: Clinical Concentration Objectives

| Clinical Concentration Objectives | 2000-2001 | 2001-2002 | 2002-2003 | 2003-2004 | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Foundation knowledge of human behavior theory, to apply advanced theory to understand individuals within families. | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.2 |
| 2. Foundation skills of generalist practice, to apply clinical skills to facilitate change. | 3.9 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.0 | 3.9 |
| 3. Foundation experiences, to integrate knowledge and skills learned from academic experiences with those of the practicum. | 3.9 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 4.1 |

Alumni Survey

The “Alumni Survey” (AS) was developed to examine various areas of graduates’ experience at NCSSS and professional life since graduation. The survey addressed the following areas: 1) experiences as a graduate student; 2) experiences with employment and other professional activities; 3) job search experiences; 4) sense of preparation for entering the social work field; 5) experiences with licensure; and 6) various demographic items. The AS was developed as a web based survey using Websurveyor (see Appendix D for a copy of this survey instrument). Findings from this survey will be presented to the MSW Program Committee and the Full Faculty.

The targeted population was NCSSS graduates from 1997 to 2006. Based on names and contact information received from CUA’s Alumni Office, a sampling frame of 787 potential respondents was developed. Identifying those on the list with email addresses, the sample was reduced to 425 (54% of all graduates during this time period); these individuals were emailed the survey. Each potential respondent received a personalized email that included information about the purpose of the survey, how they had been selected to participate, the voluntary and confidential nature of the survey, and directions for accessing the link for the survey. After two weeks, alumni who had not responded were sent a reminder email, and a third and final request was sent an additional two weeks later to non-respondents. Of the original sample of 425, 20.5% ($n = 87$) emails were returned as undeliverable. Thus, the final number of successfully transmitted emails was 339, or 79.8% of graduates with email addresses. Of these, 204 surveys were completed and returned, representing a 60.2% response rate. Table 15 shows a breakdown of the percentages of respondents and proportion of the sample for each year of graduation.

Table 15

Breakdown of Alumni Survey Respondents

| Year of Graduation | Sample | Respondents |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1997 | 11.1% ($n = 47$) | 6.4% ($n = 13$) |
| 1998 | 5.9% ($n = 25$) | 5.9% ($n = 12$) |
| 1999 | 9.2% ($n = 39$) | 4.9% ($n = 10$) |
| 2000 | 7.5% ($n = 32$) | 8.8% ($n = 18$) |
| 2001 | 6.6% ($n = 28$) | 8.3% ($n = 17$) |
| 2002 | 8.7% ($n = 37$) | 7.4% ($n = 15$) |
| 2003 | 7.8% ($n = 33$) | 12.3% ($n = 25$) |
| 2004 | 10.8% ($n = 46$) | 14.2% ($n = 29$) |
| 2005 | 16.9% ($n = 72$) | 14.2% ($n = 29$) |
| 2006 | 15.5% ($n = 66$) | 17.6% ($n = 36$) |

One section of the Alumni Survey asks respondents to indicate “*How prepared at graduation do you believe you were in...*”, followed by a listing of concentration-specific objectives. The response format for quantitative items employed a 5-point scale: (1 = *poor preparation*; 2 = *less than adequate preparation*; 3 = *adequate preparation*; 4 = *more than adequate preparation*; 5 = *excellent preparation*).

Table 16 presents findings from the 2006-2007 Alumni Survey from graduates who were Clinical/Health Care concentrators ($n = 145$), including means, standard deviations, and range of

responses for each Clinical Concentration Objective. A review of these data show that, **as a group, respondents felt that they were generally well prepared, with scores falling at or above the benchmark of 3 of “adequate” for all objectives.**

Table 16

2006-2007 Alumni Survey: Clinical Concentration Objectives

| Clinical Concentration Objectives | Mean | S.D. | Range |
|---|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Apply advanced practice theory to understand the development and need of individuals and families. | 4.03 | .92 | 1 – 5 |
| 2. Apply advanced clinical skills to facilitate change within individuals and families. | 3.90 | .94 | 1 – 5 |
| 3. Integrate knowledge and skills learned from course work and your field practicum experience and apply both to your clinical practice. | 4.13 | .86 | 1 – 5 |
| 4. Use knowledge and skills learned in your research courses to evaluate your clinical practice. | 3.49 | .96 | 1 – 5 |
| 5. Apply professional values and ethical principles to your clinical practice. | 4.43 | .75 | 2 – 5 |
| 6. Apply knowledge regarding diversity, oppression, and strategies for social and economic justice as applicable to your clinical practice. | 4.14 | .95 | 1 – 5 |

Analysis included identification of the **objectives rated as the “top two”** (highlighted in Table 16). The program objectives rated highest by respondents were program objectives **#5** (*Apply professional values and ethical principles to clinical practice to your clinical practice, M = 4.43*) and **#1** (*Apply knowledge regarding diversity, oppression, and strategies for social and economic justice as applicable to your clinical practice, M = 4.14*). The **lowest rated objective** was objective **#4** (*Use knowledge and skills learned in your research courses to evaluate your clinical practice, M = 3.61*). These findings are congruent with results from other assessment tools in that objectives related to “values and ethics” and “diversity and social and economic justice” consistently emerge among the highest rated areas while objectives related to “research” fall within the lowest.

Assessment Findings Advanced Year: Social Justice/Social Change Concentration

SJSC Concentration Field Student Self-Assessment and Field Educator Assessment Forms

The SJSC Concentration “Field Student Self-Assessment” and “Field Educator Assessment” forms are identical to the measure used in the Clinical Concentration, except that it addresses the SJSC Concentration Objectives. As with the Clinical assessment tool, possible responses range from 1 (*unsatisfactory*) to 5 (*excellent*); with a score of 3 (*adequate*) representing the benchmark for success. (See Appendix D for copies of these two assessment forms.) As with other advanced curriculum measures, these data will be used in subsequent years to allow for yearly comparisons and track changes over time.

Assessment information from the MSW Social Justice and Social Change Concentration Field Student Self-Assessment and Field Educator Assessment forms is available for the 2006-2007 academic year. Three students and three Field Educators provided ratings on these outcome measures, representing a 75% participation rate for both groups. A review of these data indicates that both students and Field

Educators generally report successful student attainment of expected competencies. Specifically, student self-ratings showed means of greater than the benchmark (3 or “adequate”) for all 6 SJSC Concentration Objectives. **Field Educators’ ratings of student competencies also reached the benchmark for all program objectives.** It should also be noted that for 5 of 6 of the concentration objectives, Field Educators rated students lower than students rated themselves.

Analysis included identification of the **objectives rated as the “top two”** among both students and Field Educators. Ratings from both students and Field Educators showed little variation; thus, only the **top rated objective** will be reported for each group. Students rated program objective #5 (*Apply professional values and ethical principles to social justice and social change practice within a chosen field of practice, M = 4.33*) the highest, while Field Educators rated program objective #6 (*Apply knowledge of the impact of difference and the mechanisms of oppression on populations-at-risk, including use of strategies for promoting social and economic justice within social justice and social change social work practice, M = 4.33*), the highest.

There were also different views on the **lowest rated objective**. Students identified objective #6 (*Apply knowledge of the impact of difference and the mechanisms of oppression on populations-at-risk, including use of strategies for promoting social and economic justice within social justice and social change social work practice, M = 3.67*) as the lowest, which is noteworthy given that this objective was rated highest by Field Educators. Field Educators rated objective #4 (*Expand the depth, breadth, and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods, in order to evaluate programs within a field of practice, M = 3.33*).

Percentages for each rating also were examined to determine if the SJSC Concentration was achieving the **benchmark of “adequate” for the majority of students in all areas**. Review of ratings revealed that 100% of both students and Field Educators reported ratings at or above the benchmark for all program objectives, with ratings falling between 3 (“adequate”) and 5 (“excellent”). Combined with group mean ratings on each objective, assessment data suggest that the SJSC Concentration has been successful in achieving expected student competencies.

SJSC Concentration Student Field Evaluation Form

All SJSC Concentration students are evaluated by their Field Educators at the end of the spring semester after completing 600 hours of concentration-specific field education. This assessment is conducted using a comprehensive, 47-item, 10-point “Student Field Evaluation” form (see Appendix D). Consisting of 5 sections applicable to all students (*Student Use of Self, Social Work Processes, Understanding of the Agency, Supervisory Process, and Professional Behavior*), it includes an additional 3 sections that specify learning objectives that may not be pertinent to every SJSC field placement (*Planning, Management/Administration, and Policy*). Items in these sections are rated only if they apply to the particular student’s field experience. Finally, there is one remaining section that is individualized for each student (*Professional Skills*). Field Educators provide both quantitative ratings and qualitative feedback, including ratings on 15 “threshold items”, which are pivotal in determining successful completion of the field placement. Different areas of the Student Field Evaluation form allow assessment of aspects of the SJSC Concentration Objectives. Table 17 provides an overview of evaluation areas, total number of items, number of threshold items, and objectives addressed in each area.

Table 17***SJSC Student Field Evaluation Form: Assessment Areas, Number of Total and Threshold Items, and Concentration Objectives Addressed***

| Assessment Area | Total Number of Items | Number of Threshold Items | Concentration Objectives Assessed |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Student Use of Self | 3 | 3 | #3, #5 |
| Social Work Processes | 3 | 3 | #1, #2, #3, #4, #6 |
| Understanding of the Agency | 2 | 2 | #3 |
| Supervisory Process | 4 | 4 | #3 |
| Professional Behavior | 5 | 3 | #3, #5 |
| Planning | 8 | 0 | #3, #4 |
| Management/Administration | 13 | 0 | #3, #4 |
| Policy | 9 | 0 | #3, #4, #6 |
| Professional Skills | varies | N/A | N/A |

Data from the SJSC Student Field Evaluation form have been compiled for the past seven years. NCSSS program faculty have set the benchmark for acceptable student performance as receiving a rating of 5 or more on each of the 15 threshold items included in the evaluation form. Table 18 shows percentages of students who passed, withdrew, or failed field for academic years from 2000-2001 to 2006-2007. **All continuing students achieved the targeted benchmark during the last seven years,** with only two students (13%) withdrawing during the 2006-2006.

Table 18***SJSC Student Outcomes on the Student Field Evaluation Threshold Items***

| Academic Year | Percentage Passing | Percentage Withdrawing | Percentage Failing |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2006-2007 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 04 | 0 | 0 |
| 2005-2006 | 83%, <i>n</i> = 10 | 13%, <i>n</i> = 02 | 0 |
| 2004-2005 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 12 | 0 | 0 |
| 2003-2004 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 03 | 0 | 0 |
| 2002-2003 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 05 | 0 | 0 |
| 2001-2002 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 03 | 0 | 0 |
| 2000-2001 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 02 | 0 | 0 |

Advanced SJSC Comprehensive Examination

The MSW “Advanced Social Justice and Social Change Comprehensive Examination” is a take-home examination that students take in March of the year in which they are enrolled in the *SJSC Field Education and Integrative Seminar* (SSS 876). Comprised of five sections (*Social Planning; Social Work Management; Advanced Policy Analysis; Ethics; and Program Evaluation*), it allows assessment of various aspects of 5 of the 6 SJSC Concentration Objectives. As with the Foundation Comprehensive Examination, students must earn at least 80 out of a possible 100 points in order to pass the SJSC Comprehensive exam. Students have the opportunity to take an oral exam and/or a second written exam if they fail the first time; they must pass this exam in order to graduate from the program. Table 19 provides an overview of assessment areas and the specific objectives addressed by each area.

Table 19***SJSC Comprehensive Examination: Assessment Areas and Program Objectives Addressed***

| Assessment Area | Foundation Objectives Assessed |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Social Planning | #1, #2 |
| Social Work Management | #1, #2 |
| Advanced Social Policy | #1, #2, #6 |
| Ethics | #1, #5 |
| Program Evaluation | #4 |

Data from the SJSC Comprehensive Examination are available for six years from 2001-2002 to 2007 academic years. **All students passed these exams during this time period as evidenced by data presented in Table 20.**

Table 20***Student Outcomes on the Social Justice and Social Change Comprehensive Examination***

| Academic Year | Written Exam: Pass/Fail | Oral Exam: Pass/Fail | Total Pass/Fail |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2006-2007 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 4)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 3)/ 0 |
| 2005-2006 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 12)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 12)/ 0 |
| 2004-2005 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 9)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 9)/ 0 |
| 2003-2004 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 3)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 3)/ 0 |
| 2002-2003 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 5)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 5)/ 0 |
| 2001-2002 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 3)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 3)/ 0 |

Graduating Exit Survey

The “Graduating Exit Survey” (GES) has been described previously in presentation of the Foundation Curriculum, which will not be repeated here. Its contribution to assessment of the Social Justice and Social Change Concentration centers on responses to 6 items that ask students to indicate how well their experience at NCSSS addressed each of the SJSC Concentration Objectives. The 2006-2007 SJSC class was comprised of only four students. Unfortunately, only one of these students participated in the GES, providing limited evaluative information from this effort. Because data from this assessment tool is so limited for this past academic year, data will not be presented in tabular form. **However, ratings from the one student who did participate in the survey were all 4, meaning that he or she believed that NCSSS had “well” addressed the SJSC objectives.**

Table 21 presents respondent mean ratings from the GES on SJSC Concentration Objectives for six academic years (2000-2001 to 2005-2006). **There is little variation in ratings in these three objectives across previous academic years, with average scores being well above the benchmark of 3 or “adequately.”** Because these objectives have gone through substantial revisions, it is difficult to make comparisons between this time period and 2006-2007 results. NCSSES will continue to track responses to the GES as one assessment measure of Concentration objectives.

Table 21

2001-2006 Graduating Exit Survey Results: SJSC Concentration Objectives

| SJSC Concentration Objectives | 2000-2001 | 2001-2002 | 2002-2003 | 2003-2004 | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Foundation knowledge of human behavior, to apply theory to understand the issues of management, planning, and policy analysis. | 3.3 | 3.8 | 4.3 | 4.2 | 3.7 | 3.9 |
| 2. Foundation skills of generalist practice, to apply advanced skills to facilitate change. | 3.6 | 3.7 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 3.7 | 3.7 |
| 3. Foundation year experience, to integrate the knowledge and skills learned from academic experiences with those of the practicum. | 4.3 | 3.7 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 3.9 | 3.8 |

Alumni Survey

The “Alumni Survey” (AS) has been described previously in the presentation of the Clinical Concentration data. The Alumni Survey contributes to the assessment of the Social Justice and Social Change Concentration through ratings from 6 items that asked alumni to indicate *how well prepared they felt upon graduation* to implement the SJSC Concentration Objectives.

Table 22 presents findings from the 2006-2007 Alumni Survey from graduates who were SJSC concentrators ($n = 22$), including means, standard deviations, and range of responses for each Clinical Concentration Objective. A review of these data show that, **as a group, respondents felt that they were generally well prepared, with scores falling at or above the benchmark of 3 of “adequate” for all objectives.**

Table 22

2006-2007 Alumni Survey: Social Justice and Social Change Concentration Objectives

| Social Justice and Social Change Concentration Objectives | Mean | S.D. | Range |
|---|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Apply advanced organizational, community, political and social justice theories to understand issues that arise in management, planning, policy analysis, and/or community development and community building. | 4.00 | .82 | 3 – 5 |
| 2. Apply advanced skills to facilitate change through management, planning, policy analysis, and/or community development and community building. | 3.82 | .73 | 3 – 5 |
| 3. Integrate knowledge and skills learned from course work and your field practicum experience and apply both to your macro practice | 3.91 | 1.02 | 1 – 5 |
| 4. Use knowledge and skills learned in your research courses to evaluate | 3.50 | 1.34 | 1 – 5 |

| | | | |
|---|------|-----|-------|
| programs. | | | |
| 5. Apply professional values and ethical principles to your macro practice. | 4.23 | .87 | 2 – 5 |
| 6. Apply knowledge regarding diversity, oppression, and strategies for social and economic justice as applicable to your macro practice | 4.27 | .63 | 3 – 5 |

Analysis included identification of the **objectives rated as the “top two”**. The program objectives rated highest by respondents were program objectives #6 (*Apply knowledge regarding diversity, oppression, and strategies for social and economic justice as applicable to your clinical practice, M = 4.27*) and #5 (*Apply professional values and ethical principles to clinical practice to your clinical practice, M = 4.23*). The **lowest rated objective** was objective #4 (*Use knowledge and skills learned in your research courses to evaluate your clinical practice, M = 3.61*). These findings are congruent with results from other assessment tools in that objectives related to “values and ethics” and “diversity and social and economic justice” consistently emerge among the highest rated areas while objectives related to “research” fall within the lowest.

Assessment Findings Advanced Year: Combined

Combined Field Student Self-Assessment and Field Educator Assessment Forms

The Combined Concentration “Field Student Self-Assessment” and “Field Educator Assessment” forms are identical to the measures used in the other two Concentrations, except that it addresses the Combined Concentration Objectives. Possible responses range from 1 (*unsatisfactory*) to 5 (*excellent*); with a benchmark score of 3 or “adequate.” Ratings on student attainment of objectives are gathered from both students and Field Educators. This evaluative process will be used in subsequent years to allow for yearly comparisons and track changes over time.

Assessment information from the MSW Combined Concentration Field Student Self-Assessment and Field Educator Assessment forms is available for the 2006-2007 academic year. Ten students and nine Field Educators provided ratings on these outcome measures (83% and 75% participation rate, respectively). Review of these data indicates that both students and Field Educators generally report successful attainment of expected competencies. Specifically, both student self-ratings and Field Educator ratings showed means of greater than the benchmark (3 or “adequate”) for all 6 Combined Concentration Objectives. **It should be noted that in all cases, Field Educators rated students higher than students rated themselves.**

Analysis included identification of the **objectives rated as the “top two”** among both students and Field Educators. Students rated program objective #5 highest (*Apply professional values and ethical principles to clinical and social justice and social change practice within a chosen field of practice, M = 4.10*), followed by two objectives that tied for second: #3 (*Integrate the knowledge and skills learned from the academic educational experiences with those of the practicum, within a chosen field of practice*) and #6 (*Apply knowledge of the impact of difference and the mechanisms of oppression on populations-at-risk, including use of strategies for promoting social and economic justice within clinical and social justice and social change social work practice*) (*M = 3.90* in both areas). Field Educators rated #4 (*Expand the depth, breadth, and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods to evaluate practice with client systems and evaluate programs, within a field of practice, M =*

4.71) the highest, followed by #5 (*Apply professional values and ethical principles to clinical and social justice and social change practice within a chosen field of practice, M = 4.67*).

In terms of the **lowest rated areas**, students targeted both objectives #1 (*Apply advanced clinical practice theories and social justice/social change theories to understand the development and needs of client systems of all sizes, and the issues that arise in management, planning, policy analysis, community development, and community building, within a chosen field of practice*) and #2 (*Apply advanced clinical practice theories and social justice/social change theories to understand the development and needs of client systems of all sizes, and the issues that arise in management, planning, policy analysis, community development, and community building, within a chosen field of practice*) ($M = 3.60$ in both areas). Field Educators also rated objective #1 and #2 as the lowest ($M = 4.13$ and $M = 4.22$, respectively).

The percentages for each possible rating also were examined to determine if the MSW Combined Concentration was achieving the **benchmark of “adequate” for the majority of students in all areas**. Review of ratings revealed that a substantial majority (90% - 100%) students reported ratings at or above the benchmark for each of the 6 program objectives, with ratings generally falling between 3 (“adequate”) and 5 (“excellent”). However, one student (10%) rated objectives #2 and #3 as a 2 or “less than adequate.” **No Field Educator rated any program objective less than 3 or “adequate.”** These findings show that the majority of both student self-assessment and Field Educator ratings indicate at least adequate achievement of all Concentration Objectives. Combined with the group mean ratings on each program objective, assessment data show that the MSW Combined Concentration has been successful in achieving expected student competencies.

Combined Concentration Student Field Evaluation Form

All Combined Concentration students are evaluated by their agency Field Educators at the end of the spring semester after completing 600-660 hours of concentration-specific field education. This assessment is conducted using a comprehensive, 48-item, 10-point “Student Field Evaluation” form (see Appendix D). It contains 4 standardized sections (*General Performance: Clinical and SJSC; Clinical and SJSC Professional Behavior; Clinical and SJSC Knowledge Development; and Clinical Skill Development*). The sections on *Knowledge Development* and *Skill Development* also have room to add additional items in these areas specific to the particular student’s field experience. Field Educators provide both quantitative ratings and qualitative feedback, including ratings on identified 20 “threshold items”, which are pivotal in determining successful completion of the field placement. Different areas of the Student Field Evaluation form allow assessment of various aspects of 5 of the 6 Combined Concentration Objectives. Table 23 provides an overview of evaluation areas, total number of items, number of threshold items, and objectives addressed in each area.

Table 23***Combined Student Field Evaluation Form: Assessment Areas, Number of Total and Threshold Items, and Concentration Objectives Addressed***

| Assessment Area | Total Number of Items | Number of Threshold Items | Concentration Objectives Assessed |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| General Performance (Clinical and SJSC) | 10 | 4 | #3, #5 |
| Clinical and SJSC Professional Behavior | 12 | 4 | #3, #5 |
| Clinical and SJSC Knowledge Development | 12 | 6 | #1, #2, #3, |
| Clinical Skill Development | 14 | 6 | #2, #3, #4 |

Data from the Combined Student Field Evaluation form have been compiled for the past seven years. NCSSS program faculty have set the benchmark for acceptable student performance as receiving a rating of 5 or more on each of the 15 threshold items included in the evaluation form. Table 24 shows percentages of students who passed, withdrew, or failed field for academic years from 2000-2001 to 2006-2007. **All continuing students achieved the targeted benchmark during the last seven years and no students withdrew from the Concentration during this time period.**

Table 24***Combined Student Outcomes on the Student Field Evaluation Threshold Items***

| Academic Year | Percentage Passing | Percentage Withdrawing | Percentage Failing |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2006-2007 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 12 | 0 | 0 |
| 2005-2006 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 09 | 0 | 0 |
| 2004-2005 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 11 | 0 | 0 |
| 2003-2004 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 13 | 0 | 0 |
| 2002-2003 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 2001-2002 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 14 | 0 | 0 |
| 2000-2001 | 100%, <i>n</i> = 11 | 0 | 0 |

Advanced Combined Comprehensive Examination

The MSW “Advanced Combined Comprehensive Examination” is a take-home examination that students take in March in the year that they are enrolled in the *Combined Field Education and Integrative Seminar* (SSS 874). It is comprised of five sections: *Macro Practice*, *Clinical Practice Theory*, *Application of Theory to Practice-Family or Individual*; *Ethics*; and *Practice or Program Evaluation*. Different sections of the exam allow assessment of various aspects of 5 of the 6 Combined Concentration Objectives. Table 25 provides an overview of assessment areas and the objectives addressed by each area.

Table 25***Combined Comprehensive Examination: Assessment Areas and Program Objectives Addressed***

| Assessment Area | Foundation Objectives Assessed |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Macro Practice | #1, #2 |
| Clinical Practice Theory | #1, #2 |
| Application of Theory to Practice – Family or Individual | #1, #2, #6 |
| Ethics | #1, #5 |
| Practice or Program Evaluation | #4, #6 |

As with the Foundation Comprehensive Examination, students must earn at least 80 out of a possible 100 points in order to pass the SJSC Comprehensive exam. Students have an opportunity to take an oral exam and/or a second written exam if they fail the first time. Students must pass this exam in order to graduate from the program. Data from the Combined Comprehensive Examination are available for six years from 2001-2002 to 2007 academic years. **All students passed these exams as evidenced by the data in Table 26.**

Table 26***Student Outcomes on the Combined Comprehensive Examination***

| Academic Year | Written Exam: Pass/Fail | Oral Exam: Pass/Fail | Total Pass/Fail |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2006-2007 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 10)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 10)/ 0 |
| 2005-2006 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 9)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 9)/ 0 |
| 2004-2005 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 12)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 12)/ 0 |
| 2003-2004 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 13)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 13)/ 0 |
| 2002-2003 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 10)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 10)/ 0 |
| 2001-2002 | 100% (<i>n</i> = 13)/ 0 | NA | 100% (<i>n</i> = 13)/ 0 |

Graduating Exit Survey

The “Graduating Exit Survey” (GES) has been described previously in presentation of the Foundation Curriculum. Ratings from students in the Combined Concentration were part of the findings reported for the Clinical and SJSC Concentration Objectives, as these students take courses in both concentrations. However, there was one additional GES item that focused specifically on the Combined Concentration. Mean ratings on this item for the six years are presented in Table 27. **Responses show ratings at or above the benchmark of 3 of “adequately” for all six years.**

Table 27**2001-2006 Graduating Exit Survey Results: Combined Concentration Objectives**

| Combined Concentration Objectives | 2000-2001 | 2001-2002 | 2002-2003 | 2003-2004 | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Foundation year, to integrate knowledge and skills learned from clinical and macro academic educational experiences with those of clinical and macro aspects of the practicum. | 4.3 | 3.9 | 4.3 | 4.1 | 3.7 | 3.8 |

Alumni Survey

The “Alumni Survey” (AS) has been described previously in presentation of the Clinical Concentration, which will not be repeated here. Its contribution to the assessment of the Combined Concentration are ratings from 6 items that asked alumni to indicate how well prepared they felt upon graduation to implement the Combined Concentration Objectives and reported experiences with licensure.

Table 28 presents findings from the 2006-2007 Alumni Survey from graduates who were Combined concentrators ($n = 37$), including means, standard deviations, and range of responses for each Clinical Concentration Objective. A review of these data show that, **as a group, respondents felt that they were generally well prepared, with scores falling at or above the benchmark of 3 of “adequate” for all objectives.**

Table 28**2006-2007 Alumni Survey: Combined Concentration Objectives**

| Combined Concentration Objectives | Mean | S.D. | Range |
|--|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Apply advanced practice theory (clinical practice, organizational, community, political, and social justice) to understand the development and needs of client systems of all sizes as well as issues that arise in management, planning, policy analysis, and/or community development and community building. | 3.75 | .73 | 2 – 5 |
| 2. Apply advanced clinical skills to facilitate change in systems of all sizes. | 3.67 | .76 | 2 – 5 |
| 3. Integrate knowledge and skills learned from course work and your field practicum experience and apply both to your practice with systems of all sizes. | 3.69 | .93 | 2 – 5 |
| 4. Use knowledge and skills learned in your research courses to evaluate with systems and/or programs. | 3.33 | .89 | 2 – 5 |
| 5. Apply professional values and ethical principles with client systems of all sizes. | 4.31 | .75 | 3 – 5 |
| 6. Apply knowledge regarding diversity, oppression, and strategies for social and economic justice as applicable with client systems of all sizes. | 4.09 | .98 | 1 – 5 |

Analysis included identification of the **objectives rated as the “top two”**. The program objectives rated highest by respondents were program objectives #5 (*Apply professional values and ethical*

principles to clinical practice to your clinical practice, M = 4.31) and #6 (Apply knowledge regarding diversity, oppression, and strategies for social and economic justice as applicable to your clinical practice, M = 4.09) The lowest rated objective was objective #4 (Use knowledge and skills learned in your research courses to evaluate your clinical practice, M = 3.33). These findings are congruent with results from other assessment tools in that objectives related to “values and ethics” and “diversity and social and economic justice” consistently emerge among the highest rated areas while objectives related to “research” fall within the lowest.

Additional Master’s Program Assessment

Qualitative Data from FES and GES

In addition to quantitative ratings, both the Foundation Exit Survey (FES) and Graduating Exit Survey (GES) yield qualitative data stemming from two open-ended questions: 1) “*What would you consider the strengths of the MSW Program?*” and 2) “*What would you suggest for improvement for the MSW program?*” Information from these queries is combined with quantitative findings in order to affirm and sustain program strengths and address areas in need of improvement. The following identifies major themes that emerged from these two qualitative data collection mechanisms.

Foundation Exit Survey: Major Themes

Several themes emerged from open-ended questions on the FES over the past two academic years (2005-2006 and 2006-2007). These are highlighted below.

Major Strengths of the MSW Program

- Faculty
- Attention to diversity issues and working with special populations
- Field experience; field seminar
- Course content and structure

Suggestions for Improvement of the MSW Program

- Foundation Practice courses (SSS 605 & SSS 606)
- Foundation Comprehensive Examinations
- Addressing part-time student needs
- Integration of practice-related content into foundation year curriculum

Graduating Exit Survey: Major Themes

Several themes emerged from open-ended questions on the FES over the past seven academic years (2000-2001 to 2006-2007). These are highlighted below.

Major Strengths of the MSW Program

- Faculty
- Field experience; field seminar
- Curriculum; strong theory base
- Advising; opportunity for professional guidance and career mentoring

Suggestions for Improvement of the MSW Program

- Lack of diversity among faculty and student body
- Little opportunity to conduct research as an MSW student
- Advisement for students accepted as Advanced Standing student
- Limited variety of MSW elective courses

External Assessment: Professional Licensure Data

One measure that provides external assessment of NCSSS’ Master’s Program is information about professional licensure. Two sources of information regarding licensure are presented here: 1) data from the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) on NCSSS pass rates; and 2) responses from the Alumni Survey regarding their experiences with licensure.

Licensed Graduate Social Work (LGSW) Pass Rates

NCSSS Master’s students are eligible to sit for the LGSW examination once they have completed all program requirements. The exam includes 170 questions: 150 items count toward the score and 20 items are used for pre-testing purposes. Individuals have 4 hours in which to complete the exam at a computer-based testing center. ASWB does not set a passing score; passing scores vary by jurisdiction. In the District of Columbia, the pass score is 75 or above. While NCSSS recognizes that these exams do not constitute comprehensive testing of all social work content areas, findings do provide important data on mastery of specific knowledge and skills needed for competent and ethical entry-level practice. NCSSS requests data concerning the LGSW exam from the ASWB for the purpose of monitoring NCSSS graduate performance. Table 29 provides a breakdown of these findings from 2001 to 2006. **The data reveal that NCSSS graduates have consistently scored well above the national average for all six years.**

Table 29

Licensing Exam First Time Pass Rates

| Year | NCSSS Pass Rate | National Pass Rate |
|-------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2006 | 91% | 79% |
| 2005 | 95% | 79% |
| 2004 | 93% | 76% |
| 2003 | 88% | 75% |
| 2002 | 87% | 75% |
| 2001 | 94% | 74% |

Alumni Survey Licensure Results

Five questions regarding licensure were included in the AS to ascertain the number of respondents who had taken and passed the LGSW, the number of attempts made in order to pass, and the number and pass rate on the advanced licensure exam. Of those who completed the survey, 163 reported having taken the LGSW exam, including 117 Clinical concentrators (87.3% of Clinical respondents), 10 Health Care Specializers (90.1% of Health Care respondents), 30 Combined concentrators (81.1% of Combined respondents), and 6 SJSC concentrators (27.3% of SJSC respondents). **The majority**

passed it the first time (95.1%), 3.7% the second time; and 1.2% the third time. The pass rate by concentration was as follows: Clinical (97.4%); Health Care (90%), SJSC (83.3%), and Combined (100%). **In terms of the advanced licensure, 86 (42.2%) of the respondents have taken an advanced exam with a 95.3% pass rate.** Together these findings, combined with the ASWB data, provide additional evidence that NCSSS is achieving its program objectives and facilitating expected student outcomes.

Curricular Improvements

Master’s Program: Foundation Curriculum

Assessment mechanisms for the Master’s Program Foundation Curriculum include six quantitative measures (*Field Student Self-Assessment Form, Field Educator Assessment Form, Student Field Educator Form, Foundation Comprehensive Exam, Foundation Exit Survey, and Graduating Exit Survey*). All of these measures constitute either direct or indirect assessment of the Foundation Curriculum Objectives. Two of these measures provide general information regarding the overall percentages of students who successfully met the targeted benchmark. Results show consistently high percentages of students achieving the targeted benchmarks in terms of field performance (Student Field Education Form) and comprehensive understanding of foundation content (Foundation Comprehensive Exam). The remaining four measures allow us to pinpoint areas of strength and areas needing improvement. Table 30 provides an overview of each objective by these four outcome measures, allowing identification of patterns across assessment tools.

Table 30

Overview of Numerical Rankings of MSW Foundation Objectives by Four Outcome Measures

| MSW Foundation Curriculum Objectives | Field Student Self-Assessment | Field Educator Assessment | 2007 FES | 2007 GES |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Apply critical thinking skills to analysis of various theories of development and change in the assessment of client system needs, and the facilitation of client system growth. | | | | 3rd |
| 2. Apply critical thinking skills to policy analysis, administration, and management. | | | | last |
| 3. Engage in practice that is grounded in the values and ethics of the profession. | 2nd | 2nd | 2nd | 2nd |
| 4. Place knowledge of the current structure and issues of society within the historical context of the profession. | | | Tied for 3rd | |
| 5. Understand the effect of oppression and discrimination on client systems and apply this knowledge to the promotion of social justice. | | | Tied for 3rd | |
| 6. Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes. | | | | |
| 7. Practice with sensitivity and respect for all client differences. | 1st | 1st | 1st | 1st |
| 8. Use appropriate communication skills with clients, colleagues, and communities. | 3rd | | | |
| 9. Know the impact of government and agency policy on human systems, specifically on vulnerable | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|--|
| populations. | | | | |
| 10. Apply critical thinking skills to the evaluation of research and its application to practice. | last | last | last | |
| 11. Demonstrate the professional use of self in effective communication with clients. | | | | |
| 12. Demonstrate the professional use of self as adult learners in ongoing supervision and consultation. | | 3rd | | |

Several themes are apparent from this overview of quantitative assessment findings:

Areas of MSW Foundation Curriculum Strengths

- There is remarkable consistency in regards to the highest rated area based on all four quantitative assessment tools. Providing students with the competencies to *practice with sensitivity and respect for all client differences* is clearly a strength of the Foundation Curriculum.
- A similar pattern emerges for students competencies related to *engaging in practice that is grounded in the values and ethics of the profession*, which is consistently rated as the second highest curriculum objective.
- Various areas emerged for the 3rd highest objective depending on the particular assessment measure utilized. Field Student Self-Assessments identify *using appropriate communication skills with clients, colleagues, and communities* as the third highest, compared to *demonstrating the professional use of self as adult learners in ongoing supervision and consultation*, which was identified by Field Educators. Although different in specific focus, both of these objectives address in some way “professional use of self,” suggesting student integration of course learnings with the field experience. Foundation Exit Survey respondents identified both *placing knowledge of the current structure and issues of society within the historical context of the profession and understanding the effects of oppression and discrimination on client systems and applying this knowledge to the promotion of social justice* as their third choice, while Graduating Exit Survey respondents targeting *applying critical thinking skills to analysis of various theories of development and change in the assessment of client system needs, and the facilitation of client system growth*. Variations here probably reflect different vantage points respondents held when participating in the survey (one group having completed only foundation courses, while the other had completed the entire graduate curricula).

Areas Targeted for Improvement

No foundation objective received a group mean rating below the benchmark of “adequate,” but useful information can be gleaned from areas that were rated the lowest.

- The most consistent pattern is the low ranking of the objective focused on research (*Apply critical thinking skills to the evaluation of research and its application to practice*). This objective was rated lowest on the Field Student Self-Assessment, the Field Educator Assessment, and the Foundation Exit Survey. These ratings have been noted and inform an ongoing conversation about the need to strengthen the research content area.
- A second area identified as the lowest among the Graduating Exit Survey respondents was in the area of critical thinking and macro-level skills (*Apply critical thinking skills to policy*

analysis, administration, and management). Thus, it has been targeted as an area for improvement.

Regardless of the reasons underlying particular assessment findings, these two curricular areas have been identified as areas for improvement based on quantitative data from 2006-2007. A similar process of program response to identified curricular concerns has occurred every academic year. Table 96 illustrates the MSW Foundation Program’s response to these two areas of concern:

Table 31

MSW Foundation Program Responses for Continuous Improvement: 2006-2007

| Area for Improvement | MSW Foundation Program Response | Timeline |
|--|--|-----------------|
| Apply critical thinking skills to the evaluation of research and its application to practice (Obj. 10) | Modifications have been made to course syllabi, assignments, and selected textbooks and readings in SSS 590: <i>Social Work Research Methods</i> . In addition, alternate ways of teaching students to both utilize evidence-based knowledge and implement practice-based research are being considered. One example is an innovative approach to teaching students to be critical consumers of evidenced-based knowledge, modeled after the “Research Roundup” initiatives developed by the Child Welfare League. Translated into an academic setting, this approach would require students to produce a synthesized summary of a particular research area based on critical analysis of existing research studies in a format easily accessible and applicable to practitioners. Data will be gathered in order to determine the impact of these curricular revisions. | 2007-2008 |
| Apply critical thinking skills to policy analysis, administration, and management (Obj. 2) | Syllabi in the two foundation policy courses (SSS 581 & 582: <i>Social Welfare Policy & Services I and II</i>) have been revised to incorporate more policy research relevant to economic, political, and organizational policy. This includes introduces more research investigating the effectiveness and nuances of historical and cotemporary poverty reduction programs, which students will use a critical-values lens to analyze. Data will be gathered in order to determine the impact of these curricular revisions. | 2007-2008 |

In addition to efforts to strengthen curriculum objectives based on quantitative assessment measures, the MSW Foundation Program has also responded to student concerns in other areas through responses to the open-ended questions included in the Foundation Exit Survey over the past two years. A summary of areas for improvement and program responses is included in table 32. A more detailed description of program responses is provided below the table:

Table 32

MSW Program Response to Foundation Exit Survey Responses: 2005-2006 to 2006-2007.

| Rank | 2006-2007 Areas of Concern | 2006-2007 Program Response | 2005-2006 Area of Concern | 2005-2006 Program Response |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Foundation year | | Readings and assignments not | MSW Program Committee gave more |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| | curriculum: needs to be more challenging | To be addressed by MSW program | reflective of course content | attention to this issue |
| 2 | Comprehensive examinations | In the process of being revised | Foundation year curriculum: needs to be more challenging | Addressed by MSW program |
| 3 | Readings and assignments | MSW Program Committee will give more attention to this issue | Flexibility for part time students | Addressed by MSW program |
| 4 | SSS 605/606 | More coordination will be utilized in these courses | Structure of SSS 605/606 | More coordination is being utilized in these courses |
| 5 | Flexibility of part time students | To be addressed by MSW program | Spirituality issues not addressed | MSW program is once again offering <i>Catholic Social Thought</i> |
| 6 | Integration of more practice situations in the classroom | More case studies will be utilized in classes | Integration of more practice situations in the classroom | More case studies were utilized in classes |

Foundation Year Theory and Practice course (SSS 605 & SSS 606)

- The MSW Program Committee launched a sub-committee that addressed specific concerns regarding the disconnect between large lecture and individual, small classes. Better coordination between SSS 605 & SSS 606 has resulted.
- Sequence Chairs for both courses met regularly with their respective Faculty. This collaboration has resulted in better coordination and delivery of course content, along with a change in a more appropriate course text and required course readings.
- Major changes have been implemented in SSS 605 from Fall 2005 to Fall 2006. The large lectures are now presented by the Chair of this sequence rather than individual presentations by multiple faculty members.

Foundation Year Comprehensive Exam

- The MSW Program Committee launched a sub-committee that addressed specific concerns in which better coordination has resulted.
- Foundation Comprehensive Examination questions have been altered to more closely reflect the questions that are presented during Foundation course exams.
- In the 2007-2008 academic year, the Foundation Comprehensive Exam will be completed on the computer. The MSW Program Chair and the Director of Field Education have worked closely with the University's Center for Planning & Information Technology (CPIT) to make this option available to our students.

Part-time Student Needs

- The MSW Program and the Office of Field Education have consistently addressed the ongoing needs of our part-time students. The Master's Student Association (MSA) leadership has included more representation from the part-time student body.
- MSW Program and Office of Field Education activities and presentations have been carefully scheduled at a time convenient for both our full-time and part-time students.
- More required Foundation course sections have been added in the evening to meet the needs of our part-time students.

- The MSW Program Chair has taught evening courses over the last four years for the sole purpose to connect with and better address the needs of our part-time students.

Integration of Practice Content in the Foundation Curriculum

- The MSW program has systematically addressed implementing more opportunities for integrating theory with practice across the Foundation curriculum.
- More case studies have been added to Foundation courses to provide the opportunity for application of theory to practice.
- The SSS 673 & SSS 674 *Foundation Field Education & Integrative Seminars* have addressed this issue through individual student presentations of cases from students’ field placements. This allows students as a group to experience a wider range of client problems and varied interventions that they may not be experiencing in their individual field placements.

Attention to Content on Spirituality

- An elective relative to content on spirituality is being offered again (SSS 557: *Catholic Social Thought and Contemporary Social Issues*). Also, a lecture on “Transpersonal Theory” was presented to students in the Foundation HBSE course by a new faculty member who teaches this content in one of the three required theory courses in the advanced curricula.

Master’s Program: Clinical Concentration

Assessment mechanisms for the Master’s Program Clinical Concentration include seven quantitative measures (*Field Student Self-Assessment Form, Field Educator Assessment Form, Student Field Educator Form, Clinical Concentration Exam, Graduating Exit Survey, Alumni Survey, and Licensing Examinations*). All of these measures constitute either direct or indirect assessment of the Clinical Concentration Objectives. Three of these measures provide general information regarding the overall percentages or scores of students who successfully met the targeted benchmark. Results show consistently high percentages of students achieving the targeted benchmarks in terms of field performance (Student Field Education Form), comprehensive understanding of clinical concentration content (Clinical Comprehensive Exam), and knowledge and skill required for entry-level practice (Licensing Exam). The remaining four measures allow us to pinpoint areas of strength and areas needing improvement. Table 33 provides an overview of each objective by these four outcome measures, allowing identification of patterns across assessment tools.

Table 33

Overview of Numerical Rankings of MSW Clinical Concentration Objectives by Four Outcome Measures

| MSW Clinical Concentration Objectives | Field Student Self-Assessment | Field Educator Assessment | 2007 GES | 2007 AS |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Apply advanced clinical practice theory to understand the development and needs of <i>individuals</i> as bio-psycho-social-spiritual beings functioning in a <i>family</i> or family-like structure, within a chosen field of practice. | 2nd | 2nd | 2nd | 2nd |
| 2. Apply advanced clinical skills to facilitate change in individuals as bio-psycho-social- | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|------|
| spiritual beings, within a chosen field of practice. | | | | |
| 3. Integrate the knowledge and skills learned from the academic educational experiences with those of the practicum, within a chosen field of practice. | | | | |
| 4. Expand the depth, breadth and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods, to evaluate practice with client systems within a chosen field of practice. | last | last | last | last |
| 5. Apply professional values and ethical principles to clinical practice within a chosen field of practice. | 1st | 1st | 1st | 1st |
| 6. Apply knowledge of the impact of difference and the mechanisms of oppression on populations-at-risk, including use of strategies for promoting social and economic justice within clinical social work practice. | | | | |

Several themes are apparent from this overview of quantitative assessment findings:

Areas of MSW Clinical Concentration Strengths

- There is total consistency in regards to the highest rated objectives using the four assessment measures. *Practicing with sensitivity and respect for all client differences* was rated first and *applying advanced clinical practice theory to understand the development and needs of individuals as bio-psycho-social-spiritual beings functioning in a family or family-like structure, within a chosen field of practice* was rated second by all respondents. These results suggest that a focus on sensitivity and respect for difference and the importance of theory to under-gird practice are particular strengths of the Clinical Concentration.

Areas Targeted for Improvement

No Clinical Concentration objectives received a group mean rating below the benchmark of “adequate, “ but useful information can be gleaned from area that were rated the lowest.

- The most consistent pattern is the low ranking of the objective focused on research (*Expand the depth, breadth, and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods to evaluate practice with client systems, within a field of practice*), which was rated last by respondents using all four assessment tools. These ratings have been noted and inform ongoing conversation about the need to strengthen the research content area in this concentration.

Just as in previous years, a process of review and response has occurred with this noted area for improvement. Table 34 illustrates the MSW Clinical Concentration response to assessment findings.

Table 34

MSW Clinical Concentration Responses for Continuous Improvement: 2006-2007

| Area for Improvement | MSW Clinical Concentration Response | Timeline |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Expand the depth, breadth and | Modifications have been made to course syllabi, assignments, and | 2007-2008 |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods, to evaluate practice with client systems within a chosen field of practice (Obj. 4) | selected textbooks and readings in SSS 576: <i>Evaluation of Social Work Practice</i> . The Clinical Concentration is also considering curricular changes that would result in a more hands-on research experience, based on a pilot project that is currently being implemented in the undergraduate program. This would involve having students develop and implement a useful and feasible research project within their field placement setting as part of the requirements of their field seminar courses. The experience and lessons from the undergraduate research project is being considered for implementation at the graduate level; taking into account the additional resources and more complex at the graduate level given the higher number of students and agencies involved. | |
|--|---|--|

In addition to efforts to strengthen curriculum objectives based on quantitative assessment measures, the MSW Clinical Concentration has also responded to student concerns in other areas through responses to the open-ended questions included in the Graduating Exit Survey over the past several years. Information from this assessment process will be presented following presentation of quantitative data for the other two advanced concentrations.

Master’s Program: Social Justice and Social Change Concentration

Assessment mechanisms for the Master’s Program SJSC Concentration include seven quantitative measures (*Field Student Self-Assessment Form, Field Educator Assessment Form, Student Field Educator Form, SJSC Concentration Exam, Graduating Exit Survey, Alumni Survey, and Licensing Examinations*). All of these measures constitute either direct or indirect assessment of the Clinical Concentration Objectives. Three of these measures provide general information regarding the overall percentages or scores of students who successfully met the targeted benchmark. Results show consistently high percentages of students achieving the targeted benchmarks in terms of field performance (Student Field Education Form), comprehensive understanding of clinical concentration content (Clinical Comprehensive Exam), and knowledge and skill required for entry-level practice (Licensing Exam). The remaining four measures allow us to pinpoint areas of strength and areas needing improvement. Table 35 provides an overview of each objective by three of these four outcome measures, allowing identification of patterns across assessment tools. (Data from the GES is not presented, as findings were limited to responses from only 1 SJSC student).

Table 35

Overview of Numerical Rankings of MSW SJSC Concentration Objectives by Three Outcome Measures

| MSW SJSC Concentration Objectives | Field Student Self-Assessment | Field Educator Assessment | 2007 AS |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Apply advanced organizational, community, political and economic, and social justice theories to understand the issues that arise in management, planning, policy analysis, community development, and community building, within a chosen | Tied for 2 nd | last | |

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|------|
| field of practice. | | | |
| 2. Apply advanced skills to facilitate change through management, planning, policy analysis, community development, and community building, within a chosen field of practice. | Tied for 2 nd | Tied for 2 nd | |
| 3. Integrate the knowledge and skills learned from the academic educational experiences with those of the practicum, within a chosen field of practice. | Tied for 2 nd | Tied for 2 nd | |
| 4. Expand the depth, breadth, and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods, in order to evaluate programs within a field of practice. | Tied for 2 nd | | last |
| 5. Apply professional values and ethical principles to social justice/social change practice within a chosen field of practice. | 1st | Tied for 2 nd | 2nd |
| 6. Apply knowledge of the impact of difference and the mechanisms of oppression on populations-at-risk, including use of strategies for promoting social and economic justice within social justice/social change social work practice. | last | 1st | 1st |

Several themes are apparent from this overview of quantitative assessment findings:

Areas of SJSC Concentration Strengths

- There is more variation in ratings of the highest rated objectives in the SJSC Concentration than in the Clinical Concentration. However, both Field Educators and respondents to the Alumni Survey identify objective #6 (*Apply knowledge of the impact of difference and the mechanisms of oppression on populations-at-risk, including use of strategies for promoting social and economic justice within social justice/social change social work practice*) as the highest.
- Field students identify objective #5 (*Apply professional values and ethical principles to social justice/social change practice within a chosen field of practice*) as their highest and this objective is rated second by Alumni Survey respondents and tied for second among Field Educators. It is apparent that these two areas represent particular strengths of the SJSC Concentration.

Areas Targeted for Improvement

No SJSC Concentration objectives received a group mean rating below the benchmark of “adequate,” but there is information regarding respondent ratings of the lowest objective.

- What is most apparent from the respondents’ views on the lowest rated objectives is that all three groups have identified different areas. Field students rated objective #6 last, which focuses on the “impact of difference and mechanism of oppression.” This is interesting given that this objective was ranked first by the other two groups. Field Educators noted some need for improvement related to theory represented by objective #1 (*Apply advanced organizational, community, political and economic, and social justice theories to understand the issues that*

arise in management, planning, policy analysis, community development, and community building, within a chosen field of practice). Finally, respondents on the Alumni Survey identify Objective #4 concerning “research” as the area most in need of improvement.

Just as in previous years, a process of review and response has occurred with this noted area for improvement. Table 36 illustrates the MSW SJSC Concentration response to assessment findings.

Table 36

MSW SJSC Concentration Responses for Continuous Improvement: 2006-2007

| Area for Improvement | MSW SJSC Concentration Response | Timeline |
|---|---|-----------------|
| Apply knowledge of the impact of difference and the mechanisms of oppression on populations-at-risk, including use of strategies for promoting social and economic justice within social justice/social change social work practice (Obj. 6) | Significant revisions have been made to SSS 570 <i>Diversity in a Multicultural Society</i> course to more explicitly provide more in-depth conceptual understanding of the linkages between the social construction of difference, the mechanisms of oppression operating at multiple levels, and specific strategies for the promotion of social and economic justice. There has been increased attention to various theories of social and economic justice in this course, as well. At the advanced level, students are being encouraged to consider taking SSS 946: <i>Theories of Social Justice</i> to fulfill their advanced theory requirement. Data will be collected to assess the impact of these curricular changes. | 2007-2008 |
| Apply advanced organizational, community, political and economic, and social justice theories to understand the issues that arise in management, planning, policy analysis, community development, and community building, within a chosen field of practice (Obj. 1) | Revisions have been made to all SJSC practice courses and Concentration has developed three possible tracks (described earlier) will be instituted in the 2007-2008 academic years. In addition, three theory courses (SSS 880: <i>Organizational Theory and Change</i> ; SS 885: <i>Administration Theory, Practice, and Process</i> ; and SSS 946: <i>Theories of Social Justice</i>) have been identified as advanced theory courses for this concentration. Data will be collected to assess the impact of these curricular changes. | 2007-2008 |
| Expand the depth, breadth and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods, to evaluate practice with client systems within a chosen field of practice (Obj. 4) | Modifications have been made to course syllabi, assignments, and selected textbooks and readings in SSS 757 <i>Evaluation of Social Work Programs</i> . The SJSC Concentration is also considering curricular changes that would result in a more hands-on research experience, based on a pilot project that is currently being implemented in the undergraduate program. This would involve having students develop and implement a useful and feasible research project within their field placement setting as part of the requirements of their field seminar courses. The experience and lessons from the undergraduate research project is being considered for implementation at the graduate level; taking into account the additional resources and more complex at the graduate level given the higher number of students and agencies involved. | 2007-2008 |

In addition to efforts to strengthen curriculum objectives based on quantitative assessment measures, the MSW SJSC Concentration has also responded to student concerns in other areas through responses to the open-ended questions included in the Graduating Exit Survey over the past several years.

Information from this assessment process will be presented following presentation of quantitative data for the remaining advanced concentration.

Master’s Program: Combined Concentration

Assessment mechanisms for the Master’s Program Combined Concentration include seven quantitative measures (*Field Student Self-Assessment Form, Field Educator Assessment Form, Student Field Educator Form, Combined Concentration Exam, Graduating Exit Survey, Alumni Survey, and Licensing Examinations*). All of these measures constitute either direct or indirect assessment of the Clinical Concentration Objectives. Three of these measures provide general information regarding the overall percentages or scores of students who successfully met the targeted benchmark. Results show consistently high percentages of students achieving the targeted benchmarks in terms of field performance (Student Field Education Form), comprehensive understanding of clinical concentration content (Combined Comprehensive Exam), and knowledge and skill required for entry-level practice (Licensing Exam). The remaining four measures allow us to pinpoint areas of strength and areas needing improvement. Table 37 provides an overview of each objective by three of these four outcome measures, allowing identification of patterns across assessment tools. (Data from the GES is not included as Combined student responses were included with the other Concentration responses and data are not available separately).

Table 37

Overview of Numerical Rankings of MSW Combined Concentration Objectives by Three Outcome Measures^a

| MSW SJSC Concentration Objectives | Field Student Self-Assessment | Field Educator Assessment | 2007 AS |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Apply advanced clinical practice theories and social justice/social change theories to understand the development and needs of client systems of all sizes, and the issues that arise in management, planning, policy analysis, community development, and community building, within a chosen field of practice. | last | last | |
| 2. Apply advanced skills to facilitate change in client systems of all sizes, within a chosen field of practice. | | | |
| 3. Integrate the knowledge and skills learned from the academic educational experiences with those of the practicum, within a chosen field of practice. | Tied for 2 nd | | |
| 4. Expand the depth, breadth, and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods to evaluate practice with client systems and evaluate programs, within a field of practice. | | 2nd | last |
| 5. Apply professional values and ethical principles to clinical and social justice/social change practice within a chosen field of practice. | 1st | 1st | 1st |
| 6. Apply knowledge of the impact of differences and mechanisms of oppression on populations-at-risk, including use of strategies for promoting social and economic justice within clinical and social justice & social change social work practice. | Tied for 2 nd | | 2nd |

Several themes are apparent from this overview of quantitative assessment findings:

Areas of MSW Combined Concentration Strengths

- Again, there is complete congruence in regards to the highest rated objectives using the three assessment measures. *Practicing with sensitivity and respect for all client differences* was rated first by all respondents. It is clear that this curricular area is a particular strength of the Combined Concentration.
- There is some consistency in regards to the objectives rated as second. Field Student Self-Assessment findings target both objective #3 (*Integrate the knowledge and skills learned from the academic educational experiences with those of the practicum, within a chosen field of practice*) and objective #6 (*Apply knowledge of the impact of difference and the mechanisms of oppression on populations-at-risk, including use of strategies for promoting social and economic justice within social justice/social change social work practice*) as second highest. Alumni Survey respondents also identify objective #6 as their second highest area. Field Educators identify objective #4 relating to *research* as their second highest area.

Areas Targeted for Improvement

No Combined Concentration objectives received a group mean rating below the benchmark of “adequate, “ but useful information can be gleaned from data on areas rated the lowest.

- Both field students and Field Educators identify theory as the area needed the most improvement (*Apply advanced clinical practice theories and social justice/social change theories to understand the development and needs of client systems of all sizes, and the issues that arise in management, planning, policy analysis, community development, and community building, within a chosen field of practice*).
- Alumni Survey respondents identify research as the area needed the most improvement (*Expand the depth, breadth, and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods to evaluate practice with client systems and evaluate programs, within a field of practice*).

Just as in previous years, a process of review and response has occurred with this noted area for improvement. Table 38 illustrates the MSW Combined Concentration response to assessment findings.

Table 38

MSW Combined Concentration Responses for Continuous Improvement: 2006-2007

| Area for Improvement | MSW Combined Concentration Response | Timeline |
|---|---|-----------------|
| Apply advanced clinical practice theories and social justice/social change theories to understand the development and needs of client systems of all sizes, and the issues that arise in management, planning, policy analysis, community | Modifications regarding both clinical and SJSC theory courses have been described in the discussion of these two Concentrations. The impact of these changes on Combined concentrators will also be monitored and used for future curricular revisions. | 2007-2008 |

| | | |
|--|---|-----------|
| development, and community building, within a chosen field of practice (Obj. 1) | | |
| Expand the depth, breadth and specificity of the foundation knowledge of research methods, to evaluate practice with client systems within a chosen field of practice (Obj. 4) | Modifications regarding both clinical and SJSC evaluation courses have been described in the discussion of these two Concentrations. The impact of these changes on Combined concentrators will also be monitored and used for future curricular revisions. | 2007-2008 |

In addition to efforts to strengthen curriculum objectives based on quantitative assessment measures, the MSW Combined Concentration has also responded to student concerns in other areas through responses to the open-ended questions included in the Graduating Exit Survey over the past several years. Information from this assessment process will now be presented.

Lack of Diversity among the Faculty and Student Body

- NCSSS employs a multi-faceted definition of diversity, which includes aspects of human experience shaped by race, ethnicity, immigrant status, religion and spirituality, sex and gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, and socio-economic status. Some of our full-time and part-time Faculty, who represent diverse populations, have shared their personal experience of oppression with our student body. The Diversity Awareness Committee continues to work with Faculty, staff, and students to sensitize our NCSSS community to this comprehensive understanding of diversity. This comprehensive definition guides all aspects of developing a diverse NCSSS community.
- Last year at our NCSSS Orientation, we welcomed all new students and stressed our commitment to supporting all forms of diversity while addressing multi-level discrimination and oppression in accordance with the *NASW Code of Ethics*. We also distributed a flyer to all students, which describes the Diversity Awareness Committee and directs students with concerns or questions about GLBTQ issues to a specific Faculty contact person who serves as an ally concerning these issues.

Little Opportunity to Conduct Research as an MSW Student

- The MSW Program Committee has repeatedly discussed possible strategies and plans for introducing a new student assignment in the Advanced research curriculum. This assignment, addressed in the second research course, SSS 756/SSS 757 (*Practice Evaluation or Program Evaluation*), would be completed and monitored in the Advanced Concentration Field Seminars. Introduction of this assignment will be discussed and hopefully approved during the 2007-2008 academic year in preparation for implementation during the following academic year.

Advisement for Students Accepted as Advanced Standing Status

- Over the last four years, the MSW Program has conducted a special one-day Advanced Standing Orientation just prior to the beginning of the fall semester. This program includes curriculum content on advanced curriculum theories including cognitive, behavioral, psychodynamic, transpersonal, and macro theories; a comprehensive description of the advanced field placement experience; an orientation to the library, including a description of the varied databases in Mullen Library; and an opportunity to meet with the MSA. The faculty

advisor for Advanced Standing students contacts student over the summer and meets with students individually prior to this orientation.

- The MSW Program has continued to enhance the content of the Advanced Student Orientation, but recognizes that it has not adequately met the educational and professional needs of our Advanced Standing students. Our MSW Program Committee will address this ongoing program need and develop a more effective orientation program for students accepted with Advanced Standing status.

Limited Variety of MSW Elective Courses

- With the revised Macro Concentration change to Social Justice and Social Change (SJSC), a number of graduate courses taught within other CUA graduate departments have been identified as courses that will meet the MSW elective course requirement for SJSC concentrators. This will expand elective options.
- Two new courses (SSS 653: *Attachment and Neurobiology: Implications for Social Work Practice* and SSS 835: *Community Organizing for Equitable Development*) have been developed over this past academic year to meet the ongoing need to increase the variety and number of MSW elective courses. We will continue to focus on this area.

National Catholic School of Social Service (NCSSS)

Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements

Doctor of Philosophy

Assessment Measures

The Doctor of Philosophy program at the National Catholic School of Social Service (NCSSS) uses the following measures to assess student learning outcomes:

- Grades, course evaluations, and enrollment totals for Philosophical Issues in Social Work Knowledge Building (SSS 940), Research Foundations (SSS 950), and Theoretical Framework for Ethical Decision Making (SSS 944)
- Feedback on Student Performance Forms for six foundation courses
- Comprehensive examination pass rates
- Progression through the program
- Alumni Survey

Assessment Findings

Course Enrollments, Grades, and Evaluation:

The PhD program at NCSSS is guided and assessed by the Doctoral Program Committee. The committee is chaired by the Doctoral Program Chair and comprised of all faculty members teaching in the doctoral program as well as a doctoral student representative who is elected by the Doctoral Student Association. The Program committee formulates policy, continually reviewing existing courses and developing new curriculum for presentation to the full faculty. It monitors student progress and reviews results of surveys and focus groups. The program committee provides an ongoing forum for dialogue between faculty and students in the program and ensures the excellence of the NCSSS PhD in Social Work.

The Program Committee analyzed course grades, evaluations, and enrollment data for Philosophical Issues in Social Work Knowledge Building (SSS 940), Research Foundations (SSS 950), and Theoretical Framework for Ethical Decision Making (SSS 944) for a five-year period (Fall 2003-Fall 2008).

Philosophical Issues in Social Work Knowledge Building (SSS 940) (Appendix A)

This is the gateway course for the doctoral program. All new students – full-time, part-time, and non-degree – take this course in the fall semester (since Fall of 2006) of their first year. During the period from Spring 2004 to Fall of 2007, enrollment in SSS 940 varied between 7 and 13 newly admitted students. All students earned good to exceptional grades (B- to A) with the average final grades ranging from 3.49 to 3.97.

Students evaluated the “relevance of the course” at 4.0 and 4.08 (Fall 2006, Fall 2007) on a 5 point scale. “Knowledge and Skill of the Instructor” ranged from 4.40 to 4.57, and “overall effectiveness of the instructor” ranged from 4.33 to 4.60. Due to overall low response rate on electronic course evaluations, the Doctoral Program Committee returned to use of in-class handwritten course evaluations, so for the fall of 2008, the response rate was 100% and the evaluation of relevance of the course was 5.0; knowledge and skill of the instructor was 5.0, and overall effectiveness of the

instructor was 5.0. These evaluations indicate both satisfaction with the course and understanding of its relevance to the doctoral program.

Research Foundations (SSS 950) (Appendix B)

Taken in the spring semester of the first year (since spring of 2007), Research Foundations is the second course that is required of all new students - full-time, part-time, and non-degree. For part of that period, part-time students beginning the previous year also took the class, so during the period from Fall of 2003 to Spring of 2008, enrollment varied between 7 and 11 students. Thirty seven students (80%) earned good to exceptional grades (B- to A). Three students earned grades of C and one failed in the spring of 2008. Average grades ranged from 3.05 to 3.90.

Students evaluated the “relevance of the course” at 4.83 and 4.65 (Fall 2006, Fall 2007) on a 5 point scale. “Knowledge and Skill of the Instructor” ranged from 4.64 to 4.79, and “overall effectiveness of the instructor” ranged from 4.88 to 5.0. Again, because of response rate, paper evaluations will be completed the next time the course is offered in Spring of 2009. These evaluations indicate both satisfaction with the course and understanding of its relevance to the doctoral program. In addition, the course is often a predictor of success in the doctoral program. Those with grades of C are counseled to take a lighter load, and the student who failed was a non-degree student and was not accepted into the degree seeking program.

Theoretical Framework for Ethical Decision Making (SSS 944) (Appendix C)

Theoretical Framework for Ethical Decision Making is a third first-year doctoral course that is both foundational to the scholarly discipline and profession of social work as well as particularly consistent with the mission of the school and university. Enrollment varied between 6 and 11 students. All students earned good to exceptional grades (B- to A) with the average final grades ranging from 3.65 to 3.88.

Between Spring of 2003 and Spring of 2008, electronic course evaluations were completed by students only in the spring of 2007. Students evaluated the “relevance of the course” at 4.28 on a 5 point scale. “knowledge and Skill of the Instructor” was rated at 4.36 and “overall effectiveness of the instructor” was scored at 4.25. Because of the low response rate for evaluations of this and other doctoral courses, the Doctoral Program Committee returned to use of in-class handwritten course evaluations. Accurate data will be available when the course is next taught in the spring of 2009.

Progression Data

Building on the 60 credit hour MSW, the PhD program requires 45 additional credit hours. The full time program takes 5 semesters of course work pre comps; the part-time program takes 7 semesters. Occasionally students are admitted as non-degree students who may take two courses before either being admitted into the full or part-time programs or withdrawing.

Student Progression Status (2003-2008)

| | Admission Status | | | Total | Current Status (spring 2009) | | | |
|------|------------------|-----------|------------|-------|------------------------------|-----|---------------------|-----------|
| | Full time | Part Time | Non-degree | | In class | ABD | Withdrew/ dismissed | Graduated |
| 2003 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| 2004 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 10 | 2 | 0 |
| 2005 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 10 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 0 |
| 2006 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| 2007 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------|----|----|---|------|-------|------|------|-----|
| 2008 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 24 | 23 | 6 | 52 | 18 | 19 | 12 | 3 |
| | | | | 100% | 34.6% | 36.5 | 23.1 | .06 |

Fifty-two students have been admitted to the PhD program since 2003. Newly admitted classes have ranged in number from 7 to 12. The balance between those interested in full-time or part-time study varies from year to year.

Of the 52 students admitted to the PhD program since 2003, 40 (76.9%) have been successful. That is, they have either graduated or continue in the program. Twelve (23.1%) have withdrawn or been dismissed (due to failure of comps). All other than those who have graduated, withdrawn, or have been dismissed are on track in their progression towards graduation..

Feedback on Student Performance Forms for six foundation courses

Instructors in the six first year foundation courses, in addition to submitting a grade, write a narrative report of the students' readiness for doctoral study within specific domains. This report is shared with the student and forwarded to the program chair. All beginning students are reviewed by the doctoral faculty based on these narratives, and if the group deems it necessary, a review committee will be called to determine with the student a plan for strengthening the student's performance. Since initiating this process in 2003, no student reviews have been needed to be called on the basis of the feedback, although informal advisement regarding progress has been provided by both instructors and program chair.

Comprehensive Examinations Outcome (2003-2008)

| Fall | | | | | | Spring | | | | | |
|------|------|----|----|--------|--------|--------|------|----|----|--------|--------|
| | Pass | MP | MF | Fail 1 | Fail 2 | | Pass | MP | MF | Fail 1 | Fail 2 |
| 2003 | 1 | | | 1 | | 2004 | 2 | | | 1 | 1 |
| 2004 | 1 | | | 1 | | 2005 | 2 | 3 | | | 1 |
| 2005 | 2 | | | | | 2006 | 1 | | | 1 | |
| 2006 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | | 2007 | | 3 | | | |
| 2007 | | 3 | 1 | | | 2008 | 3 | 1 | | | |
| 2008 | 2 | 4 | | 1 | | 2009 | | | | | |

Since 2003, 41 students have taken the written comprehensive exam. Program policy requires that a student must pass the comprehensive before submitting a proposal for the dissertation. The exam may be failed and retaken only once. A second fail results in dismissal from the program. Prior to the fall of 2006, students could receive a grade of pass or fail. The Doctoral Program Committee found that allowing a third option of "marginal" provided a finer measure of performance on the exam. Students receiving a grade of marginal on the written exam have the opportunity to take an oral exam in which they have a different medium in which to demonstrate that they understand the material.

Of the 41 students who have taken the written comprehensive since 2003, 15 passed the first time; 17 (post 2006) received grades of "marginal" and 16 of these 17 passed after having an oral examination. One failed the oral. Of the 41, 7 ultimately failed the first time (either by failing the written exam or failing the oral following a grade of marginal). Of these 7, 3 failed the exam twice and were dismissed from the program.

Alumni Survey

In 2008, the Doctoral Program Committee conducted a survey of a 10-year cohort of graduates. Among other issues, the survey explored progression through the program, degree of support alumni felt during their preparation, how well the program prepared them for their post PhD career.

Progression Through the Program

| How many years did it take to complete the coursework towards your PhD? | | |
|---|----------|--------------------|
| Mean = 3.0 | SD = 1.3 | Range 2 – 8 years |
| How many years did it take you to complete all requirements for the PhD Degree? | | |
| Mean = 6.1 | SD = 2.1 | Range 3 – 10 years |

Preparation towards the Degree

| | Excellent | More than adequate | Adequate | Less than adequate or poor |
|--|-----------|--------------------|----------|----------------------------|
| Classroom preparation for comprehensive exam? | 9 | 13 | 3 | 0 |
| Faculty support for developing the dissertation committee? | 12 | 6 | 5 | 1 |
| Dissertation director support during dissertation process? | 18 | 1 | 5 | 1 |
| Reader support during dissertation process? | 9 | 8 | 7 | 1 |

Extent to which Program Contributed to Program Objectives

| | Excellent | More than adequate | Adequate | Less than adequate or poor |
|---|-----------|--------------------|----------|----------------------------|
| Prepared to contribute to the critique, transformation, or dissemination of knowledge for the profession in response to existing and emerging social problems? | 9 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Prepared to apply humanistic values, ethical principles, and philosophical and theoretical perspectives to the understanding and alleviation of existing and emerging social problems? | 8 | 10 | 4 | 3 |
| Prepared to promote and enhance the role of social work in society by assuming leadership or research roles in clinical practice, administration, social policy analysis, or social work education? | 14 | 7 | 3 | 1 |

In addition to quantitative items, open-ended responses were sought. Many expressed praise of the program, but a number of suggestions for improvement were made. Some of these had already been implemented in the program, and some have now been placed under consideration by the Doctoral Program Committee in its restructuring of the program. Among these are:

- A more comprehensive orientation
- Reducing the comprehensive exam from three to two days
- Institutionalize peer support in the process of preparation for the exam
- Produce a comprehensive dissertation manual to provide more detailed information of potential dissertation committee members
- More opportunity for student participation in faculty research

- Additional “hands-on” research and statistics content in the curriculum
- Better integration of the program
- Additional ethics content
- Additional mentoring towards academic careers
- Better representation of NCSS in CUA alumni publications

Curricular Improvements

On an ongoing basis, drawing from ongoing discussions of the doctoral faculty and student representative; grades, feedback on foundation courses, and comprehensive exams; course evaluations; and student and alumni surveys, the Doctoral Program Committee has adjusted and improved the curriculum. During the last five years, we have:

- Added a required course in scholarly writing for incoming students
- Augmented orientation with presentation on APA format and style
- Provided special orientation with Ms Mary Agnes Thompson of Mullen Library for incoming students
- Developed a free-standing course on qualitative methodology
- Redeveloped the clinical integrative seminar

During much of the 2008-2009 academic year the Program Committee worked on developing a proposal to the full faculty for a substantial restructuring of the doctoral program. An all-day retreat was held in November to further the process. The planned changes will:

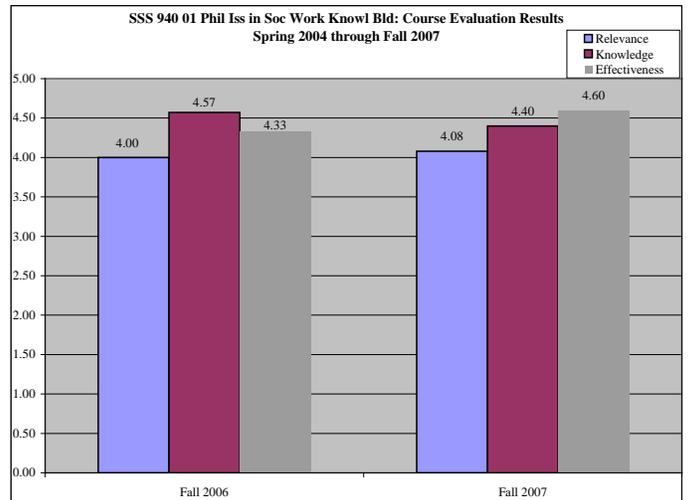
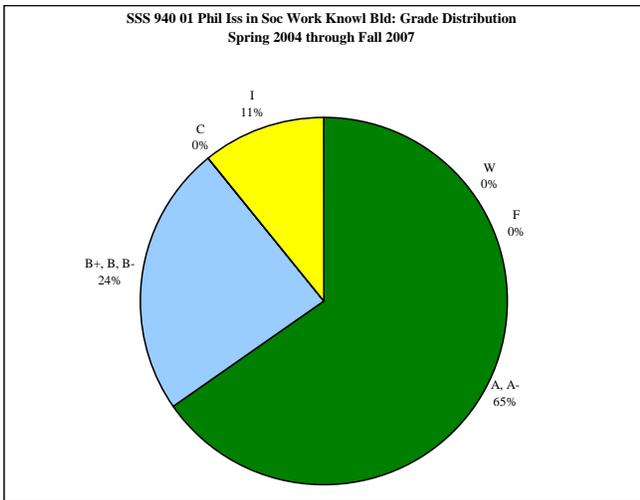
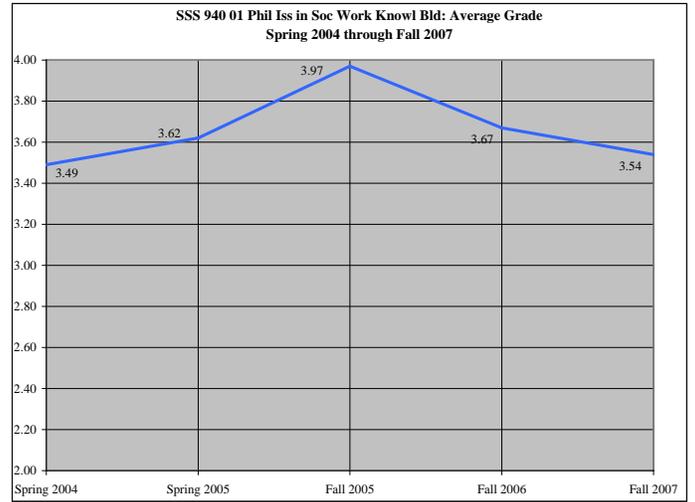
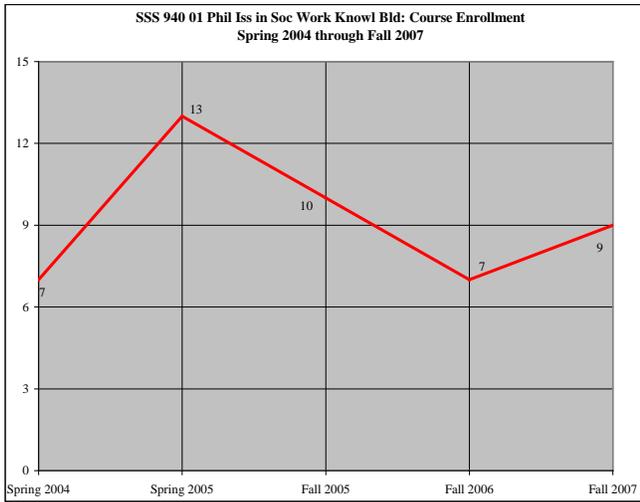
- Maintain excellence of the program
- Enhance student skill in scholarly writing
- Increase content on both quantitative and qualitative research methods and statistical analysis
- Provide additional opportunity for hands-on experience in research
- Eliminate the artificial distinction between clinical and macro concentrations
- Enhance content on classical and contemporary theory
- Provide a seminar for all students to integrate curriculum from the entire program

As the proposed improved curriculum takes shape, it will be presented to the full NCSSS faculty for approval and will be phased in over the next three years.

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE
SSS 940 01 Phil Iss in Soc Work Knowl Bld

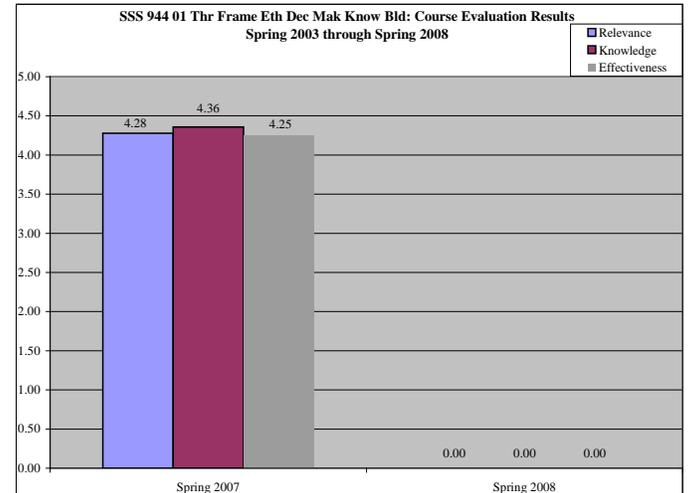
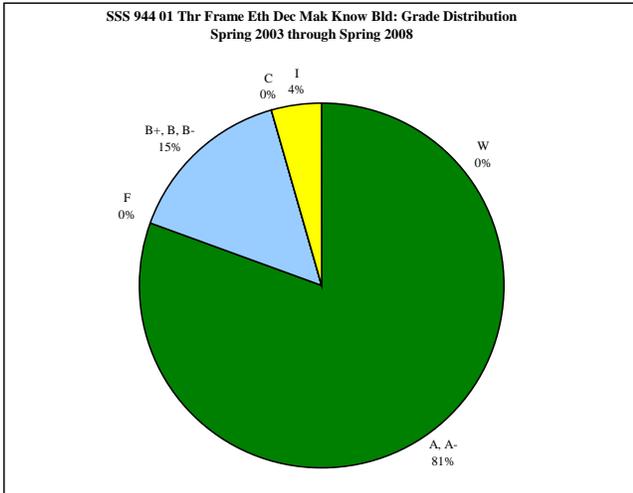
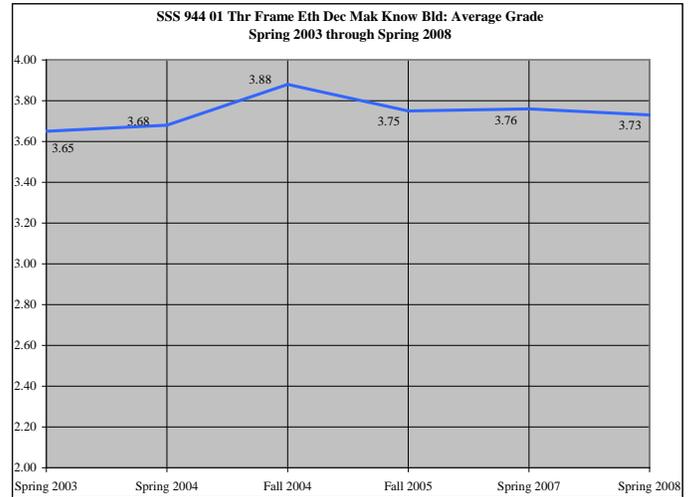
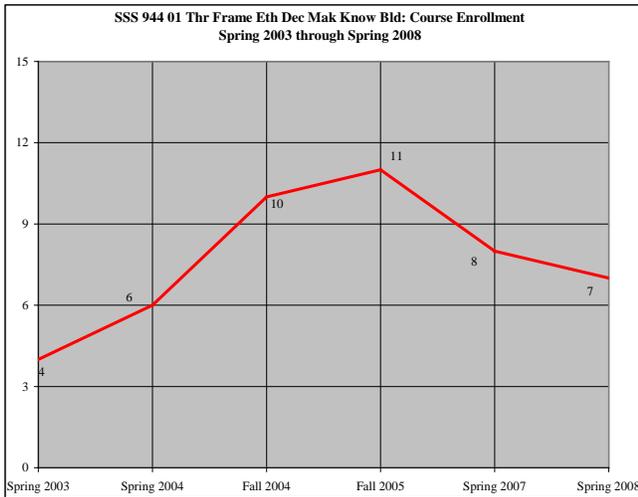
| Term | Course Enrollment | Course Grades | | | | | | | | Course Evaluation Results | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------|--------|--------------------|-----------|---|---|---|--------------|---------------------------|---------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------|------|--------|
| | | Course Grade | | Grade Distribution | | | | | Course Eval. | | Relevance of Course | | Knowledge and Skill of Instructor | | Overall Effectiveness of Instructor | | |
| | | Avg. | StDev. | A, A- | B+, B, B- | C | F | W | I | # | % | Avg. | StDev. | Avg. | StDev. | Avg. | StDev. |
| Spring 2004 | 7 | 3.49 | 0.65 | 4 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spring 2005 | 13 | 3.62 | 0.47 | 9 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fall 2005 | 10 | 3.97 | 0.09 | 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fall 2006 | 7 | 3.67 | 0.31 | 4 | 2 | | | | 1 | 3 | 42.86% | 4.00 | 0.85 | 4.57 | 0.75 | 4.33 | 1.15 |
| Fall 2007 | 9 | 3.54 | 0.39 | 3 | 2 | | | | 4 | 5 | 55.56% | 4.08 | 0.91 | 4.40 | 0.85 | 4.60 | 0.89 |



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Institutional Assessment

COURSE SUMMARY DATA: SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE
SSS 944 01 Thr Frame Eth Dec Mak Know Bid

| Term | Course Enrollment | Course Grade | | Grade Distribution | | | | | | Course Eval. | | | Relevance of Course | | Knowledge and Skill of Instructor | | Overall Effectiveness of Instructor | |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------|--------|--------------------|-----------|---|---|---|---|--------------|---|--------|---------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------|------|
| | | Avg. | StDev. | A, A- | B+, B, B- | C | F | W | I | # | % | Avg. | StDev. | Avg. | StDev. | Avg. | StDev. | |
| Spring 2003 | 4 | 3.65 | 0.40 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spring 2004 | 6 | 3.68 | 0.37 | 5 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fall 2004 | 10 | 3.88 | 0.15 | 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fall 2005 | 11 | 3.75 | 0.20 | 10 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spring 2007 | 8 | 3.76 | 0.33 | 5 | 2 | | | | | 1 | 4 | 50.00% | 4.28 | 0.89 | 4.36 | 1.06 | 4.25 | 0.96 |
| Spring 2008 | 7 | 3.73 | 0.26 | 5 | 1 | | | | | 1 | | 0.00% | | | | | | |



COURSE SUMMARY DATA: SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE
SSS 950 01 Research Foundations: Intro

| Term | Course Enrollment | Course Grade | | Course Grades | | | | | | Course Evaluation Results | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------|--------|---------------|-----------|---|---|---|---|---------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | | Avg. | StDev. | A, A- | B+, B, B- | C | F | W | I | Course Eval. # | Course Eval. % | Relevance of Course Avg. | Relevance of Course StDev. | Knowledge and Skill of Instructor Avg. | Knowledge and Skill of Instructor StDev. | Overall Effectiveness of Instructor Avg. | Overall Effectiveness of Instructor StDev. |
| Spring 2003 | 3 | 3.90 | 0.17 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fall 2003 | 7 | 3.30 | 0.76 | 4 | 2 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spring 2005 | 11 | 3.41 | 0.66 | 7 | 3 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spring 2006 | 10 | 3.74 | 0.62 | 9 | | 1 | | | | 8 | 80.00% | 4.83 | 0.38 | 4.79 | 0.49 | 4.88 | 0.35 |
| Spring 2007 | 7 | 3.68 | 0.37 | 5 | 1 | | | | 1 | 4 | 57.14% | 4.65 | 0.59 | 4.64 | 0.56 | 5.00 | 0.00 |
| Spring 2008 | 8 | 3.05 | 0.77 | 3 | 3 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | |

