

Annual Report Form

Please answer the following questions in the body of an e-mail and return to rculbert@iusb.edu. CC a copy of the report to your department faculty and to your dean.

a. Program Name – Master’s of Social Work

b. Report prepared by – Marilynne Ramsey, PhD

c. Who is the current assessment contact for your program? Same.

*d. Should assessment information be sent to anyone else in your department?
No.*

1. What are the program’s educational goals? (Please take goals directly from your program’s assessment plan, and highlight any changes made this year.)

See the report below for the entire system school, plus my notes about South Bend specific projects.

2. What assessment techniques did the program use? (Please take assessment techniques directly from your program’s assessment plan and highlight any changes made this year.)

See the report below

3. What has your program done with assessment information this year? (i.e. communicated results to faculty, staff, alumni and students, made changes in the curriculum, made changes in the budget, added new courses. . .)

See the report below

4. After reflecting on assessment activities in your unit, as a result of assessment what are two issues you would like to address?

The entire program is now engaged in changing our assessment for an upcoming re-accreditation. The new guidelines stress “competencies.” One issue I am addressing is starting an assessment for educational outcomes for the first year of our program, the foundation year.

Master of Social Work Program
All campuses

1. *Evaluation of Master of Social Work (MSW) Curriculum*

Year

The MSW Program had approximately 560 students who attended the IUPUI MSW Program during the 2007-2008 academic year. These students completed 60 credit hours of study to obtain an MSW degree. The course content is normally divided between 30 credit hours of foundation course work and 30 credit hours of concentration classes. The courses are divided between 12 credits of field work and 48 hours of classroom study. The MSW Program has six concentrations of study. These concentrations focus on; family therapy, mental health and addictions, health, school social work, child welfare and leadership. The IU School of Social Work's Master of Social Work Program has made a comprehensive, ongoing effort to evaluate the impact of the program on its students using both qualitative and quantitative procedures. This effort has included an exit survey, alumni survey, employer survey, student focus groups, advisory board input, evaluation of field practice, and periodic subject specific surveys. The following information explicates how these efforts have been and are being used to evaluate the MSW Program. This is followed by an outcome assessment schedule that identifies when the procedures are used, with whom, and their general purposes.

OUTCOME AND PROCESS ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE

<u>Data Gathering Method</u>	<u>Population Surveyed</u>	<u>Frequency Data Collected</u>	<u>Purpose of Data</u>
Exit Survey; Short-term Outcome	Graduating MSWs	Each year two weeks prior to completion of courses.	Feedback on the curriculum
Employers Survey ; Intermediate Outcome	Employers of graduates	Once every three years	How adequately graduates are trained for their jobs and the future training needs of MSWs
Alumni Survey; Intermediate Outcome	MSW Graduates	Once every three years	Feedback on curriculum, graduates' employment statuses, type of employment,

			salaries, and recommendation for future curriculum needs
Field Evaluations; Immediate Outcome	Field Instructors for Advanced Standing placements and Foundation placements.	Each year at the end of the foundation placement and advanced placement	Determine if the MSW students have the requisite generalist skills and advanced practice skills needed prior to graduation
MSW Student Association Focus Groups; Immediate Outcome	All MSW students	Once each year at the end of the Spring Semester	Feedback on curriculum and School of Social Work policies and procedures
School of Social Work Advisory Board; Immediate, Intermediate, Long Term Outcomes	Advisory Board members	Once every six months	Feedback from representative community agencies on their perception of how the MSW program is meeting current service area needs and to provide recommendations on future needs
Licensed Social Work Exam; Intermediate Outcome	Association of Social Work Boards	Collect results of exams once every two years	Determine if graduates who have taken the licensing exam have the requisite knowledge for generalist practice
Licensed Clinical Social Work Exam; Intermediate Outcome and Long Term Outcome	Association of Social Work Boards	Collect results of the exams once every two years	Determine if graduates who have taken the licensing exam have the requisite knowledge for independent practice as an advanced clinician

Periodic Subject Specific Surveys; Range of possible Outcome Times	Will vary based on the information needs.	When needed to provide data on specific issues.	Gather data on specific MSW Program issues
Data from End of Semester Surveys on Course Objectives	All MSW students	Collected at the end of each semester	Feedback on whether course objective have been achieved

Methods Used:

This past year we did subject specific surveys to obtain a better understanding of the effectiveness of several field processes. We also did focus groups with faculty and student to determine the effectiveness of the new writing course. We also did student focus groups each semester that we organized by the MSW student association. The goal of these efforts was to obtain general feedback to the Dean on student satisfaction with the MSW program. The MSW students who graduated in May of 2009 were also given an exit survey to complete. The IUPUI Office of Information Management and Institutional Research (IMIR) conducted the 2008 Continuing Student Satisfaction and Priorities Survey for the School of Social Work. Additionally each concentration implemented either concentration specific exit surveys or focus groups with students who attended their concentration. These efforts provided quantitative and qualitative information for review.

Findings

The findings for the Field evaluation will be discussed in a separate section below. The other findings will be reported in this section of the report.

The data from these surveys and focus groups indicated that courses are meeting their objectives. The IMIR survey report noted that the MSW students as compared to other IUPUI students were overall more satisfied with their academic experiences at IUPUI than IUPUI students from other programs. A faculty MSW focus group and subsequent review of the literature found that it was highly likely that there was grade inflation within the MSW Program. The MSW graduate 2008 exit survey indicated that students thought the MSW Program had prepared them to be practicing MSW's upon completion of the program. The 2008 exit survey finding that students desired more practical application activities during classes to assist in learning how to apply the course material was not present in the 2009 exit survey. The 2008 exit survey indicated that students thought that concentration classes were sometimes too basic and overlapping in content. This finding was not present in the 09 survey. The 2008 indicated that students in general were satisfied with their field liaison. There were still concerns about some liaisons not making adequate time with students in the field. The exit survey also indicated a continued desire for additional online classes. Students also reported they were more satisfied with the OnCourse CL

this year than last. However, they still preferred the Angel platform to OnCourse. The various evaluation methods found that graduating MSW would be very interested in the IU School of Social Work providing CEUs for graduates. The new writing class focus groups found that the writing class was being offered at a time that made it difficult for our very busy part-time MSW students to take full advantage of them and that it would be more appropriate to have students take this class prior to doing any other MSW courses.

Impact of Findings

The writing class has been changed from the first semester of a student's MSW program to being done prior to starting classes. This was done to reduce the work load as requested by the students who took the class.

The grade inflation study resulted in the faculty voting to work at systematically correcting the grade inflation over the next 3-4 years. Training was provided to faculty on how to develop and use grading rubrics and what would be appropriate grade distributions for various classes. During fall 2009 training on test development will be provided to faculty.

The report of improved satisfaction with field liaisons reinforces the need to continue the use of paid liaisons and the practice of lower field liaison loads for faculty.

"The graduates" request that the IU School of Social Work provide CEUs after graduation will be reviewed during the new strategic planning process. The school is currently working with Kelly Direct to develop online CEUs that should be available by spring semester 2010.

The MSW program faculty will continue to collaborate and review course content focusing on reducing repetition whenever possible. The faculty will continue to work on developing pedagogical strategies that might better address the learning needs of the students. The MSW Curriculum Committee will continue its efforts to identify courses applicable for online learning and will work on implementation of these courses. Efforts will also be made to develop screening procedures for identify which students are appropriate for online classes and which are not. The above evaluation processes will be implemented again during the 2008-2009 academic year.

2. *Evaluation of Master of Social Work (MSW) Field Liaison Processes*

Year – 2008-2009

The MSW Program had over 450 students in field placements during the 2008-2009 academic year. Each student is assigned a faculty field liaison who is responsible for ensuring that curriculum content is integrated into field placements and that field placements are meeting the learning needs of MSW students and the Indiana School of Social Work. Based upon an evaluation completed during the 2006-2007 academic year, which helped to determine if the liaison process was meeting these two educational goals, liaison student assignments were reduced from 20 to 10 students per semester for full-time faculty members during the 2007-2008

and 2008-2009 academic years. Part-time contract liaisons continue to be employed to reduce the workload for full-time faculty.

Method Used

Surveys were administered to all field students at the end of their field practicum experiences during the 2008-2009 academic year to gather their opinions on the efficacy of this process, among other issues. Qualitative and quantitative information was obtained in these surveys. Informal qualitative information continues to be obtained from faculty on the efficacy of these liaison processes.

Findings

The results from these surveys have indicated a marked improvement in student satisfaction with the field liaison process. A full 92.8 % of students who responded to the survey indicated that their liaison communicated with them early in the semester/year, compared with 54-67.8 % in a related survey conducted during the 2006-2007 academic year; and 95.2 % indicated that the liaison visited with them at their agency at least once during the semester/year, compared with 72.4-78.3 % in the 2006-2007 survey. Students also ranked liaisons as well above average in all other areas measured, compared with near average overall ratings from the 2006-2007 survey. Problems of faculty overload, lack of understanding of the liaison processes, and lack of communications among faculty, students, field instructors, and field placement staff seem to have abated considerably since implementation of part-time contract liaisons.

Impact of Findings

In May, 2007 the Senior Field Coordinator recommended a change in the liaison process which was subsequently approved by the Dean of the School of Social Work. The new process, which was implemented during the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 academic years, involves hiring MSW's from the community who are knowledgeable about the MSW curriculum as liaisons for approximately 10-20 students each. The Senior Field Coordinator also proposed that any full-time faculty member be liaison for no more than 10 students. The Dean supported the recommendations and during 2007-2008 the new process was implemented; the new process continued during the 2008-2009 academic year. Based upon the apparent success of this approach, contract liaisons will continue to be utilized to lower workload for full-time faculty to no more than 10 students.

3. *Evaluation of Master of Social Work (MSW) Field Seminars*

Year – 2008-2009

As noted above, the MSW Program had over 450 students in field placements during the 2008-2009 academic year. A component of the field placement process initially implemented during the 2006-2007 academic year was student completion of an online field seminar. There was a foundation seminar for students in their foundation placement and concentration seminar for students in their concentration placement. The seminars were designed to help students bridge their academic course content and their learning experiences in field placement. Surveys were done of all field students and field instructors at the end of their field placement during 2006-2007 to obtain their opinions on the efficacy of the online seminars. Qualitative and quantitative

information was obtained in these surveys. The results from these surveys indicated that field seminars had varied effectiveness. With regards to student educational goals, the foundation seminars were surveyed as more effective than the concentration seminars. Students indicated that the concentration seminars were too basic and repetitive of content learned previously in their MSW courses. The students recommended, however, continued use of the online seminars instead of the face to face seminars. In summer, 2007 the MSW Field Placement Unit evaluated the content that was presented in the concentration seminars. They met with faculty from the various concentrations and obtained input on what would be relevant material for the MSW seminars during the 2007-2008 academic year, and whether or not the seminars should continue in their original format. Field staff recommended that due to the multiple challenges presented by the online format seminar assignments for both foundation and concentration practicum would be done in the context of the students' ongoing working relationship with their agency field instructor, not online or in a face to face seminar format.

Method Used

Surveys were administered to all field students at the end of their field practicum experiences during the 2008-2009 academic year to evaluate the efficacy of the modified approach to "seminar" content. Qualitative and quantitative information was obtained in these surveys.

Findings

Slightly more than $\frac{2}{3}$ (69%) of students who responded to the 2008-2009 survey indicated that field practicum assignments (i.e., content previously contained in online "seminars") in the agency were of definite instructional value. Seventy-one percent (71%) of students who responded indicated that field practicum assignments in the agency were appropriate to their individual learning needs and goals. In the 2006-2007 survey mentioned in Findings above, fewer than $\frac{1}{2}$ of respondents indicated that the overall quality of the online seminar assignments was "very good."

Impact of Findings

Based upon these results and in accordance with the standards of our accrediting body, the Council on Social Work Education, we will continue to incorporate leaning activities/assignments that connect classroom learning with practice experience, in practicum learning plans at both the foundation and concentration levels. We do not intend to reintroduce online or face to face seminars at this time.

IUSB Specific Research

Social work programs are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The CSWE has just revised its assessment criteria to "competencies" or actual learning outcomes, rather than curriculum requirements. To this end, I have begun a research study (IRB approved) to assess the first year outcomes of our students. I am using the Foundation Outcomes Assessment Measure developed by Dr. D. Mark Ragg, Associate Professor at the Eastern Michigan University School of Social Work. It is a pre- and post- survey based on responses to typical social work scenarios. The instrument is still in development

and my work here will assist with the reliability and validity testing being done. It will also give us a method of assessing student competencies at the end of the first year of our 3 year program. I began this research this year (2009) and plan to continue with the post test in the spring of 2010, and a pretest for the new students entering the program in the summer of 2010. If it proves to be a useful measure, I may try to expand its use to the Gary campus, and possibly the entire system.