

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT RECORD 2005-2006

YOUR COLLEGE/SCHOOL: CLAS

DEGREE PROGRAM COVERED BY THIS PLAN: BA IN SOCIAL WORK

% OF YOUR FACULTY MEMBERS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAN:
100%

NAME OF YOUR DEPARTMENT'S ASSESSMENT REPRESENTATIVE: Gwen Thornton, PhD LCSW

TODAY'S DATE (FOR TRACKING): 10/02/06

Our department established intended learning outcomes for students are congruent with elements of CNU's Vision 2010, and our own departmental goals.

Regarding the Strategic Plan our intended learning outcomes load on at least five of its goals:

1. IA: Provide an intellectually challenging and dynamic liberal learning curriculum.
2. IB: Support learning that cultivates critical and innovative thinking
3. IC: Foster independent student learning
4. ID: Connect liberal learning to ethical conduct and civic responsibility
5. IID: Connect liberal learning to community outreach through service and leadership.

Our criteria for success for all our learning outcomes are intended to be challenging, setting high standards for our students and faculty. The 1st learning outcome (*knowledge*) relates to students ability to recall and obtain a fundamental knowledge base in eight core social work content areas. Our 2nd and 3rd learning outcome (*comprehension and application*) relate to our students ability to understand and integrate theory and practice skills in their field internships. These activities encourages independent student learning that requires students to think critically and innovatively, promotes civic responsibility and global awareness as well as acquiring an understanding of ethics and ethical values. In addition, this activity connects liberal learning to community outreach by way of service and leadership inside and outside the classroom.

The goals of our department are to produce:

1. excellent practitioners prepared as liberal arts based baccalaureate level generalist social workers;
2. social science scholars who are prepared for scientific inquiry, technologically competent and knowledgeable of diverse and special populations;

3. citizens of the community and Commonwealth who are informed about the world around them, and ready advocates for social and economic justice;
4. communicators who are capable of collaboration across disciplines, client populations, and communities;
5. professionals imbued with the social work strengths perspective and able to use self-as-instrument in practice that includes biological, psychological, sociological and spiritual views of person-situation-interaction;
6. leaders dedicated to service and prepared with an understanding of the value base of the social work profession and its ethical standards and principles

Our *first* learning outcome (knowledge) directly relates to our 1st, 2nd and 3rd departmental goals; - we are assessing students foundational knowledge in eight core social work content areas, their competence and knowledge of diverse and special populations, as well as and their knowledge about their world around them and their preparation to advocate for social and economic justice. Our *second* and *third* learning outcomes (*comprehension and application*) directly relates to the 4th, 5th and 6th departmental goals - communicators who are capable of collaboration across disciplines, client populations, and communities; professionals imbued with the social work strengths perspective; and leaders dedicated to service and are prepared with an understanding of the value base of the social work profession and its ethical standards and principles. Finally, all of our intended learning outcomes are related to our department's commitment to provide an undergraduate social work program of excellence designed to educate CNU social work major for baccalaureate level generalist social work practice. In essence, assessment results of our intended learning outcomes help indicate our department's success relative to CNU's Strategic Plan and our own departmental goals.

I. **Intended Learning Outcome 1 (Knowledge):** Students will be able to recall and gain a foundational knowledge base in eight core social work areas: Policy, Social Work Practice, Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Research Methods, Diversity, Populations-at-Risk, Social and Economic Justice, and Values and Ethics.

A. **First Means of Assessment/Criteria for Success:** *Professional Area Concentration Achievement Test (ACAT) Social Work Exit Exam.* As part of the assessment of the effectiveness of the social work program, we require all senior social work majors to take the PACAT exam upon completion of all required social work courses. The test is a requirement and participation is 100% (16 out of 16; 2005- 2006 seniors). This exam takes place during the Spring semester final exam period. This session is monitored by Professor Williams and run in accordance with PACAT standards for testing (similar to taking SAT or GRE tests). This social work exam covers the content areas of Diversity, Populations at Risk, Social and Economic Justice, Values and Ethics, Policy & Services, Social Work Practice, Human Behavior in Social Environment, and Research Methods. Scores are reported to us in individual as well as aggregate form but are used only for program (not individual) evaluation. The test was chosen by the department because: (1) it covers the eight core social work content areas, (2) the publisher provides considerable validity evidence for its use with college students and, (3) it has national norms. **Criteria for Success:** The graduating cohort score will be at the 55 percentile or higher level as compared to the national norms for each of the eight knowledge areas (Policy, Practice, HBSE, Research, Diversity, Populations at Risk, Social and Economic Justice, Values and Ethics). The faculty agreed that if our students ranged at or above the 55 percentile they will be considered above average in comparison to the national norm average of 50 percentile in each of the core social work content areas.

Results:

PACAT EXAM 2003-2006

Area	2003 – 2004 N = 20		2004 – 2005 N=22		2005 – 2006 N=16	
	Standard Score	%ile	Standard Score	%ile	Standard Score	%ile
Diversity	523	59	556	71	573	77
Populations at Risk	533	63	552	70	511	54
Social and Economic Justice	524	59	544	67	536	64
Values and Ethics	545	67	501	50	529	61
Policy & Services	544	67	556	71	592	82
Social Work Practice	570	76	585	80	597	83
Human Beh in Social Environment	539	62	560	73	569	75
Research Methods	554	71	555	71	551	69
OVERALL PERFORMANCE	552	70	568	75	577	78

B. **Second Means of Assessment/Criteria for Success:** *Baccalaureate Educational Assessment Package (BEAP) Social Work Exit Survey.*

All seniors are required to take a national exit survey. This survey was designed by a group of social work researchers in collaboration with the Baccalaureate Programs Directors Association. The exit survey is completed by students just prior to graduation. This instrument is administered by Professor Williams in SOWK 490 during the spring final exam week. This instrument seeks to obtain feedback from students about their experiences while in the program. A major section addresses evaluation of curriculum objectives based on the Council of Social Work Education Educational Policy and Accreditation Standard – knowledge, skills and values. This survey instrument was selected by our department because it was designed to provide regular program feedback from multiple consumers within a longitudinal timeframe that begins during the professional education process and continues after graduation. Information gained from this assessment process allows our program the opportunity to make decisions based upon empirical data. The opportunity is also provided for the faculty to then monitor the impact of changes that were made in various aspects of the program such as curriculum, field instruction, advising, etc. Criteria for Success: On the BEAP Social Work Exit Survey. The mean graduating cohort score on the set of 35 items assessing mastery of core knowledge will be 7 (6 = good, 8 = very good, 10 = superb), which we consider above average.

Results:

BEAP SURVEY -Evaluation of Knowledge Gained in BSW Program

	2004-2005 n=22	2005-2006 n=16
K: Theories of diversity	7.77	7.75
K: Oppression	7.64	7.31
K: Social & economic Justice	7.59	7.00
K: History of social Work	7.05	6.88
K: SW professional associations	7.50	7.44
K: Current issues in SW profession	7.36	7.38
K: Bio-psycho-social development	7.41	7.38
K: Family development	7.45	7.06
K: Group development	7.45	7.25
K: Organizational development	7.45	6.81
K: Community development	7.50	7.44
K: Interactions between systems	7.36	6.25
S: Culturally competent interventions	7.64	7.00
S: Professional use of Self	8.23	7.88
S: Generalist	8.14	8.19

interventions		
S: Applying bio-psycho-social knowledge	7.50	7.38
S: Impact of social policies	7.64	7.50
S: Influence of organizational policies	7.27	6.75
S: Evaluating research studies	7.41	6.38
S: Applying findings of research	7.55	7.00
S: Evaluating my own practice w/supervision	8.14	7.56
S: Communicate based on diversity & ability	8.32	7.63
S: Use in supervision in practice	8.45	7.94
S: Function within organizational structures & policies	8.18	7.31
S: Seek organizational change with supervision	7.95	6.63
V: Respect dignity of clients	9.00	9.06
V: Uphold client confidentiality	10.00	9.25
V: Respect client self-determination	9.00	9.19
V: Non-judgmental manner	9.00	8.94
V: Respect cultural & social diversity	9.50	9.13
V: Ensure primary responsibility to clients	9.23	8.69
V: Work with colleague in SW	9.14	8.88
V: Work w/colleagues in other fields	9.00	8.00
V: Maintain professional relationship	9.05	8.94
V: Promote social & economic justice	9.14	8.44

Interpretation and Use of Results:

In regards to our 1st means of assessment, overall we met our criteria for success. The Social Work Department has consistently used the PACAT Exit Exam over a ten year period to assess the eight knowledge areas (Policy, Practice, HBSE, Research, Diversity, Populations-at-Risk, Social and Economic Justice, Values and Ethics) based on the Council of Social Work Educational and Policy Accreditation Standards. **At the beginning of the 2005 fall semester, the department analyzed**

the results of the PACAT 2004-2005 Exit Exam. The result for the Values and Ethics was at the 50 percentile. In response to this problematic area the social work faculty reviewed the curriculum and committed to incorporating content on values and ethics in the courses that each individual taught. Consequently, the PACAT results for the area on Values and Ethics for the 2006 graduating cohort was in the 61st percentile, which was 11 points above the 2005 graduating cohort. Our 2006 PACAT results showed that students scored at or above the 55% percentile level for all but one of the eight areas of knowledge. The exception, a 54 percentile was in the area of Populations at Risk which was 16 percent less in contrast to the previous year. Each social work professor is reviewing the curriculum to make sure they are integrating and emphasizing content material related to populations at risk. Although the students didn't meet our expectations in all eight content areas, students made a significant improvement in the Diversity, Values and Ethics, Policy & Services, Social Work Practice and HBSE areas of knowledge in comparison to the 2004-2005 graduating cohort.

Regarding our 2nd means of assessment, our criteria for success was met. This was the second year that we used the BEAP Exit Survey to obtain feedback from graduating seniors about their experiences while in the social work program. However, disappointingly, the scores in several areas were lower than we anticipated for this mode of assessment. We had hoped that the graduating cohort score on the 35 items assessing mastery of core knowledge to be at least 7 or above. On the other hand, the mean scores ranged between 6.25 and 9.25. It appears that student's perceptions of knowledge, when compared to tested knowledge, shows that this cohort of social work exiting seniors was not as confident about their knowledge in all areas surveyed by this 35 item instrument which includes knowledge, skills and values. This was especially true in the areas of Policy and Services (organizations, systems, policy etc.), when compared to their counterparts across the nation via PACAT (see A above). Still, students appear confident in their social work knowledge base, which revealed no weak area and therefore no specific follow-up or implications for the curriculum.

Areas in which the mean score decreased will be monitored more closely, specifically in two courses: Social Welfare Policy (SOWK 368) which is taught in the junior year, and Community and Organizations (SOWK 490) which is taught in the senior year. In addition, agency field instructors and faculty field liaisons will pay specific attention to macro practice issues in SOWK 401 and 402. We will also consider offering a workshop to agency field instructors on macro practice expectation in field placements.

II. Intended Learning Outcome 2 (Comprehension): Students will understand the value base of social work practice.

- A. First Means of Assessment/Criteria for Success: *Professional Area Concentration Achievement Test (ACAT) Social Work Exit Exam.* All seniors (n =16) took the PACAT national exit exam. As stated in learning outcome 1, this test is a requirement and participation is 100% (16 out of 16 seniors). This exam takes place during the Spring semester final exam period. This session is monitored by Professor Williams and run in accordance with PACAT standards for testing (similar to taking SAT or GRE tests). This social work exam includes a content area on Values

and Ethics. Scores are reported to us in individual as well as aggregate form but are used only for program (not individual) evaluation. The test was chosen by the department because: (1) it covers the social work content area – Values and Ethics, (2) the publisher provides considerable validity evidence for its use with college students and, (3) it has national norms. Criteria for Success: The graduating cohort score will be at the 55 percentile or higher level (compared to the national norms) on Values and Ethics. Again, the faculty agreed that if our students ranged at or above the 55 percentile they will be considered above average in comparison to the national norm of 50 percentile in the Values and Ethics.

Results

PACAT EXAM 2003-2006

Area	2003 – 2004 n = 20		2004 – 2005 n=22		2005 – 2006 n=16	
	Standard Score	%'ile	Standard Score	%'ile	Standard Score	%'ile
Values and Ethics	545	67	501	50	529	61

Second Means of Assessment/Criteria for Success: *Social work Values Inventory (SWVI) (Pretest/Posttest)*. Similar to other instruments used by BEAP, the social work program has been using an entrance exam on 50 items that give a knowledge test on the values and ethics (confidentiality, self-determination & social justice) as applied in social work practice examples. For the last three years (2004-2006) the pre-test of this exam was given during the first or second week in the semester to the students in the Introduction to Social Work class (SOWK 260. This year (Spring 2006) was the first time that the exit survey was given to graduating seniors in the social work program. Through a series of unfortunate mishaps, the values posttest was not given as scheduled to all 16 graduating seniors. When this was realized amidst the confusion of finals week, an attempt was made to reach and give the posttest to as many seniors as we could find and engage. Even though the sample is small, it is a second indicator of assessment in the area via a knowledge test of values and ethics at the point of graduation. This instrument was selected by the department because: (1) the inventory measures values, (2) it is designed to acquire information about how social work practice issues should be resolved, (3) it was designed to help programs address the importance of educational excellence as emphasized by the CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standard, and (4) information gained from this assessment process allow our program the opportunity to make curriculum decisions based upon empirical data. Criteria for Success: Because this is our initial experience with the results of the BEAP Values Inventory Pre and Post Test comparison, the department is unsure of the best criteria of success. We are exploring this issue with BEAP and with some other programs who have experience with this instrument. Since we have not had an opportunity to do so as yet, we have not determined a set criterion of success for this measure.

Results:

Social Work Values Inventory

Scale	2004 SWVI Entrance n = 17	2006 SWVI Exit n = 9
Confidentiality	62.65	72.29
Self-Determination	52.53	69.00
Social Justice	78.00	85.67

Interpretation and Use of Results:

The initial results of the pre and post test on the BEAP Values Inventory, as indicated above, shows a marked improvement of scores for this cohort of students from pre to post test. Since these are our first results, it is difficult to put them in context. Further analysis of this data, received on 10/3/06, may yield a greater understanding of its meaning. For now, the department is encouraged by the improvement in scores in all three values areas. It appears, even from these preliminary results, that we are following the correct course of action in closely attending to the values content of the curriculum and we will continue to do so.

III. Intended Learning Outcome 3 (Application): Students will be able to apply knowledge and skills of the social work planned change process from a strengths perspective.

- A. First Means of Assessment/Criteria for Success: *Senior Case Conference – SOWK 402 Capstone Project*. In SOWK 402, our required senior field seminar, all graduating seniors (16 out of 16) made a formal case presentation that contained the components for the generalist planned change process. The steps for the planned change process are engagement, exploration, assessment, planning and contracting, intervention, evaluation, termination, ethical issues, and policy practice. Students were required to identify three references to support their methodology in working with their client or client systems. They were also required to articulate learning experiences from their cases and identify goals for further learning. Students take this assignment very seriously because this assignment accounts for fifteen percent of their final grade for this course. Teams of two faculty members (field liaisons) and one outside consultant (field instructor) in their area of expertise evaluated each student’s presentation using a rubric that was originally created by the Georgia University School of Social Work and was modified by our department faculty to be more consistent with our department goals. This instrument was selected because (1) it covers all of the planned change process criteria stated in the learning outcomes, (2) it was created and used by faculty in another social work programs and could be modified by our department faculty to be consistent with our department values and goals, and it (3) it provides descriptors that aid with rating. Using the rubric, each component of the above outcome – engagement, exploration, assessment, planning and contracting, intervention, evaluation, termination, ethical issues, policy practice, learning goals and references – was rated on a three point consisting of (1) failed to meet expected performance level, (2) met expected performance level,

(3) exceeded expected performance level. Each of the scale points were described in detailed to assist the raters in determining a score. A trial version of the case presentation and grading rubric were tested in Spring 2005, revised and refined, and then used for the first time as an assessment tool in Spring 2006. Criteria for Success: Considering the rubric the department decided that if 85% of the students demonstrate the ability to communicate and integrate the social work planned change process for generalist social work practice by attaining a score of 2.00 in each of the criteria for the planned change process this would indicate success.

Results

Faculty & Consultants Ratings of Students Case Conference Presentation

Planned Change Process Criteria (n=16)	Mean Score (3-point scale)
Engagement	2.50
Exploration	2.46
Assessment	2.50
Planning & Contracting	2.50
Intervention	2.50
Evaluation	2.40
Termination	2.26
Ethical Issues	2.30
Policy Practices	2.33
Learning Goals	2.43
References	2.50

- B. Second Means of Assessment/Criteria for Success: *Field Instruction Supervisor Post-Internship Evaluation.* As a requirement for SOWK 402 all senior year students must complete a 448 hours internship in a social service agency. (SOWK 401 for 224 hours and SOWK 402 for 224 hours). Fifty-five percent of the final grade for the internship is determined through an evaluation of a student's performance as judged by the agency field instructor. We use a 35-item instrument to evaluate performance of the student's use of the planned change process in generalist social work practice. Field instruction supervisors evaluate the performance of student's use of the planned change process at the end of their first semester and final semester in their fieldwork.

This evaluation instrument assesses the student's professionalism and preparation for generalist social work practice in the following areas: professional responsibility, poise and self control, assertiveness, personal appearance as related to agency standards, effectiveness in planning and arranging work responsibilities, ability to assume responsibility for own learning, practice effectively within organizational structures and regulations, use a computer at skill level sufficient for beginning social work practice and research, ability to identify and use community resources, verbal and non-verbal communication skills, written communication skills – including ability to record with clarity and promptness, assess situations both within and outside the client system; determine priorities, ability to develop & maintain professional relationships with clients from diverse groups and communicate respect, relationships with co-workers (students and staff) relationships with staff of other agencies, demonstrate acceptance and use

of basic social work values, ethics & principles, effectiveness in providing services to individuals, effectiveness in providing services to families, effectiveness in providing services to groups, effectiveness in providing services at the community and organizational level, use of supervision, development of self awareness –including the need for continued professional growth, application of critical thinking and inquiry-including policy analysis, global awareness, liberal arts, social welfare policy awareness, strengths perspective in practice, bio-psycho-social knowledge – including systems, use of social research methods and tools – including evaluation of practice, value inherent dignity and worth, value self-determination, value confidentiality, understands & relates to client diversity and special needs, knows and uses the planned change process, leadership . The field instructors attend a field instruction orientation seminar each fall semester and are trained on how to use the evaluation instrument to assess the student’s performance in their internship. Using the evaluation instrument, each component of the above outcome was rated on a five-point scale ranging from, (1) N/A (not applicable), (2) satisfactory, (3) good or competent, (4) very good, (5) superior or very competent. Dr. Thornton collected the data and a data analysis were conducted with the assistance of computer based SPSS 14.0 Statistical Package. SPSS 14.0 Frequencies and Descriptive procedures were used to obtain averages and percentages for the variables in the evaluation instrument. The results are used by each faculty liaison to determine 55% of the student’s grade from the internship but are also reported in aggregate form and used for program evaluation. This evaluation form was designed by the department faculty because: (1) it incorporates social work foundational knowledge in the eight core social work areas as set forth by the Council on Social Work Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (2) it incorporates the criterion for social work professionalism and the social work skills required for successful use of the planned change process in generalist social work practice and, (2) it is consistent with our department mission and goals. Criteria for Success: The mean rating on those items described above for the graduating cohort will be 4.0 (very good) or higher (good to very competent) on a scale of 0 to 5.

Results

***Average Scores for Field Instruction Ratings of Students
Performance in Internship***

	2003 – 2004 n = 20	2004 – 2005 n=22	2005 – 2006 n=16
1. Profresp	4.75	4.73	4.76
2. Poise	4.55	4.52	4.46
3. Assert	4.55	4.26	4.50
4. Appearance	5.00	4.91	4.80
5. Planwork	4.75	4.60	4.66
6. Active	4.70	4.69	4.76
7. Agency	4.70	4.56	4.86
8. Computer	4.80	4.43	4.43
9. Resource	4.25	4.17	4.03
10. Communication	4.55	4.26	4.53
11. Write	4.60	4.47	4.60
12. Assessment	4.45	4.43	4.50
13. Clients	4.40	4.45	4.80

14. Worker	4.90	4.90	4.03
15. other	4.50	4.50	4.80
16. swbas	5.00	5.00	4.80
17. Individual	4.50	4.52	4.60
18. Family	3.55	3.60	4.06
19. Groups	3.15	2.91	3.63
20. Communities	3.10	3.17	3.56
21. Supervision	4.95	4.60	4.90
22. Self-awareness	4.95	4.78	4.80
23. Critical thinking	4.45	4.78	4.46
24. Global	4.10	3.65	3.96
25. Liberal Arts	4.35	3.73	4.43
26. Policy	4.50	4.08	4.26
27. Strengths	4.85	4.65	4.86
28. Bio-psycho-social	4.60	4.17	4.60
29. Research	4.05	3.34	3.96
30. Dignity	4.90	4.52	4.93
31. Self-determination	4.80	4.26	4.46
32. Confidentiality	4.85	4.56	4.86
33. Diversity	4.65	4.39	4.56
34. Change	3.55	3.86	4.56
35. Leadership	4.40	3.95	4.03

- C. Third Means of Assessment/Criteria for Success: *Field Instruction II (SOWK 402) final grade*. As a part of our assessment of the effectiveness of the social work program field instructors and faculty jointly evaluate graduating senior's performance in field and coursework to determine a final grade. In SOWK 402 students must complete additional coursework to fulfill the requirements for graduating from the program - submit weekly journals and agendas, attend joint seminar, submit weekly timesheets for hours in field, submit three process recordings and complete a resume - which accounts for thirty percent of the student's final grade. Criteria for Success: The mean grade for the graduating cohort will be a B (3.0) or higher on a scale of 0 to 4.

Results:

2006 Graduating Cohort Final Grades (n=16)

Students	Average 4-point scale	Letter Grade
01	3.30	B+
02	4.00	A
03	4.00	A
04	4.00	A
05	4.00	A
06	4.00	A
07	2.70	C+
08	3.70	A-
09	3.70	A-
10	0.00	F
11	3.70	A-
12	3.30	B+
13	4.00	A
14	3.00	B
15	3.30	B+
16	3.30	B+
Overall Average	3.37	

Interpretation and Use of Results

The criteria for successfully meeting learning outcome 3 has been met on all measures, with the exception of our second means of assessment that indicate a result below 4.0 in the area of groups, communities, global awareness, and research. Results for groups and communities, areas in which we have been working for several years to improve these results, do show improvement. Because these results relate directly to student performance in the field as rated by agency field supervisors, this is a measurement in which consistency of raters is a constant problem. The program will continue our efforts to insure that all students and agency field supervisors remain aware of the need to incorporate and measure work with groups and with communities. Regarding the lower marks in the areas of global awareness and research, both marks are very close to 4.0 (3.96) and both show improvement over the previous years marks (3.65 and 3.34 respectively). The program concludes that efforts made in both areas to improve curriculum content are working and should be continued. In point of fact, Dr. Thornton has revised the social welfare sequence that is the most opportune place to increase global content, and much more work on international social work is underway in the department. We also believe that we need a better way to measure global awareness on the field evaluation instrument. We also expect that having hired a fourth faculty member in Fall 2006 with extensive experience in the teaching of research will improve the performance of our students in this area.