SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT 6-17-11

Review of Program Objectives #9, #11, #12, & #13

The primary mission of the Viterbo University Social Work Program is to prepare students for bachelor level generalist social work practice. A comprehensive assessment plan using multiple measures has been selected by the social work faculty to evaluate the accomplishment of our program objectives. The outcome measures take a variety of forms providing data that is both formative and summative. The measures are designed to provide feedback for curricular and program improvement. Each of the program’s thirteen program objectives is on a schedule for evaluation so that all program outcomes are reviewed over a 3-year cycle. In the 2010-2011 academic year Program Objectives #9, #11, #12, & #13 were reviewed. The faculty met on 6/15/11 to discuss the assessment data for these objectives and to follow up on issues identified in last year’s assessment report. The following is a report of these assessment activities.

Program Objective #9: Utilize social work research skills and knowledge to evaluate practice and program effectiveness.

Summary of 2005 Self Study Assessment Findings related to Program Objective #9:
In summary, the findings in our last self study from three of the four mechanisms used from 2001-2004 to measure outcomes related to Program Objective #9 indicated we were meeting our targeted benchmarks. Only on the BEAP Employer Survey did assessment data fall below identified benchmarks and these finding were thought to have limitations as the data was based on only two classes of graduates with a total population of nine. However additional feedback from students as well as the Professor Anderson- Meger who teaches the research course led to the following recommendations:

- Place the statistics course in closer proximity to the junior level research course so students make better connections between these two courses.
- Work with the Math Department to modify content of the statistics to be more meaningful and applicable to social work.
- Incorporate a research component in the Senior Capstone project to include an evidence based literature review, an evaluation of client system progress and an evaluation of student’s own practice.

It was recommended that assessment data be monitored in subsequent years to determine if these changes resulted in improvement in this program objective outcome.

6/15/11 Review of PO #9: Utilize social work research skills and knowledge to evaluate practice and program effectiveness.

Summary of measures used: There are 5 independent measures used to assess this objective including one course embedded measures (benchmark: 80% of students will score 80% or better), field education student skill ratings by agency instructors (benchmark: mean rating of 4.0 or better), BEAP Exit Survey (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms), BEAP Alumni Survey (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms), and BEAP Employer Survey (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms). Multiple years of data were examined.

Assessment Analysis:

1. Course Embedded Assessment: The Organization Case Study paper in SOWK 482 is the course embedded measures for this program outcome. Four years of data for this measure were analyzed. In only one year, 2009, did students achieve the benchmark for this measure (93% of students achieve a score of 80% or better). In 2008 75% of students reached the benchmark, in 2010 64% reached the benchmark and in 2011 67% reached the benchmark. When data is aggregated over all four years, only 75% of students achieve a score of 80% or better. Benchmark for course embedded measure of this objective is not met.

Feedback Loop/Recommendation: To further develop students’ research skills a sophomore level Introduction to Research Writing course is being developed and will be offered for the first time in fall of 2012. Research will now be a two course sequence with statistics taken between the two courses or concurrent with the first research course. Also to improve integration of research findings in the Organization Case Study, there will be new
exercises developed for the Capstone course that will help students focus on the criteria in the grading rubric and develop skill in integrating literature findings in the discussion section of the Organization Case Study paper.

2. Field Education Student Skill Ratings:
Agency field instructor’s ratings of student skill in utilizing social work research skills to evaluate practice met the program’s benchmark rating of 4.0 or better. Five years of field ratings were reviewed. In 2007 the mean rating was 4.63, in 2008 the mean rating was 4.37 in 2009 the mean rating was 4.35, in 2010 the mean rating was 4.55 and in 2011 the rating was 4.23; all five years exceeded the benchmark. Benchmark met.

3. BEAP Exit Survey: There were 7 classes (2004-2010) of exit survey data analyzed. Two classes (2004 and 2007) rated their ability to utilize research skills and knowledge to evaluate practice below the national norms. The other 5 classes rated their skills at or above national norms. When data over all 7 classes is aggregated, Viterbo students rate themselves above the national norm at the 95% confidence interval. The most recent classes surveyed (2008-2010) have rated themselves at or above the national norm. Findings for this measure are mixed. However the preponderance of evidence (5 out of 7 classes met benchmark) suggests that students feel confident of their research skills upon graduation. Addition of second research course should further increase student’s research skills. Benchmark met.

4. BEAP Alumni Survey: Five classes of alumni survey data (2004-2008) were available for review. Alumni in all five classes rated their skills in research at or higher than the national norms. Benchmark met.

5. BEAP Employer Survey: Employer survey data was available for five classes of graduates (2004-2008). Employer ratings for four of five years exceeded national norms. Ratings by employers from the class of 2006 fell below the national norms for this program objective however cumulative ratings for all five classes were still within national norms at the 95% confidence interval. Benchmark met.

Summary of Assessment Review of PO #9: Utilize social work research skills and knowledge to evaluate practice and program effectiveness.
Benchmark met in 4 out of 5 measures for this objective. However two classes of students did not rate themselves at the identified benchmark upon existing the program and students do not demonstrated benchmark skills in research on the course embedded measure. The faculty has identified both research skills and academic writing as weaknesses over several classes of students. Consequently a second research course Introduction to Research Writing will be added to the sophomore level to further develop these skills. Additionally, an Applied Statistics Course for the Social Sciences has been developed so students have the choice of a math based or applied statistics course. Statistics will be taken either concurrently with the sophomore level research course or immediately following.

Program Objective #11: Understand the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.

Summary of 2005 Self Study Assessment Findings related to Program Objective #11: Assessment findings related to students’ understanding of the history of social work and current issues indicated that this was a strength of the program in 2005. All assessment measures indicated that we were meeting or exceeding program benchmarks for this program objective.

6/15/11 Review of PO #11: Understand the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.
Summary of measures used: There are 5 independent measures used by the faculty to assess this objective including one course embedded measure (benchmark: 80% of students will score 80% or better), field education student skill ratings by agency instructors (benchmark: mean rating of 4.0 or better), BEAP Exit Survey (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms), BEAP Alumni Survey (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms), and BEAP Employer Survey (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms). Multiple years of data were examined.

Assessment Analysis:

1. Course Embedded Assessment: Scores from the History Timeline in SOWK 341 Policy are used for the course embedded measure of this outcome. Four years of data were analyzed. In three years, the benchmark for this measure was met (2008-93%; 2009-100%; 2010-100%). Only in 2007 did students fall below the benchmark (67%). Scores have improved over the past 3 years. When data is aggregated the benchmark is met and exceeded (90% of students scoring at or above the benchmark). Benchmark met.
2. **Field Education Student Skill Ratings:** Agency field instructor’s ratings of student understanding of the history and current issues of the social work profession met the program’s benchmark rating of 4.0 or better. Five years of field ratings were reviewed. In 2007 the mean rating was 4.55, in 2008 the mean rating was 4.4 in 2009 the mean rating was 4.37, in 2010 the mean rating was 4.43 and in 2011 the rating was 4.32; all five years exceeded the benchmark. Benchmark met.

3. **BEAP Exit Survey:** There were 7 classes (2004-2010) of exit survey data analyzed for the review of this outcome. All seven classes rated their understanding of the history and current issues of the social work profession higher than the national averages. Benchmark met.

4. **BEAP Alumni Survey:** Five classes of alumni survey data (2004-2008) were available for review. Four of five classes rated their understanding of the history and current structures of the profession at or above national norms. Alumni data in only one class (2006) had ratings below national norms but still within the 95% confidence levels. When cumulative data of all five years is aggregated and analyzed, student ratings met national norms at the 95% confidence interval. With small class sizes, cumulative data is a more accurate reflection of our program overall. Benchmark met.

5. **BEAP Employer Survey:** Five classes of employer survey data (2004-2008) were available for review. Three of five classes rated their understanding of the history and current structures of the profession at or above national norms. Employer survey data in 2006 & 2008 had ratings below national norms. When cumulative data of all five years is aggregated and analyzed, student ratings fall below the national norms at the 95% confidence interval. The class of 2006 falls significantly below the other classes and this one data point significantly impacts the aggregate data due to our small student numbers and low employer survey response rates. Benchmark not met.

Summary of Assessment Review of PO #11: Understand the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.

Benchmark met in four of five measures. The benchmark was not met in two out of five years on Employer Survey. Determined not to be of concern. No further action needed.

Program Objective #12: Analyze the adequacy and effects of social policy on client populations, colleagues, agencies and communities and formulate appropriate policy in response to human needs.

Summary of 2005 Self Study Assessment Findings related to Program Objective #12:
Overall assessment findings from the 2005 Self Study affirmed that Viterbo graduates have a good handle on social policy analysis and formulation. Curriculum changes were implemented in 2002-2003 and resulted in assessment improvements.

6/15/11 Review of PO #12: Analyze the adequacy and effects of social policy on client populations, colleagues, agencies and communities and formulate appropriate policy in response to human needs.

Summary of measures used: There are 4 independent measures used by the faculty to assess this objective including field education student skill ratings by agency instructors (benchmark: mean rating of 4.0 or better, BEAP Exit Survey (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms), BEAP Alumni Survey 2 years (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms), and BEAP Employer Survey (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms). Multiple years of data were examined.

Assessment Analysis:

1. **Course Embedded Assessment:** The policy analysis assignment in SOWK 441 Policy II is the course embedded measure for this program objective. Four years of data were reviewed (2007-2010). Four years of data were analyzed. In three years, the benchmark for this measure was met (2008- 93%; 2009-100%; 2010-88%). Only in 2007 did students fall below the benchmark (67%). Scores have improved over the past 3 years. We data is aggregated the benchmark is met and exceeded (90% of students scoring at or above the benchmark). Benchmark met.

2. **Field Education Student Skill Ratings:** Ratings of student’s ability by agency instructors for Field Education to analyze and formulate social policy met the program’s benchmark rating of 4.0 or better. Five years of field ratings were reviewed. In 2007 the mean rating was 4.53, in 2008 the mean rating was 4.41, in 2009 the mean rating was 4.37, in 2010 4.43 and in 2011 4.32; all five years exceeding the benchmark. Benchmark met.
6. **BEAP Exit Survey:** There were 7 classes (2004-2010) of exit survey data analyzed for the review of this outcome. All seven classes rated their ability to analyze and formulate social policy to be higher than the national averages. Benchmark met.

7. **BEAP Alumni Survey:** Five classes of alumni survey data (2004-2008) were available for review. All five classes had alumni ratings of their ability to analyze and formulate social policy at or above national norms. Benchmark met.

8. **BEAP Employer Survey:** Five classes of employer survey data (2004-2008) were available for review. Four of five classes had employers ratings of their ability to analyze and formulate social policy at or above national norms. Employer survey data in only one class (2006) had ratings below national norms. When cumulative data of all five years is aggregated and analyzed, student ratings met national norms at the 95% confidence interval. Benchmark met.

**Summary of Assessment Review of PO #12:** Analyze the adequacy and effects of social policy on client populations, colleagues, agencies and communities and formulate appropriate policy in response to human needs.
Benchmark met in all measures. Area of strength. Continue current plan.

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<th><strong>Program Objective #13:</strong> Use appropriate social work interventions including political and case advocacy to advance social and economic justice.</th>
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**Summary of 2005 Self Study Assessment Findings related to Program Objective #13:**

Assessment findings in the 2005 Self Study presented mixed results. Field and Employer survey data for the class of 2003 did not meet the programs benchmark. However subsequent field data showed improved results. Future monitoring of outcome data was recommended.

6/15/11 Review of PO #13: Use appropriate social work interventions including political and case advocacy to advance social and economic justice.

**Summary of measures used:** There are 5 independent measures used to assess this objective including one course embedded measure (benchmark: 80% of students will score 80% or better), field education student skill ratings by agency instructors (benchmark: mean rating of 4.0 or better, BEAP Exit Survey (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms), BEAP Alumni Survey (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms), and BEAP Employer Survey (benchmark: meet or exceed national norms). Multiple years of data were examined.

**Assessment Analysis:**

1. **Course Embedded Assessment:** One course embedded measures is used to assess this program outcome- the advocacy project in SOWK 441 Social Policy II. Four years of data were available for analysis. Data from all four years met or exceeded 80%. Benchmark met.

2. **Field Education Student Skill Ratings:** Agency field instructor’s ratings of student skill to use appropriate interventions to advance social and economic justice met the program’s benchmark rating of 4.0 or better. Five years of field ratings were reviewed. In 2007 the mean rating was 4.53, in 2008 the mean rating was 4.41 in 2009 the mean rating was 4.37, in 2010 the mean rating was 4.36 and in 2011 the rating was 4.32; all five years exceeded the benchmark. Benchmark met.

3. **BEAP Exit Survey:** There were 7 classes (2004-2010) of exit survey data analyzed for the review of this outcome. All seven classes rated their use of appropriate interventions to advance social and economic justice to be higher than the national averages. Benchmark met.

4. **BEAP Alumni Survey:** Five classes of alumni survey data (2004-2008) were available for review. All seven classes rated their use of appropriate interventions to advance social and economic justice to be higher than the national averages. Benchmark met.

5. **BEAP Employer Survey:** Five classes of employer survey data (2004-2008) were available for review. One (2006) of five classes received ratings lower than national norms. Subsequent classes have received ratings at or above national norms. Aggregate data are within national norms at the 95% confidence interval. Benchmark met.
Summary of Assessment Review of PO #13: Use appropriate social work interventions including political and case advocacy to advance social and economic justice.
Benchmark met in all measures. Area of strength. Continue current plan.

Follow up on 2010 Assessment Report
In the 6-10-10 Annual Assessment Report the following concerns were identified for follow up:

PO #2: Exercise effective communication skills differentially with a variety of client populations, colleagues, and members of the community.
- Academic writing in need of improvement.

PO #4: Use knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice.
- Improvement noted in evidence based practice. Monitor to see if improvements are sustained.
- Monitor for improvements in mid-level assessment of knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice in SOWK 321. See if reduction in total number of assignments and more focus on case planning has intended results.

Follow up on PO #2: Exercise effective communication skills differentially with a variety of client populations, colleagues, and members of the community:
A sophomore level Introduction to Research Writing will be added in fall 2012 to further develop academic writing skills. More emphasis being placed on professional writing by adopting a new textbook in each practice course beginning with Service Learning in the fall of 2011. Continue to monitor.

Follow up on PO #4: Use knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice.
Sustained improvement in evidence based practice is noted and no longer a concern.

Results of course embedded assignment in Practice I (case plan) was still below program benchmark. A new text focusing specifically on case based professional writing has been adopted and will be used in each practice course beginning with Service Learning in the fall of 2011. Continue to monitor.